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DEMOCRACY, GOOD GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: AN INTERROGATION OF THE CHALLENGES OF INSTITUTIONAL FAILURE AND PROSPECT

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ABSTRACT

This paper addressed four objectives relying solely on documented evidence in literature. The study unraveled pertinent issues germane to the challenges and prospect of democracy, good governance and sustainable development in Africa. The issues raised and reviewed points to the fact that democracy in Africa is seemingly alien and thus faced with consolidation crises especially in the hands of the political elites who are antagonistic to popular participation. Central to the challenges of democracy and good governance in Africa is the issue of lack of institution building, constitution maneuver with regards to term limits, corruption and mismanagement of national resources, ethnic fragmentation and lack of free, fair and credible elections. Poor economic growth and inadequate political education of the citizens also contribute to failure in the democratic transitions. Based on this findings the paper calls for an urgent change situation that requires a "bend or break" reality from all Africans both leaders and the led. This is a call for African renaissance. Accomplishing this will entail that all and sundry must concertedly and altruistically, press for the realizations of the imperatives of democracy and good governance and of course the prudent management of national through constitutionalism, institution building and human development. Importantly, more public education would increase political understanding and with it, the possibility to play an active role in a democratic system.

Keywords: Democracy, Good Governance, Sustainable Development, Africa, Institution, Challenges, Prospects.

Introduction

Democracy no doubt is the world's current new bride. To the extent that everyone - Politicians, Journalists, statesmen and even laymen – call themselves democrats while those who wish to defend a regime no matter its nature call it democracy (Williams, 1995), one could aptly say the world is in the age of democracy. The global acceptance of "liberal democracy" as a major vehicle in attaining peaceful co-existence in a multi-faceted society, promotion of economic development, individual liberty, human rights restoration, rule of law and freedom of healthy competition in global socio-political activities, necessitated the quest for democratic consolidation especially in society like ours that have experienced dictatorship over the years (Nwafor, 2009).

In the 48 states of Sub-Saharan Africa, democracies, or at least popular aspirations for and appreciation of the democratic form of government, are more prevalent than at any time since

decolonization. However, many African regimes that are labeled as democracies are hollow and ambiguous, and many others stake a claim to democratic status that is manifestly false. Only two African states have been continuously democratic since independence, Mauritius and Botswana. Both have small populations (around two million or under), and both have achieved a pace of economic development that has eluded most other countries in the region. The most important liberal democracy in Africa is South Africa, which has so far sustained high levels of freedom despite political turbulence, economic hardship, and dominance by a single party. By contrast, Africa's other big states are all struggling politically. Of the principal regions of the world, the Middle East (including North Africa) is the one least hospitable to democracy at present. At most, only two of the 19 states in this broad region— Israel and Turkey—are democratic (and in Turkey, the military still exercises a veto on many important issues). None of the sixteen Arab states is a democracy, although several (Lebanon, Jordan, and Morocco) have at least some degree of electoral competition and societal pluralism. Bahrain is gradually exploring a possible democratic opening. The only liberal democracy in the region is the only Western-oriented state, Israel, and there freedom has diminished in recent years under the stress of terrorism (Huntington, 1991).

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to explore the relationships between Democracy, Good Governance and attainment of Sustainable Development in Africa: an Overview of the Challenges and Prospects. Sequel to the above, the following specifics shall be pursued:

1. To briefly address conceptual issues and characterization of democracy;
2. To identify the main impediments to democracy and good governance in Africa;
3. To expose the rise of the constitutional coup as threats to democracy in Africa; and
4. To assess elections as a democratizing tool in Africa vis-a-vis enhanced participation as a tool for legitimization.

Theoretical Framework

The Marxist theory of post-colonial state forms the bases of this paper. The use of this theory is justified due to its relative proficiency in the study, analysis and understanding of post colonial political economy. This theory was mainly propounded by Karl Marx; who posited the following attributes of the neo-colonial state:

i) That class domination remains the central tendency of a post colonial state;
ii) That primitive accumulation is perpetrated by local bourgeoisies using state power and with the collaboration of some external forces in the metropole; and
iii) That post-colonial states are mainly renter states parcelled out to individuals that makes use of state power and its apparatuses for self aggrandizement.

The core assumption of this theory is that post colonial states are reflections of the colonial external forces that ab initio dominated it. The theory of post colonial states perceives the state as both the source of economic power and an instrument of accumulation of economic power as the state is the major source of access to wealth, prestige and power. This was the central orientation propagated by colonialism and which was at the same time bequeathed to the new crop of leaders that took over the control of state apparatus at inception of independence in the various African countries. In the light of the above, African countries epitomise a case illustration of a post colonial state and is marked by these attributes and trappings highlighted above. The struggle for political power represents the highest level of manifestation of

political party activities within which opposition politics is consequential. In this interplay, there is tendentious chaotic relationship as a result of deep rooted lack of capacity by the post colonial states to moderate the struggles which are pronounced between and among the various political parties and the government in power.

The outcome of the above is zeroed down to winner takes all, which has become a recurring decimal of politics in Africa and contributing immensely to the challenges confronting democracy and good governance in Africa. In this scenario, effective popular participation in politics is by all means neutralised using various means possible as the party in power seeks to maintain its rigid hold on state power for the political and economic benefits of its members. This theory therefore, holistically undergirds and explains the ramifications of socio-economic cum political relations in post colonial states particularly in Africa within which the study is domesticated.

Research Methodology

The use of secondary source of data is the main method of data collection adopted in this research work. This method is adopted due to its intrinsic values. The secondary sources used in this study include materials like Newspapers, magazines, textbooks, internet or online publications, journals, government publications, official documents etc. which enabled the writer gain an insight into the . Content analysis as a method of investigation is adopted in this study. This involves reading meaning into materials that are collected for the purpose of achieving reliable and verifiable conclusion.

Conceptual Issues and Characterization of Democracy and Good Governance

Democracy is not a single approach but rather a commitment to certain institutions such as the rule of law, civil society and political accountability through free and fair elections by an electorate based on universal suffrage. It also includes (to a varying degree) freedom of speech, the development of a civic culture and the acceptance of a social contract. For democracy to emerge there must first be liberalization of the state, for example, the release of political prisoners, followed by a transitional period that sets the groundwork for a democratic constitution. Finally, there is a consolidation period that is characterized by regular elections and the development of civic culture and society. However, before looking at these aspects of the debate, it is important to understand democracy and its basis as well as other allied concepts.

Democracy is always more difficult to define precisely because it means different things to different people Democracy is simply a system of government in which the principal positions of political power are filled through regular, free, and fair elections. Governance on the other hand is the exercise of power in the management of a country‘s resources. It is —the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country‘s economic and social development (Olowu, 2002). Governance draws attention to the public space or realm and its management. Although the notion of democratic governance evokes a clear and unambiguous meaning, in analytical terms, governance and democracy are distinct terms. However, it is widely accepted that democratic governance, which is largely characterized by high valued principles such as, Rule of Law, accountability, participation, transparency, and human and civil rights is in tandem with good governance. It is generally believed that democratic governance is a fundamental factor to effectively advance sustainable development.

The above notwithstanding, the development crisis in Africa has been described as a crisis of governance. It also follows that while the reasons for South Asia's colossal human development challenges are rooted in poor governance, the period of robust and rapid economic development growth in East Asia (Asian Tigers) is attributed to good governance. Governance has been defined as —the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social development (Olowu, 2002). In the light of the above, this paper raises a number of concerns; which below appears and is addressed as a sub heading.

What are the Main Impediments to Democracy and Good Governance in Africa?

Democracy in Africa has been shaped by the colonial powers that ran Africa until the period of decolonization that began in the 1960's. Thereafter Africa has attempted to follow the European model of democratic governance. However, whilst African democracy has shown some improvement, it is still having legitimacy problems as African states are characterized by corruption and autocracy. In this section this paper will succinctly highlight the impediments to the furthering of democracy and good governance in Africa and what can be done to increase the role of democracy in African States. There will be a focus on the role played by colonialism and the ethnic divides that exist in Africa. We will then examine how corruption and the economic problems of African States are restraining democratic legitimacy and the effect these problems have on human rights. Lastly, we will concentrate on the role that other state and non-state actors have on democracy in Africa.

1. ***The Role Played by Colonialism and Ethnic fragmentation***

It needs be recalled that at the Berlin Conference, European powers carved up the map of Africa without regard for the integrity of existing cultural groups and state systems. As a consequence, some large ethnic groups were split up, while others with little in common or a history of warfare and enmity were forced to be part of a single new state. With it, the colonial powers also created a class system based on race, laying a foundation for even more social tensions. These ethnic divisions can be a huge challenge to political stability because the clashes of diverse cultural traditions foster political tensions between groups in Africa, threatening the democratic system. Problems created by such fragmented societies may even result in civil wars like in Somalia, creating social and political chaos and making democratic governance almost impossible. Ethnicity was furthermore the major characteristic by which the various emerging political parties could differentiate themselves, after the discrediting of socialism left no chance of ideological contrast. Competitive political parties in open elections mobilized ethnic, religious and racial solidarities intensifying disintegrative pressures on fragile states. Quite often ethnic groups hold power at the expense of other ethnic tribes, neglecting the democratic principle of participation. This has led to dramatic cases of increased ethnic hatred directly linked to multiparty elections. Burundi is a telling example. The country has a history of open ethnic conflict and had been dominated since independence by the Tutsi minority. Multiparty democratic elections inevitably handed power to a Hutu party. Tutsi officers who controlled the army did not accept the defeat. They staged a military coup that led to the massacre of the elected President, many cabinet officers and thousands of civilians, leaving the country on the verge of genocidal conflict. However, in some countries, greater decentralization or a fairer distribution of power helped in dealing with ethnic rivalries. As a matter of fact, it would be a mistake to conclude that the mere presence of deep ethnic divisions doomed Africa to democratic failure.

2. *Legitimacy Deficit / Weak States*

The colonial powers imposed a political system on the African states, which is directly copied from the Western model of democracy but alien to African people. The lack of articulation between modern democratic systems and ancient cultural traditions may help to explain the failure to embrace democracy. Cultural traditions of ethnic or tribal groups driven by patronage were completely ignored. Pre-colonial Africa existed with a political system where each leader ruled his 'nation' through the use of well established patron – client relationships, an informal system for the conveyance of influence to and from the ruling elite. Each faction had representatives at government level, conveying the wishes of their community or sub-group of the tribe. To some extent this system continues to operate, creating weak states with a lack of legitimacy for the central governments. The system of patronage is above all based on inequity and a patron's arbitrary control of the distribution of political resources. It is at odds with the democratic principles of universal rights and political competition in the public sphere.

Another impediment to democracy is the fact that political beliefs and values may be seen as anti-democratic in Africa, democracy being a very western concept. It has been argued that most nationalist leaders found democratic elections were simply a condition for independence and continuing Western support. So after the first wave of independence; a rapid decay from democracy into single party dominance, mirroring the strong leadership of the colonial period and the traditional African patriarchal society emerged. The democratic arrangements quickly devised by the colonial powers, soon appeared superfluous to the new leaders, and democracy was destroyed from above in many countries like Ghana, Uganda or Nigeria. Without democracy being a valuable concept for the majority of the African people, democratic governments cannot be granted legitimacy. Not only that the idea of Western democracy was unfamiliar to African states but above all, the example set by European powers during the period of colonial rule was not that of democracy. The colonial empires were authoritarian regimes, kept in power through the use of violence and repression. Intolerant and antidemocratic behaviour of post independence politics can be, in part, traced back to the repression and lack of democratic preparation during final years of colonial rule. Similarly, in the countries where independence was the result of armed struggle, violence was perceived as a legitimate method of political action, which was unfavourable to the establishment of a moderate democracy (Costantinos, Akande, Shubane, and Ghai, 1997).

Consequently the values as well as the system of governance linked to democracy were alien to African people, giving little legitimacy to the "democratic" state imposed. Representatives of the government have little authority (Garret, 2014), because there is little experience and trust in the democratic process and the representation of ethnic interests. This has created a crisis of legitimacy within government. There is a lack of trust and no feeling of societal security, especially in areas populated by smaller minorities. The breakup of effective patron – client relationships has had the effect of reducing the old source of stability. In place of the older system we see elected but illegitimate governments. Constitutionalism and democratic processes have not been a priority in Africa. There are many examples of liberal constitutions that are simply not adhered to. We find that many nations will adopt a carrot and stick approach to the legislature and the judiciary.

In Zimbabwe at a time the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was attacked when he proclaimed that an executive action was unconstitutional. These clashes reduce the legitimacy of fragile government. Recently, the UN has focused on elections rather than the democratic process as a whole. Deeper analysis shows that even for the international community the manner of the election is obviously more important (because easier to supervise), although accountability, good governance, rule of law and separation of powers is what democracy is really about. The illegitimacy and the weakness of African states do not only stem from the lack of democratic culture and the fact that the system imposed was alien to African population but also from their incapacity to protect their citizens. The democratic relationship between a state and its society is usually based on a social contract: obedience of society in exchange for protection (social as well as physical) from the state. In Africa, however, most do not feel loyalty to often inefficient and weak governments, which provide a minimum level of security and a low standard of living. The model of the modern state which was imposed on the African continent lacks the necessary legitimacy for democratic progress, as for the reasons reviewed.

3. Lack of Economic Development and Systemic Corruption

The future political development of a country depends on the trust of the population in an honest and efficient government and in the economic success of their state. Two obstacles to obtaining the trust of the citizenry and security for democracy are inefficient economic performance and corruption. Severe economic problems play a central part in political instability, restraining the transition towards democracy and the progress of democratic structures. In South Africa only around 47 % of the population considers democracy to be the best form of government, while 43 % favour strong, non-elected leader (Kenny, 2011), suggesting the absence of a critical mass of democrats. Currently, social problems such as refugee migration, debt, poverty, illiteracy, crime, unemployment, diseases, inflation and missing infrastructure seem to be more pressing than the transformation to democracy. Where resources are scarce, the priority of political contestation is to secure economic consumption, not democratic structures. According to Bratton (1998), "ordinary Africans do not separate political democracy from economic democracy or for that matter from economic well-being". In their eyes democratic reforms must be accompanied by growth resulting in employment and redistribution. The example of Botswana, however, shows that an upturn in economic activity is not necessarily the outcome of an increase in employment. While performing an acceptable GDP real growth rate of 6% and relative moderate inflation of 8.6%, it nevertheless resulted in a tremendous unemployment rate of 40%. Also even South Africa, which shifted towards democracy relatively easily, because of its `substantial economy´, remains with 50% (Barret, 2018), of its population below poverty line.

Another problem linked to the lack of economic development is illiteracy. 76% of the South Africans cannot afford to learn how to read and write. Illiteracy is responsible for the dislocation, lack of participation and understanding that the African people have for politics and democracy. More public education would increase political understanding and with it, the possibility to play an active role in a democratic system. In countries like Somalia even 75% of the populations were illiterate and the means of political communication were rare, only 143,000 television sets and 494,000 radios for 7,488,800 people (Mendoza, 2018). These realities represent practical hurdles for the democratization process because well-informed, educated people are better able to face problems that emerge from democracy. It may be true

that there is a need for economic development before there can be sustainable democracy, as resources and material requirements will remain a priority over civil liberties. Yet the problem is that economic reforms produce new fundamental bias for democracy like deepening social inequalities. Many authors view democracy and liberal economic reform as incompatible because neoliberalism "bring about severe violations of political equality and hence of the democratic process" (Darlington, 2001) and therefore "require non-democratic forms of repression to sustain itself" (Barret, 2018).

Consequently, severe economic problems restrain Africa's present capacity to adopt democratic institutions. The issue of corruption also prevents Africa from developing democratic structures. Many African governments can be described as extractive, withdrawing social wealth from the population and exploiting the country's social and mineral endowment for the benefit of the elite and foreign corporations. The former Zaire (now Congo DRC) with its `kleptocratic´ regime under late President Mobutu Sese Seko is a typical example. Mobutu came to power in 1965, he and his bureaucracy seized property, collected bribes from entrepreneurs to be able to import goods, charged enormous official and unofficial taxes while local officials even stole the livestock of peasants (Johnson, 1997). The Mobutu government also mobilized and controlled national resources with personal political rather than national intentions. For instance, the revenues of the state mining company were used to buy opposition figures instead of being spent on community goods like transportation, communication, education or health care. Mobutu himself was able to accumulate a fortune of $5 - $8 billion without being charged. Authorities show extraordinary agility in order to stay in power, unwilling to lose privileges through more democratic structures. These patron-client relationships and nepotism serve a small group of family members, high functionaries, political advisers and military officers but not the majority of the population. The widespread nature of corruption constitutes therefore a real impediment to African democracy. Instead of developing the necessary level of trust towards its governors to establish real democratic structures, the African people feel frustrated and betrayed by its authorities and their arrangements of power (Costantinos, 1994).

The Rise of the Constitutional Coup (*Elimination of Term Limit*) as Threats to Democracy in Africa

Indubitably, since the early 1990s, there have been significant transformations in political systems in many African countries. These institutional changes have resulted in, for example, the demise of the racially based apartheid system in the Republic of South Africa and the introduction of a nonracial democracy. Many civilian and military dictatorships have fallen, paving the way for the establishment of rule-of-law-based governance systems characterized by constitutionalism and constitutional government, including reforms such as term limits. Nevertheless, many of these countries still struggle to deepen and institutionalize democracy and deal effectively and fully with government impunity, particularly that which is associated with the abuse of executive power and the violation of human rights (Mukum Mbaku, 2019). Notably, while presidents in some countries, such as Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Ghana, have abided by their countries' two-term limit, others have used legislatures subservient to the president to change their constitutions to allow them to stay in power beyond those two terms, and, in some cases, indefinitely. In addition, these and other recent institutional changes have created conditions that make it very difficult for the opposition to participate competitively in elections.

Presidents that have changed their countries' constitutions to eliminate the two-term limit include Presidents Gnassingbé (Togo), Museveni (Uganda), Déby (Chad), Biya (Cameroon), Kagame (Rwanda), the late Nkurunziza (Burundi), and el-Sisi (Egypt), just to name a few. Changing the constitution to eliminate term and/or age limits for presidents and allow the incumbent president to unconstitutionally extend his mandate has been referred to as a constitutional coup. It is important to note that relatively weak institutions and the absence of a democratic culture have facilitated the ability of incumbents to manipulate constitutions in the countries named above. The hope is that, as the level of democratic development improves in these countries; such constitutional coups will become a rarity (Mukum Mbaku, 2019). Free and frequent elections as a constraint to governmental tyranny are a necessary but not sufficient condition to guarantee and guard liberty.

At this juncture it is important to note that, term limits "can facilitate democratization in Africa" and "help push semi-authoritarian countries toward democracy by handicapping incumbents and increasing the chances of democratic turnover from one party to another." For example, in interviews with high-level Kenyan officials, Dr. Alexander H. Noyes, a political scientist at the Rand Corporation, concluded that Mwai Kibaki's "intention to step down after his second term was up in 2013 made him more inclined to agree to changes that constrained executive powers—including a new constitution in 2010—than if he was running for reelection" (Noyes, 2015).

According to the African Center for Strategic Studies (2020), since 2015, leaders of 13 African countries have "evaded or overseen the further weakening of term limit restrictions that had been in place." For example, Alassane Ouattara, who has been president of Côte d'Ivoire since 2011 and who was seemingly barred from standing for the presidency in the last election cycle by the constitution's two-term limit, argued in August 2020 that his first two mandates do not count because the limits were created by the constitution that was adopted in 2016, which effectively reset the clock. Although he initially declined to run again, the untimely death of his party's chosen candidate created a vacuum in which he decided to stand again.

These constitutional coups weaken the role of elections as a democratizing tool. Worse, in some countries (Cameroon or The Gambia, for instance), this circumvention of term limits has contributed significantly to the rise of violent and destructive mobilization by marginalized ethno-cultural groups.

Elections as a Democratizing Tool in Africa vis-a-vis Enhanced Participation as a Tool for legitimization

In Africa, elections perform at least three important democratizing functions: They

(1) Help the continent build and sustain effective democratic institutions;
(2) Provide the people with an effective legal tool to constrain and guard the government and minimize impunity; and
(3) Enhance the ability of the people to change their government and bring into public service new and more energetic and effective political leaders.

Nevertheless, in order for elections to perform these three important functions and do so effectively, these elections must (i) be regular, not infrequent; and (ii) fair, free, competitive, inclusive, transparent, and credible.

At the same time, free and frequent elections as a constraint to governmental tyranny are a necessary but not sufficient condition to guarantee and guard liberty. In fact, while elections can help African countries consolidate, deepen, and entrench democracy, they can also pave the way for sustained majoritarian power to the detriment of the minority, as we have seen in countries like Cameroon. It is important to note that, although elections are critical to the transition of a country from authoritarianism to constitutional democracy, they can also serve as a tool for the survival of authoritarian governments. For example, authoritarian regimes in countries, such as Cameroon, the Republic of the Congo, and Equatorial Guinea have used elections to legitimize their leaders and remain in power indefinitely.

In each country in the world, groups or factions whose interests may not be in line with those of the country as a whole certainly exist. Indeed, in Africa, one of the most important constraints to democratic consolidation is the violent struggle by various factions, many of which are actually ethno-cultural groups, to capture, through elections or other means, the apparatus of government. To combat the abuse of the rights of minorities by majorities—that is, to minimize majoritarian tyranny—a country can create a governmental system in which the people are sovereign but government power and the exercise of it is limited by the constitution, which includes provisions to explicitly protect individual rights, to instill separation of powers through checks and balances, and to enshrine popular sovereignty through elections. However, for such a constitutional democracy to survive and flourish, it must have a "virtuous," robust, and politically active public, as well as political elites dedicated to maintaining the country's constitutional institutions (Dahl, 1994).

Suffice to say at this juncture that in Africa as elsewhere, elections help citizens build effective democratic institutions and provide a tool for guarding the government through regularly and peacefully replacing recalcitrant and poorly performing political elites.
However, if African countries are to use elections to consolidate and entrench democracy, they must make certain that incumbent leaders are not able to;

(i) change national constitutions to eliminate term and age limits for presidents (as noted above) and other protections that guard the president against various forms of opportunism (as currently taking place in Zambia);
(ii) mandate registration fees for candidates seeking to stand for political office, including the presidency, that are beyond the reach of many citizens;
(iii) interfere with freedom of the press in ways that make it very difficult for the press to check on the government, provide citizens information about elections, and serve as a platform for the opposition to bring their message to voters; and
(iv) use security forces to intimidate and strangle the opposition.

Efforts must be made to ensure that all of a country's population groups, including especially those which historically have been marginalized (e.g., minority religious and ethnic groups), are provided the wherewithal to participate fully and effectively in elections. In other words, African countries need to make certain that elections are adjudged credible, not just by external observers but also by each country's citizens.

One concrete way to enhance electoral participation is to provide electors information about all the issues that must be decided by the election. In most African countries where most citizens are not fluent in their countries' national language (e.g., French or English); the

government should provide election-related information to citizens in a language that they can understand. For example, studies have determined that "inclusive language recognition is linked to higher turnout" for South Africa's various subcultures during elections. By expressly recognizing the language of each of its various ethno-cultural groups and providing them election information in their own language, the South African government significantly increased the participation of these groups in elections and, as a result, in governance generally.

The institutional environment, one in which liberties and political rights are guaranteed and protected in which elections are held is also critical for a successful democracy. Citizens' civil liberties and political rights must be guaranteed and protected. For example, citizens must be able to freely and peacefully protest or support government policies or decisions, including those related to elections. In addition, where there is adequate protection for free speech and a free press, as well as freedom for the opposition to campaign unimpeded, citizens can form political organizations to compete for positions in government. Such political competition can contribute significantly to improving the quality of elections and more effectively entrench constitutional democracy.

Interrogating the Prospects of Democracy, good Governance and Sustainable Development in Africa

All said and done, the point of emphasis of this paper is that democracy should drive good governance that will ensure sustainable development in Africa. Consequently, governments in a democracy should be 'stewards' of their national resources, maintaining and improving them for the benefit of their populations. Stewardship encompasses the task of defining the vision and direction of the citizens' welfare, exerting influence through regulation and advocacy, and collecting and using information (WHO, 2000). No wonder, the founding fathers of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, in their clairvoyance, mandated the government in Section 16 (1) to:

a) Harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and an efficient, dynamic and self-reliant economy; and
b) Control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity.

However, there is a discernible wide expectation gap in the way governments have managed their nation's resources over time, the intensive, extensive and sustainable propaganda of democratic dividends notwithstanding. Nigerians and Africans in general want to see the dividends of democracy, for all and sundry, through improved living conditions commensurate to the volume, value and varieties of national resources. This is the citizens' constitutional right. Everything about Africa's development has been left for too long in the 'pipeline'. Effectual results from prudent management of resources are expected from African governments to justify their mandates. Koonz, O'Donnel and Weihrich (1980) rightly believe that no one would want a person in a managerial position who appeared to do everything right as a manager (leader), but who could not turn in a good record for whatever the area of responsibility they held. This essentially relates effectiveness to results obtained or impact made to the extent the management of the people's resources positively affect the citizens'

lives. Rhetoric, no matter how sound and loud, would not amount to effectiveness of resources management.

The prudent use of the enormous resources accruing to the African continent can turn Africa into a buoyant economic haven in the shortest possible time. However, only responsible leadership can be trusted with prudent use of resources. These are servant leaders who put the interest of the led uppermost in their order of priority and leave footprints in the sands of time, and in the hearts of their followers through acts of self-denial. The servant leader does not consider his "personal" interest above the group interest. ... The servant leader always plays by the rules, when they are formulated and agreed. He does not consider himself above the law. To the servant leader, the interest of his group is paramount. ... The servant leader does not "force" himself on the group, or attain leadership through untoward methods and strategies (Ayegbusi, 2008).

Those in governance have for too long regarded and treated their country's resources as 'national cake' which is often shared among a privileged few. This goes on because the machinery to compel accountability has been weakened by the same leadership (Achua, 2002). There is urgent need for exceptional concerted efforts to develop inclusive, transparent, and effective institutions of democratic governance in African countries. This entails rebuilding basic mechanisms of democratic governance to make elected officials accountable to their constituents through free and fair elections, strong government institutions, and well-organized, informed citizens who demand performance.

Conscious efforts must be made to improve the rule of law by strengthening the capacity and transparency of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary. The civil society has to be strengthened by promoting existing watchdog groups for more transparency, accountability, and pluralism in Africa's fiscal, electoral, conflict management, political, and human rights affairs. It is pertinent, therefore, that African governments allow Freedom of Information to flourish. Given the demonstration of the lack of political will-power to effect a change by the ruling class, the civil society, and specifically the organized working class in the various African states, must continue to press for it.

Ensuring the prudent management of resources is a duty, the accomplishment of which is the responsibility of all citizens. This is, no doubt, a Herculean task which invariably entails re-ordering of priorities, rechanneling of ideals, and revitalizing the governance machinery towards breeding a sound, habitable, and tolerable society for everyone to proudly live in. This is critical because Africa as a continent will be unable to achieve its mandate in terms of sustainable development if greed and avarice continue to deprive it of authentic vision and imagination. In the light of the above, there is an urgent need for an African renaissance to effect robust fiscal responsibility, pragmatic public accountability, and good public governance geared towards democratic consolidation and sustainable development in Africa.

Recommendations

To deal effectively with the challenges of democracy, good governance and sustainable development in Africa, there is need for institution building and human capacity development. This can be actualized through the following measures:

a) Making exceptional concerted efforts to develop inclusive, transparent, and effective institutions of democratic governance that guarantee the election of responsible leaderships through free and fair elections.

b) Emphasis should be placed on constitutionalism. This will require making conscious efforts to improve the rule of law by strengthening the capacity and transparency of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary.

c) Strengthening the civil society by promoting existing watchdog groups for more transparency, accountability, and pluralism in Nigeria's fiscal, electoral, conflict management, political, and human rights affairs.

d) To reactivate the Freedom of Information (FoI) law to protect well-organized and informed groups and individuals who demand performance and accountability from the leadership.

Conclusion

This paper has unraveled a lot with regards to democracy, good governance and sustainable development in Africa. The issues raised call for an urgent change situation that requires a "bend or break" reality from all Africans both leaders and the led. That is, those who anticipate and prepare for the change will bend. However, the change will take its toll and break those who would not be ready or prepared to accept it. A successful change situation will leave leaders and potential leaders with very little option. This will be the African renaissance. Accomplishing this will entail that all and sundry must concertedly and altruistically, press for the realizations of these imperatives of democracy and good governance and of course the prudent management of national resources today, tomorrow and together. By focusing on the opinion and views of African intellectuals, academics, writers, and political activists and observers, this paper provides a unique perspective regarding the dynamics and problems of democratization and good governance in Africa. Importantly, more public education would increase political understanding and with it, the possibility to play an active role in a democratic system.

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