

UDC 32+35.07(669.1)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22182/pr.6932021.4>

Прегледни рад

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## **CHALLENGES OF LEADERSHIP AND FOLLOWERSHIP IN NIGERIAN GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE: AN ANALYTICAL REVIEW**

### **Abstract**

The paper examines the challenges of leadership and followership in governance and how poor leadership has undermined democratic and sustainable development in Nigeria. Specifically, it explores reasons why one of the world most endowed nations in human capacity continues to be bequeathed mis-governance. Using documentary approach, we argue that the challenges for poor leadership and followership in Nigeria's contemporary political system are tied to corruption and self-aggrandizement of leaders and followers with unquenchable self-centeredness coupled with a crop of leaders without vision towards the betterment of the country. We conclude however that Nigerians should focus on electing leaders with proven track records of selfless service, achievement towards geared sustainability and developmental stride for efficiency, effectiveness and higher productivity. If this was done in line with the intent to salvage

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the crumbling political system, there would be renewed value orientation that is required to make Nigerians more politically responsible to the country.

**Keywords** Governance, Leadership, Followership, Development, Nigeria.

## INTRODUCTION

Prior to the coming of the colonial masters to the African soil, in the words of Obi and Uche (2019), the people that later became known as Nigerians were living under different political administrative organizations or political arrangements that made it possible for them to govern themselves before the advent of colonialism. It means that traditional political and governance system preceded the era of colonialism. From the same position, the pre-colonial Nigeria varies from one region to another because of the ethnic and ethno-linguistic difference, though with similar cultural values in terms of mutual social responsibility. That is the tradition of injury for one is injury for all. For instance, while some political systems are centralized (Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba pre-colonial system), other were decentralized or chief less society (e.g. the Igbo clan system). The economic system was socialist in nature (collectivism) and under such socio-political and economic arrangement, the value and attitudes of eat and give your brother is manifest in day-to-day activities of various ethnic groups (Bagaji 2002). Since the attainment of political independence in 1960, the major problem of Nigeria has been the leadership and development crises, relationship between different nationalities, social classes and political administrative unit over material resources, power sharing, local government creation, the minority question, citizen-indigeneship-native question, practice of true federalism and continuous glamour for secession. Be it the Nigeria Biafra civil War of 1967-70, the then June 12 crises, military coup and counter *coup d'état* and recently the agitation by the Indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) and the Movement for actualization of sovereign state of Biafra (MASSOB) for secession in the South Eastern Nigeria, the Niger-Delta agitation for resource control (Militants), Boko Haram insurgency and Fulani heads men attack on rural farmers has demonstrated in the course of our existence as colonial creation that power sharing (presidency), resource control, ethnicity groups, and leadership is indeed the national question (Oyetunbi & Akinrinde 2021). It is based on the forgoing that this paper is poised at bringing to limelight the challenges of leadership and followership in governance among Nigeria youths.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE**

It has been thought imperative and necessarily at the on-set to explain the key concepts in this paper. The intention here is to put the concepts within the context in which they are used, in order to avoid misunderstanding. Besides, concept may have cultural, administrative, institutional and ideological contextualization (Chafe 2013). In the introduction of this paper, key words were listed. The point here is to explain and review them. The concept of governance just like any other social science concept has a myriad of meaning and interpretations among scholars, policy/decision makers and the civil society organizations. Governance, a concept that is greatly debated, is now inviting greater attention within and amongst countries and as the number of democratic administrations is continuously increasing, good governance has evidently become a key standard to judge a nation's credibility as well as respect on international scales (Iyoha et al 2015). Governance refers to several ways by which social life is coordinated. It is a process of social engagement between the rulers and the ruled in the society which implies that governance is predicated on the relationship between the ruling class and the ruled class in the society (Iyoha et al 2015; Nyewusira 2007). Governance can be referred to as the traditions as well as institutions that define how authority is exercised in a given country (Kaufmann, Kraay & Zoido 2000).

According to Awa (1996:1) governance is believed to be social insurance practices of the extended family, the allocation of land to members of the community for farming or residential purpose, folktale, religion, organization of artists in the areas of pointing and sculpture, the traditional political system operation with a basic minimum sense of fairness and justice in respect of each member of the community. This was a moral order that governed the handling of public lives, this was predicated on the assumption and understanding that everybody's welfare and well-being must be catered for. In a true societal setting where there is good governance, people tend to have things in common and they live together and no cheating.

Everything done is meant to please the overall interest of all without the exclusion of any group. It was in recognition of this that, Achebe (1983:1) observed that the trouble with Nigeria is dimply and squarely a failure of leadership. He believed that there is nothing basically wrong with the Nigeria environment. He further reiterated that the inability of our leaders to rise to the responsibility of challenging some of these problems that have made the country to be characterized with tribalism,

false image, indiscipline, corruption, for the country to continue to maintain the status-quo as a great nation, policies and program needs to be put in place to eradicate these nagging problems.

Salman (2009) asserts that Governance entails the procedure through which governments are selected, monitored, held accountable, and replaced; it is government's ability to judiciously manage resources well and formulate, implement as well as enforce good policies and regulations; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interaction between them (Salman 2009).

According to Kolade (2012), Governance involves participation by both the governor and the governed (i.e. the leader and the follower). He asserted that in order to get the expected governance in Nigeria, there is the need to provide „leadership education that highlights service delivery, quality and accountability; severely curtail the excesses of position holders, encourage the culture whereby position holders vacate office when being investigated for wrong doing; and openly celebrate leaders that excel or perform well. Recently, good governance has been an important subject in economic development discourse because of its connection to information dissemination which, could improve resource allocation, enhance efficiency and increase the prospects of economic growth provided it is made available on time and without being distorted.

Ijaya & Ijaya (2004) asserted that this is a vital pre-requisite for the improvement of wellbeing of the citizens. A general agreement has been building throughout Africa that good governance is indispensable for transforming its economy. Certain qualities are connected with good governance, which comprises protecting respect for human rights, justice and rule of law; strengthening democracy through public participation and pluralism; encouraging transparency, accountability, anti-corruption policies and practices and capacity in public administration (UNDP 1998; World Bank 1989). Good governance is indispensable for institutional growth and effectiveness. According to Akanbi (2004), good governance is the capability of a government to sustain social peace, guarantee law and order, promote conditions needed for generating economic growth and ascertain a minimum level of social security. Development will be a mirage where good governance is lacking. Good governance is hinged on the capacity to exercise power and to make sound decisions over a period of time in economic, social and environmental areas (World Bank 2005).

## **CONCEPT CLARIFICATION: LEADERSHIP**

Leadership, followership, and its relative implication on Nigeria political system; in fact, leadership is older than the country itself. However, it became a very fundamental socio-economic and political problem after the attainment of independence in 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1960. This paper notice that a search of the relevant and plethora literatures reveals that there is no consensus on the definition of these concepts. However, the chamber 20<sup>th</sup> century Dictionary (1987), says that, “lead” means to show the way by going first” “to guide by the hand”. According to the same Dictionary, “a leader is one who leads or goes first” and leadership means “Ability to lead”. In agreement to this assertion, Ademola, Edoh and Wuam (2009) cited in Obi and Uche (2019) contend that leadership is the ability to take an initiative, to motivate, to influence, to direct and control the thought, opinions and actions of the followers in a desired end. Leadership, according to them, is a broad term to express the state of being part of the key stakeholders in an organization, social grouping, society and state, depending on the levels and numbers of social grouping like family, a school, religion, village, an establishment, a group, and a state, there are major stakeholders occupying the various leadership positions (Obi, and Uche 2019).

Adding strength to the above, Simbine (2000) opined that Leadership is any person that direct or show the way for others to follow and relies on the willing support and compliance of the people who gives him a right to lead them toward achieving goals. And for Gould and Kolb (1964), leadership is the occupancy of status and the entire performance of a role that mobilizes less organized collectives and voluntarily efforts towards the attainment of shared goals. The beauty of this definition lies in the fact that leadership does not mean just occupying a position, office or status, vision will, programs and policies, it entails at the same time that the leaders should be able to mobilize the people he is leading and voluntarily makes all the necessary efforts and sacrifices for the attainment of shared goals. But more interestingly among these numerous views of leadership as it applies to the Nigeria situation is the position of Okadigbo (1987) who argued that leadership is that process through which one individual consistently exerts more influence than others in the decision of the social policy and resource allocation as exerted by partisan representatives. This definition suggests that the leadership process is hinged on the capacity to allocate scarce resource which determines the focus power. This explains why the struggle for leadership position (Presidents, Governor, Local Government Chairman, Councilors among others) is marred by ethnic and religious

crises in the country.

This implies that leadership is a serious business with high level of organization effectiveness in relation to policy formulation and policies actually pursued, especially in the conduct of economic policy and its contribution to growth, stability and popular welfare... also implies accountability, transparency, participation, openness and the rule of law. It does not necessarily presuppose a value Judgment. Flowing from this, human is the epicenter of governance itself requires human efforts (involving leaders and followers), through interaction, authority, power, managing resources, and focusing on the welfare of the polity, the leader and the led can ascertain good governance and vice versa. By implication, leadership and followership are answerable at any level for the way their organizations do things.

### **CONCEPT OF FOLLOWERSHIP**

Since this leadership is carrying the ruled along peacefully in organizations, being family, church, mosque, school, local government, state or federal government. Followership on the one hand, according to Robert Kelley, a prominent social scientist in followership studies begins the construction of his definition by saying that followers are the “people who act with intelligence, independence, courage and a strong sense of ethic” (Kelley 1992). Therefore, followership despite lack of research and emphasis on followership when compared to leadership can be conceived as the individual desire to server others and support team in its task to complete a mission. Followers seek to perform their task well, maintain cooperative working leaderships, provides constructive disagreement, share leadership functions and support leadership development. Their role is to help the leaders become effective while remaining true to their values and essential needs (Walead 2001). No one can lead without followers. This line of thinking strongly suggests that there can be no leader without a follower. This is the case of corporate existences of Nigeria.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The paper adopted documentary method of data collection from Newspapers, journals, text books and internet materials, etc. Documentary approach was the tool of analysis used to interpret, describe and understand the challenges of leadership and followership in governance in Nigeria. The choice of document analysis was pertinent because the paper was primarily concerned with identifying

and selecting relevant documentaries, literature, magazines and evaluating evidence in academic research. Duffy (2000) stated that the document analysis approach is dynamic in nature because it can be used as the central or exclusive method of research. Johnson (1984) further explained that document analysis is useful in research that focuses on organization policy or evaluating government reports. Hakim (2000) and Elton (2002) viewed document analysis as examining information that came into existence during a particular period of study.

## **DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS: CHALLENGES OF LEADERSHIP AND FOLLOWERSHIP IN NIGERIAN GOVERNANCE PROCESS: AN ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF PRECIPITATING FACTORS**

### **Corruption**

Corruption has pervaded every sphere of human activity such that in every endeavor economic, social, political, etc. Corruptions the determining factors in the relationship between the people involved. Indeed, in Nigeria, hardly an uncorrupt person will be anything in the scheme of things in running the government. If we were not corrupt you would be marginalized if not got rid of. And if you are corrupt, you must be prepared to follow anything without personal initiative or ideas of an alternative policy (Yusif 2008). In terms of corruption in leadership of the country has many faults to their credit. Adisa (2003), affirmed that government at the central level is the vessel that is leaking from the top and Aso-rock and other government Parastatal and departments are the main fountain where corruption takes its source.

Undoubtedly, corruption has a negative impact on all indicators of economic development. Corruption, especially political corruption breeds lack of productivity, lack of initiative and creativity to put sound politics, which could generate further development. Thus, the rate of economic growth, domestics and foreign investment, employment and fair income distribution all suffered and retarded as a result of corruption (see Oyetunbi & Akinrinde, 2021). In fact, the problems of corruption have increasing pushed Nigeria's society and economy to the bricks of disaster, as the current lack of progress and the political crisis between the legislature and the executive shows. This political crisis is a great revelation of people in the leadership of Nigeria, overwhelmed by corruption of office can be extent including the generation of tribal regional and religious support to protect their loot (Yusif 2008).

## **Community Conflict, Religious and Ethnic Differences**

Another area of contradiction includes community conflict, religious and ethnic differences. Conflicts arise from the pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individual and / or groups in defined social and physical environment. change in the social environment, such as contestable access to new political positions, or perception as well as new resource arising from development in the physical environment, are fertile grounds for conflicts involving individuals and groups who are interested in using these new resources to achieve their goals. Typical example included the Jukun/ TIV conflict – “the conflict being analyzed here was the prolonged dispute that the Jukun and TIV communities in Taraba state had over land, traditional rulership political authority and differences and fears of domination and marginalization and Ife/Modakeke conflicts – the Ife –Modakeke crisis is one of the oldest intra ethnic conflict in Nigeria. The inability of the successive regimes in Nigeria to find a long – lasting solution to the problem mirrors the extent of governance problems in country.

## **Attitudinal Deficiency**

Osiris (2010) opines that it is needless to recycle the litany of woes that confront masses daily, because they are well-known. In consonance, Fabiyi (2012) concurred that, Nigerian leadership is inept not because of inability to attract effective talents, motivates its people and translate the innate potential of the nation to greatness. In other to buttress the lapses on the part of the followers, he further affirmed that; Nigerian followership is loud and ineffective, because all that it does is talk loud, boisterous, garrulous, we blame everything under the sun for our problems – from colonial experiences that ended 50 years ago, to the poverty of leadership, we talk as if these we denounce at every turn were dropped on us from outer space on us, forgetting that we can vote them in ourselves. With our hands we seem to forget also that national growth has roles not just for those who lead but for those follow as well. This is because, evidence have shown that social vices rock the Nigerian society. There are vices such as examination malpractices, certificate racketeering, smuggling, ritual, killing looting, arson problem of political upheavals, alcoholism, rape, disease and fall in the standard of education and living standard. There is problem of intra and inter-ethnic groups conflicts; election, rigging, problem of population counts, academics disturbances due to incessant strikes, fuel shortage, social insecurity fraud in work places and act of indiscipline

among people in general and specifically among the law enforcement agents (Adeyemi & Adesina 2007). Conversely, ask a Nigerian where the worst Nigerians are and they will tell you is in politics. Ask them where the best Nigerian are, and they will tell you they are in private sector. Suffice to say, it is terrible, awful and even outrageous as much damage had been done to the good name of the country. We must also point out, based on the conflicts that there is something fundamentally wrong with our value system. Nigerian is a classic example of “representation without taxation”, “reap without planting” and sharing without contributing”. If these are reversed and representation depends on taxation, reaping depends on what was planted and sharing depends on contribution, most of these disputes will abate (CSMN 2007).

### **Values of Orientation in Governance**

Huitt (2004), in Adetoro and Omiyefa (2012) stated that values refer to criteria for determining levels of goodness, worth or beauty. Bamisaiye (1989) in Adetoro and Omiyefa (2012) argues that values are the worth, merit or esteem which we ascribe to a person, an object or idea. In another development value are choices people make and act upon. They represent an alternative from which choices is freely made after thoughtful consideration of consequences of each alternatives (Raths, Mharim and Simon 1966; Banks and Clegg 1977; Omiyefa 2009).

On the other hand, value scholars have, describe value orientation as the degree to which our lifestyle choices depend upon societal influences, primary/ secondary group influence and or our own particular individuated pursuits of self-interest. Ligo (2009), affirmed that value orientation are complex but definite patterned (ranks/ordered) principles resulting from transactional interplay of three the analytically distinguishable elements of the evaluative process; the cognitive, the affective and the directive elements which gives orders and direction to the overflowing stream of human acts and thoughts as they relate to the solution of “ common human problems” this definition introduces three key ideas , the principles that gives order to human acts, second , the inseparable elements of the evaluative process; the notion of “common human” problem.

In the light of this, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) theorize that human beings are oriented to finding answer to the following human problem.

- i. What is the character of innate human nature?
- ii. What is the relationship of human beings to nature (super nature)?

iii. What is the temporal focus of human activity?

iv. What is modality of the relationship of human beings to another?

From these questions, it is apparent that value reorientation has been a doctrine of necessity for any society to adjust to the social change and disposition of its inhabitants. In line with this, the willy-nilly that characterized the Nigerian leadership and followership from time immemorial has been addressed by successive governments, viz:

i. Ethical Re-orientation of President Shehu Shagari

ii. The war against indiscipline (WAI) of general Muhammed Buhari, in addressing a topic of this magnitude and national appeal, and the followers sometimes get impatient and wish that we could take some actions that would immediately restore orderliness and respectfulness. But there is no easy way of our predicament and behavioral changes.

iii. Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Reconstruction (MAMSER) of General Ibrahim Babangida, now replaced by National Orientation Agency (NOA)

iv. War against indiscipline and Corruption (WAI-C) of General Sani Abacha

v. Nigeria image project and the Heart of African by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. The campaigns, though aimed at ensuring and enduring dawn in our collective quest to entrench a culture of moral rearmament and ingrain positive values in Nigerians, made little progress to rid the citizens of their negative attitude both at home and abroad

vi. Re-branding Nigeria campaign, with the slogan, “where all well-meaning Nigerians, that home or in the Diaspora, agreed that this rebranding promises to be a genuine attempt and a renewed commitment for the regeneration of a new Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis, it is crystal clear that Nigeria is a multi-ethnic society with deep cultural/political/linguistic divisions. Many years in the past around the time of independence, most of these differences were not so pronounced. Today, after a war, several coups, June 12 and the northern (Hausa-Fulani) domination of politics, many fundamental socio-economic, political and security issues have become order of the day. Deducing from the framework of analysis one of the major problems of Nigeria today as it relates to National question is the leadership structure of the country of which the Northern region dominates the political scene (presidency) with 67%, Yoruba 20%,

south-south 1.7% and south east 1.6% since 1960 till date reveals politics and politicking exclusion of the South Eastern region which invariably gave birth to Biafra resurgence and if not properly handled, Nigeria might invariably experience another civil war, and if it happens that will definitely be the end of Nigeria as a country because many sovereign nations is bound to emerge.

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### **Resume**

The paper examined the challenges of leadership and followership in governance and how poor leadership has undermined democratic and sustainable development in Nigeria. Specifically, it explored reasons why one of the world most endowed nations in human capacity continues to be bequeathed mis-governance. Using documentary approach, we argued that the challenges for poor leadership and followership in Nigeria's contemporary political system are tied to corruption and self-aggrandizement of leaders and followers with unquenchable self-centeredness coupled with a crop of leaders without vision towards the betterment of the country. We concluded however that Nigerians should focus on electing leaders with proven track records of selfless service, achievement towards geared sustainability and developmental stride for efficiency, effectiveness and higher productivity. If this was done in line with the intent to salvage the crumbling political system, there would be renewed value orientation that is required to make Nigerians more politically responsible to the country.

**Keywords:** Governance, Leadership, Followership, Development, Nigeria.

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\* Овај рад је примљен 25. јула 2021. године, а прихваћен за штампу на састанку Редакције 9. августа 2021. године.