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## ***Vision and Trust as Vital Elements for Confronting Leadership and Governance Crises in Nigeria***

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper interrogates the leadership-governance matrix that defines the Nigerian situation. It adopts Richard Joseph's prebendal/clientelistic mode of analysis of political organisation and behavior in Nigeria to interrogate the nature and character of the nation's leadership. The paper examines the interface between the poor leadership quality of the nation's political elite and the endemic bad governance that characteristically promotes mass poverty in the midst of abundant natural resources, unrelenting economic crises, kidnapping, terrorism and insurgency. The paper concludes that credence to the leadership and governance deficits in the country can only emerge when the nation's leaders are driven by clear, political, social and economic vision that can engender the building and sustenance of public trust in both the leadership and the government of the Nigerian state by the diverse groups that constitute the nation.*

### **Introduction**

Since the attainment of independence by most African countries in 1960, regarded as the golden year of Africa, the problem of leadership and issues of good governance have continued to have devastating impact on nation building in Africa (Adebayo, 2014).

The problem which troubles Nigeria most is leadership deficit. Since the collapse of the First Republic following a military coup on 15 January, 1966, the challenge of leadership and issues of good governance have continued to undermine efforts to mobilise the abundant natural and human resources that are available

in the country for the emancipation of her teeming population. For example, at independence Nigeria had higher GDPs per capital than countries in Asia like Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia and South Korea. In an interval of thirty years, these Asian countries became the Asian Tigers, while Nigeria is hamstrung by political corruption, unrelenting economic crises, kidnapping, terrorism, insurgencies, ethno-religious crises and poverty. The squalid state of the Nigerian nation is aptly expressed as follows: "In the 11 years that Nigeria has returned to democracy, infrastructure decay (roads,

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**86 Benjamin Adeniran Aluko**

railways, power supply), has worsened, while all sectors (education, health housing, manufacturing) have further collapsed, despite the several trillions of naira budgeted each year to improve the nation . . ." (cited in The Nation Sunday, 19 July, 2015). Sixteen years down the democratic path, the Nigerian situation has degenerated so much so that 23 out of the 36 states in the country owe workers' salaries running into several months. It must be observed that the Nigerian state, as it were, is at odds with the aspirations and expectations of her people so much so that they have lost trust and confidence in anything that has to do with the government and the leadership of the state. This perhaps explains why the people look up to their ethnic associations for succour in time of need rather than the Nigerian state. As a matter of fact, there is resurgence in ethnic-related activities suggesting that more and more Nigerians are losing confidence and trust in the Nigerian project. In light of this, this paper interrogates the nexus between the nation's leadership deficiencies and the bad governance that define the Nigerian state. It emphasises the place of "vision" in the making of a leader and the importance of citizens having "trust" in both the leadership and the state as critical to the enthronement of good governance in Nigeria. The paper concludes that only a leadership that is inspired and driven by a strong commitment to a clearly defined collective vision can facilitate the building of trust in government by the generality of the Nigerian people.

**Conceptual Issues**

Key concepts such as governance, leadership, trust and vision used in this paper are hereby

operationalised in this section in order to provide a framework of analysis.

*The Concept of Governance*

The idea of governance in a generic sense refers to the task of running a government or any other appropriate entity, such as a nation. The word governance from its Latin origins suggests the notion of "steering". Thus, it implies, in the context of public realm, the management of social and economic resources to achieve social progress and development. Governance is the conscious management of regime structures with a view to enhancing the legitimacy of public realm (Hyden, 1992). It is a process that involves the engagement of state power to drive a nation's human and natural resources with a view to promoting the realisation of the collective goal(s) of a society. Put differently, governance is the exercise of political authority and the use of institutional resources to manage a nation's problems and affairs towards the achievement of social cohesion and collective goal(s). Adamolekun (2006) aptly represents this when he defines governance as "the process of exercising political power to manage the affairs of a nation."

*The Idea of Leadership*

The idea of leadership is critical to socio-political discourse. This is because socio-political ideologies and philosophy are largely dependent on the values and attitudes of the leadership. Thus, it is a concept that has been defined and described by scholars from a variety of ideological and disciplinary orientations. "For example, some researchers define leadership in terms of personality and physical traits, while others believe leadership

**Vision and Trust as Vital Elements for Confronting Leadership and Governance Crises in Nigeria 87**

is represented by a set of prescribed behaviours" (Mohammed, Y. 2015:130). The point that is being established here is that leadership is a concept that has been defined from diverse perspectives and standpoints. Hackman (2006) classifies these diverse perspectives into four definitional themes. These are:

- (a) Leadership is about what you are. This definitional theme focuses on leaders in-born characteristics, the leader's traits, attributes, psychological and emotional make-up;
- (b) Leadership is about how you act. This refers to the influence and power you have over others to make them do what you want;
- (c) Leadership is about what you do. This refers to the role that leaders play in the management of the affairs of the public realm;
- (d) Leadership is about how you work with others. This refers to the capability of leaders to collaborate with the followership and all stakeholders to achieve common goal(s).

Flowing from the foregoing, leadership represents the agent that coordinates available resources (both human and natural) and influences social processes with a view to promoting the realisation of the collective goal(s) of the group or the nation as the case may be. Thus, it has been seen as "a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organisational goals" (Graig, 2005). In this study, we define leadership as the force driving state resources towards the

accomplishment of societal goals.

*Trust*

Trust is not a word that can easily be defined. It is a concept that has attracted the attention of quite a large number of scholars - Barber, (1983), Baler, (1986), Gambetta (1988), Hardin (1991, 1993, 1996), Misztal (1996), Seligman (1997), Braithwaite and Levi (1998), Warren (1999) and Diamond (2007). Broadly speaking, the word expresses or captures the nature and quality of social relationship. It has been defined "as the actor's belief that, at worst, others will not knowingly or willingly do him harm, and at best, that they will act in his interests" (Newton, 2001). As a matter of fact, social relationship is strengthened by trust, while it collapses in the absence of it. Newton (2001) captures this when he states: "trust makes it possible to maintain peaceful and stable relations that are the basis for collective behavior and productive cooperation."

Let us at this juncture state that in the context of this paper, trust is interrogated in light of the nature of the relationship that exists between the citizen and the leadership of the Nigerian state. It is instructive to point out that trust in government and the leadership of a state is borne out of the belief and consciousness by the citizens that the resources and machinery of the state are being employed to promote their collective well-being.

*Vision*

Vision is indispensable to serious leadership. This explains why it is a word often used in leadership studies. "Vision," in the words of Barnes is a-way of spelling out for your

**Benjamin Adeniran Aluko 88**

listeners 'the big picture', to help them understand the effort in which they are engaged and win their 'buy in' ... Vision provides the essential 'spark' that makes the difference between people who are just going through the motions and people who are really trying to achieve something" (Barnes, 2005:14).

The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines "vision" as "the ability to think about or plan the future with great imagination or wisdom. A thing experienced powerfully in the imagination, especially concerning the future." It depicts a grand plan conceived with the intent to define what ultimately will become of a nation or an organisation. Vision represents a plan of action that presents the larger picture of what would be the ultimate destination of a group or a nation. It presents an idealised view of what the future of a group or a nation can be (Barnes, 2005:14).

### **The Nature and Character of the Leadership of the Nigerian State**

The nature and character of the state and its operators, actors and agencies determine the trajectory and quality of governance. Where and when there is negative turning points in the sequences of the use of power and authority, the nation experiences alienation and instability, and sometimes it experiences trouble and grave danger (Oyovbaire, 2007). There is a consensus that the nature and character of the leadership of a nation determines the quality of governance of that country. The values or morality and the recruitment/selection pattern of a nation's political leadership undergird its politics and governance processes and ultimately define the legitimacy or otherwise of the governance

process. This point has been acknowledged by a notable political scientist and politician in the following terms:

Where the behaviour patterns of the political class conform with the structural imperatives of the constitutive and regulatory rules of politics, good governance is highly likely to manifest and experienced. Where, however, the behavior of the political class manifests non-conformity with, or deviance from the structures, there is high likelihood of the relations negating good governance . . . The conduct of the political class is critical to governance (Oyovbaire, 2007).

The point here is that the nature and character of the leadership of a nation determine largely the quality of governance of the state. But before we begin to discuss the nature and character of the leadership of the Nigerian state, it is germane that we bring into the fore the manner of recruitment into leadership positions, especially that of the president and the governor. It is instructive to point out that understanding the pattern of recruitment into the nation's political offices would provide insight into the logic that underpin both the character of the leadership and governance processes in the nation.

For the purpose of our analysis, we are interrogating the leadership recruitment/emergence pattern from two epochs - the pre-1999 leadership recruitment/emergence pattern. In other words, the leadership recruitment and emergence pattern in the country between the time the nation became independent in October, 1960 and the period the country returned to civilian rule in May 29, 1999. The other segment of the analysis focuses on the leadership recruitment and

**Vision and Trust as Vital Elements for Confronting Leadership and Governance Crises in Nigeria 89**

emergence pattern in the country since the return of civilian rule in 29 May, 1999 to 2011 when President Goodluck Jonathan administration was voted in.

With respect to the nation's First Republic, it is instructive to point out that the departing colonial masters were, for their own interest, not favourably disposed to the emergence of a visionary leadership in the country. This explains why the colonial masters manipulated the process in a way that those who may likely provide purposeful leadership were shut out. Thus, the nation had in the First Republic Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as prime minister. It must be noted that Balewa never prepared for the office. As a matter of fact, the leadership of the nation fell on him following the refusal of the leader of the Northern People Congress (NPC), Sir Ahmadu Bello, to come over to Lagos, the then seat of the Federal Government of Nigeria. The point that we are making is that at independence, the leadership of the Nigerian state was handed over to a man who did not have the anticipation to occupy the position. It is on record that Balewa only wanted to be a parliamentarian. The implication of this is that as early as the time of independence, the nation had at the helm of affairs a leader without a clearly articulated vision.

The Balewa government was overthrown by the military on 15 January, 1966. Sadly however, the various military governments that the nation had come without a clearly defined programme of action. Following the failure of successive military governments to improve the material conditions of the people, there was clamour for return to democratic

rule in the country. Consequent to this, the Olusegun Obasanjo military government put in place a transition programme. This gave birth to the emergence of Alhaji Shehu Shagari's administration on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1979.

Like Balewa, Alhaji Shehu Shagari had the presidency handed over to him against his own plan and ambition. It is also on record that what Shagari wanted was not the presidency of the nation. Rather, he wanted to be a senator. Once again, the Nigerian state had at the helm of affairs a leader who did not have a clearly articulated programme of action as the nation's president. True to the logic of Shagari's emergence as Nigerian leader, his government failed woefully to meet the aspirations and yearnings of the people for a democratically elected government in the country. Consequent to that, the government was overthrown on the 31 December, 1983. Following the military take-over of 1983, the Nigerian state was under military rule till 29 May, 1999, when Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military head of state, was elected president of the country.

The Obasanjo government that took over from the military was actually foisted on the nation by the military elite. Obasanjo came to power barely one year after he was released from prison for treason. Obasanjo corroborates this in a conversation with El-Rufai when he says: "... I came out of prison, I was on my farm, I was begged to come and do this job." (cited in El-Rufai, 2013: xxxvi). The point we are making is that, though Obasanjo might have the experience, having been Head of State before, the reality of the situation is that he did not assume the leadership of the Nigerian state in 29 May,

**90 Benjamin Adeniran Aluko**

1999, with a clearly articulated vision. El-Rufai (2013: XIV) reiterates this when he posits:

. . . The only reason he (Obasanjo) became president the second time, when Chief Abiola died, was because someone from the southwest was needed as president to assuage the grievance arising from the annulment of the 12 June election which the deceased Abiola had won, and people like Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Aliyu Gusau came to him, drafted him, organised everything and handed it to him (Obasanjo)...

After Obasanjo's eight-year rule as president Umaru Yar'Adua became the President of Nigeria. An interrogation of the circumstances of Yar'Adua's emergence as president of the nation clearly revealed that Yar'Adua was not prepared for the office. An account in El-Rufai's book, *The Accidental Public Servant* attests to this. El-Rufai commenting on how Yar'Adua came to occupy the nation's highest political office captures the nature of the nation's leadership selection process when he writes: "The final nails in the coffin of any meritocracy or track record of governance in Nigeria as basis for leadership selection were driven in when President Obasanjo selected Yar'Adua whose ill-health, among other challenges, was known already to constitute a serious impediment to the possibility of any inspired and energetic leadership" (El-Rufai, 2013:57). Though Yar'Adua hurriedly came up with what he called his 7-Point Agenda, an agenda he made spirited efforts to execute, his death, mid-way into his presidency, put an end to the implementation of the agenda. Yar'Adua's deputy, Dr Goodluck Jonathan, who took over the reign of leadership of the Nigerian

state, did not demonstrate any serious commitment to the 7-Point Agenda, except to the Amnesty Programme initiated to address youth restiveness in the Niger Delta.

It is instructive to note that Jonathan's emergence as the running mate to Yar'Adua was single-handedly determined by Obasanjo. And so, when Jonathan emerged Nigerian leader following the death of Yar'Adua, the leadership of the nation, once again, was handed to a "leader" who never thought of occupying such an exalted position. The point we are trying to establish is that Jonathan came on board as the President of Nigeria without a clearly crafted vision or a programme of action. Even when he contested and won the 2011 presidential election, it was very difficult to distill the vision driving the Jonathan administration.

Let us at this juncture point out that the discussion on the emergence pattern of the leadership of the Nigerian state becomes imperative in the light of the fact that the way the leaders emerged had had profound implications on their nature and character. In other words, the way and manner the leaders emerged fed into their nature and character and to a very large extent defined it. The reality of the situation is that the fact that these leaders are thrown up circumstantially rather than as a result of their personal ambition forecloses the possibility of coming to office with a clearly articulated vision. This point that is being made here is that a politician who methodically prepared and sought to occupy an office is most likely to be armed with a vision, however poorly crafted, as opposed to one who never prepared for the office. It is on record that Obafemi Awolowo, the

**Vision and Trust as Vital Elements for Confronting Leadership and Governance Crises in Nigeria 91**

Premier of the old Western region of Nigeria, methodically prepared and sought the office of the Premier of the region. Little wonder, he came into the office with a clearly articulated vision that greatly transformed the region and improved considerably the material condition of his people so much so that the region became a reference point for the other regions in the country.

With our understanding of the way and manner the leaders of this country emerge, let us discuss the nature and character of the nation's leadership. It has been observed by a political scientist that clientelism and prebendalism are two of the fundamental principles of political organisation and behaviour in Nigeria. This conceptualisation of Nigeria's socio-political system succinctly captures the nature and character of the leadership of the Nigerian state.

According to Joseph, 1991:56:

clientelism refers to 'patron-client ties' where an individual seeks out patrons as he or she moves upward socially and materially, such individuals also come to accept ties of solidarity from their own clients which they view as fundamental to the latter's security and continued advancement as well as their own . . . It represents a political behavior where an individual seeks the support and protection of an 'oga' or a 'godfather', while trying to acquire the basic social and material goods-loans, scholarships, licences, plots of urban land, employment, promotion- and the mam resource of the patron in meeting these requests is quite literally a piece of the state. While prebendalism refers to the ways in which the public power acquired ostensibly for public good is utilised to maintain patron-client ties.

The import of Joseph's understanding of

the nature and character of Nigeria's political leadership is aptly stated when he observed: clientelism defines the nature of individual and group relationships within the wider socio-political sphere, while prebendalism is primarily a function of the competition for, and appropriation of, the offices of the state (Joseph, 1991: 63).

In the light of the above exposition, the implications of the clientelist/prebendalist tendencies of Nigeria's political elite, among others, are:

First, the allegiance of the political leadership to the godfather rather than to the people of the nation has become a major stumbling block to promoting good governance in the nation. Public policies and state resources are directed at promoting business and financial interests of both the godson and the godfather whose interests characteristically are at variance to the interests of the mass of the Nigerian people. Even when there is a conflict between the godfather and the godson, the reason(s) are hardly remotely connected to the promotion of the interest of the electorate who presumably elected the holder of state power. A very good example is the conflict that erupted between the Late Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu and Rasheed Ladoja. Adedibu was the godfather that facilitated the coming to power of Chief Rasheed Ladoja as governor of Oyo State in May 29, 2003. Along the path, the two fell apart. It is instructive to point out that the bone of contention between the Late Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu (godfather) and Chief Rasheed Ladoja (godson) had nothing to do with the interest of the people. Rather, it was about the fact that the godfather wanted more than what the godson was willing to give as patronage from the State's resources.

Second, the process of governance of the Nigerian state is characterised by widespread

## 92 Benjamin Adeniran Aluko

corruption of the leadership so much so that one cannot X-ray issues of leadership in Nigeria without bringing into fore the centrality of the political corruption of the leadership. On assumption of office as president of Nigeria on May 29, 1999, Obasanjo in his inauguration address acknowledged this when he observed that some of the challenges confronting the nation among others, are 'leadership insensitivity and corruption' (Obasanjo, 2000). After his inauguration, Obasanjo proceeded to institute legal structures such as the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), the due process regime and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to fight the war against corruption. Sadly, sixteen years on, the war against corruption in Nigeria is far from being won. As a matter of fact, the levels of corruption of the nation's leadership are deepening as more and more political leaders are being prosecuted by the various anti-graft agencies.

Moreover, a political analyst Joel Minister aptly captures the primary predisposition of the Nigerian leaders when he writes:

I have been watching over the years with keen interest, the nature and character of Nigerian parliamentarians and Executives. Nothing has changed in this country. We are only waiting for God to answer our prayers and change the politically immature and democratically backward Nigeria. The "Executhieves" and the "Legislathieves" of this country are not ready to promote the interests of our people but rather continue to advance their egocentric and avaricious interests to the chronic detriment of the grossly indigent masses in this country.

From the above extract, the nation's executive body is ingeniously referred to as 'Executhieves' and the

legislative body as 'Legislathieves'. Delineated, the members of the two bodies which constitute what is referred to as political leadership are said to be thieves (kleptomania). The truth of the matter is that the nation's political leadership is parochial rather than national and corruptly converts national resources into its project of primitive accumulation. Ethnic diversity is manipulated to stay afloat to the detriment of national cohesion (Ake and Onoge, 1995:33).

In the light of our exposition on the nature and character of the nation's leadership, we could safely posit that Nigeria's leadership is corrupt, uninspiring and visionless. It is committed only to promotion of self and group interests rather than collective national interest. A social commentator reiterates this when he states: ". . . Leadership in many today's communities in Nigeria is a pollution of leadership qualities . . . what we have as leadership is an adulteration of courage and valour and a shameful display of spineless acquiescence. What we have as leadership is an uncharitable display of material arrogance and a distasteful reminder of group exploitation" (Ehusani, 2002:210).

### **Exploring the Context and Content of the Crisis of Governance in Nigeria**

Good governance has been an elusive goal in Nigeria since the collapse of the nation's First Republic. As a matter of fact, borrowing the words of Oyovbaire, "the crisis of governance in Nigeria is real and tangible. It is obvious and clear, even to the deaf and blind as it is to the common and uncommon Nigerians" (Oyovbaire, 2007). Governance, to state it in

**Vision and Trust as Vital Elements for Confronting Leadership and Governance Crises in Nigeria 93**

clear terms, is about the proper use of legitimate power and authority in the affairs of a nation or the people. Thus, bad governance involves the misuse of state powers and resources, which characteristically produces dysfunctional state structures, institutions and systemic state incapability to perform her role as instrument for promotion of human security. This has been expressed in this manner: where and when there are negative turning points in the sequences of the use of power and authority, the nation experiences alienation and instability, and sometimes it experiences extreme trouble and grave danger (Oyoubaire, 2007). The Nigerian state manifests bad-governance in its entirety.

The crisis of governance bedeviling the Nigerian state has manifested in diverse ways. It must however be noted that these various dysfunctional manifestations can be said to be the derivatives of the crisis of legitimacy of the holders of state power. In other words, the crisis of legitimacy of the holders of state is the precursor of the crises that are associated with the obvious governance deficit in the nation. By legitimacy crisis we mean the inappropriateness of the procedure through which power and authority is acquired and the consequences of improper use of such power and authority which, characteristically, undermine the achievement of the collective aspirations of the Nigerian people and realisation of the intents and purposes of the existence of the state.

Let us state that the idea of legitimacy rests squarely on two pillars - procedural and performance. Procedural legitimacy focuses on the fulfillment of the legal requirement that establishes the exercise of state power.

Power is legitimate where its acquisition and exercise conform to established law (legal validity) (Beetham, 1990:4). In Nigeria, conformity to the requirement of the law in terms of acquisition and exercise of power has been a challenge. This is because of the lack of integrity of the nation's electoral processes. Thus, more often than not, those who occupy political offices are not duly elected by the people. Moreover, the political parties lack internal democracy and so party candidates are chosen by political godfathers rather than through processes legally recognised.

The point here is that in terms of procedural legitimacy - which is about legal validity of the processes by which power is acquired and exercised - the processes are compromised to fulfill the wishes of godfather(s) and power broker(s) whose interests usually stand in contradistinction to the interest and aspirations of the mass of the Nigerian people. This partly accounts for the reasons why the leadership of the Nigerian state is almost always failing performance legitimacy test which is grounded on examining the ability of those in authority to perform the basic functions of government as defined by the expectations of most members of the nation (Horvat, B. 1979: 81).

From the above, it is clear that legitimacy crisis underpins the governance crisis in the country. Let us quickly discuss some of the derivatives of the legitimacy crisis and how these shape the governance crisis in the nation. Some of the derivatives include the following:

Participation crisis, which refers to the trouble involved in the peoples' quest to own and be acknowledged that authority derives from them. This emanates largely from the

#### 94 Benjamin Adeniran Aluko

nation's electoral processes that are characterised by fraud and violence. The implication of this is that the people are denied ownership of the political process and true representation. The point we are making here is that *rarely* do the outcomes of elections reflect the choices of the electorates. Their votes hardly count and thus their participation in the governance processes is seriously hindered. Even when elections are free, fair and credible, the elected representatives hardly identify with the wishes and aspirations of the people. Rather, they are concerned about their interest and personal enrichment. Thus, what plays out in Nigeria is not only a mockery of electoral democracy but also an affront to participatory democracy.

Closely intertwined with the participatory crisis is the crisis of integration or of identity, which means the degree of attachment to or of withdrawal, alienation and detachment from the state and to, or from one another as citizens of the state, communities and classes of people (Oyovbaire, 2007). The truth of the matter is that the generality of the Nigerian people are alienated from the state such that they still see the state as a colonial creation designed to promote interest other than that of the people. This reason for this perception is not far-fetched. It is because of the lack of accountability and responsiveness of the state to the generality of her citizenry. This explains the lack of interest of the mass of the Nigerian people in the public sphere, the arena of the state, and enthusiasm and keen interest in the primordial sphere where peoples' needs are often met.

It is apposite to point out here that the fundamental problem that undermines the establishment of legitimacy and good

governance in Nigeria is the endemic corruption of the leadership. In fact, it has been rightly observed that "corruption has become a norm and practice of politics among the present political class from the Presidency to the Councillors of the local authorities" (Dukor, 2006:53). Indeed, the level of corruption of the nation's leadership has become a stumbling block, despite the country's enormous resources, to the achievement of meaningful development.

It is instructive to note that the crisis of governance bedeviling the nation is progressively deepening as a result of abysmal failure of successive governments in the country to identify with and represent the collective aspirations of the generality of the people. Even sixteen years after the enthronement of democratic rule that was expected to provide the cure for leadership and governance deficits, the situation has not changed. At this juncture, it must be clearly stated that the crisis of governance bedeviling the Nigerian state is largely a derivative of the endemic leadership crisis that has become the hallmark of the country. Fayemi, a former governor of Ekiti State, accentuates this by pointing out that the governance crisis which the nation experience is not unconnected to leadership problems (Fayemi, 2012).

#### **Interrogating the Essentiality of Vision and Trust as Critical Elements for Confronting Leadership and Governance Crises in Nigeria**

The place of a leadership that is inspired by, and committed to a clearly articulated vision to the generation and sustenance of citizens' trust in their government in addressing the

**Vision and Trust as Vital Elements for Confronting Leadership and Governance Crises in Nigeria 95**

prevalent governance crisis in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasised. In fact, it has been observed that:

Trust between citizens and their government officials and elected representatives is a vital element of a well governed society. In the absence of trust, citizens become cynical about their political system and disaffected with the existing order. Distrust may produce alienation and withdrawal from the political process, leaving behind a shallow, fragile state that cannot mobilise national resources or shape a collective vision for national development (Diamond, 2007).

The experience in many countries, especially in Africa, has revealed that governance processes are seriously hampered where there is absence or collapse of trust between the citizens and the leadership of the state. This is because the citizens' support and cooperation required to facilitate proper functioning of state institutions and policy implementation for social cohesion and national development are either completely non-existent or when given, not willingly offered due to citizens' lack of trust in the government of the state. The Nigerian people express so much of cynicism about their leadership and government and thus are not ready to make sacrifice and provide required support for government policies. This explains why it has been difficult for the government to withdraw subsidy on petroleum products. Consequently, the needed reform in the downstream oil sector of the industry has been challenging.

The reality of the situation is that the generality of the Nigerian people have lost confidence in the leadership of the state obviously due to perennial failure of the state

to impact positively on the lives of the people. At the enthronement of democratic rule in 1999, the expectations of the people were so high. It was believed that democratic rule would usher in good governance and promote improved socio-economic condition for the people. But many years down the lane, the dividends of democratic rule and good governance are still scarcely enjoyed by the people. This agrees with Osaghae's (2012:118) observation that:

The wave of democratisation and installation of democratic regimes that swept through most African countries in the 1990s and 2000s was expected to provide the cure for governance deficits and the infrastructure for equitable political accommodation and strengthen the capacity of the state to manage conflicts. In a number of cases, notably South Africa and Ghana, the state has arguably been strengthened, but for most part, Nigeria inclusive, the situation has not changed much.

Indeed, in a study on 'Performance and Legitimacy in Nigeria's New Democracy', it is observed that:

satisfaction with the working of democracy plunged from 81 percent in 2000 to 25 percent in 2005, support for democracy declined (from 84 to 65 percent) and trust in the president plummeted from 78 to 26 percent. In the same period, approval of the performance of the National Assembly (NASS) plunged from 58 to 23 percent and trust in the institution, declined from 66 to 55 percent (Diamond, 2007).

The situation has since degenerated. Today, about 23 of the 36 states in the country owe workers' salaries running into several months. The levels of political corruption, poverty and misery have

**96 Benjamin Adeniran Aluko**

tremendously increased. The implication is that more than ever before, the level of citizens' trust and confidence in the government is abysmally low. The fact is that the Nigerian state is a compelling example of a nation that is ill-governed due largely to lack of vision and insensitivity of the political leadership. El-Rufai (2013:71) encapsulates this when he argues that the true culprit behind Nigeria's lackluster progress is disastrous political leadership and bad decision making which, *according* to him, had led to a culture of impunity in the country. The question that looms large now in the light of the above concerns how the leadership of the Nigerian state can reinvent itself to facilitate the establishment of a governance process that would engender public trust and confidence of the people.

Retrospectively, the position that we are advancing is that the need to establish good governance in Nigeria demands a total reinvention of the nation's leadership profile. There is the need for a leadership that is not only inspired by a clearly defined vision, but is also committed to the establishment of the vision with a view to promoting a governance process that would elicit public trust and confidence in the nation's political leadership in particular and the state in general. It is instructive to note that governance matters for political trust and confidence, and ultimately for political stability and social progress. In fact, it has been observed that "to build public trust in government, government must govern better: more transparently, responsibly, accountably and responsively, with more active engagement with the public and in particular more

rigorous respect for the law and the public interest (Diamond, 2007).

**Conclusion**

Let us at this juncture reiterate that the quality of governance in any political space largely is a function of the nature and character of the political leadership. The point we are making is that for the Nigerian state to be enlisted in the league of well-governed nations, she needs a leadership that is committed to a very strong and clearly articulated vision. This is what Barnes has in mind when he says: vision is indispensable to serious leadership (Barnes, 2005:14). In Nigeria, the leadership needs to give the citizens something to strive for, something to reawaken the patriotism, interest and loyalty of the citizens to the nation. By this we mean a coherent and constructive vision that encapsulates the collective aspirations of the Nigerian people. This, we believe would engender public trust in government and ultimately have positive impact on governance processes in the nation.

Though a clearly defined collective vision is indispensable to the reinvention of Nigeria's political leadership and the reconstruction of the nation's governance processes, it is, however, not enough to achieve the much desired transformation of the governance system to one that is capable, accountable, responsible and responsive. We need also a strong commitment on the part of the leadership (political will) to the realisation of the vision, strategic integration of the people in the vision of the leadership and dynamic and functional state institutions.

The kernel of our discussion is that a leadership that is committed to the realisation

**Vision and Trust as Vital Elements for Confronting Leadership and Governance Crises in Nigeria 97**

of a clearly articulated vision in the context of virile state institutions would birth a governance process that could engender the requisite public support for harnessing both the natural and human resources in the nation for social progress and development. A leadership that is inspired by vision, accountable, responsible and responsive would earn the citizens trust and confidence. People are enthusiastic about what transpires in the public sphere when government sufficiently solicit and engage their concerns.

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