

ANATOMY OF REBELLION: INSURGENCY, INSURRECTION, AND MILITANCY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Transitional societies face a myriad of problems which include incessant conflicts. Some scholars and international financial institutions believed that neoliberal economic growth and policies in support of them would reduce poverty and end conflicts. While not disputing the role of economic growth in a country's development, this paper takes the view that a holistic approach that recognizes good governance can do more to promote sustainable peace and development. The methodology for this paper was content analysis of official documents, articles and other written sources. The paper observes that the absence of good governance has provided a fertile ground for some of these conflicts to emerge such as insurrections, insurgencies, and general insecurity of lives and property. It concludes that a developmental model that takes cognizance of this can provide the best option for emerging societies in need of lasting peace.*

KEYWORDS: Governance, Insurgency, Boko Haram, Insurrection, Militancy, Development, Rebellion, Al Qaeda, Colonialism.

INTRODUCTION

The problems of the transitional societies of Africa are multi-dimensional, ranging from underdevelopment, poor economy and poverty; high levels of inflation, unemployment, rampant corruption, insurrections and insurgencies. Regarding the latter, some writers attribute the incessant conflicts in the developing world to poverty. Collier (2006) for instance, has argued that poverty is the root cause of conflict and by extension; people in conflict situations tend to be driven not by grievances but by the desire for primitive accumulation of wealth. In other words, these people are driven mostly by greed. Draman (2003) and others (World Bank) who favour this theory of a causality between poverty and conflict, see economic growth and development as providing the needed palliative to end conflicts.

This model of economic development has largely been discarded because as Todaro (1982) noted, economic growth can take place in the midst of poverty and the poverty may not be in abeyance unless there is a forceful, direct governmental intervention. According to Todaro (1982:96):

There were for example, a number of developing countries which experienced relatively high rates of per capital income during the 1960s and 1970s, but which simultaneously showed little or no improvement or witnessed an actual decline in employment, equality and real incomes of the bottom 40 percent of their population. By the earlier growth definition, these countries were developing. By the more recent poverty, equality and employment criteria, however, they were not.

Economic development, while representing increases in industrial productivity, must also include increases in the quality of life of the people. Efforts to pursue the latter goal would require forceful governmental intervention in the form of policies and programmes to eradicate poverty; or at least reduce it to manageable levels.

The nature of politics in these emerging societies also contributes to the emergence of conflict situations, and the absence of sustainable peace. Many of them have a Neopatrimonial system of governance characterized by elites who masquerade as politicians, and who engage in primitive accumulation of wealth. Neopatrimonial governance is common in Africa (Iyer, 2011). In settler countries like Sierra Leone, and Liberia, the high level of insecurity leads to the establishment of extreme forms of neopatrimonial systems (Boas 2001). The system of neopatrimonial governance has created situations of extreme poverty, low economic growth, high levels of corruption, and youth restiveness. The result has been violent conflicts in one form or the other, leading to massive losses in lives and properties.

From the time of independence in 1960 to now, Nigeria has had to grapple with these conflicts. In 1964, for instance, a state of emergency was declared in the then Western Region due to rioting that broke out there in the aftermath of the general elections of the previous year, and that led to loss of lives and properties. The military coups of 1966 were accompanied by wholesale massacres and pogroms directed against people of Eastern Nigeria origin who resided in the North. The unfortunate carnage snowballed into the Nigerian civil war of 1967 – 1970. The attempt to introduce Sharia law in Kaduna State led to rioting between the year 2000 and 2001, and left thousands dead and properties destroyed. In the late 1990s, militants in the Niger Delta region took up arms against the Nigerian state. The region is where 80% of Nigeria's crude oil is extracted. It is the goose that lays the golden egg but is one of the least developed areas of the country, pointing to elite insensitivity and marginalization. This has also been the major grouse of the militants. The Boko Haram terrorist bombing campaign has been ongoing since 2009. The terrorist group has destroyed thousands of lives and razed down entire villages. In 2014, the group kidnapped about 200 girls from a government school in Chibok, Borno State, the whereabouts of which is still unknown.

Nature of Conflicts in Africa

Conflicts on the African continent have been classified into a typology that includes political, economic and religious conflicts (Onwudiwe, 2004). Political conflicts tend to arise as a result of fallouts from the political system such as election related violence and so on. Political conflicts that border on power control are rife on the African continent. For more than half a century, Africa witnessed wars of liberation from colonialism. In the post-colonial era, many African countries became involved in wars to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity. Others have had to fight wars to install democratically elected governments against dictators who would not want to relinquish power. This type of conflict manifested in countries such as the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (formally Zaire when Mobutu was forced out); in Cote d'Ivoire (when AU forces had to install Alassane Ouattara); in Zimbabwe where Robert Mugabe has been president since independence in 1980; and most recently in the Gambia. Presently, violent political conflicts are taking place in the DRC and Burundi due to the attempts by the incumbent presidents to amend the constitution and give to themselves third terms in office. These conflicts destabilize the political system, disrupt the economy, kill and displace thousands from their homes.

Economic conflicts revolve around the question of economic rights and benefits. In January 2012, Nigeria witnessed mass protests and upheaval due to an attempt by the Federal Government to remove subsidy on petroleum products. Clashes between nomadic herdsmen over grazing rights as opposed to the rights of farmers to plant and harvest crops without having them destroyed or eaten up by rampaging cattle, are frequent occurrences and underlie the nature of economic conflicts in Nigeria. So also are boundary issues which often pit one community against the other with the attendant losses in lives and properties. Sometimes, these clashes are seen as ethnic or communal conflicts, yet they would have economic undertones. Fundamentally, religious conflicts stem from intolerance by adherents of different religions; or the erroneous claim to superiority as reflected by religious fundamentalism. In Nigeria, the lines are often blurred because political and economic conflicts do take on religious coloration. Ehusani (2015) identifies internal conflicts as high intensity and low intensity perhaps based on the duration, ferocity, and level of destruction of lives and properties. The existence of weak institutions makes conflict prevention difficult (Ehusani, 2015). This paper argues that the absence of good governance, coupled with weak or the “failure of critical institutions” have contributed in no small measure to the vicious cycle of violent conflicts in Nigeria thereby, making sustainable peace difficult.

The Concept of Good Governance

At the turn of the 21st century, good governance became an issue in development, with development seen mostly or understood as human development (Iyer, (2011). There has been a shift in paradigm from development being viewed purely in terms of economic growth to a focus on human development through the provision of basic amenities to satisfy basic human needs in addition to efforts to eradicate poverty, disease, hunger, injustice and equality (Tschirgi, 2003). This is encapsulated in the maxim: “doing the most good for the most people.” Good governance means different things to different people. It has been seen as the effective process of providing leadership, with the capacity for efficient service delivery to the citizenry (Beetseh and Akpoo, 2014). Kukah (1998) held that good governance is synonymous with responsibility, accountability, and transparency in policy formulation and implementation. It calls for probity, justice, fairness and the efficient use of state resources to better the lot of the people. Jega (1994:101-102) maintains that as a social and political process good governance is desirable and it involves basic elements such as:

- Responsibility and responsiveness in leadership and in public service,
- Accountability in the mobilization as well as in the utilization of resources,
- Discipline, effectiveness and efficiency in handling public as well as personal affairs,
- Selflessness and impartial service to the people and,
- Popular participation and empowerment of the people in the conduct and management of their own affairs.

As a system of managing human affairs, good governance ensures equity and fair play, and the creating of an enabling environment in society within which all can excel. Good Governance consists of a public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable, and an administration that is accountable to the public (World Bank, 1989: 60). The major component

of the Bank's definition of Good Governance are that, it entails effectiveness and efficiency in public sector management, requires an accountable and responsive public service, enthrone the rule of law, transparency and easy access to public information (World Bank, 1989, 1992, viii).

The United Nations Economic and social Commission for Asia and the Pacific defines governance as the process of decisions-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented) (UNESCAP, 2012). Good governance then according to the above definition involves effective and efficient adherence to the process of decision-making to ensure that it is accountable, responsive, inclusive, and follows the rule of laws. The UN organ identifies eight major characteristics of good governance which include: participation, consensus building, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, equitability, inclusiveness, and rule of law. Good governance requires that corruption be minimized, and that the concerns of the most vulnerable in society are addressed.

In the good governance matrix, participation means popular participation or a situation where the citizens freely participate in the political processes, and in decision-making affecting their lives (UNESCAP, 2012). Adherence to the rule of law requires a legal framework that enforces impartiality. The law should not be a respecter of persons or status. It should be enforced irrespective of whose "ox is gored." The culture of impunity or selective obedience to the law is to be discouraged. The law should provide full protection for and enforcement of human rights of all in society.



Fig.1. Good Governance Features

Source: Good governance images, 2013.

By transparency, it is meant that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations (UNESCAP, 2012). But in a real sense and particularly in low developing economies, transparency should also mean that critical government decisions are not shrouded in secrecy and that the people are carried along at every step of the way. Unnecessary secrecy in government operations tends to provide a convenient cover for corruption and maladministration. The role of the media and civil society organizations (CSO) in this respect becomes crucial. The processes of governance should not take forever to yield fruit. This is where responsiveness becomes important in the good governance matrix. Responsive governance also requires that leaders be ready to take the blame when policy goes awry. Consensus building requires that actors and stakeholders in governance be able to

compromise and reach consensus in what is in the best interest of the people as a whole, as opposed to a section of it. The existence and proper utilization of a conflict management framework by actors and stakeholders in governance become important. So also is a proper understanding of the historical, social and cultural milieu of a given community (UNESCAP, 2012).

By equity and inclusiveness, groups in society should not be discriminated against nor marginalized in government policy. In addition, efforts must be made in government policy to address historical wrongs and systemic biases against vulnerable groups in order to give them a sense of belonging. In different parts of the world and particularly in pluralistic societies, there are affirmative action laws and programmes to address this notion of equity. Society must provide equal opportunities for all citizens to improve their well-being.

Good governance abhors waste; as a result, government processes and institutions must make proper and judicious use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in governance also covers the issue of sustainable development particularly in the use of natural resources and the protection of the environment. Utilization of natural resources should reflect the present as well as the future needs of society. In Nigeria, weak environmental laws and exploitation by Multinational Oil Companies (Shell and ExxonMobil) have caused untold hardship to the inhabitants of the oil producing areas. This ugly situation has been the cause of deaths, destruction and militancy in the Niger Delta. We shall return to this theme later.

Accountability is a major aspect of good governance. Societal institutions (both public and private) must be accountable to those who will be most affected by its decisions, actions or inactions (UNESCAP, 2012). In governance, public office is a trust. Public servants are expected to give account of their stewardships; and be sanctioned if found wanting. But it would be difficult to enforce accountability without transparency and the rule of law (UNESCAP, 2012).

Good governance is an ideal construct (UNESCAP, 2012). This helps to explain why there have been relative successes in achieving high levels of good governance in practice. Countries all over the world see good governance is a desirable social and political process of nation building. But any discussion about it is not complete without the issue of security; simply understood as ensuring the protection of individuals in their persons, and with regards to their properties. Citizens have to feel reasonably safe to pursue their life endeavours without fear or intimidation. A situation where people live in fear of highway robbers and kidnappers is indicative of the absence of good governance. On the propensity by politicians to surround themselves with security apparatchiks, an editorial in a Nigerian Newspaper averred that “Security is not instilling fear; it is planning. What this means is that planning for good governance as well as excellent execution of that plan for the people are the best forms of security” (The Guardian, 2015).

Sources of bad governance

Any discussion of the issue of bad governance must of necessity, examine Nigeria’s colonial misadventure as a starting point. Colonialism had two major objectives namely: discovering new markets for European goods; and locating and providing raw materials for European industries. By its very nature, colonialism was therefore exploitative. It failed to lay good foundation for the societies that would emerge from it. Be that as it may, the societal elites that emerge in the new Nigerian nation did not helped matters. Their zeal and determination in

fighting colonial rule and eventually winning independence cannot be denied. Beyond this singular achievement, the nationalists failed to forge a solid foundation for a virile nation in the mould of America's founding founders. For the most part, they resembled tribal war-Lords or chauvinists, more interested in the domination of their various groups than anything else. This may well be the result of the "divide and rule" strategy of colonial rule. African countries however, cannot continue to blame colonialism for its slow pace of development (Igwe, 2010). Indeed, there were some African countries such as Ethiopia and Liberia that were never colonized, but that have not fared any better (or even worse) than countries that were colonized. These countries have been badly governed, and this explains the developmental challenges that they continue to face.

Nigeria's colonial experience has multiple consequences for its political progress (or the lack thereof) (Olaopa, 2015). The differences between the nationalists and present day politicians in Nigeria are that, while the former were patriotic and altruistic, the latter are not. While the former abhorred corruption and primitive accumulation of wealth, the latter revels in them. In recent times, bad governance in Nigeria got its impetus from military rule or misadventure. Particularly from the middle 1980s to late 1990s, Nigeria's moral fabric and foundation were shredded by military rule. In their quest to perpetuate themselves in power, Nigeria's military leaders attacked the country's moral foundations. Corruption and brazen self-interest became the order of the day. This situation has flowed right into the new civilian dispensation which started in 1999. In many cases, good governance became relegated to the background with the attendant negative consequences for the progress of the nation.

The consequences of bad governance are many. Indeed, the list is a long one. But the particular aspect which has great import for this study is that the absence of good governance, coupled with weak institutions can alienate groups from the general order leading to a primacy of politics, and a situation whereby groups retreat to their primordial cleavages to fight for rights which the political institutions has failed to guarantee and preserve for them.

Nigeria and the world-wide governance indicators

From the 1990s, there has been a lot of emphasis by researchers and aid donors on the importance of good governance as a major aspect of development; and sometimes as a developmental objective in itself (Thomas, 2010). This created a demand for indicators to measure the quality of governance, both for research and for targeting foreign aid (Thomas, 2010). The World Bank defined "good governance" as "epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policy making; a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs, and all behaving under the rule of law" (World Bank, 1994).

Various aggregate governance indicators have been produced, due to the growing demand for measures of the quality of governance. These include the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), the Country Governance profile (CGP) produced by the African Development Bank, and the Good Governance matrix produced by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP, 2012). These bodies have different perceptions about "good governance" and the indicators they select to measure the concept differ from one body to the other. For instance, the World Bank's WGI ranks countries on six governance indicators which include Voice and Accountability, political stability and violence, Government Effectiveness, Rules of law, and control of corruption. For

its part, the UN agency UNESCAP produced eight indicators or aspects of good governance, while the ADP has five indicators.

All three bodies have participation and rule of law in their good governance profile; except the ADP where the rule of law is subsumed under the legal and judicial system. Both UNESCAP (2012) and the ADP have transparency as an index of good governance, while only the WGI and ADP emphasize the control or combating of corruption as important aspect in the good governance matrix. The indicators are relative measures of governance, which ranks a country in respect of a particular indicator, based on available information. However, the methodologies in the selection of indicators, ranking, and poor quality of data have raised questions about the statistical uses to which these indicators have been put to (Thomas, 2010). Political stability and the absence of violence as a good governance indicator on the World Banks' WGI may have compounded the problem of construct validity as asserted by Thomas (2010).

Since no deeper observation has been offered with regards to this indicator, it is assumed that "violence" as used here refers to physical violence such as war and other kinds of armed conflict. Johann Galtung (1969) had argued that violence as a concept should not be limited to physical violence. Violence may be embedded in a society's political, social, or economic structure. Systemic violence, although not immediately perceived as violence, is expressed in such conditions as poverty, inequality, oppression, discrimination and marginalization. The existence of these conditions may indicate the absence of good governance, although in older societies, it may also indicate the need for social reform.

Table 1. Good Governance Indicators

WORLD BANK (WGI)	UNESCAP	ADP
1) Voice and Accountability	1) Participation	1) Accountability
2) Political Stability and absence of violence	2) Rule of law	2) Transparency
3) Government effectiveness	3) Consensus Oriented	3) Participation
4) Regulatory quality	4) Equity and inclusiveness	4) Legal and Judicial system
5) Rule of law (RL)	5) Effectiveness and Efficiency	5) Combating consumption
6) Control of Corruption	6) Accountability	
	7) Transparency	
	8) Responsiveness	

Source: UNESCAP (2012) Thomas, (2010)

The governance indicators also failed to include the provision of security as an aspect of good governance, further compounding the problem of "construct validity." It is difficult to see how good governance can be promoted in the face of rampant insecurity to lives and properties.

Therefore, these indicators have been criticized for their lack of "construct Validity" or inability to measure what they are supposed to measure (Thomas, 2010). For our purposes, we will attempt a normative assessment of governance in Nigeria from 1980-2015, using the UNESCAP indicators. The aim is to show that good governance has been absent from the

nation's affairs for long periods of time, with devastating consequences to sustainable peace and development.

Voice and participation

The advent of civil rule in 1999 brought about a more open atmosphere for the expression of ideas, public discourse, and criticism of government policies. Presently the media in Nigeria is at its open best. Government censorship of the media is low. Equally low is government's sensitivity to public opinion as expressed in the media. Nigerian elections tend to record high levels of voter turnout, an indication of the seriousness that people attach to their civil responsibilities and probably their desire to effect change through the ballot box. However, elections in Nigeria have been anything but free and fair. The closest to a free and fair election was the 1993 presidential election, which the Late M. K. O. Abiola was acclaimed to have won; and which was annulled by the military. Since the return to civil rule in 1999 almost all the elections conducted have been marred with fraud, buying of votes, rigging, ballot box snatching and other irregularities (Omotosho, 2008). The 1999, 2003 and 2007 general elections have been adjudged as terrible and badly conducted elections in the annals of Nigeria's political history (Omotosho, 2008). In a developing economy like Nigeria, political offices are seen by some as an opportunity to escape poverty. This situation helps to explain the desperation by politicians to win elections at all cost. The situation is not helped going by the fact that Nigerian legislatures are one of the most highly paid in the world.

Rule of Law

Nigeria has good laws which are not properly enforced. In some cases, the punitive measures or sanctions for infraction are puerile, hardly constituting deterrent. Independence of the judiciary is lacking because the judiciary had become compromised through all the years of bad governance. In Nigeria, it is not a secret that only the poor go to prison. Those who have money and clout particularly the political class buy justice. Law enforcement agencies such as the Economic and financial crimes commission (EFCC), and the Independent and Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) have prosecuted hundreds of high profile cases since their inception with little to show in terms of conviction and incarceration. Many of these cases are still pending in the courts, and a close inspection would show that the politicians, who made the laws, suspecting that the same laws might be used to try them, watered down sanctions to the point where they become meaningless. There is an overreliance on plea-bargaining in the criminal justice system to the extent that a convicted person for corruption for instance, would simply lose the proceeds from his criminal act, and walk free. What is needed is the amending of laws to provide stiffer penalties for offences. For example the use of mandatory sentencing that is popular in the United States could become useful if applied in Nigeria.

Adherence to the rule of law as an aspect of good governance requires that authorities respect and promote the fundamental rights of citizens, among other things. The Nigerian government presently has to pay huge sums of money as compensation to victims of police brutality and wanton killings. Indeed, the extrajudicial killing of the leader of the Boko Haram sect, Mohammed Yusuf in 2010 by the Nigerian Police contributed to the insurgency of the group against the Nigeria state. We shall return to this issue later. One of the damning verdicts against the People Democratic Party (PDP) that ruled Nigeria since 1999 is the culture of impunity they had developed. During the presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo, court orders were routinely ignored. Obasanjo also ordered the destruction of properties and killings of the people of Odi community in Bayelsa State in 1990; and Zaki-Biam in Benue State in revenge for the murder

of some soldiers in both communities. Odi community has been awarded a huge sum in damages and compensation by a Federal High Court sitting in Port Harcourt, Rivers State (Odiegwu, 2015).

Consensus Orientation

The willingness by stakeholders to come to agreement can contribute to peace building and nation building. This in turn requires the existence of conflict resolution frameworks to “nib in the bud” disagreeable issues before they result in open confrontation. There are traditional systems of conflict resolutions in Africa which if properly used would resolve festering social conflicts in Nigeria. In the body politic, the ineffectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms makes consensus building difficult. The dearth of internal mechanisms for conflict resolution in the political parties in Nigeria is indicative of the absence of consensus, with the result that politicians engage in cross-carpeting, shopping for suitable platforms to win elections. The situation does not bode well for Nigeria’s nascent democracy because it weakens the growth of political parties and other vital institutions. The incidences of cross-carpeting is also a reflection of the fact that Nigeria’s political parties are not ideologically based; but merely associations of those who seek power for personal interests.

Equity and Inclusiveness

This aspect of good-governance poses a particular challenge to pluralistic societies all over the world, and Nigeria is not an exception. With more than fifty ethnic groups and about 250 languages spoken, the problem of inclusiveness can be overwhelming. Good governance requires that groups in society get a sense of belonging in government policies and actions (UNESCAP, 2012). The federal character principle which can be found in section 14 (3) of the 1999 constitution tries to foster national unity and give every Nigerian citizen a sense of belonging. Although originally intended to guide the federal government in terms of appointment, promotions and the like, its beneficial effects have spread to the states and local governments. Its use in the selection of principal officers of the national assembly is presently being debated (Alli, 2015). Unlike in countries like the USA, the Federal Character Principle and its implementation is limited to the public sector. The frequency with which groups cry of marginalization does not mean that federal character is not working. It simply points to a deeper malaise in governance.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

Good governance requires efficient and effective use of government resources. In Nigeria, there is a big disconnection between government policy and implementation; and it is at the implantation stage that most wastes occur (Essoh, 2014). For instance, a country like Nigeria that produces crude oil but that has been importing refined petroleum products for the past 16 years is not prudent in the management of its resources. The cost of this monumental waste is enough to have built ten refineries in the country. The lack of a culture of maintenance does nothing to contain the waste. Although some wasteful spending is downright corruption because some of the money ends up in private pockets, but much is also due to profligacy – the erroneous belief that government’s resources do not belong to anybody and therefore, can be expended with careless abandon. The effectiveness of government policies and programmes should be measured by whether it reaches the target audience and they are benefiting from them. If a government programme takes a long time to reach its target, some of its intended benefits may become lost in the process.

Accountability

In modern democratic governance, public office is a trust. Public office holders are held accountable for their actions and inactions by the electorate. A warped version of this which is practiced in Nigeria is that, public office is held firstly to personal aggrandizement, and secondly, in the public interest. Politicians in the country feel a greater loyalty to the party on which platform they got elected into office, rather than to the electorates. As a result, the rate of cross-carpeting is quite high because the goal is locating a political party with a suitable platform and internal democracy to enable one actualise his or her dream of getting elected into office.

Transparency

A transparent government is one in which decisions are taken and implemented according to statutory laws and regulations. A contentious issue at the present time in the polity is that of fiscal transparency. Nigeria presently suffers leakages from her economy which include crude oil theft, smuggling of contraband, and official embezzlement. For instance, about \$2.1 billion which represents a part of the money that accrued to the excess crude account since 2013 has not been accounted for (Vanguard 2015 p.12). The implication is that this money was spent outside of the budgetary process and without approval from the National Economic Council as provided for by law. The Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency initiative (NEITI) has disclosed that the country lost about 160 million barrels of crude oil valued at \$13.7 billion to crude oil theft from 2009 – 2012 (Mernyi, 2015). Then there is the issue of about \$4.0 billion outstanding against the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) which should have been remitted to the federation account, but which the NNPC illegally failed to do. The former CBN Governor, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi made this revelation in Feb. 2014 but rather than be commended for his effort at transparency, he was suspended from office. A situation where revenue generating agencies of government pay government revenues into corporate accounts outside of the Consolidated Federation Account, in contravention of constitutional provisions and extant laws, is indicative of the absence of fiscal transparency, as well as of good governance.

A responsive government must be alive to the yearnings of its citizenry through consultative forums and other close interactions. Such responsive leadership must also take responsibility for policies that have gone awry. Political leaders in Nigeria rarely accept leadership failures. Rather they attribute such failures to the handiwork of fifth columnists and other enemies of the administration; thereby missing out on the opportunity to learn and make corrections.

Conceptual Framework

In his "Republic," Plato viewed justice as the most fundamental basis for ordered social life (Lear, 1992). For him, justice is the basis for peaceful social co-existence. And he defined justice as giving to each his/her due. Plato argued that every society requires three functions to achieve harmony (peace). The functions are: production, security, and political rule. Society also needs to promote certain aptitudes such as appetite, courage, and knowledge. Society also has to organize its citizens into roles as workers, soldiers, and rulers (the political class); according to their particular endowment. Justice according to Plato demands that society organize its citizens into these functional roles so that they can be productive and able to actualise their goals in life. This presupposes a social order based on reasoning that provides for all in society. Without good governance, life is akin to the Hobbessian state of nature, which

was conceived of as a state of “war, as is of every man against every man” (Hobbes 1651; cited in Tuck 1991, Priimae 2006).

When good governance is lacking in a nation’s affairs, life equally resemble Hobbes’s state of nature in another sense, which is that it is “nasty, brutish and short;” a situation where “a good man can be murdered in his sleep” (Hobbes 1651; cited in Tuck 1991, Harold 2011). Of necessity therefore, good governance implies a sort of social contract in which men surrender part of their right to self-defence to a “leviathan” a powerful force above all and to which all are subject, thus creating a more peaceful and orderly society. As in the nature of contracts, default on the part of any party renders it unenforceable and the parties return to the status quo ante.

For Immanuel Kant, there are conflicts between individualism (the asocial), and communalism (the social). The asocial tendencies can create chaos if left unchecked; while the social tendencies tend to bring about an atmosphere of complacency and stagnation if allowed. For Kant, human beings can avoid this problem through the use of reasoning in creating a state that caters for the interests of all citizens and communities concerned on a fair and equitable basis (Agbakoba, 2009). Again, this presupposes the application of good governance. The consequences of the absence of good governance are many. Indeed, the list is a long one. But the particular aspect which has great impact for this treatise is that, the absence of good governance tends to alienate individuals and groups (asocial and social) from the general order, leading to what Huntington (1992) calls a primacy of politics – a situation where individuals and groups retreat into their primordial cleavages to fight for rights as a result of the failure of the political system and institutions to guarantee and preserve such rights for them. Based on this conceptual framework, we shall examine four insurgent groups in the last 30 years in Nigeria. The argument is made that bad governance as reflected in the disdain for the rule of law, failure to protect and guarantee the rights of minorities, and sundry other grievances provided the “*causa belli*” for these groups to take up arms against the Nigerian state.

The rise in ethnic militias particularly in the period of democratic rule has been attributed to many factors. Firstly, democratic rule tends to widen the space for agitation, discontents, and cries of marginalization by social groups (Ikelebge, 2011). This is in contrast to military rule which by nature is authoritarian and repressive, and tends not to accommodate unnecessary grievances. In addition, democratic rule in Nigeria failed to address at least at the early stages, deep grievances that bordered on the national question (Ikelebge, 2011).

The nature of democratic practice and behaviour in Nigeria is such that has engendered intense, lawless and crude competition and struggles for power among the political class. The political elites have been known to fund, arm and use militias to intimidate opponents and build political platforms to secure electoral victory (Ikelegbe, 2011). The down side of this situation is that political militias are seldom disarmed or demobilised by their sponsors. They would then turn their attention to real and imaginary grievances as a way of remaining relevant. While the foregoing factors may help to explain superficially the emergence of militias and insurgencies, a deeper search and understanding would show that bad governance also provide the ingredients for the cries of discrimination, marginalization and other grievances. In the main, activities by Violent Non-State Actors (VNSAs) represent the nature of political conflicts in contemporary Nigeria. These actors tend to be national liberation movements and separatist forces seeking to secede from a given state (Gray, 2005). They adopt military tactics similar to those of guerrilla groups engaged in a war of attrition that aims at destroying the legitimacy of a ruling government (Thomas et al, 2005).

Oduduwa People Congress (OPC)

Militancy has been seen as a low-level military conflict characterised by small, lightly armed bands practicing guerrilla warfare from a rural base (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). A group becomes militant when it engages in the use of force or strong pressure to achieve social or political change. The Oduduwa Peoples Congress (OPC) was formed by some civil and democratic activists around 1994 as a response to the annulment of the 1993 presidential election presumably won by M.K.O. Abiola, a Yoruba, by the military. Abiola who was subsequently imprisoned by the late military dictator Sani Abacha, died in prison custody. The military claimed that Abiola died of a heart attack while protesters and democracy activists believed Abiola was murdered. At any rate, Yoruba protests became vociferous and violent soon afterwards. The OPC was established and structured as a militant vanguard of the Yoruba and Yoruba interests. Its main objectives are the monitoring, protection, defence and promotion of Yoruba interests and integrity; and to assert and fight for the rights of the Yoruba in general (Ikelegbe, 2011). The OPC therefore, exist majorly to oppose and resist perceived injustice and marginalization of the Yoruba (Abunyele, 2001). As a militant group, the OPC is not averse to using force and strong pressure to achieve its aims.

In early 1999, the dissident Oodua Liberation Movement (OLM), split from the Oduduwa People's Congress and became more militant in its philosophy and approach. It opposes Nigeria's federal system and advocated a separate homeland for the south-western part of the country. Since its emergence, the OPC has constituted a law unto itself particularly in the south-western part of the country where in some areas; it is seen as a de facto authority. There have been violent clashes between the OPC and other groups; and the authorities, which have resulted in huge losses of lives and properties (Ikelegbe, 2011).

Niger Delta Militancy

Militancy also refers to the behaviour or attitudes of people who are active in trying to bring about political change, often in ways that some people find unacceptable (BBC English Dictionary, 1972). The willingness to use force or violence to achieve political ends has characterized the activities of the Niger Delta Militants since it began operations almost a decade ago. In 1958, oil was first discovered at Oloibiri in present day Bayelsa state. In the ensuing years, the Nigerian state has derived much of its revenue from oil and gas production in the Niger Delta. During this period, successive dictatorships under the influence of corporate politics, signed laws that basically placed Nigeria's oil resources under the control of multinational oil companies such as chevron, Royal Dutch Shells, and ExxonMobil. Paradoxically, the Niger Delta region from where oil resources are used to develop other parts of the country has remained the least underdeveloped. It appears the goose that laid the golden egg was thrown to wild dogs. The people of the Niger Delta suffered environmental degradation due to unchecked pollution caused by the oil industry. Whole generations were denied the means of livelihood as environmental pollution, coupled with weak laws, affected both land and sea. The Niger Delta inhabitants who are mostly fishermen, daily saw their catches dwindle due to the effects of oil on aquatic life. Revenue from oil were rarely seen nor felt by the people who were suffering from its consequences.

As president of the Movement for the survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ken Saro Wiwa led a non-violent struggle against environmental degradation of the land and waters of Ogoni land and other parts of the Niger Delta. He and eight others were falsely accused of masterminding violence and executed by the military dictatorship of General Sani Abacha in 1995; an action

that provoked international outrage and earned Nigeria suspension from the Commonwealth of Nations for three years. The Niger Delta Militants who followed in Saro – Wiwa’s footsteps, having seen the governments’ reaction to non-violent activism, decided to adopt violence as resistance to what they regarded as unfair and unjust treatment of their people.

The Niger Delta Militancy was prosecuted by an amalgam of groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of The Niger Delta (MEND), and the Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force (NDPVF). At the height of the militancy, these groups routinely kidnapped and sometimes killed oil workers, destroyed oil pipes and installations, and generally engaged in guerrilla warfare against the Nigerian state. A general amnesty proclaimed by the federal government in 2008, led to a ceasefire and the disarming, demobilization, and rehabilitation of the militant groups. The combatants were made to undergo various skills training to facilitate their reintegration into society. The federal government also awarded huge amounts in pipeline protection contracts to former militant warlords; an act that was seen as mounting to inducements rather than substantially addressing the issues of poverty and underdevelopment on a general level. The amnesty programme has had issues bordering on implementation but on the whole has been seen as a good response to a challenging situation. However, just as one group surrenders to join the amnesty programme, other groups would emerge to continue the struggle. Militancy in the Niger Delta Region has therefore become a vicious cycle, taking a huge toll on the mineral resources and revenue from the region.

Boko Haram

Insurgency refers to attempts by a group to take political control of their country by force. An insurgent therefore, is a person who is fighting against the government or armed forces of his own country (Oxford Dictionary, 2010). For much of written history, insurgency has been used to serve diverse political grievances, agendas and motivation (Bagaji and Mulaj, 2014). Although the term has often been associated with communist insurgency, insurgent tactics have served Islamic fundamentalist as well as ethnic nationalists. Hoffman (1998:43) defined terrorism as “the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change.” Therefore, a group can be both insurgent and terrorist in its nature. Similar to the two groups already examined, the activities of the Islamic fundamentalist group Boko Haram became violent from 2009, following the extra judicial killing of Mohammed Yusuf, the sect’s leader by the Nigerian Police. A conspiracy theory has been woven around the event, raising such questions as who wanted Yusuf dead and for what purpose? (Anele, 2012). Boko Haram may have existed in Nigerian far longer than is generally believed. The existence of the sect has been traced to Egypt during the regime of Gamal Abdel Nasser (Ogumade, 2015). Their leader was executed by authorities there in 1970, an action that caused his followers to scatter to other parts of Africa. The sect came to Nigeria as a religious philosophy rather than as a political movement. But before Boko Haram, there was the Maitasine, an Islamic religious sect that preached a dubious theology and attracted large following in the northern parts of Nigeria. Before long, the sect had become a concern for the authorities and had to be forcibly put down by the military in 1984.

As an Islamic religious sect, Boko Haram was known as Jama’atu Ahliss-Sunnah Lidda’ Awaic Wal Jihad. Boko Haram is a philosophy that is embedded in a warped religious ideology of dislike for western ways of life; including democracy which is seen as a western idea (Ogumade, 2015). Boko means Western Education, Haram means prohibited or forbidden. Its doctrines include hatred for non-Moslems, moderate moslems, and opposition to secular society. The sect would like to return Islam to its original, undiluted 7th century form, devoid

of modern interpretations and ways of life. At the early stages of the insurgency, the sect targeted Christians and Christian places of worship for destruction. Gradually, the movement became hijacked by political and criminal elements bent on destabilizing the Nigerian state. In 2013, the much respected former emir of Kano, late Alhaji Ado Bayero narrowly escaped being assassinated. The following year, the centuries old central mosque in Kano was invaded by a suicide bomber, leaving hundreds death and wounded. The deft use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by the terrorist group has been very successful because these are small explosives which can be concealed in clothing, hand-bags, and luggage without detection. At the height of the insurgency, Boko Haram captured and controlled large swathes of areas in the north-eastern parts of the country.

The Boko Haram insurgency has caused massive disruption in the economy and lives of people in the northern part of Nigeria, particularly the North East. Presently, there are internally displaced persons (IDPs) in camps in places like Maiduguri, Kano, Abuja, Mubi and Edo state. Whole villages became razed in Boko Haram attacks and men, women and children are indiscriminately killed. Of particular concern is the tendency of the group to hypnotise, brainwash, and use young women as suicide bombers. Equally disturbing is the number of children rendered orphans by the terrorists. At the last count, these children number around 1 million in different camps and settlements around the country (Adejokun 2015, Ebegbulem 2015). In 2013, the group detonated bombs at a crowded bus terminus in Nyanya, a suburb of Nigeria's capital. Hundreds were killed and others wounded and maimed. Nigeria's national emergency management has been stretched to the limits due to the needs of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPS) which range from food, shelter, clothing, health needs and education for the children. Both the US and UN have designate Boko Haram a terrorist group. The link between Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) as well as the Al Shabab in the Arabian Peninsula and Somalia had been established since 2011 when Al Qaeda publicly identified Boko Haram as an organization it could do business with. More than 3000 people have been killed by the insurgent group since it became active in 2009 (Guardian, Nov. 21, 2013).

Biafra Agitation

In the south-eastern part of Nigeria, militancy took a new turn. The Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MOSSOP) and a group that calls itself the Indigenous People of Biafra are at the forefront of the renewed agitation for Biafra. In 1967, the Igbo who comprised the majority ethnic group in the south-eastern part of Nigeria, declared secession and attempted to pull out of the Nigerian federation. This was as a result of what they perceived as unfair treatment by their fellow countrymen, particularly in the Muslim north, who organized pogroms, killed and maimed the Igbo who resided in the north following political instability that claimed the lives of northern politicians. The renowned Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe maintained that state machineries in the northern part of the country were deployed to execute the pogroms. Yet nobody was arrested nor prosecuted for such heinous crimes against unarmed and defenceless civilians (Achebe, 2012:82). Much has been written about the civil war that followed this attempt at secession particularly the decision by the Federal Government to block relief materials from entering the rebel enclave. It is estimated that about a thousand people a day died during this period and at the height of the economic blockade, more than fifty thousand civilians mostly, babies, women and children died every month (Achebe, 2012:210).

When the Biafran war ended, about 3.0 million people had died in the conflict (Achebe, 2012:226). The Nigerian government's declaration of "No victor, No vanquished" sounded

hollow in the face of the realities on the ground. The Igbo had lost land, houses, and savings. But the group made remarkable progress since the end of the war and mainly due to their industriousness and business acumen. They are to be found all over Nigeria and beyond, engaged in one business activity or the other. As a result, they tend to get caught in the cross-fire of sectarian violence and xenophobia; and often suffer the highest casualties (Anele, 2015). The consequences of the Nigerian civil war are many and the Igbo often complain about marginalization and being treated as second-class citizens. Since the return to civil rule in 1999, government at the centre has made efforts to address issues of Igbo concern. Many from the Igbo ethnic group were appointed into cabinet level posts in government ranging from the Chief of Army Staff, Inspector General of Police, to the Co-ordinating Minister of the Economy which position is similar to that of a Prime Minister.

As have been pointed out, democratic rule tends to widen the space for agitation, and discontents by social groups (Ikelebe, 2011). The agitation for Biafra threatens national security (Vanguard, 2015: 16). In the present situation, Igbo political leaders and the apex Igbo socio-cultural organization Ohaneze Ndigbo have maintained a studied silence thereby, making the present agitation appear like youthful exuberance, undertaken by a generation that does not know the horrors of war. It has been argued that the present agitation is not unconnected with the neglect and dearth of infrastructure in the south-eastern part of the country where the Igbo reside. And the aloofness with which President Muhammadu Buhari treats issues of Igbo concern ostensibly on the grounds that he did not receive much votes from the Igbo, does not help matters (Anele, 2015). Obi (2015:12) asks a rhetorical question: "Do the Igbo want out or do they want a better Nigeria?"

According to Ajani (2015:13):

Whatever grievances the Igbos (sic) are crying about today, many parts of Nigeria typify that neglect. But there is a nexus between good governance, rule of law and prosperity. Which is why good governance, justice and equality would always be a sine-qua-non for development and prosperity.

It is safe to say that the Igbo want a better Nigeria, one which can only be achieved through good governance, democracy and the rule of law. The present agitation serves to bring to public consciousness the fundamental disorder of a society that is badly governed, and that has failed to meet the yearnings of its people.

CONCLUSION

Good governance is a continuum. It is the bedrock of modern democratic governance. All the nations that have made progress today have done so through respect for the rule of law, strengthening of critical institutions of governance, promotion of the rights and well-being of its citizens. Many of the wealthy democracies of the world today have gotten so because good governance is at the core of their being. As a result, they are relatively stable and tend to enjoy long periods of sustainable peace. Indeed, the four cases of militancy, insurgency, and insurrection that are examined in this paper show that bad governance, epitomized by weak

institutions, disrespect for the rule of law; neglect of the fundamental rights and well-being of citizens are part of the reasons for these conflicts. These low-intensity conflicts continue to pose a threat to national security as well as constitute obstacles to sustainable peace and development in Nigeria.

Many factors have been identified as contributing to the high incidence of conflicts in low developing economies (LDEs). These include poverty (Collier 2006, Draman 2003); widening of the democratic space (Ikelegbe, 2012), elite conspiracy (Anele, 2012). In the main, these factors are aspects of bad governance and any attempt to exclusively focus on them will miss the larger picture. Poor countries are poor because they have dysfunctional social models (Collier, 2013). This helps to explain the current wave of migration from badly governed, war-torn countries to the affluent, stable and rich countries of east and Western Europe. Presently, Europe is trying to deal with the influx of these refugees on its shores. These immigrants embark on desperate journeys to avail themselves the benefits of good governance and the rule of law, which they could not get in their home countries (The Economist, 2013: 86). In the last quarter of 2015, the global community was mandated to set in motion a new development agenda, since the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) would have expired. The post 2015 Development Agenda will focus on addressing the challenges of poverty eradication and inequality between and within countries (Sun, 2015: 24). Promoting and entrenching good governance is indispensable if these goals are to be achieved, particularly in the low developing economies.

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