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**PRESIDENT GOODLUCK EBELE JONATHAN LEADERSHIP STYLE AND
DEMOCRATIC ADVANCEMENT IN NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

The major challenges for Nigeria and Africa are summersault, inconsistent policies and unpredictable leadership. Over the years, successive governments have introduced various programs, conferences and amendments to the constitution and political system in a bid to improve Nigeria's leadership, growth and governance. The present study examined the relationship between Nigerian leadership dynamics and democratic development with reference to the administration of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (2010-2015). Jonathan's political decisions, ways of administration and style of leadership had impacts on Nigeria's institutional development, electoral processes, democratic consolidation and political stability. The qualitative analysis is based on secondary sources including books, academic journals, government publications, policy papers and reports of national and international organisations. The Jonathan administration made a significant contribution to Nigeria's democratic development as demonstrated by electoral reforms, judicial independence, constitutional governance, relatively credible elections and the historic peaceful transfer of power after Jonathan's loss of the 2015 presidential election. Methodology and scope were analysed using descriptive analysis and secondary data sources (text books, published papers, journals and internet resources). The report noted that Nigeria and Africa can solve their socioeconomic and political problems if political leaders and their followers would throw away all ethnic politics and obsolete wealth accumulation. It recommends strengthening democratic institutions, promoting transparency and accountability, improving electoral integrity, addressing insecurity, and encouraging leadership that prioritizes national interest over partisan considerations to deepen democratic governance and national development.

Keywords: Administration, Democracy, Development, Election, Governance

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INTRODUCTION

The substance of democracy is called a democracy in which the results of elections are in the interest of the people and express their will. This form of democracy is sometimes called a working democracy. Democracy can make society better. But non-democratic settings have also seen advances. All the civilisations on earth wish to progress, it is believed. Progression is all about improving the living standards of the people (Shaapera & Ayatse, 2018. Ogbogu (2012) notes that the constitution does not outlaw women's active participation in the Nigerian government and that democratic governance is a legal right of all citizens. The increased participation of women in politics should strengthen the commitment of the Nigerian government to democratic governance which by definition embraces pluralism and includes all groups.

Leadership has been a major obstacle to real democratisation. Some of the political elite have struggled to make an effective contribution to national politics. Years of political misrule and bad governance since political independence of the country, characterised by civilian administrations and military dictatorships, had led to political demobilisation, human underdevelopment and economic sterility in the country. This means that a large percentage of the people are poor (Fayemi, 2009). Thus, with the return of democracy in 1999, Nigerians hoped that the new generation of political leaders and democratic government would hasten the country's prosperity. The political leadership was expected to deal with the nation's socio-economic and political

problems which include unemployment, insecurity, poor governance, poverty, corruption and a corrupt electoral system (Orji, 2014). Some of these problems seem to be unsolvable and are worsening. Nigerians are very angry and disappointed that the promises to resolve the ongoing political instability, social unrest and economic problems facing the country are not being fulfilled. Much of the public anger has been directed at the widespread political corruption and dishonesty that some interest groups have exploited for their particular ends. So, for all its hugeness and material and human resources, Nigeria is still in the doldrums as a future nation. This is contrary to the expectations of the founders of Nigeria who had envisioned their country as an African bastion of democratic administration and a beacon of hope at independence (Oronsaye, 2006).

The problem of leadership has been an obstacle to real democratisation, since some members of the political elite are not interested in the politics of the country. But the democratic content of the nation is shockingly low due to widespread corruption, election fraud and manipulation, the absence of a stable and reliable political party system, electoral violence etc. The study is on the causes of Nigerian democracy's failure to produce competent leaders. Every culture and social system on the planet has its own brand of democracy. Today the word "democracy" is used all over the world.

It has received more attention as it is regarded as an important factor in the growth, development and political stability of

any democratic society. What is true democracy? Different forms of democracy have developed over the years. There is no single, widely accepted definition of democracy. Scholars in both classical and modern political studies have put forward many theories of democracy (Erunke, 2012). According to Almond et al. (2004), democracy is a form of government in which the most important political leaders are selected through free and fair elections and are legally accountable. It also provides residents with a range of important civil and political rights.

In a democracy the ruling class has regular constitutional opportunities of being replaced. This social process allows most people to have influence over important decisions through selection of candidates for political office. Dada, Udoaka and Dada (2013) describe democracy as a type of institutional structure or political system for making legislative, administrative, and political decisions. What characterises the democratic regime is, he says, the competition for the vote of the people. Erunke (2012) explains democracy as 'a system of elected representative government under the rule of law in which the most important groups in the population participate in the political process and have access to effective representation in the practice of making decisions of government, that is, of the allocation of scarce resources.'

Democratic governance is the process of organising direct mass and popular participation in matters that concern their general welfare and the science of the

construction of government at all levels. It is not surprising, thus, that democratic administration involves protection of human rights, holding elections for various government positions, and the participation of the public in the choice of political leaders. Democratic governance requires public participation. But it also requires the social and economic well-being of the people. Furthermore, the relationship between democratic governance and human rights and the ability to provide and sustain the socioeconomic welfare of the populace is critically linked to the evolution and development of democratic institutions (Abbass, 2007).

In the fourth republic of Nigeria, democracy was introduced. This is the first time in the democratic history of the country that there has been a civilian-to-civilian transition and oddly enough, there has been no military intervention since the establishment of the Fourth Republic. But it is a big symbolic victory for democracy. However, with the enthronement of democratic rule in 1999, most Nigerians were optimistic that the system would breed a democratic culture that would lead to constitutionalism, respect for human rights, rule of law, accountability, transparency, public participation and improvement in the socio-economic well-being of the country. Salisu and Avidime (2018) stated that the optimism of Nigerians was a consequence of their realisation that the ruling class and political leadership failed to put in place democratic governance in the former republics with negative impacts on economic development, public welfare and quality of government. And more military action blew it up. Since the restoration of democracy on May 29, 1999, the democratic

experience has not been sullied by military adventurism in politics. Unfortunately, the system has had a very limited impact on the socio-political development of the country. Democracy has not yet the perfect democratic brain.

Salisu and Avidime (2018) noted that the militarisation of the country's civic and electoral process has weakened democratic governance. Democratic governance in the Fourth Republic has largely failed to provide the development, democratic dividends and the basic minimum of governance standards (Omodia and Aliu, 2013). The authors further argue that the failure of democratic governance is due to the intolerance of dissenting opinions by the government, as well as the persistent problems of food insecurity, unemployment, security threats, lack of portable water, lack of access to high quality healthcare, inadequate road networks, inadequate education, among others. The continued poverty of the nation may also be responsible for the constant insecurity created by armed robbery, kidnappings, theft of crude oil, militancy and insurgency which the democratic government has not done much to solve. There has been some anti-democratic action by the Nigerian government. As rightly observed by Aniekwe and Kushie (2011), violence has been a hallmark of elections since the inception of the Nigerian Fourth Republic.

The crimes during the elections of 1999, 2003 and 2007 included theft of ballot boxes, political killings of candidates, bombings, murders, maiming of voters, arson and abduction of election workers. The next elections of 2011, 2015 and 2019 have a lot in common with the three elections

mentioned above. They include the militarisation of politics, massive electoral fraud, and a rise in ethno-religious conflicts. According to Omodia and Aliu (2013), the crisis of legitimacy in the Fourth Republic is a consequence of the failure of democratic governance to meet the expectations of the majority of Nigerians. This is breeding mutual distrust as the public is losing faith in the government's ability to ameliorate the security and well-being of Nigerians. Some Nigerians are publicly exhibiting devotion, obedience and commitment to ethno-religious and micro-nationalist groups in a bid to defend themselves not the Nigerian State. This unhealthy competition has at times resulted in violent clashes among the country's ethno-religious socio-economic groups (Omodia and Aliu, 2013). These include the many ethno-religious and communal conflicts that have bedevilled the states of Plateau, Kaduna, Kano, Nassarawa, Taraba, Imo and Enugu since the return of democratic administration; the Niger Delta militancy; the Boko Haram insurgency; and the nomadic killer-herdsmen. The nature of political disputes has changed once again. The country has many registered political parties. Election fraud has increased.

Another way the progress made since the formation of democracy may make Nigeria happy is despite the challenges faced in the nation's democratic government. Salisu and Avidime (2018) observed that the country has experienced some political and economic changes since the return of democratic governance. A few of these achievements can be credited to governmental policies and actions that have been backed by the democratic climate. These include the new salary scale for public servants, the debt

forgiveness the Olusegun Obasanjo administration was able to secure for the country and the deregulation of the communication sector that led to the birth of the Global System for Mobile Telecommunication (GSM). Other democratic victories include the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act, some respect for the rule of law and the seven-point economic growth plan of late Umar Musa Yar'adua. Other gains of democratic administration are the establishment of nine federal colleges and the promise by Goodluck Jonathan to deregulate the downstream sector of the petroleum industry (Igba, 2012). Other examples of how President Muhammadu Buhari's administration has made democracy possible include the National Social Investment Programs, signing of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) and the provision of financial autonomy to the country's legislative and judicial arms of government. This would enhance the separation of powers in the political system, aside from the enactment of the Electoral Acts of 2022, to ensure free, fair and credible elections and to entrench the democratic culture and ethos of the country.

Perspectives on the leadership process

Leadership is one of the five functions of management. People of all ages have experienced leadership problems (Schermerhorn et al., 1988). Not until F.W. did some serious, methodical research into leadership in the days of Taylor. Leadership has been the subject of a huge amount of research, but there is still debate about what leadership is and how it can be measured. There is a huge number of researches, books,

articles and communications published and presented at national and worldwide scientific conferences in an attempt to define leadership. In the last 20 years there has been a great increase in the amount of literature on leadership. Leadership is generally viewed by most experts as a social influence process in which subordinates willingly participate to achieve organisational goals (Vag et al., 2006, p. 3).

Leadership is described as “the ability to influence persons and groups to co-operate in the achievement of organisational goals” (Mescon et al, 1988, p. 464). W. I. Tannenbaum, and F. and F. Washler, W. I. But leadership is a process of social influence, where the leader seeks the voluntary participation of followers as a reward for accomplishing the objectives (Massarick). Leadership is a two way communication process, sometimes in choosing a goal or set of objectives. Hello, Koontz and C. O'Donnell define leadership in the following way: “the ability to realise a vision conceived by others, efficiently using all available power resources” (Vihanskii et al., 1998, p. 408). According to Koontz et al (1980, p. 490), leadership is “the art of influencing others to voluntarily cooperate in the achievement of group goals”.

Leadership is the ability to motivate and guide people or groups toward a common objective. It's not just about authority; it's about vision, communication, empathy, and the ability to inspire others. Good leaders lead by example and earn the confidence to influence people, not by coercion and force. For centuries, leadership has inspired

institutions, movements, and individuals, driving progress and innovation. Business and politics and social and personal development in our fast-changing world all depend on good leadership. Getting a sense of what it means to lead with integrity, purpose, and compassion through understanding the characteristics and styles of leadership. To get a feel for the concept, the researcher first examined some of the most popular definitions of leadership. The study and analysis of these definitions identify that the most popular concepts of leadership are focused on human characteristics and attributes. Great leaders have defined leadership because they have their own opinion. Here are some definitions of leadership:

Leadership is the ability to get a thing done through the help of other people. Prentice, W.C.H. "Understanding Leadership." Harvard Business Review, vol. (September/October 1961). A leader is a person who manages to motivate his human colleagues to achieve some goals (39, no. 5, p. 143). As W.A. Cohen said, "Leadership is the capacity to induce others to work enthusiastically to accomplish any task, goal, or project." (The Art of a Leader, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990, p. 9) Leadership is the art of getting people to work together for common goals. (Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z., The Leadership Challenge, San Francisco: JosseyBass, 1995, p. 30) Leadership is when a person leads a group of people to a common goal. "Leadership is the ability to translate vision into reality." Leadership is defined by Warren G. Bennis (as cited in Vecchio, 1988) as the ability to influence others beyond the power of a formal position.

"Leadership is the influential increment over and above the mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization." As Katz and Kahn (1978, p. 528) put it, Ambition is not the same as the ineffable quality of leadership. There are certain people who seem to create a magnetic field to which other people will respond like iron filings in a magnetic field. A leader is always driven either to accomplish a goal or to improve himself. Often people who inspire others are reacted to and copied. The best leaders have a very high drive to achieve. They are passionate and derive a lot of personal pleasure from what they do. (Iain Dale) How a single person (or leadership group) gets a group of people to work toward goals that are shared by both the leader and his/her followers. John Gardner, it is the reciprocal process by which individuals having specified goals and beliefs mobilize a variety of political, economic, and other resources in a competitive and conflictual environment to achieve goals that leaders and followers are convinced of, individually or collectively. James McGregor Burns. Leadership is the process of influencing the task goals and strategies, the commitment and compliance in task behaviour, and the group maintenance and identification to achieve the task goals. (Gary Yoke)

Importance of leadership

Some scholars define leadership as a leader's ability to motivate his team members to significantly contribute to the achievement of an objective. Davis (1967, p. 96) states that "leadership is the ability to inspire in the collaborators the dream toward which they will strive, stimulating them with the energy

necessary to their movement." Kotter of Harvard Business School defines leadership as the ability to lead a group of people without resorting to coercion. The ability to convince others to achieve significant and challenging goals via both individual and group communication is known as leadership. In order to accomplish a shared goal, at least two people must collaborate throughout the leadership process. Leadership is all about the spirit of cooperation, or people's desire to think, feel, and act together to achieve a common goal. There are four ways to foster team spirit. These include developing procedures for participatory decision-making, having a clear purpose and goals that these individuals follow, being highly motivated to maximize each person's contribution to the accomplishment of the common goals, and developing mutual trust. "Leadership is about the style of leadership and the climate it creates." (Vagu et al. 2006, page 7) These skills include being observant, recognizing that people's motivation fluctuates based on the circumstances, teaching followers how to concentrate their efforts to accomplish a goal, and increasing and responding to motivations.

The core of leadership is the ability to convince someone to do what you want them to do because they want to. This human element is what brings people together and inspires them to strive for success. T. Peters & N. Peters et al. (1985), p. 56, state that "Leadership is the capacity for command, persuasion, and victory." It's about a million little, meticulously crafted things, but none of them matter without vision and confidence. "Leadership is vision, enthusiasm, love, trust, vivaciousness, obsession, consistency, use of

symbols created by heroes at all levels, managing concerns, and many other things," Austin stated.

Furthermore, leadership may be seen as a kind of management engagement that is centered on people's desire to achieve common goals and is based on the most effective manner for different power sources to interact in a particular situation. Convincing members of an organization to work willingly and commit their efforts to the group's survival, achievement of common goals, and, conversely, its growth is the art or practice of leadership. Leadership is a part of everything we do, including business, education, and health. Certain features of leadership as a relationship need to be clarified. Being a leader is not something that just happens. It cannot survive without followers. It is conditioned by the nature of its followers. Additionally, leadership of any sort occurs in an environment where certain actions are common. The leadership problem is more complicated since various leadership philosophies are appropriate for different people and situations.

The style of leadership is a function of the characteristics of the leader and the followers, and both are taken into account in a given situational context. Leadership is therefore seen as communication. One of the most important aspects of leadership is the power relationship of leaders to followers. It is important to note their behaviour.

Leadership and democratic consolidation

The idea of democratic consolidation has been a concern for scholars and policy

makers since the third wave of democratisation. The concept of consolidation is considered in the literature from two perspectives. According to Jega (2006) democratic consolidation has been characterised as a “garbage-can concept”, “omnibus concept” and “catch-all concept without a core meaning which would bind all modes of usage”. Democratic consolidation is defined by Odo (2015) as the point at which democratic institutions, rules and regulations become the only means of acquiring and using political power. One of the main political goals of a transitional democracy is “democratic consolidation” that can be challenged by authoritarian leadership (Erunke, 2012). With these interlocking behavioural, attitudinal and constitutional components, democracy may be ‘deeply embedded in the political strategy of success and the social, institutional and even psychological life’ (p. 35). Democratic consolidation is a specific phase in the transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes and it aims at the establishment of stable, institutional and durable democracy (Ademola, 2011). Mohammed (2013) defines democratic consolidation as the process of securing the new democracies, extending its life expectancy beyond the threat of imminent authoritarian repression and the obstacles to reversal. Democratic consolidation is the “process of political democratisation being solidly established and successfully completed” (Frimpong Mansoh, 2012).

Democratic consolidation is the process of maintaining democratic standards, the status quo and the belief that the primary political

institution is the sole and legitimate means of political contestation (Ogundiya, 2009). Every political leader that believes in Nigeria’s leadership and democratic principles – 245 democratic processes that effect change in government. Laws that support political participation and competition require universal support for the successful entrenchment of democracy (Michels, 2011). The only other way is democracy. A consolidated democracy offers a model of attitudes, behaviour and constitutional techniques for evaluating democratic consolidation. Main actors at national, institutional, political or socio-economic level do not use violence, state secession or criminal activity as a means to pursue their objectives (Michels, 2011).

Democracy is a deeply rooted culture and system of government that enables people to participate in politics, to make demands on elected and appointed leaders of state and to hold them accountable. A government of law that protects the basic rights of the people to include their civil and political rights and their economic, social and cultural rights. Hence democratic consolidation is a stage of democratic maturity that makes democracy impervious to the forces of regression, internal or external, that may threaten or destroy it. In this sense, "democratic consolidation" is the question of how to protect new democracies from the danger of authoritarian repression and to avoid other waves of backsliding (Schedler, 1998).

Azeez (2004) adopted a broader approach to the concept of democratic consolidation,

which is not just the building of democratic institutions and symbols or the overthrowing of seemingly anti-democratic people and forces. He argues that to survive and grow stronger, democracy must be able to maintain political stability, protect people from the horrors of war and other violent conflicts, and raise people's material well-being, such as providing affordable and adequate education, housing, improved health care, employment prospects, food, and clean drinking water. Another important aspect of democratic consolidation is the legitimization of political institutions and processes and the economic well-being of the people.

As per Diamond (1999, p. 62), democratic consolidation is the process of achieving widespread and profound legitimacy in which all the key political players (elites and the general public) believe that democracy is the best option for society. It also links the reduction of the probability of the failure of the system with the threshold at which democracy might be considered as permanent. Democratic consolidation, then, preserves the status quo and holds that political competition and commitment to democratic ideals are only proper in the basic political institutions. It is evident in a strong democratic culture, a stable political system, and more robust economic development, amongst others. In the development of the concept of legitimization, Linz and Stepan (1996, p. 33) underlined that the consolidation of democracy demands, in addition, a shared moral or behavioural commitment to the specific laws, values, attitudes, and practices of a country's constitutional system. Therefore, it is

essential to the development of democracy that the economic and social rights of the people be protected and promoted.

Leadership qualities of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan

In 1998, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was elected Deputy Governor of Bayelsa State, marking the start of his political career. He introduced the world to his natural love, humility, and dedication while serving in that capacity from 1999 until 2005. Prior to being the state's substantive governor, he served as governor of Bayelsa State from 2005 to 2007. Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was elected as the Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2007. He held that position until he was appointed interim president in January 2010. He succeeded President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in May 2010 after the death of President Yar'Adua. He was elected president of Nigeria in 2011. In May 2015, he quietly passed the baton to the present government.

His revolutionary agenda was successful in promoting the enactment of laws and programs which contributed to the growth of different economic sectors. During his tenure, Nigeria's economy grew at an unprecedented rate to become the biggest in Africa. He was a strong believer in democracy, peace and national security during his rule. The Transformation Agenda of Dr. Jonathan, President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, gave very much boost to Nigeria's political, economic and social

development. He worked hard to deliver on his pledge to change the negative perception of Nigerian elections globally by re-engineering the electoral process to promote non-violent, free, fair and credible elections. He helped to democratise society by promoting the rule of law, by passing the Freedom of Information Act and by implementing changes to the electoral system and not interfering in election results.

His Transformation Agenda was a strong economic recovery plan that strengthened the creative industries sector, raised agricultural and industrial production and recovered the economy. He established and advanced institutions of higher education and specialised institutions that promote social development and gender equality to broaden access to education. He built the biggest economy in Africa with a GDP of about half a trillion dollars. He worked with his colleagues particularly the ECOWAS Heads of State to stabilise democracies in the subregion and the whole of Africa especially in the likes of Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo.

His passion and commitment to the promotion of peace and stability across the continent raised Nigeria's profile during his five years on the UN Stability Council. Nigeria was one of the few non-permanent members of the UN Security Council to have been nominated twice. As GCFR in Nigeria, Dr. Jonathan was given the highest national honour from his fellow African leaders for his commitment to promoting democracy in the ECOWAS region. Since leaving office in 2015, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Ebele Jonathan

has spent his life promoting democracy, free elections, peace and respect for the rule of law in Africa. He is the head of Goodluck Jonathan Foundation which was established to promote best practices in democracy, peace and prosperity across the African continent. He has led several international election observer missions in Tanzania (Commonwealth, 2015); Zambia (African Union, 2016); Liberia (National Democratic Institute, 2017); Sierra Leone (Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa, EISA, 2018); South Africa (EISA, 2019) and Mozambique (African Union, 2019).

In 2019 he was voted to chair the African Chapter of the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP), a coalition of serving and former presidents working together to promote global peace, stability and economic growth. He was appointed to the Senior Panel of the Kofi Annan Foundation's Electoral Integrity Initiative in May 2020. After his term as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, he was appointed in July 2020 as the ECOWAS Special Envoy to Mali to lead the efforts to restore democracy and peace to the country. The nomination was made in light of the significant achievements of his administration in the maintenance of stability, security and peace in the ECOWAS space. In December 2020, the Gambian government appointed him to lead the country's constitutional dialogue. He has just been appointed to the Council of the Wise (CoW) of the ECOWAS.

THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE JONATHAN ADMINISTRATION

Political Leadership and National Security under President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan

The political leadership of a country has a major impact on its institutions, policies, and counter-security concerns. The ability of the leadership to formulate and implement workable security plans, promote good governance, and enhance national cohesion is essential for the safety and welfare of the people. It is vital to understand how Nigerian political leaders have discharged this responsibility and how it affects national security (Odeyemi, 2014).

Many political leaders have emerged in the fourth republic with their own method, style, and national objective. These presidents have confronted varied security challenges like inter-communal conflicts in the Middle Belt, Niger Delta militancy in the South, and the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast. Economic problems like corruption and fluctuating oil prices make security problems worse. It is perceived that political leadership is not able to solve the problems or respond to them too late (Ogele 2021b).

Nigeria's political leadership has changed dramatically over the last several decades, with each administration facing specific security issues and employing different tactics to secure the nation. The administrations of former Presidents Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2015) and Muhammadu Buhari (2015-2023) are relevant cases for this study, as they took different security and policy decisions during their respective tenures (Muhammed, 2020).

As the fear of the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast increased, Jonathan's government struggled to reconcile national security and regional peace requirements with human rights. By now, the abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls had put Nigeria's security challenges on the world stage and demonstrated the difficult decision-making process involved in handling such situations (Soetan, 2017). There have been several approaches to this peculiarity. Previous governments had carried out military operations, peace and reconciliation initiatives, and socio-economic development measures in the affected areas. Legal structures have also been established to improve national security response and cooperation. Civil society groups have been active in the search for peace and in providing humanitarian relief to the affected. With financial and technical support from international partners, Nigeria is today better positioned to tackle security issues. However, the problem is still there, which shows that it is a deep-rooted and perennial problem that needs to be further explored (Okorie, Bitrus, & Ukata, 2020).

Despite efforts to curtail the anomaly, Nigeria is still grappling with security challenges that are threatening her economy and stability. The persistence of insurgent groups, the escalation of farmer-herder conflicts, the emergence of separatist outfits and the continuing problems of economic infrastructure are all indications that these challenges are still with us in different forms. The effectiveness of different types of political leadership in handling these problems remains debated. The problem is still on and so the need for a holistic analysis of the relationship between political

leadership, national security and security situation in Nigeria. The increasing volume of literature being produced today provides a detailed account of how issues of political leadership, corruption and governance have stunted Nigeria's growth and threatened its security.

The practice of Liberal democracy in Nigeria under President Goodluck Jonathan's administration

Good luck, Jonathan. Liberal democracy does not empower people, it disempowers them. It is anathema to the educated, to the general public, to development. We hate being criticised. Friends get rewards. We are not good at criticism. Friends are paid. Conformity pays off. Liberal democracy in President Goodluck Jonathan's Nigeria is characterised by the personification of political rule, the professionalisation of corruption, the institutionalisation of violence, hegemonic dominance, the subjugation of social and democratic forces, the destruction of peasantry, the emasculation of opposition forces and the veneration of political crooks. There was democratisation and de-industrialisation. The professionalisation of corruption has undoubtedly affected the epidemiology of theft. According to Momoh (in Yunusa, 2007:49), an emerging economic elite is responding to the issue of women and youth within the framework of phoney data accountability.

Under President Goodluck Jonathan's administration, the public does not accept poverty. It kills people every day while doing nothing to reduce poverty. The worst of all is

that the impoverished are seen as having no say in this debate. The people in control should be non-poor people, financiers, and humanitarian groups. Both the perpetrators and the victims are impacted by poverty. Momoh, referenced in Yunusa (2007: 49), "The poverty story is a massive lie and cover-up, ignoring the question of agency, the processes that cause and sustain poverty, and the reasons why some are poor and others are rich."

If proper process is not followed, the individual in question runs the danger of being unjustly demonized and having his reputation harmed. Our objectives, our advancement, and the very basis of our nation are all being threatened by corruption. The media is trying to convict and criminalize some of our political leaders. Everyone is kept in the dark about the actual extent of the problems by the media's frequent distortion of the facts and lynching of any alleged corruption (Uduagham, 2007:9).

Throughout Nigeria's democratic democracy, the cult of mediocrity has been and continues to exist. Nigerians have not benefited from democratic administration at the federal or local levels since they do not seem to have enough government and lack the qualifications of capable leaders. They lack the resources necessary to address the problems that an increasing number of people are bringing up. They lack the spiritual fortitude to handle their people's social unrest. Cheap popularity is another strategy used by mediocre leaders to hide their lack of a clear objective or viewpoint. They would prefer to use mudslinging and

witch-hunting to cover up their ineptitude rather than take criticism. Selecting a poor leader only leads to inefficiency, underdevelopment, and a drop in the nation's output. Social instability might also result from it (Machungo: 2001; D). Religious, ethnic, and communal conflicts were common in Nigeria's fledgling democracy during the Goodluck Jonathan government. It was made worse by elections and political violence. Development is impossible without peace. Big scammers and MEGA thieves in Nigeria are honored with confetti, chieftaincy titles, and prizes.

Specific governance challenges confronting the Jonathan administration

i. Corruption

Corruption is one of the major problems of the democratic system of the Fourth Republic of Nigeria. In 2004, corruption in Nigeria was at its apex when Transparency International, a German non-governmental organization, placed Nigeria second in the world as the most corrupt nation in its Corruption Perception Index (CPI) report (Akinyemi, 2008). In transparency International's 2011 global corruption assessment, Nigeria was ranked 143 of 183 countries and third in Sub-Saharan Africa. Since independence in 1960, the country has lost over \$380 billion to corruption and related crimes (Transparency International, 2011). Corruption and related crimes cost the country between \$4 million and \$8 million a day, which amounts to more than \$70.58 million a year.

Olu-Olu (2006) and Olu-Olu (2008) reported that corrupt policy makers are the causes of the problems of fighting corruption. The latest in the \$620,000 oil subsidy bribery allegations to hit the National Assembly was the purchase of armoured cars valued at \$255 million for Aviation Minister Stella Oduah by the National Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) (The Nation, 2013). Corruption is the biggest threat to democracy (Oko, 2008). Privatisation of social services is not only bad for the government, it damages people's quality of life and creates perverse incentives for dysfunctional behaviour. Corruption is a global issue but perhaps more common in Nigeria. There is a lot of oil in this country and not many people know about it." In Nigeria, everyone believes that the society is corrupt. Corruption has been a problem in Nigeria for a long time and it persists despite a number of reforms and dishonest leadership.

Furthermore, it isolates the country from foreign aid (Familoni, 2007:3). Corruption has impacts on government expenditures, investment, inflation and economic growth. In a 1996 study by Transparency International and Goettingen University, Nigeria was the most corrupt of 54 countries. In 1998 Nigeria scored 81 out of 85 countries in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Nigeria's image was further tarnished when it was ranked 90th out of 91 countries in the 2001 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and was rated the second most corrupt nation after Bangladesh (Familoni, 2005:9-10). Nigeria ranked 39th for most corrupt nation in the world, with most of the 182 nations and territories surveyed scoring under five on the

Transparency International (TI) 2011 Corruption Perception Index, which runs from 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (highly clean). In 2012, TI ranked Nigeria as the 35th most corrupt nation. "Corruption is the principal cause of backwardness and bad governance in Nigeria.

(ii) Lack of knowledge

Insecurity is one of the main problems the present democratic administration is dealing with. Sectarian strife, ethno-religious conflict, and other problems have plagued the nation since democracy was restored, casting doubt on its continued survival. The Ijaw/Itsekiri dispute over the location of the local government headquarters; the Jukun, Chamba, and Kuteb power struggle over Takum; the Yoruba/Hausa-Fulani disturbance in Shagamu, Ogun State; the Aguleri, Umuleri, and Umuoba Anam of Anambra State; Boko Haram; and the ongoing turmoil in Jos. An examination of the aforementioned unrest will demonstrate that our democracy is in jeopardy, making the country's current security situation a major barrier to the consolidation of democracy (Dauda & Avidime, 2007). But despite these challenges, there is hope. One may conclude that Nigeria has reached democratic maturity after fourteen years of uninterrupted democracy—the longest in the nation's history. A thriving press, an independent court, and a growing civil society are essential components of democratic consolidation in the political system.

iii. Election-related misconduct.

The orderly transfer of power via legitimate, free, fair, and regular elections is one of democracy's core principles. Elections have been conducted on a regular basis since the nation's democracy was restored. Between 1999 and 2011, there were three consecutive civilian governments (Obasanjo Administration, 1999–2007; Yar'adua/Jonathan Administration, 2007–2011; Jonathan Administration, 2011–present). This also holds true for the legislature. The nation has successfully completed three local and national parliamentary chambers since 1999. Gross irregularities and malpractices have plagued every election in the Fourth Republic. The police, the military, and the electoral body are a few government agencies that band together to rig elections in support of certain candidates. One of the fundamental principles of democracy, or the democratic process, is the need for free, fair, and credible elections. This is due to the fact that it establishes the limits of the people's ability to choose their representatives in government. However, this is not feasible in Nigeria due to the system's design, which promotes certain individuals and political parties (Ogbonnaya, Omoju, and Udefuna, 2012).

iv. The increasing power of political mobsters

Nigeria's democratic consolidation is under jeopardy due to the pervasive occurrences of political thuggery in the existing democratic system. Some politicians have recruited, retained, and equipped thugs in order to achieve their political objectives via the democratic process; also, due to the way they operate, thugs are likely to intimidate, harass, or even injure the opponents of their sponsors. For example, the Amala politics philosophy and methods of Chief Lamidi Adedibu, better known as Garrison Commander, the strongman of Ibadan politics, led to political excesses and instability in both Ibadan and Oyo State.

v. Insufficient strength to triumph

There hasn't been a powerful and reputable opposition party to restrain the abuses of the government or its agents since the republic's foundation. An opposition party is necessary for an efficient democratic government that prioritizes the interests of its people. By highlighting constitutional restrictions as well as proper norms and practices in democratic administration, they restrain the abuses of the government or its representatives. Nigerian politics have been controlled by the People Democratic Party.

Impact of Governance Policy of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan on Socioeconomic Development in Nigeria

Anyaeachie and Areji (2015) noted that inadequate policies and management by government have hampered the

implementation of socio-economic policies that will affect the way of life and economic management in Nigeria. 40.1% of Nigerians live in extreme poverty (Iyoha et al., 2015; Mammanda & Hassan, 2019; World Bank, 2020). The National Bureau of Statistics (2020) reported that 55.7% of the country's population is either unemployed or underemployed. This is not affected by the government's 2020 Vision 20:20 plan to develop the perfect economy for higher living standards (Alumona, 2016). Although Nigeria is a rich country, poverty, economic inequality and economic differences in livelihood have not been significantly alleviated (U.S. Agency for International Development, 2020). Bad governance practices in Nigeria have led to the accumulation of huge wealth by a few individuals and societal problems such as extreme poverty (Familusi and Oshomoh, 2018). According to Yagboyaju (2019), the slow growth of Nigeria is due to the problems of policy management and implementation.

Nigeria is one of the world largest crude oil exporters but has a high percentage of poverty (Dauda, 2017; Kura et al., 2019). Olayungbo, 2019; Mesagan et al., 2019). Nigeria is a developing country and the largest economy in Africa, with abundant natural resources. Oil provides over 95% of Nigeria's export earnings, 25% of Nigeria's GDP and over 90% of government revenue from economic activity (International Monetary Fund, 2012; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2020). But the average Nigerian earns \$1.9 a day (World Bank, 2020; Dauda, 2017). Again, in 2019, 40.1% of the people in Nigeria lived in

extreme poverty (World Bank, 2020; Mammanda & Hassan, 2019; Iyoha et al., 2015). Underemployment and unemployment in the country is 55.7 percent (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Despite Nigeria being blessed with abundance of oil and gas resources, it has failed to harness these resources for economic growth due to lack of governance and accountability (Mesagan et al., 2019; Waziri, 2020). Inadequate restrictions and outright theft of resource revenue are common problems in resource-rich countries (Bulte et al., 2005; Eregba & Mesagan, 2016; Gylfason & Zoega, 2006; Mesagan et al., 2019; Perry & Olivera, 2009; Rufai et al., 2019).

Poor management has stalled Nigeria's socioeconomic progress and created problems such as unemployment (Awofeso & Irabor, 2020; Bolarinwa, 2018; Ekundayo, 2017; Familusi & Oshomoh, 2018; Kura et al., 2019). Dauda (2018) attributed the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria to a number of factors which include poor infrastructure, underdevelopment of human capacity, inefficient educational system, neglect of agriculture and the impact of globalisation. Government personnel have embezzled development money since the country's transition to democracy in 1999 (Adamu & Rasheed, 2019). In Nigeria, 158 of the 189 countries and territories of the world are ranked for poor human development (United Nations, 2019). The Human Development Index (HDI) is an index of life expectancy, health, education and quality of life. The HDI was 0.534 in 2018.

A better living conditions or well-being is a human development (Ita, 2020). It is sad to

note that a large chunk of Nigeria's budget is not dedicated to social development which is a major facet of human development (Kubalu et al., 2017). The government spent USD 28 billion or more than USD 5900 per person (Elumoye, 2020; Kura et al., 2019). Nigeria's debt stood at N33.9 trillion in December 2020. But the country's economic growth has not made much progress. The socio-economic problems have contributed to the increase in the wealth divide (Awofeso & Irabor, 2020; Bolarinwa, 2018). For example, many powerful politicians commit many crimes, embezzle public funds and hide money but are not held accountable (Waziri, 2020). The agents of poverty in Nigeria are the selfishness, thievery and disdain for progress by politicians (Okeke & Eme, 2016).

The government is not helping the country but championing the interest of the rich (Igiebor, 2019). However, the Constitution of Nigeria provides that the principal objectives of the government shall be to ensure a decent standard of living for Nigerians and to secure their welfare and security (Ekundayo, 2017). According to Adebayo and Adepoju (2018), the Nigerian state has failed to carry out its constitutional duties, which include protecting lives, protecting the country, providing a reasonable standard of living, and providing a conducive environment for trade and economic activity. Development efforts in Nigeria have not been successful due to policy implications (Ozahu-Suleima, 2016). Governance is the integration of individuals and society (Arslan & Roudarki, 2017).

However, the inability of Nigeria to

efficiently govern itself has hampered its efforts to reduce poverty, develop infrastructure and minimise insecurity (Yagboyaju & Akinola, 2019). According to Yagboyaju (2019), studies on socio-economic development and governance in Nigeria have not provided strategic recommendations for the formulation of laws that would improve the living conditions of the people and reduce poverty. The study examined the effect of governance on socio-economic development of the country through the lenses of policy and development specialists.

Governance and policy are key to characterising, analysing and influencing progress toward intended performance (Patterson et al., 2017). However, the independent works of different authors have not been able to address the persistent and changing socio-economic challenges of Nigeria since independence (Ojo et al. 2014). However, many empirical researchers have not studied in depth the impact of governance practices on socioeconomic growth such as extreme poverty, falling unemployment, education and human development (Shah et al., 2019). Nigeria's socioeconomic problems include extreme poverty, unemployment, instability, illiteracy, a dysfunctional health system, decaying infrastructure and huge debt (Uche, 2017). Top-to-bottom corruption negatively affected Nigeria's economic development, according to Igiebor (2019) in his qualitative study on political corruption under the Fourth Republic.

Political corruption "affects and impedes government institutions, governance, legal

norms, laws, coherent processes" Igiebor said (quoting secondary sources). "Nigeria is rich and resourceful, but still has serious problems with ethics, accountability, competence and openness," says Igiebor. The conventional definition of economic growth is an improvement in the standard of living of the people of a particular culture and the conventional definition of social development is progressive social change. The evolution of cohabitation is a complex process that can be studied from social, political and economic viewpoints. Nigerians will soon demand accountability and transparency from their government to effectively participate in the creation and implementation of policies as well as fight corruption and self-interest (Igiebor, 2019).

Kura et al. (2019) studied poverty in Nigeria and the government's actions to reduce and prevent poverty. Kura et al. conducted an analysis of secondary data, and found that efforts to fight poverty have increased substantially, not declined. According to Kura et al. (2009), the key causes of poverty were bottlenecks in decision making, competitiveness of government agencies, corruption and duplication of projects. Kura found that the concept is just a framework to understand poverty and the main reasons poverty cannot be eliminated are political weakness and incompetence. Poor macroeconomic management, political instability and governance have hindered Nigeria's efforts to combat poverty, despite a number of government initiatives, according to Kura. Kura et al. (2012) stated the main causes of failure of the program are government intervention, lack of progress and lack of specific policy frameworks and

concepts. The government has not adequately considered the comparative results and effects of all the programs meant to eradicate poverty in Nigeria (Kura et al, 2019).

Nigeria has its own development problems to deal with. The World Bank (2020) identifies the challenges to be public financial management and governance, reducing dependence on oil, insufficient infrastructure, stable and effective governance, and economic transformation. Yagboyaju (2019) employed qualitative research design and secondary data analysis to show how poor governance in Nigeria has hindered the development of evidence-based research to guide socioeconomic development strategies, and that has made it difficult to reduce poverty, insecurity, and infrastructure deficiencies. In the last 10 years Nigeria has not been able to implement policies that would have turned ideas into realities. However, this problem still persists because of the very big difference between what was expected and what actually happened (Yakubu, 2019). All the government development programs have failed because Nigerians have always rejected the necessary socio-economic advancement. The strategies of socio economic growth of a nation are of critical importance for superb governance (Gisselquist, 2012).

Waziri (2020) used qualitative approaches and an empirical research strategy to investigate the influence of socioeconomic rights, democracy and governance on development in the Nigerian context. It indicated that the nexus between democracy, good governance and economic growth in

Nigeria was found in chapter II of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, especially the socioeconomic constitutional privileges policies and that this nexus was contentious and should be removed. He says constitutions of different countries will bring socioeconomic benefits. But there are instances where economic and constitutional rights have been violated and exploited in democracies that emphasise human development. The reason for the government in the Constitution as reported by Itumo and Nwefuru (2016) was the security and well-being of Nigerian citizens. "Governments must therefore make policies regardless of the views of their people. Joseph et al. (2016) insists that Nigerians should not be silenced or shut down on bad governance again and the government should be held responsible for its responsibilities to the people.

Conclusion

In Nigeria's democratic democracy, the cult of mediocrity has existed and continues to exist. Because they lack the qualifications of effective leaders and don't seem to have appropriate governance, our leaders, both at the federal and local levels, have failed to provide Nigerians the benefits of democratic administration. Many of them are either ill-prepared or unprepared for the concerns that the electorate has brought to their attention. Their psychophantic lieutenants don't either. These substandard leaders lack the spiritual fortitude to deal with the social upheavals that plague their people. Cheap popularity is another tactic used by mediocre leaders to conceal their lack of a clear philosophy or

objective. Instead of accepting criticism quietly, they turn to mudslinging and witch-hunting to conceal their ineptitude. Underdevelopment, inefficiency, and a drop in national production are the only outcomes of selecting a bad leader. Social instability might also result from it (Machungo: 2001; D).

Nigeria's liberal democracy was marked by religious, ethnic, and community strife throughout the presidency of Goodluck Jonathan. Election and political violence exacerbated them. There is no peace, which is necessary for growth. Big con artists and MEGA thieves in Nigeria are rewarded with confetti, awards, and titles of chieftaincy. Under Goodluck Jonathan's leadership, liberal democracy devastated both politics and agriculture. The economy has been ruined by it. Religions have been either destroyed or prostituted by it. Every development-related facility was destroyed. In Yunusa, David-West claims that "we are master destroyers today, yet we have the audacity to expect development" (2008:279). Voodoo, juju, or brotherhood could never do this. Despite the major obstacles his administration faced both domestically and internationally, President Goodluck Jonathan was able to demonstrate his power in pursuing Nigeria's foreign policy and projecting the country's image and position. Nigeria's current foreign policy focuses on obtaining direct investment in order to accomplish this reform goal.

Our diplomatic posts overseas are now more focused on gaining support for the

government's domestic initiatives as a result of the new policy agenda. In any event, President Jonathan's foreign policy goals were quite similar to those of President Yar' Adua, his previous boss. Nigeria's economy was regarded as the strongest in Africa in 2014, surpassing both Egypt and South Africa, thanks to some moderate economic development under President Goodluck Jonathan. However, Boko Haram's operations and government corruption continued to be problems that hindered both internal growth and the progress plan's implementation. Because of Boko Haram's horrific actions, potential international investors were hesitant to do business in Nigeria. Like his predecessors, Jonathan's determined attempts to put in place a strong and practical foreign policy were stymied by significant domestic economic issues.

Leadership continues to have a significant impact on Nigeria's democratic growth. In a growing nation like Nigeria, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's government illustrated the advantages and difficulties of democratic governance. The study's findings demonstrated how democratic and tolerant Jonathan's leadership style was, especially when it came to election results, freedom of speech, and constitutional order. His acceptance of the 2015 election results improved Nigeria's standing as a nation capable of a peaceful democratic transition and boosted democratic culture. However, regular elections or peaceful transfers of power are insufficient to maintain democratic growth. Strong institutions, accountability, openness, good public service delivery, and efficient security management are all

necessary for a democratic government to succeed. The Jonathan administration's inability to successfully fight corruption and instability undermined public confidence and reduced the overall effect of its democratic reforms. Thus, the research comes to the conclusion that institutional strength, political responsibility, and public involvement are just as important to Nigeria's democratic progress as well-known personalities. Only when leaders put the country's interests ahead of their own, their ethnicity, or their party loyalty can a long-lasting democracy flourish.

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