

Analysis of Good Governance as an Earmark of Distinctive Federalism in Nigeria Federation

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Abstract

Purpose: The restructuring of Nigeria towards the path of true federalism is a clarion call for good governance in the federation. It is argued that the enhanced performance of governmental agencies in any federation is a product of good governance, which in turn leads to peace, security, and development in the living standard of the people. The main objective of this paper is to examine good governance as a catalyst of true federalism in Nigeria.

Research methodology: The paper employs a qualitative methodology that heavily relies on secondary sources of data.

Results: In line with the findings, Nigeria's route to true federalism is being hampered by a variety of challenges which include but are not limited to weak leadership, corruption, flawed electoral procedures, an uneven distribution of resources, and a lack of security of lives and properties.

Limitations: The study covers only Nigeria and may not be appropriate to generalize the findings to other countries practicing federalism.

Contributions: The study contributes to knowledge as it examines the impact of good governance as an earmark of distinctive federalism in Nigeria federation, which has not been adequately discussed in numerous works on federalism. It recommended that good governance that encompasses accountability, prudent financial management, and an improved judicial system backed up with adequate security of life and property.

Keywords: *Amalgamation, Constitution, Democratisation, Federalism, Good Governance*

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1. Introduction

Britain in their earlier reign divided different territories in Africa into colonies, protectorates, or dominions, for easy administration (Osadolor, 1998). In this process of scramble, Nigeria fell under British sovereignty. This categorization helped to determine the type of administration efficient in ruling the territories, which include federal systems. Sir Frederick Lord Lugard's amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates led to the emergence of Nigeria, a confederation of numerous independent nations with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Through the influence of Lord Frederick Lugard, the term "amalgamation" became popular in Nigeria in 1914, marking an important turning point in the country's journey toward federalism. Federalism was finally realized in 1954, and the participating regions of the newly created federation were the North, the East, and the West (Epelle & Thom-Otuya, 2014).

Nigeria's amalgamation later brought about cold feet in the pace of development in the federation of Nigeria. Virtually every ethnic group at one point on the other had cried out against marginalization and bad governance (Ekeh, 2000). The tragedy is that Nigeria became the mother of many children, without a particular one to care for her in old age. Good governance is recognized as itemized and

imperative for political communities to thrive and deliver the dividend of democracy to the people. It is essentially using common resources to achieve goals and ends that are of the interest of the large society through the use of open administration which accommodates transparency and accountability to accomplish the set goals of the large society.

Nigeria with the adoption of federalism among others has paid an enormous price in terms of human and material resources for the sake of good governance (Epelle & Dean, 2013). The federation has undertaken a long and complicated process of transition from authoritarian military rule to democratic governance which is an indication of good governance. Good governance is a necessary condition for the development and peaceful coexistence of citizens irrespective of economic status, religion, ethnicity, and political affiliation (Babatope & Oladipopo, 2010). A country cannot be claimed to exist without good governance in place.

There was a fallout of good governance in Nigeria under the long years of khaki boys in power (Omotoso & Abe, 2010). Since the inception of democratic governance in Nigeria, there seems to be not much difference in discharging good governance. Much has been put in place both in human and material resources for the actualization of the goal of good governance. Despite a series of laudable moves, the federation is still struggling with nothing working as expected (Suberu & Center, 2005). Instead of good governance, it is evidence of bad government manifested in corruption, lack of transparency, electoral violence, and decadence of infrastructure among others. This is coupled with a dearth of good leadership. This is a call for a rethink and radical approach.

There has been extensive work on federalism in Nigeria, however impact of good governance has not been adequately discussed. To fill the gap created, the paper analysis impact of good governance as an earmark of distinctive federalism in Nigeria federation with a view to examining the features of good governance, discussing the constraints and impediments of good governance as well as the challenges of democratic governance in achieving lofty goals of federalism in Nigeria federation.

1.1. Aim and Objective of the Paper

The main objective of this paper is to examine good governance as a product of true federalism in Nigeria, while the specific objectives are to:

1. highlights the features of good governance; and
2. examines the challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria's Federalism.

1.2. The Hypothesis of the Study

2. H₀: Accountability is not one of the major futures of good governance in a distinctive federalism
H_i: Accountability is one of the major futures of good governance in a distinctive federalism
3. H₀: Inept political leadership and statesmanship are not vital challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria's federalism
4. H_i: Inept political leadership and statesmanship are vital challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria's federalism.

1.3. Conceptual Analysis

Karl Fredrick sees federalism as "a situation where the federal and regional (state) government are united to their spheres and within those spheres should be independent of others" (Epelle & Thom-Otuya, 2014). It is a situation where the geographical distribution of power to govern is shared or has been achieved in a way that gives several governmental units of the system, some degree of security, a guarantee of continued existence as an organization, and shareholders of power (Eme, 2015). Ugwu (1998), while commenting on the variant of the definitions said,

"federalism can be generally seen as a principle in which there are two or more levels or units of government with federal authority representing the whole and acting on behalf of the whole on certain matters assigned to it by the constitution. Such matters are mainly of common interest exercise legislative and administrative powers and responsibilities on the subjects prescribed for it by the same constitution"

In a pure federal system, the constitution, which must be written and rigid, gives both the federal and the regional (state) governments their existence and authority (Jinadu, 1979 and Dare, 1979) as quoted by Epelle & Thom-Otuya (2014). In order to prevent conflict and overlap between the three levels of government, it is required to emphasize the roles, authority, and jurisdiction of each level. Hence, it is clear that a written constitution plays an essential role in a federal system of government. The existence of judicial institutions to interpret the constitution, which must be an independent body, sound interpretation, equitable resolution of disputes, and conflict among other government arms are important features in addition to the constitution's supremacy. Additionally, each level of government has appropriate relevance generated from independent sources and a division of legislative authority as stipulated by the constitution (Fayemi, 2012). Regrettably, many federal systems in the modern world, including Nigeria, lack some of the indicators of true federalism.

Governance can be defined as the process of electing, monitoring, and replacing governments; the ability of the government to successfully formulate and implement appropriate policies (Onu, Chiamogu, & Chiamogu, 2022), as well as the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that oversee economic and social interactions among them. World Bank, cited in Asaju (2016) sees the whole essence of governance as being directed towards enhancing the legitimacy of the public realm. Under this definition, the crucial issue of legitimacy is introduced as a vital element of effective governance. For a better understanding of the foregoing discussion, the clarification of the difference between governance and government is necessary. Governance may either encompass a public institution, a private one, or even a collaboration between the two institutions, while the government is always comprised of the public institutions in a society. Governance is therefore broad and encompasses more than just government. It includes the administration of government and non-governmental organizations, and public, and private institutions in an efficient and orderly manner. Modern corporations can function without state government, but not without governance (Keping, 2018).

Three operational categories for governance are functional, structural, and normative (Oladoyin 2012). The process of creating, approving, and enforcing rules in a community is referred to as functional. The term “structural” refers to the three institutions of government namely the rule (law), the ruler (the state), and the ruled (society) as a whole. The following according to Nigeria’s Vision 2010 document, cited in Ahule (2013) are listed as characteristics of good governance:

1. Managerial and organizational effectiveness;
2. Accountability;
3. Legitimacy and responsiveness to the public;
4. Transparency in decision-making; and
5. Pluralism in policy options and choices.

According to Odock (2006), good governance can be described as a system of government based on effective leadership, adherence to the law and due process, political leadership's accountability to the electorate, and transparency in governmental activities. Odock (2006) stressed the necessity to institutionalize the rule-governed relationship and create a strategy that will be varied and balanced in enunciating the aforementioned traits. In other words, all of the attributes must be considered in order to ensure excellent governance.

1.4. Essential Features of Good Governance

Good governance is a necessity in any acclaimed government. Hence, it is characterized by a number of issues such as:

1. **Accountability:** The first and most important feature of good governance is the accountability of both the elected and the appointed individual during and after office time. Accountability focuses on the ability to account for the allocation, use, and control of public assets in accordance with legally accepted standards (Ibrahim, Audu, Tyav, & Hamza, 2021). According to Mwesigwa and Oladapo (2021), accountability refers to ensuring that managers in governmental, private, non-governmental, or voluntary sector organizations are held accountable for their actions and responsible for making amends when duties and obligations are not carried out as required. All

action taken during the tenure of office of any government officer must therefore be taken with caution bearing in mind that he/she will one day give an account of his/her stewardship. The most unfortunate aspect is that in Nigeria, most public officers never account for how they run office. This only happens when and if such is in the opposition party or offends the power-to-be. For a regime to be characterized by good governance, elected individuals and organizations charged with a public mandate are freely held accountable for specific actions to the public from which they derive their authority from time to time.

2. **Transparency:** Transparency is carrying out government business in an open, easy-to-understand, and explicit manner such that the rules, policies, and results of government activities are easy to verify by ordinary citizens (Epelle & Thom-Otuya, 2014). The policies and actions of the government should be publicly available and confidently developed its intentions. Any government that operates under secret influence cannot claim delivery of good governance.
3. **Judicial Reforms/Supremacy of the Constitution:** The existing legal system need to be reformed. There are a lot of areas that are in conflict with one another. The law should not be made to favor the elites and serve as a trap for the masses. A society that upholds the rule of law is one that operates on the principles of good governance (UNESCAP, 2009). The constitution (rule of law) ought to be ultimate; it ought to serve as the standard for judging the behavior of individuals and groups regardless of social standing. A pro-governance and pro-development legal and judicial system are created in which the laws are clear and are uniformly applied through an objective and independent judiciary (Okoroafor, 2010). Timely and periodic reforms are key ingredients of good governance.
4. **Free and Fair Process of Election:** Election into public offices is key to the development of any modern state. A nation that is run on the principle of good governance is that society that conducts free and fair elections free from violence, rigging, manipulation of results, and influence of the judicial system to favor the ruling party (Mollah, 2016). Such a society run on the principle of good governance empowers the electoral commission to be independent in discharging its statutory role. Nigeria needs to allow independence of the electoral commission in our electoral process if she wants to get it right.
5. **Zero Tolerance and Combating Corruption:** Corruption is an abuse of office for personal gain. Under good governance where the government will not tolerate corruption of any means or any magnitude (Epelle & Thom-Otuya, 2014). Fighting corruption should be one of the major policies of the administration. Assistance should be provided to fight the abuse of public office for private gain. Anti-corruption measures should be effectively implemented.
6. **Adherence to the Principle of Separation of Power:** Separation of power is encouraged to avoid arbitrary use of power and too powerful mentality. Realistically, there can be no liberty where executive, legislative and judicial powers are united in one person or body of persons because such concentration is bound to result in arbitrary despotism (Uwakwe, 2019). Therefore for the effective and efficient discharge of good governance, the powers of government need to be diffused or separated into different bodies and institutions.
7. **Participation:** Civil society is working with the courage to exercise influence over public policy decisions. Citizens are to participate in determining their fate either through debate, planning, or sponsoring of the bill (policymaking) to control the institutions that affect their lives (Mwesigwa, Acanga, Chono, & Oboi, 2023), thereby providing a check on the power of government (Oyefara, 2013). Technocrats and professionals also participate in the affairs of their country through full participation in politics or otherwise open and constructive criticism. This process only occurs under democratic governance where good governance is their watchword. It takes place at various levels of grassroots, local government, state, regional and national levels through flexible and decentralised forms of government.

8. **Respect for Humanity:** Both the traditional rulers, religious leaders, and elder statesmen adhere to the required respect for one another. The respect also extends to freedom of speech which invariably translates to freedom of the press (Ibrahim et al., 2021). The press must be left to do its work of reporting without fear or favor. Objectivity is the core ingredient of an ideal press. The press must be free and not be seen as enemies of the government that must be erased or silenced permanently. Unfortunately, the press is not totally free under democratic governance in Nigeria. Nigeria's government in recent times has been employing inhuman legislation to censor the press in an attempt to curtail them from discharging their statutory role.
9. **Absence of Nepotism and Tribalism:** Under the practice of good governance, merit and meritocracy are considered in any political appointments, not party alliance (Oyefara, 2013). Political appointments should not be for sales like in the Rule of the Jungle. Giving political offices to the highest bidder (nepotic elements or the sycophant) erode the essence of good governance (Seran, Neolaka, & Gana, 2021). Technocrats and professionals are considered first while others are fellows in handling critical developmental issues.

Only a democratic government is capable of enabling all the aforementioned components of good governance (Santi & Afif, 2021). The realization of components of good governance has been one of Nigeria's greatest challenges over the past sixty-two (62) years as a federation. Grand corruption, lack of accountability and transparency, political instability, lack of order, weak public institutions, ineffective public policies, weak leadership, and the delivery of subpar public services are all examples of the federation's poor governance (Okoroafor, 2010). Therefore, a democratic leader's task is to guide the populace and delivers dividends of democracy to them without any sentiments. Development, national cohesion and interaction, mass economic, social, and mental emancipation, and leaders who uphold the constitution are some of the advantages of good governance.

1.5. Constraints and Impediments of Good Governance in Nigeria Federation

A series of factors have been identified to account for impending good governance in Nigeria federation. Few, but salient such factors are elicited below:

The first impediment constraining the delivery of good governance in Nigeria is the leadership challenge. Leadership entails goal setting or visioning. It is a capacity or ability to motivate, inspire and mobilize efforts, energies, and talents of followers (team) to achieve set goals (Adededeji, 2023). Unfortunately, Nigeria has not gotten it right since the departure of the founding fathers of Nigeria or the first republic which produced the visionary and team leader of types of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Nnamdi Azikwe, Tafawa Balewa, and host others. The twenty-first-century Nigerian leader can be termed a ruler as against team leader. They interact with people closely before and during the election, but as soon as they win the election and are sworn in, they swiftly withdraw themselves from the community. They are motivated to support corruption, violence, and crime by their egotistical and self-centered ambition (Okoroafor, 2010). Nigeria is an apt example of the type of leader that Africa produces, according to Professor Pat Utomi, who lamented:

"we can clearly see that there is a lack of a sense of duty in Africa, which indicates that there is a leadership issue there. It was not always so. The independence struggle produced men who were willing to sacrifice for the common good. In the transition from colonial rule, as they moved from the outhouse to the Government reserved areas, the emergent leaders of Africa saw the tyranny of colonial agents as their model of leadership without recognizing, that leaders and tyrants are polar opposites. For Africa to be renewed, it has to rethink leadership" (Abdellatif, 2003).

Couple with the above is the weak judiciary which could have to check the leader against misuse of office and power, unfortunately, the system has been weakened to the extent of not being able to perform its statutory role (Chris, 2016). Media and religious groups need to wake up from slumber to check the excess and dysfunctional political institutions in Nigeria. Active participation of technocrats and professionals in politics to correct the abnormality in the country, the attitude of 'holier than thou' should be shunned.

Similar to the above factor, is the challenge of irresponsible government, which has persisted from the military era to this present democratic dispensation. The government of Nigeria has not been showing a positive and timely response to the yearning of its people (Ahule, 2013). Civil organizations which are created purposely to influence the activities of the government positively, have mostly been seen by the government as enemies. The groups are treated worse than opposition parties, this has not made civil society engage the government vibrantly, robustly, and objectively. Ihonvbere has this to say about the government in Africa,

“the main human rights issue in contemporary Africa is what to do with the non-hegemonic, unstable, repressive, and exploitative postcolonial state. The state has been more a weapon of intimidation and abuse than one with a sense of nation and mission designed to revolutionize social formation, protect the citizenry, and promote an enabling condition conducive to popular participation in development. In fact, Africans relate to the state as an arrogant, wicked, aloof, violent, and biased force that must be avoided, manipulated, cheated, and dismantled as opportunity permits. Its total failure to improve the conditions of the people, effectively mediate conflicts, protect the rights of the citizenry, and articulate a viable consistent agenda for growth and development has reduced the worth of the state in the eyes of the people. The State is simply an enemy of the people with structures that are biased - -” (Ahmad & Wani, 2013).

The government in Nigeria has not been fair and tolerant to civil society, in fact, the focus of civil society at this period is survival, and not participatory. This has adversely affected governance in Nigeria. The government of President Mohamadu Buhari has not been fair in human rights as human rights are violated at will, and this can be connected to the government's intransparent, unaccountable, insensitive, and undemocratic posture (Adedeji, 2023). It can therefore be established that there is a connection between a badly constituted state and human rights abuse on one hand and a rightly constituted state and human rights protection on the other hand. In essence, Nigeria is very terrible in terms of good governance and development. This can be changed when the nation is reformed to meet the yearning of the people.

Corruption is another constraint impeding good governance in Nigeria. Corruption is an abuse of office by the holder of such office either to enrich himself or manipulate things in his favor, or his cohort. Corruption has been claimed to be the cause and consequence of power failure, political turbulence, human rights abuses, and economic decadence (Wani, 2014), all these invariably lead to underdevelopment. Corruption has undermined hard work and meritocracy and placed amateur above professional thereby resulting in poor economic and political performance. The yearly budget in Nigeria since the return to democracy has not been equivalent to physical development. Most of the chief executives and their accomplishments have been accused severally of diverting common wealth to their personal purse thereby leaving the project the money meant for decaying or half attended to. Corruption has remained a serious barrier to development in Nigeria. It is not a new phenomenon, it has been entrenched for decades, often through patronage and nepotism system.

Combining factors of the first five factors above gave birth to poverty which has become a serious challenge to good governance. No nation ravaged by poverty can claim the presence of good governance (Worldbank, 1992). Mathematically, poverty is a minus; medically, it is a disease and a killer in terms of warfare that has sent many to early graves. Poverty is openly manifesting in Nigeria. An average Nigerian cannot boast of one US dollar (\$1) daily. The rate of unemployment and underemployment in the country is alarming and scary. Poverty undermines democracy; democracy is elusive and can hardly thrive where people are poor. Past elections in Nigeria showed how poor people have been influenced to sell their vote for a mere meal. According to Acheampongonce cited in Glennie (2010), “one man vote is meaningless unless accompanied by one man with bread”. The politicians (rulers) created poverty so as to buy the conscience of the electorate; the independence of voters is therefore subverted. Poverty cannot provide fertile ground for good governance.

Last but not least the factor working against good governance is conflict. All the six factors enumerated above combined to produce conflict. Manifestation of poor leadership will automatically lead to irresponsible government which will in turn give way to massive corruption, and poverty then

becomes the result (Adedeji, 2023). When poverty ravages a nation and ordinary basic need is not met, then frustration set in. People react when frustrated by taking arms against the government or against one another to vent their anger. Civil unrest, ethnic distrust, and rivalry as a result of survival of the fittest will slow down the pace of development and impede the realization of good governance. The frequent uprising in Nigeria has destroyed the economy, thereby improvising people to a pitiable standard (Adedeji, 2023). Conflicts continue to hamper development in Nigeria. The costs directly or indirectly are alarming. The cost of human resources, those youth who would have become future leaders that died during conflict cannot be quantified. The scarce resources of the nation are often spent to quell an uprising. The resources meant for social sectors, and infrastructural development are diverted to security funds to quench insecurity in times of conflict (Adebayo, 2014). The result of a redundancy economy will produce stagnant and decaying development.

1.6. Challenges of Democratic Governance

Most of the identified challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria can link the authoritarian government of military dictators with its antecedent effect on the present democratic governance of the federal republic of Nigeria to give the country good governance. The challenges are not limited to the following:

1. **Uncivil Attitude of Politicians:** Nigeria has made a transition from military to civil rule for a while. Many claims that our politicians are still learning democratic values. This is not surprising as the federation is still crawling after sixty-two years of self-rule. That politicians are still learning democratic values after twenty-four years of returning to a stable civil dispensation is a serious setback to the nation. They exhibit a 'residual military' psyche in their actions as they seem not to be ready for democratic practices (Ibrahim et al., 2021). According to Ojuade (2011), politicians refuse to practice ethical politics, thereby seeing democracy as an instrument to get what they want and fly like a bird after feeding from the seed of a fruit-bearing tree. They are more concerned with the goodies that politics provides under a democracy. The ends of democracy and values are unimportant, even though they may be seen as statesmen by the public.
2. **Inept Political Leadership and Statesmanship:** Leadership remains a vital factor in effecting a positive change in the federal process. It is clear that since 1999, the political class had not learned that leadership entails listening to followers, persuading them when necessary, and providing guidance and foresight for them often. At all levels of government, some executives exhibited messianic arrogance and residual militarism. These leaders did not learn that once elected, they must transform themselves into statesmen (Ojuade, 2011). The degree of harmony in the future will depend on how our political leaders uphold the rules of the game, are able to adopt democratic ideals such as compromise, tolerance of opposition, and participation; and ability to be gallant in victory and gracious in defeat (Elaigwu, 2007). Structures and institutions alone cannot build understanding and cooperation in the polity. Attendant human values of tolerance, fairness, justice, transparency, and honesty are essential ingredients, which the leadership must imbibe and promote (Elaigwu, 2007). Political intolerance of the opinion of others and the extension of the democratic space is another challenge. The actors of the past twenty-four years in Nigeria seem not to have understood democracy and are not ready to learn from the politicians of the past (Ogbeidi, 2012). Leaders need to carry the subject along and must be sensitive to their needs. Nigeria's history has shown that only very few leaders have this quality.
3. **Flaw Electoral Process:** The political process in Nigeria is gradually becoming a mess. It is a tragedy that Nigeria cannot hold free and fair elections despite her huge human and material resources (Chris, 2016). The 2011 election was assumed to be free and fair to some extent. In reality of the event, the 2003 elections in many parts of Nigeria were very fraudulent where politicians demonstrate their rigging machines and overridden the opponents with rigging skills. It was a distracting exercise detracting from the democratic learning process and potentially challenging process of national integration, worst still the 2007 elections were more fraudulent than the 2003 elections (Akanji, Danjibo, & Eselebor, 2011). The 2015 and 2019 elections were more violently rigged through the innovation of blood for money and vote for money. Domestic and international observers confirmed the excessive rigging. The cleverly concealed rigging in the

just concluded 2023 election was massively aided by the so-called electoral umpire “Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)”. The unfortunate and dance of shame of our politicians is the wave of decamping to ruling parties in attempt to secure the “for sale position”, to amass wealth, or to escape the wrath of law from the ruling parties of their uncountable public fund in their former party.

4. **Trivialization and Bastardization of Impeachment Provisions:** The Nigerian constitution clearly stated the procedures for the removal of chief executives. The process of impeachment, which was intended to ensure the accountability of elected officials, has been corrupted into a political tool used by political parties, executives, legislatures, or godfathers to remove the perceived opposition on the basis of tenuous, politically and legally inconsequential grounds, particularly when relations break down or when another election is approaching (Arinze & Oliver, 2016). The fairest way to characterize the drills is as a coup that has no place in a democratic environment. A handful of these wrongful removals have been overturned by the Nigerian judiciary in the past. All these violations point to the need to revisit the constitution with a view to safeguarding the autonomy and the independence of the judiciary against the might of the federal executive. It is our hope that the experiences will serve as lessons to Nigeria's political leader to rise above money politics and ephemeral pleasures. Delivering good governance is key.

5. **Constitutional Violations and Democratic Deficit:** It has been established that the decades of military administration played a significant role in constitutional infringement. The same military that gave us the constitution in 1979 also gave us the partially flawed constitution in 1999. Candidly, there is a need for the revision of the constitution to have a democratic outlook and people's property. However, the Constitution makes elaborate provisions on government obligations to the people under its fundamental objectives and directive principles. As there has been an unrestricted mockery of the rule of law by the succeeding government right away from the inception of the fourth republic, the hope that the constitution would naturally flourish better under democratic governance than under military regimes was dashed away (Dubagari, 2017). There is an absolute violation of the principle of the rule of law, this happens mostly under military regimes and unfortunately, it is one of the characteristics of this present republic (1999-2023). The worst is that democratic governance seems to surpass the military in its open disrespect for the rule of law. In fact, the situation is an embodiment of executive lawlessness in Nigeria (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Sadly, there is no difference in the running of Nigeria under democratic government and military rule. The constant summoning of the governors by the President is only a reflection of military tenets in a democratic setting which is against federalism principle. The administration of local government by governor is worse. Arrogant removing of local government chairman at will by governor is essentially abuse of power.

6. **Degrading Economy:** Nigeria's economy is in bad shape, the exchange rate is about N730 to one USA dollar. The pathetic story of Nigeria is that it earned N48.4 trillion between 2000 and 2011 from oil proceeds. This amount is calculated to be more than the US expenditure that fund the Marshal Plan that rebuilt Europe after the 2nd World War. The annual oil revenue in 1999 also jump from N724.4 billion to over N4.4 trillion in 2007, and N8.8 trillion in 2011. Yet, Nigeria ranks 13 out of 178 countries in the 2016 Failed States Index (Osioma, 2019). Some banks have collapsed, and many manufacturing sectors have experienced closures; the privatization process has been personalized, while a few Nigerians are buying national assets with the looted fund. Nigeria's infrastructure is becoming dilapidated; her educational system is collapsing while the health sector is severely in pain with yearly huge amounts of money budgeted and approved. Democratic culture, peace, security, stability, and devilment cannot thrive in a society where there is abject poverty. Nigeria's poverty alleviation program has recorded little or no success. The pathetic development is the distribution of ten thousand (N10, 000.00) called trader money for a few selected ruling party faithful in the week of the 2019 general election by the Vice President. The question is what can N10, 000. 00 do in this period of an economic meltdown than the purpose of vote buying. Nigeria can be rich if its leaders utilize these resources for the benefit of all.

7. **The Challenges of Distribution of Resources:** The distribution of Resources is otherwise called revenue allocation; a process of fiscal equalization; by which funds are transferred to other states that are less well to do without necessarily robbing the rich states of their funds. Nigeria Federation is currently facing the problem of revenue allocation (Awofeso & Obah-Akpowoghaha, 2017). In Australia, the Australian Lands Grant Commission carries out fiscal equalization among component units of the federation. Canada has a structured system of fiscal equalization. Nigeria has no equitable and acceptable structure of resources distribution, time without number she has changed the distribution formula due to lack of continuity with no improvement (Ewetan, 2012). It is recommended that Nigeria's RMFAC should collate available data and embark on vertical and horizontal fiscal equalization among the component units of the federation. It is hoped that with more discussions and collective experience, the politics of distribution will not be a danger to the already cracked federation.

2. Conclusion

Ascertaining the doctrine for federalism and the clamor of restructuring Nigeria for good. Good governance has been an issue in Nigeria federation. The paper has proved that good governance become a catalyst of true federalism in Nigeria. It was established that the nation has not gotten it right in her democratic tenet, hence bad governance becomes the other of the day in place of good governance. Weak leadership, corruption, flawed electoral procedures, and lack of security of lives and properties among others have been shown to be responsible for bad governance in Nigeria federation. The result of one of the hypotheses put forward indicated that inept political leadership and statesmanship remain the vital challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria's federalism. Nigeria's democratic government has proved to be ineffective in the delivery of good governance. Misgovernance is found all around the nation with rampant degrees. The fact is that the absence of good governance is the absence of sustainable development and the citizens are likely to be affected negatively. Good governance is aborted when important developmental ministries are administered by underqualified personnel with a negative attitude. However, the challenges and constraints facing the Federation of Nigeria could be managed and transformed with all-inclusive measures.

Fundamentally, restructuring, therefore, becomes a necessity to correct the faulty foundation laid for Nigeria's federalism. The other hypothesis also established that accountability is one of the major futures of good governance in distinctive federalism. In a democratic setting, efficient and effective administration is a sign of good governance. For the manifestation of positive change, a good governance mechanism to play the role of stabilizing the entire nation for dynamic and progressive development is needed. The study has established that development is only possible when vital developmental apparatus, such as the economy, government, security, and young children's education, is handled professionally and seriously. In line with the objective of the paper, the development of Nigeria could only be achieved by the readiness of all the stakeholders to go for a positive change. Nigeria's government and the Nigerians have to change the condition of the country by striving to achieve a shining and progressive Nigeria. A dream of a progressive, developed, and sustainable Nigeria is closer than we imagine, very soon, it will become a reality but we all have to be well prepared to pay the price for this laudable goal.

2.1. Recommendations

In addressing the identified challenges, the following are put forward to right the wrongs in the Nigeria Federation:

1. The business of a democratic leader is to carry all the people along and deliver the dividends of democracy to them without any sentiments in governance. Our leader should constitute this habit. Government business should be carried out in an open, easy-to-understand, and explicit manner. The policies and actions of the government should be publicly available and confidence developed in its intentions. Couple with this, elected individuals and organizations charged with a public mandate be accountable to the public from which they derive their authority from time to time. There shouldn't be secrecy in the administration of people. Any government that operates under secret influence cannot claim delivery of good governance.

2. Nigeria's economy should be put in good shape by firstly working on the exchange rate and reviving collapsed business and manufacturing sectors to guide against looming inflation and unemployment. Invasion of Nigeria's market by external forces than investment should guide against through introduction of competitive local products. The government should try as much as possible to encourage local manufacturers through soft loans. It is suggested that Nigeria diversify its mono-cultural economy and pursue deregulation and privatization policies with a sense of patriotism, transparency, and accountability.
3. Couple with the above to save our nation is the total eradication of corruption. Fighting corruption should be one of the major policies of this administration. Anti-corruption measures that defog of selective approach should be effectively implemented.
4. Election into public office is key to the development of any modern state. The election process should therefore be conducted under a free and fair atmosphere free from violence, rigging, manipulation of results, and influence of the judicial system to favor the ruling party. The electoral commission should be empowered to be independent in discharging its statutory role. To get it right in the journey of nationhood, the independence of the electoral commission is the key.
5. Similar to the above, the process of appointing people into public offices should be based on merit and made transparent. Attaching with ethnic, religious, and party affiliation should be discouraged. Competent people with proven integrity should be appointed to manage government businesses with the major goal of achieving maximum development for the country. Technocrats and professionals should also be involved to participate in the affairs of Nigeria through full participation in politics or otherwise open constructive criticism.
6. The existing legal system in Nigeria needs to be reformed. The law should not be made to favor the elites and serve as a trap for the masses. Nigerian society should be governed by the rule of law. The constitution should be supreme and be the basis for measuring the conduct of individuals and groups irrespective of social status. In an ideal federal system, laws should be cleared and uniformly applied through an objective and independent judiciary. Timely and periodic reforms of the legal system are a key ingredient of good governance and this must be strictly adhered to.
7. Period election of local government should be done centrally by the central electoral umpire (INEC) with the spirit of fair and peaceful democratization, by avoiding rigging which has become the norm of the ruling party (government). Rigging elections is going against the will of the majority which is a setback to democracy.
8. An executive should be related cooperatively with the legislature without negating checks and balances to give the federation and democracy the proper nudge forward. There are obvious prospects of greater inter-governmental relations if exploited.
9. Government should encourage civil society and citizens to participate either through debate or sponsoring of bills to influence public policy decisions and as well as control the resources and institutions that affect the lives of the entire Nigerian. This will make the citizens provide a check on the power of the government.

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