CRISIS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE GRASSROOTS: INTERROGATING THE MISHAP OF MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS, LACK OF CONSULTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE VERTICAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN IMO STATE.

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ABSTRACT: *Governance is good when the authorities ensure greater happiness for greater number. Nevertheless, it is bad if the opposite is the case. The study set to determine the extent to which neglect of important attributes of good governance such as accountability, consultation and de-corrupt leadership have affected effective service delivery to the grassroots in Imo state. Primary data was sourced through the use of structured questionnaire, administered to 233 sample size, which was determined via Taro Yamani formula from population of 558. Hypotheses were tested with the aid of Spearman's rank Correlation and simple regression. The study adopted Efficiency Services Theory (Mackenzie 1954). Findings show that; misappropriation of funds for grassroots development; lack of consultation and accountability proved worst setback to good governance and service delivery at the grassroots in Imo state. Therefore, the study recommended inter alia, that participatory governance and accountability should be prioritized at the grassroots.*

KEYWORDS: good governance; service delivery; accountability; efficiency service; grassroots

INTRODUCTION

Good governance and service delivery are two sides of a coin. Any state whose leadership is driven by positive forces of prosperity and good quality of life for the citizens especially at the grassroots, fundamentally, construes good governance aright. In other words, good governance is akin to the concept of utilitarianism (Mbachu, 1998; Westacott, 2018).It trickles down hope of economic survival, politico-administrative inclusivity, de-corruption and improved standard of living for its grassroots population while bad governance dims the rays of hope for socioeconomic and political survival of the plebs. The fundamental problem is that human existence in most rural areas in Nigeria is confronted on daily basis, with absolute dearth of basic needs of life. Infrastructure and social amenities such as quality and affordable education, good roads, rural electrification, quality health care delivery, cottage industries, security of life and assets, portable

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water, and recreational facilities which ought to be indicators of good governance are regrettably elusive. Unprecedented neglect of core attributes of good governance such as accountability, consultation and zero tolerance to corruption appear to have exacerbated the infrastructural decay identified (Nnaeto & Okoroafor, 2016.p.166).

Good governance interests itself in providing such necessities that improve the standard of living of the grassroots and to establish and sustain effective line of communication by way of consultation, participation and accountability to ensure mutual inclusivity and objectivity in the management of commonwealth. Donald in Heady (2001.p.428) opined that "good governance is transformation of governance." That is to say, any governance devoid of transformative ability to improve the standard of living of the citizens in a sustainable fashion cannot be termed good governance. The study shall therefore construes good governance as sustained effort to formulate and implement transformational policies aimed at empowering the grassroots for sustainable development and participation by the greater number. Good governance deploys development of administration and administration of development as its tools for sustainable development through service delivery at the grassroots.

Theoretical Framework
The study adopted Efficiency Services Theory (EST), propounded by Mackenzie (1954).It underlined that efficient service delivery to the grassroots should preoccupy the resources, powers, and attention of the government and must be done to a standard acceptable to the national inspectorate. This approach explains that it is the statutory right of the public at the grassroots to have access to life-enhancing facilities like hospitals, good road, schools, electricity, portable water, functional security etc. The theory expresses the following tenets;
 1. Provision of opportunity for political participation to the rural people.
2. Helps to ensure efficient service delivery to the rural people which is their major source of livelihood and development.
3. Express a tradition of opposition to an overly centralized government. This simply means yearning for local autonomy (Kafle & Karkee, 2003).

Statement of the problem
Government of every state, especially in the democratic dispensation, has both statutory and ethical responsibility to embark on formulation and effective implementation of public policies aimed at providing sustainable and universally acceptable benchmark for human existence .It is a common observation that policies of government of most developing countries lack the transformative capability to ensure good governance and service delivery to the citizens. The tangible and intangible resources for rural development tend to get missing, reduced or channeled to areas not originally appropriated for. Highhandedness, non-consultative leadership style and blatant disregard for accountability and openness appear to often frustrate actualization of governance at the grassroots. Indicators of good governance such as devolution of power and functions, social amenities, sustained economic empowerment, employment opportunities, good roads, credit

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facility, rural electrification, good and affordable healthcare, education and security of life and property are in calamitous condition. Consequently, standard of living and life expectancy are at the very low ebb. Besides, the scenario has brought about hunger/malnutrition, unemployment, ill health, high mortality rate, insecurity, poor standard of education, poor school enrollment and high school dropout, disease, and avoidable death at the grassroots.

METHODOLOGY

The study made us of survey research design. The target population was 558 and they include government officials and citizens at the grassroots. These people are actors at the grassroots. Sample size of 233 was obtained from population of 558 through the adoption of Taro Yamani formula. Primary collection of data was done through administration of questionnaire while secondary data was collected through library sources. Questionnaire was drafted using Likert five point response scales. Further, Spearman's Rank Correlations and Simple Regression were adopted for testing of hypothesis.

DETERMINATION OF SAMPLE SIZE

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Where; n = samples size

N = population (558)

E = Estimated standard error (5%)

From the above;

$$S = \frac{558}{1 + 558 (0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{558}{1 + 558 (0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{558}{2.395}$$

$$= 232.985$$

$$= 232$$

∴ S = 233

Distribution and Returned Questionnaire

Respondents/Raters		Questionnaire Distributed	Percent distributed	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Applicant	32	13.7	13.7	13.7
	Public servant	119	51.1	51.1	64.8
	self employed	44	18.9	18.9	83.7
	Retiree	38	16.3	16.3	100.0
	Total	233	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey 2021

Statement of Hypotheses
H₁: Misappropriation of funds meant for service delivery to the grassroots does not have any relationship with the quality of life at the grassroots in Imo state.
H₂: Non-consultation of rural people in grassroots governance does not affect their participation in grassroots affairs in Imo state.
H₃: Poor accountability is not significantly responsible for the poor service delivery to the grassroots in Imo state.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Good governance
Two types of governance are in existence; good or bad governance. The good one is akin to the practice of utilitarianism because it seeks or advocates policy actions capable of ensuring happiness or pleasure for the greater number (Tardi, 2021). It involves basically two processes; decisions making and execution of formulated decisions. When these processes are flawed, the consequence is bad governance. Good governance entails adoption of best politico-administrative practice, proactively deployed in the business of government to primarily ensure the delivery of required services to the people. In order to achieve the crucial task of nation-building, politics and administration must be revitalized and channeled to purse uniform objective, democracy must be refocused, and governance must be radically redesigned to provide the administration that can guarantee development (Nnaeto & Okoroafor 2016,p.163). Good governance is construed as proper, clear predictable legal framework, accountability, transparency, and information on the management of national affairs (Leftwich, 1994). Besides, it has been described as a genuine and sustainable response to the needs of the population such as providing opportunities in education, health, and social welfare, good and affordable housing, equitable distribution of development projects including roads and others infrastructural development (Sebudubudu,2010) .According to Fritz and Menocal in (Gisselquist, 2012), good governance is akin to the concept of developmental state, that is a state that possesses the vision, leadership, and capacity to bring about a positive (socioeconomic) transformation of society within a condensed period of time.

Grassroots: what it is and who they are?

The term "grassroots" focuses on common citizens that made up important political and economic groups usually found at the rural areas of a state (Dictionary.com). Thus, whenever we talk about grassroots development, it means positioning the citizens at the localities by socioeconomic empowerment through which they will attain self-sufficiency and in turn become agents or partners with government in self development (Okereke, 2003). The grassroots movement embodies collective action usually from the local strata to effect a positive change within the local scene and beyond. It is usually not power structure-conscious as it operates a bottom-up instead of top-down decision making process consistent with conservative power structures(Wkipedia, n,d). Dada, the chairmanship aspirant of Ijero Local Government Area of Ekiti State maintained that "grassroots holds the key to the development of the community and the state at large (Adeleye, 2017). Besides, in a lecture titled "Grassroots development, key to national development, Arogundade highlighted on the roles of the grassroots in national development and implored the media to focus more on the grassroots because if they do, development will come to the communities, thereby helping the people and the nation (Gbenga,2016).In its manifesto number 7.3, the Grassroots Development Party of Nigeria (GDPN), addressing issues of local government and grassroots states *inter alia* "local authorities must ensure the delivery of services and amenities such as roads, clinics, schools at the very local or community level. These must therefore, be properly resourced to enable them to deliver on that all important mandate" (GDPN, 2017).

Select definitions of good governance from individual multilaterals

United Nations Organization(UNO)	'In the community of nations, governance is considered "good" and "democratic" to the degree in which a country's institutions and processes are transparent. Its institutions refer to such bodies as parliament and its various ministries. Its processes include such key activities as elections and legal procedures, which must be seen to be free of corruption and accountable to the people. A country's success in achieving this standard has become a key measure of its credibility and respect in the world. Good governance promotes equity, participation, pluralism, transparency, accountability and the rule of law, in a manner that is effective, efficient and enduring. In translating these principles into practice, we see the holding of free, fair and frequent elections, representative legislatures that make laws and provide oversight, and an independent judiciary to interpret those laws. The greatest threats to good governance come from corruption, violence and poverty, all of which undermine transparency, security, participation and fundamental freedoms'.
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	'Good governance refers to governing systems which are capable, responsive, inclusive, and transparent. All countries, developed and developing, need to work continuously towards better governance. Good, or democratic governance as we call it at UNDP, entails meaningful and inclusive political participation. Improving

		governance should include more people having more of a say in the decisions which shape their lives'
African Development Bank (ADB)		'Good governance is defined in several ways. According to the 2000 Bank Group Policy on Good Governance, governance is "a process referring to the manner in which power is exercised in the management of the affairs of a nation, and its relations with other nations". p. 2. The policy identifies the key elements of good governance as: accountability, transparency, participation, combating corruption, and the promotion of an enabling legal and judicial framework'

Source: Gisselquist, 2012

Test of hypotheses and analysis

H₁: Misappropriation of funds meant for service delivery does not have any relationship with the quality of life at the grassroots in Imo state.

The results of the correlation analysis used for the above hypothesis is presented in table 1 as follows;

TABLE 1. Spearman's Rank Correlations

			misappropriation of funds for service delivery	Quality of life
Spearman's rho	Diversion of funds for service delivery	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.806[**]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
			233	233
	Quality of life	Correlation Coefficient	-.806[**]	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	233	233

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 1 shows that the spearman's rank correlation is -0.806 while the probability is 0.000. This shows that the two variables are significantly associated. There is a negative relationship between diversion of funds for service delivery and quality of life at the grassroots, thus we reject the null hypotheses that there is no significant relationship between diversion of funds for service delivery funds and quality of life at the grassroots in Imo State, Nigeria.

To verify the relationship between diversion of funds and quality of life, the regression analysis in **table 2** confirmed the negative and significant relationship (diversion coefficient = -0.721 and

probability =0.001). The overall regression (F=250.77) is also statistically significant. This shows that 1% increase in diversion of funds for service delivery will lead to 72.1% increase in poor quality of life. Therefore, the more funds meant for service delivery at the grassroots are diverted by government authorities, the higher the rate of poor quality of life at the grassroots in Imo state.

Table 2 Regression Coefficients[a]

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constan)		3.765	.000	.226	.723
Diversion	-.721	15.834	.000	.655	.841

a.   Dependent Variable: poor quality of life

H₂: lack of consultation of rural people in grassroots governance does not affect citizens' participation in the grassroots affairs in Imo state.

The results of the correlation analysis used for the above hypothesis is presented in table 3. as follows;

Table 3 .Spearman's Rank Correlations

			Lack of consultation.	Non-participation in governance
Spearman's rho	Lack of consultation.	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.724[**]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	233	233
	Non-participation in governance.	Correlation Coefficient	-.724[**]	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	233	233

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 3 shows that the spearman's rank correlation is 0.724 while the probability is 0.000 showing that the two variables are significantly associated. Thus there is a negative relationship between lack of consultation and non-participation in governance at the grassroots in Imo state. People at the grassroots are not actively involved in the governance at the communities because they are not usually duly consulted when making and implementing policies that affect their welfare.

To verify the relationship the regression analysis in **table 4** confirmed the negative and significant relationship (lack of consultation -0.725 and probability =0.000). The overall regression (F=250.77) is also statistically significant. Thus 1% increase in lack of consultation will lead to 72.5% decrease in citizens' participation in governance at the grassroots. The more the citizens are not consulted, the more citizens' non-participation in the governance at the grassroots increases.

Table 4. regression Coefficients[a]

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)		13.009	.000	1.565	2.123
Lack of consultation	.725	16.004	.000	.727	.931

Dependent Variable: non-participation in governance.

H₃: lack of accountability is not significantly responsible for poor service delivery at the grassroots of Imo state.

The results of the correlation analysis used for the above hypothesis is presented in table 4.8 as follows:

Table 5. Spearman's Rank Correlations

			Lack of accountability	Poor service delivery
Spearman's rho	Poor accountability/ openness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.208[**]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
		N	233	233
	Poor service delivery	Correlation Coefficient	-.208[**]	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N	233	233

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 5 shows that the spearman's rank correlation is -0.208 while the probability is 0.001 showing that the two variables are significantly associated. Negative relationship between poor accountability and poor service delivery Imo State exists, thus we reject the null hypothesis that poor accountability is not significantly responsible for poor service delivery at the grassroots of Imo State.

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To verify the relationship, the regression analysis in **table 6** confirmed that there is no significant relationship (poor accountability/openness=0.126 and probability =0.000). The overall regression (F=256.118) is also statistically significant. This shows that 1% increase in poor accountability/openness by state authority will lead to 12.6% decrease in provision of basic services at the rural areas of Imo State. In other words, the higher the issues of poor accountability/openness, the lower the provision of basic amenities at the grassroots of Imo State.

Table 6 regression Coefficients[a]

Model	Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)		24.314	.000	2.477	2.913
Basic amenities	-.126	-2.932	.005	.325	.003

Dependent Variable: basic amenities.

FINDINGS

In view of data presented and analyzed, the following findings were made;
1. The study revealed that misappropriation of funds meant for service delivery to the rural areas is a fundamental challenge to good governance in Imo State
2. Lack of grassroots consultation and participation nullifies possibility of running people oriented, participatory and development based government.
3. Finally, accountability which remains the hallmark of good governance is at a crossroad, thus encouraging corruption rather than curbing it.

Recommendation
Following the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;
1. Constitution backed restructuring is expedient to accord fiscal, political and administrative autonomy to the grassroots, to limit state government fête in the purse of the grassroots.
2. State authorities should ensure effective participatory management at the grassroots so that the people will have the opportunity to be part of how they are governed.
3. Accountability should be considered the leading principles in the vertical intergovernmental relations in the state. Its consequences will either correct or keep away corrupt officials from government at the grassroots.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the obstacles to the actualization of good governance at the grassroots in Imo State, with particular reference to the consequences of misappropriation of public funds; de-

emphasis on accountability and non-consultation. For efficiency, the channel of the delivery must be free from hitches from both internal and external sources. Our findings include that there is high incidence of encroachment on the funds meant for improving standard of living at the grassroots in Imo state. Besides, citizens at the grassroots decline active participation in politics and governance at the grassroots levels because the state authority does not consult them when making and implementing policies that affect their existence. Problem of poor accountability and lack of openness on the part of state government officials who administer the grassroots is fundamentally responsible for high incidence of corruption which does negatively significantly affect good governance and service delivery at the grassroots. It is therefore necessary grassroots be made de facto administrators of the grassroots.

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