DEMOCRACY A NECESSARY ELEMENT FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE A NECESSARY ELEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

"A SYMBIOTIC-RELATIONAL ASSESSMENT''

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Abstract

This piece explains the concepts of democracy and good governance with a conceptual and theoretical assessment of their dynamics and as well the mechanism of their workings towards the realization of a viable and veritable political system of a state. The research pays attention more specifically to the symbiotic and overlapping relationships and effects that exist between the two variables and their boundaries in regard to their elements, contending that, for the practice of good governance to be achievable in a state, the elements of democracy are significantly necessary conditions and if democracy becomes an adopted and adapted ideology, such a governmental process must definitely guarantee the needed good governance. To this end, the dividends of democracy, expected to reach the grass-root, where the peasants and the needful dwell will circulate, giving everyone the desired sense of excitement, belonging, care and security at all levels of administration. The author argues that, where this expected process becomes a mirage or an illusion, then, such a government ideal or process is wishful, not credible, popular and legitimate, as it cannot serve the people's interests. The author posits that where exists a political system that lacks credible elements and principles of democracy vis-à-vis good governance such a government is deemed unpopular.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Democracy as a term is viewed from three principal contexts and they are: concept, ideology and system. As a concept, it is a terminology or word in the dictionary of politics, used for interpretations and explanations of issues, and hence, it is commonly used even by a layman on the street or in the household. As an ideology, it is a thought conceived as a practice and which is upheld by a group or a society or even a state or nation, determining the pattern by which a governmental system flows to give the excitements and the contentment that the ruled desire. As a system, it is a process or mechanism which explains the political life and culture of a people within a state where the principle of the "General Will" as postulated by Rousseau is upheld or where 'society' is preserved as the property of all in the words of John Locke. These three contexts could help to establish whether democracy is an element of good governance and/or good governance an element of democracy.

The need for government has been central to human society ever since social order became a necessity. However, this process becomes more complex just as societies also become more complex devising different means and patterns by which administration

of justice, equity and respect for human dignity and liberty are carried out and realized.

For example, in relatively equitable societies like indigenous peoples, the distinction and distance between those who govern and the governed is the least. In feudal village communities, which are largely agrarian, structures of hierarchy are often stronger and rigid. So, governance is functional and it is integrated with culture and tradition into the social settings or interactions of a given people for observance of rules, significance of roles and how these roles are taken up by individuals in determining power relations.

Since governance establishes social and political order and the means by which that governance is carried on daily is 'government', the latter becomes the machinery by which the "Will" of the state is formulated, expressed and realized. This government and its process as noted already, takes various forms and embraces different ideologies such as democracy, autocracy, plutocracy, technocracy, oligarchy, aristocracy and other *"cracies"* we may think of, depending on the society in question. The one that has become most popular worldwide today or widely talked about since the beginning of the cold war, the decolonization process and the regime of the global powers via the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is "Democracy". This is further orchestrated by the way any leader in the contemporary global system does wish to be seen as a democrat or a regime that does seek to be described as democratic even when such a regime is dictatorial in sense. To this end, the world has continued to witness an astronomical increase in the activities and growth of mass organizations that seek to demand for more acceptable and refined means of governing through protests and violence from their respective regimes which appear more undemocratic and not liberal in sense enough. The Arab spring of the 2010 till date is a good case, some portions of which have taken the forms of terrorist movements and insurgencies where the regimes in power apply force to quell them,

but, only to aggravate tensions of ignominious destructions. The Syrian, Egyptian, Yemenis and Tunisian, even Libyan cases are clear instances in this respect. These mass protest movements are yielding more catastrophes which have become one of the foremost challenges of the twenty-first century that the international community is now seriously grappling with to contain in averting a probable third world war. Today, the world is not at ease with the activities and bestialities of Islamic fundamentalists and democracy extremists in their respective domains around the globe, such as those of the Boko Haram in the North-East of Nigeria, the Mali-North Maghreb fighters, the Palestian-based Hamas, the newly- labeled muslim brotherhood insurgents of Egypt, following the protests that overthrew the democratically elected government of Mohammed Morsi as a result of undemocratic practices, the Lebanon's Hezbollah group, the break-away Libyan factions fighting their installed post-Ghadafi liberal government,the ruthless Taliban of the Afganistan-Pakistan, the separatists of the Eastern Ukraine, the M23 rebel group of the DRC in East Africa, the Colombian rebel fighters waging wars against its government for more than fifty years now and worst than useless are the beheadist ISL fighters of Iraq and Syria, let alone the Syrian based insurgents themselves fighting to oust the already unpopular Yasser-Al Assad regime, with the backing of the western powers, claimed to be the crusaders of western democracy.

The argument here is that, while democracy movements inspired by western capitalist oligopolies came to nurture its good for the liberalization of governance, it is not without its drawbacks in sparking-off unnecessary tensions that have resulted into mass killings and wanton destructions of properties globally, believed to have resulted into global economic distress and political stalemates ravaging most world countries as highlighted above. The worsening situations have been helped by the lack of patience, dogmatism and rigid principles maintained by the rulers of affected countries, especially those of the

third world, Africa in particular. It has also been worsened by the inordinate ambitions of some rulers who are bent on holding on to power, even in the face of total defeat and alter rejection by their people. More calamitous in this case is the neo-colonialist postures of the power politics of the western powers led by America in their bid to control the global economy and dictate the tunes, and this they have been achieving through various devices e.g; planting puppet governments that protect their interests and/or conspiring to overthrow those ones that are blocking those interests through sponsoring of internal mutinies, strife and disgruntlements that heap coals of unrests, often times on issues of human rights and welfare matters .They also achieve this through their multinational companies and their agencies and satellites which engage in sharp business and financial practices that have adverse consequences on the development and growth processes as well as the political stability and internal security of their host countries. What cannot also be ignored as a cause of the degrading state of democratization process in the globe today is the rise in the number of failing states (political economy wise), of the world, especially the third world countries and how this has made many of them to succumb to western power politics pressures as a result of over-reliance on the latter and the disparaging underdevelopment of their own economies. Though, a few developing nations like the small Gambia in west Africa tend to challenge this power bloc, by raising world attention to the devices of their actions in terms of lack of respect for what can be termed 'international democracy' and non-respect for the sovereignty of other nations under article 2 on the principles of the United Nations Organization, by using available forums to articulate their feelings on this and how the global powers should allow equal level playing ground in international politics and governance as well as peaceful means of resolving major internal and international crises. While this development is however welcoming in order for balance of power to be ensured in international politics and global governance, what, to this writer sounds more effective and far-reaching is the ability of developing and other underdeveloped countries of the world to be self-reliant and self-sufficient, while guaranteeing political stability and sustainability through practice of good governance and observance of the rule of law in their respective domains, which is believed to douse tensions of democracy agitations that attract external attentions. Once this is done all the stakeholders in the making of governance including the opposition and the civil society groups in the state as well as the general populace will be able to find peace in the home administration for collective efforts towards development and national security. This will enable and guarantee international diplomacy to be played on the basis of mutual respect for each other and in the spirit of interdependence (Ozor, F. 2014; Omotosho, O. F. 2008; Enemuo, F. C. 2005; Held, D. 1993; Odinga, R. 2008; Ray, J. L. and Kaarbo, J. 2008: p. 292 - 308 & 376 - 432; Garner, R. etal, 2009, p. 309 - 447; Akinbobola, A. 2005, p. 343 - 363; Hurd, I. 2012, p. 97 – 125 and Gareis, B. S. 2012, p. 1 - 90).

1.1 DESCRIBING DEMOCRACY AND ITS ORIGIN

Democracy is an existential concept which lives with man from creation or the natural instinct of man when Charles Darwin discovered man's nature and described it as animalistic because he lived an individualistic life where he was free but all the time in danger with another man. He could be killed at anytime by anybody or anything or another animal because nothing like law protects him except by *"self defense"*. Order was later restored into man's existence as a social animal which transformed and bequeathed on him a political life as popularized by the great Aristotle, (the Political Philosopher of the Greek fifth century).

The need for order and justice, equity and respect for human dignity and liberty heralded governance, governance brought various forms of governmental systems, several of which had been practiced before the emergence of modern democracy.

Modern democracy also known as the representative government evolved or had its root from the Athenian democracy of the Greek city states when the direct democratic principles were in practice, where decisions were undertaken by all in the society. It was first practiced in Athens barely two thousand and five hundred years ago before extending to other parts of the city-states and its environs. This form of democracy was called the classical democracy or direct democracy. However, with the revolutions and explosions recorded in population, development and growths, the direct involvements' process was gradually discarded in favor of the indirect or representative model.

Democracy is a set of Greek words, that is, "Demo" meaning 'the people' and 'Kratia' or 'Kratein' implying 'rule by the people'. The two words now combine together to mean 'DEMOCRACY' which means "the rule by the people". This perhaps necessitated why the great Abraham Lincoln of the United States of America describes the term as the … "government of the people, for the people and by the people". This was so, because it was a form of rule where everybody was directly involved to partake in the decisions that concerned his own affairs. He was not represented by anybody except 'self'. From this perspective, principal elements of the direct democratic governance could be said to include recognition for equality of mankind, irrespective of class, position, and roles in societies. They also included political participation, respect for human liberty and freedom and of course equity in economic life. (Anyaele, J. U. 2005; Ikotun, A. 2010: pp. 19 - 58 and Enemuo, F. C. 2005: pp. 141-142).

The Greek democracy was a brief historical episode with little direct influence on the theory and /or practice of modern democracy. From the fall of the Greek – city states to the rise of modern constitutionalism, we had had a gap of about 2000 years or more during which state system transformed to the practice and observance of constitutional ideals. The successor states to the Athenian days were tribal or feudal kingdoms that transformed into absolute monarchies and these existed in different parts of the world down the ages up to the time of the American and French revolutions with the resembling outlook of the Arab spring of 2010 and bringing about the emergence of modern state systems with modern forms of government. The British absolute monarchy changed to constitutional one, so did the French and others in Europe before the decolonization process that transferred power to the political leaders of the former colonies, the administrative systems and structures presumed democratic in nature, but politicized by majority of the post-colonial rulers that ascended power after the colonialists departed, such of which gave birth to increased home agitations and outright rejections of unpopular regimes.

In his Comprehensive Government for West Africa, Anyaele, (2005; 35) sees or describes democracy as a system of government in which all qualified adult citizens share the supreme power of the state directly or through their elected or accredited representatives.

Appadorai, (1983) in his Substance of Politics posits democracy as a system in which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through their representatives periodically elected by them. He stresses this form of government as one which expresses the popular will on basic questions of social direction and policy, economic, equality, fraternal feeling and political liberty. Appadorai maintains that the content of political liberty is indeed the indispensable minimum for democracy requirement, which means it is the element that determines the right of every man to partake in governance through decision – making process, expressed as the popular or the general will. Omotosho (2008), in his seminar paper, University of Lagos on "Democracy and Constitutionalism": The Makings of Good Governance in a State describes democracy as "a government by consent of the governed or by the approval of the people upon which governing authority is exercised". According to Maclver, (1965) as cited in "Democracy, A Political Culture Alien to Africa" by Ikotun, (2010: 20)… "Democracy cannot mean the

rule of the majority or the rule of the masses" To MacIver, this was the manner in which democracy was interpreted by the Greek philosophers, at a time when there was no representative system or any party system. He stresses that true democracy occurs when leadership recruitment procedures are subjected to 'polls' where people are liberally allowed under the law to choose who represents them in decision-making process, such of which comes in consonance with the desires of the electors and not the elected. Today, the elected representatives are seen going into different things entirely from the mandate they accepted to lead and in defense of their hegemony, resort to use of coercion to compel public obedience. Could we say representative democracy itself is not but without its own drawbacks and structural deficiencies? Human factor is attributable to this. This necessitates the underpinning factors of human and political behaviors for a thorough study to determining why, how and when man acts differently and this mentality can be controlled to making him behave rationally in line with values and norms, principles and practice which the constitution lays down for the expression of the "Will" of the people.

Heater defines democracy as essentially a method of organizing society politically, saying, there are five basic elements that determine if a community is democratic (Heater, 1964: 114). These elements he lists as equality, sovereignty of the people, respect for human life, the rule of law and individual human liberty. Heater emphasizes the importance of the ballot which is one man one vote as central in the makings of governance that respects human value, irrespective of differences in wealth, religion, education, intelligence and roles in society, arguing, it is when all these are respected that a society can justify its democratic governance or be said to be truly democratic. (Heater, D. B. 1964: 114; Heywood, A. 2007: 71, Ozor, F. 2014, Enemuo, F. C; 2005: 141-152)

1.2 DEMOCRACY AS AN ELEMENT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE AS AN ELEMENT OF DEMOCRACY

This paper looks at the extent to which democracy serves as an element for good governance in a state and how good governance cannot also be practiced without elements of democracy.

In attempting to look at this or figure out the element of democracy in good governance, it is imperative to explain what the concept of good governance itself is about in brief. In our introduction, the word governance was explicated by linking it to a process that brings about social order and political control through administration of law and perhaps today, constitutionalism. Good governance implies an administration that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of the people and believed to be effective in coping with emerging challenges in society through framing, implementing of appropriate laws and measures and the realizations of the results of such administrative procedures and measures. It includes strict rules of accountability and transparency, which centre on community groups and individuals, based on a notion of rights as inherently compromising duties, bound by generally accepted norms and institutional enforcements.

Within this broad conceptualization of good governance are two distinct positions, first, the one articulated by the World Bank which conceptualizes good governance as competent and judicious management of a country's resources and affairs in a manner that is open, transparent, accountable, equitable and responsive to people's needs. The second, which argues that governance is *'good'* when it serves not just any public interest but that of the most poor, the deprived, underprivileged and marginalized people in society.

In the 1994 Report on Governance by the World Bank as stated in the Good Governance Resource Book, (2004)… "Good governance is epitomized by predictable,

open and enlightened policy-making that is transparent, a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos, an executive arm of government, presumed accountable for its actions and a strong and formidable civil society participating in public affairs and all behaving under the rule and ethics of law". According to the UNDP, (1997), governance is the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their legal obligations and mediate their differences. (GGR, 2004: 7). So, in the same vein ESCAP posits governance *good* only if efforts are made to minimize corruption, take on board the views of minorities and the voices of the most vulnerable sections of society in decision-making, stressing that good governance ought to be responsive to the present and future needs of society, lest the democratic elements in it will be bastardized and made irrelevant. For the European Union,… "In the context of a political and institutional environment that upholds human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, good governance is the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for equitable and sustainable development". It entails clear decision-making procedures at the level of public authorities, transparent and accountable institutions, the primacy of law in managing and distributing resources and capacity-building for elaborating and implementing measures that aim at preventing and combating corruption. ESCAP identifies eight major elements of good governance as (i) a process that is participatory in nature, meaning, there should be political participation at all levels where people are involved or carried along in the decisions of their own affairs, (ii) Consensual in nature i.e. bearing the consent of the people governed, (iii) accountable, (iv) transparent, (v) responsive, (vi) effective and efficient, (vii) equitable and all inclusive and (viii) involving the practice of the rule of law. Just as the Commission on Global Governance observes

that the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs is what is regarded as good governance, so the Office of High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) sees and assesses it as the process by which public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realization of human rights. OHCHR opines, good governance is good when it accomplishes all its elements as stated, in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption and with due regard for the practice of the rule of law. The Commissioner affirms further that the true test of 'good' governance is the degree to which it delivers on the promises of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. On theory, policy and practice of good governance in relation to democratic elements, can good governance be achieved? The answer lies in the understanding of what can be called *"governmentality",* meaning internalization of order that makes governance possible. In the pre-modern era, those who governed did so through or by means of coercion of the powerless and the oppressed, today, power is no longer something exercised through straightforward repression except by diplomatic techniques of enforcing rules of behavior that is forced on the people's consent for acceptance and compliance and which is usually justified by the holders of power in the state with the provisions of the constitution, believed to be expressing the 'Will' of that 'governed', and which signifies their approval of authority exercised in disguise for democracy. Experts and resource personnel in good governance have identified three major components to governance. These they name the process, the content and the deliverables. The process they explain as encoding factors like transparency and accountability, the content, they claim includes values such as justice and equity and the deliverables they identify as the accomplished fulfillments and deliveries of the process and values of governance where the basic necessities of life, especially those of the 'weak' in society are met for them, through effectiveness and efficiency of state apparatuses in a manner that is most

dignifying and humane. They stress, a government that is dictatorial but delivers basic needs to the citizens is indubitably not better than the one that does not .Hence, such a dictatorship cannot be seen as *'good'* in governance. A government that is voted into power through whatever arrangement or the form of an established electoral system institutionalized and where rule is made apparent but unjust e.g. apartheid regime in South Africa and Lesotho, is certainly not good in governance. Governance is good and practically human and acceptable for standard rule only when the three components of process, content and deliverables are inherently present, institutionalized and sustained, in any modern state.

From the foregoing and given all the characteristic components and elements of good governance, as well as those enumerated in our introduction in regard to democracy and its elements, it suffices to say that elements of democracy in good governance and elements of good governance in democracy are intertwined and therefore complimentary of each other, symbiotically harmonizing toward achieving a viable, virile and stable polity. Good governance is therefore established as a process for poverty eradication, development and human rights' issues with attendant features of transparency, accountability, equity, respect for the rule of law, justice and love for one another, equal opportunities for all and level playing ground in politics, aimed at building trust and confidence for good neighborliness and harmonious co-existence within the social relations and polity. Democracy on its own part is being viewed as a governmental process that allows for liberal rights of choosing representatives or the acceptable-credible standards of organizing elections for people to choose their leaders willingly without any form of intimidation, victimization and deprivation and believed to be ethical, refined and constitutional for a viable, veritable democratic governance process. At this attainment and growing liberal governance, government in a state becomes more purposeful, just, desirable, non-corruptible, fulfilling and all-inclusive.

1.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

This paper has assessed and analyzed, with the use of historical-descriptive survey, intuition and intellectual guides, concepts of democracy and good governance, to determining the symbiotic-relational elements between them and how they cannot be practiced without the need of each other for an established political order which would guarantee a state as truly democratic and observance of good governance process in building a viable polity within humans social relation. The mechanism and functioning processes of the elements of democracy and good governance in an adopted and adapted political system are examined and explained. The paper maintains that it is in this process that a genuine practice of good polity can thrive to meet people's oriented government. Should this be absent, the state could be assumed to be practicing authoritarianism or absolutist oligarchy. In a true democracy and good governance process, individuals will realize their best 'selves', peace will attain, order will reign , development will thrive and there will be general contentment and lessened controversies over issues.

1.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

If democracy is to be practicable and be free from any form of mockery and pretence and for good governance to be genuinely observed, practiced and realized in the national interests and for national security toward nation-building, the various elemental factors entwining both concepts of democracy and good governance as processes for the making of a viably-credible government must all be respected and preserved in a state. Leadership recruitment process, in particular, must be highly organized and executed to leverage qualitative, non-parochial political culture and non-corruptible political class. Corruption must be institutionally addressed by using the apparatuses of the state and self-discipline to tackle it in all ramifications. Leaders must be disciplined, patriotic and committed to national values and ethical ethos. This is the problem in most emerging democracies like that of Nigeria and most of

the developing countries. Indeed, party politics must not be turned to money politics but a career-making program, believed to be non-corruptible but service-oriented for people to engage in .This means that our leaders and politicians must have to stop seeing politics as a means for amassing wealth at the expense of the electorate that vote them into power. They should see politics as a service to the nation and pursuant of national interests through a vibrant, but liberal external relations.

Political practitioners and other stakeholders within the polity must be able to define interests by separating self-interests from national or state interests, be able to position the latter to reflect popular wishes for a veritable nation-building. The rulers must respect constitutional law and other laws of the land by guiding against abuses that can alter peace, growth, development and prosperity.

Above all, the electorate and the general public through the activities of the civil society groups and social activists, especially those of political parties and the pressure/interest groups, should realize the need for obedience to law that governs all, while engaging in dialogue whenever issues generate and resolving for consensus in order to deal with tensions and anarchy, which is not in the interest of all in a state. With leadership-followership partnership, people's patriotism and sense of identity, governance process and the entire state are made strong, consolidated and sustained for the good of all and sundry.

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