

THE SYMMETRICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This study explores the conceptual interface between democracy, development and good governance. It also examines the symbiosis between the three concepts, from theoretical perspective and the praxis. The paper historicizes and traces the emergence of good governance as a concept and universally acceptable principle and its use in international development literature to situate how public institutions ought to or should conduct public affairs and manage public resources, particularly within the frameworks of corporate, international, national and local administration or organizations, and the civil society. The study examines the relationship between democracy, good governance and development in Nigeria and blames the slow pace or the state of development in the country, not on lack of resources, but on the absence of good governance, transparency and accountability. It also identifies pervasive corruption and weakness of institutions of the Nigerian state which individuals manipulate for personal aggrandizement as bane of development. The study concludes that socioeconomic and political development is attainable, only with the entrenchment of good governance and adherence to its principles, drawing examples and illustration from countries of Europe and America.

Keywords: Civil Society, Corruption, Democracy, Development, Good Governance

INTRODUCTION

The deepest cause of development failure is not the lack of resources or international isolation, rather it could be ascribed to lack of good governance-the inability or unwillingness to apply public resources judiciously and effectively to generate public goods and services. To be sure, development requires appropriate government policies to foster savings and investment. But it also requires the public service and institutions to improve human capital, foster social trust, and thereby stimulate production and exchange. All of these are the product of good governance. Those countries that failed to realize their development potential in the past half-century have also invariably suffered yawning deficits of good governance. In these development laggards, bad governance constitutes a great obstacle-perhaps the single most intractable obstacle to sustainable development. Sustainable development, especially in a developing country, therefore, requires a thorough transformation in the quality of governance.

During the 1990's, governance emerged as a catch-all term in both the study and practice of development. It can be generally defined as the prevailing patterns by which public power is exercised in a given social context. Officials and non-governmental development agencies have sought to operationalise the idea of good governance by restructuring state bureaucracies, reforming legal systems, supporting democratic decentralization and creating accountability-enhancing civil societies. The notion of good governance, should in principle refer to any mode of public decision-making that helps to advance human welfare. But because of the heavy influence of aid donors, governance has come to be associated with institutions designed to support market-led development (Jenkins 2002:485).

Any debate over development and good governance is inseparable from the end of the cold war, the lost decade of the 1980, and evolving discussions over development strategies from the economic growth orientation of the 1950's to the Structural Adjustment and Sustainable Development of the 1980's. Since the end of the Cold War, donor countries have come to demand that development aid be more effectively and efficiently implemented and started to seek new aid strategies capable of garnering the support of their people and of replacing the strategy based on East-West ideological conflict.

The period since the 1980's has therefore, seen a global trend toward political democratization and pluralism, economic liberalization, and transitions to a market-oriented economy, although varied from country to country and region to region. This paper has as its major focus, the identification and analysis of the links between good governance and development.

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT: CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Governance and development are highly contested concepts. The two concepts, although often considered as two sides of the same reality, are different. While good governance deals with the outcome of government policies, development indicates the resultant effects on the citizen. Whether we call it the social contract (as propounded by Hobbes or Rousseau, that is, the one that provides for the application of basic principles of constitutionalism or limited government), the common good, or good governance, the idea is the same: namely, the attainment of the good of the whole (Kukah 2000:216).

Governance is the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs manage public resources and guarantee the realization of human rights. Good governance accomplishes this in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law. The true test of good governance is the degree to which it delivers on the promise of human rights: Civil, Cultural, Economic, Political and Social rights. In its resolution, the UN Commission for Human Right (2006:64) identified the key attributes of good governance as: transparency, responsibility, accountability and participation (to the need of the people). Animashaun (2002:30), citing Pierre and Peters (2000) states that governance as a concept is notoriously slippery, and frequently used by social scientists and practitioners without a concise definition. Governance can be regarded as the process of steering state towards attaining collective goals. Governance becomes “good” when it is operated in accordance with legal and ethical principles as conceived by society. This means that good governance is a normative concept by which society seeks to provide a guide and direction to itself through standard norms embedded in the governance idea (op. cit: 30).

Good governance translate to steering the ship of state and society n line with defined rules and procedure and ensuring that in all ramifications it serves the interest of the greatest number of people in the society through collective participative endeavour. Good governance is normally used in the literature to refer to one or all of the following attributes of governance: accountability based on the notion of popular sovereignty and public choice; a legal framework that guarantees the rule of law and due process; popular participation in decision-making that guarantees the rule of law and due process; popular participation in decision-making process based on political and social pluralism and on freedom of association and expression; and bureaucratic accountability based on impersonality of office, uniform application of rules and rationality of organizational structure (Bello-Imam 1997 cited in Animashaun op. cit:30).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (cited in Ngoyi, 2003:4) sees governance as the totality of the exercise of authority in the management of a country’s affairs, comprising the complex mechanism, processes and institutions through which citizens and

groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and mediate their differences. It encompasses the political, economic, legal/judicial, social and administrative authority and therefore includes government, the private sector and the civil society. The World Bank (cited in Ngoyi *ibid*) considers good governance from a purely managerial administrative efficiency and prohibiting/restraining itself from addressing issues concerned with the politics of any country. The European Union and the OECD (Ngoyi *op cit*) go beyond the mere managerial and institutional conception. Their position makes a clear case for not only free market economic regime, but also the political dimension of a state that enjoys legitimacy and authority from participatory politics, built on the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers.

IDEOLOGIES OF DEVELOPMENT

The political ideologies most popular among developing nation-states have eclectic roots in the great systems of nationalists democratic, and socialist thought (Chilton, Stephen (1987), cited in (Guy 2001 101-102). Most modern ideologies of development date to the end of World War II, when a large number of European colonies in Asia and Africa began their struggle towards political independence. The origin of modern development goes back to Marx, whose critical observations became part of so many ideologies of development. Many leaders in the developing world adopt ideologies in novel ways, mixing elements of nationalism, socialism and pragmatism to provide indigenous solutions to national economic development. The four most common ideological goals of developing states are: national self-determination; economic development; political and social modernization; and self-styled democracy (Guy 2001:102).

One of the consistent challenges in the second half of the twentieth century was (as it continues to be) the development of the developing world (Johnston 2002:483). Development is a sort of progressive transformation of the economic, social and political structure of a society from relatively less complex, less efficient and less desirable forms, to more complex, more efficient and more desirable forms. If we can deduce from the foregoing that democracy and participatory development are major elements of good governance, What then is Development? The concept of development is often regarded as a nebulous concept. This is so because a mention of the word suggests multiple interpretation and understanding.

Adherents of sustainable development believe that development means providing people with the tools and knowledge to be able to meet their basic needs in a sustainable way. It means improving agricultural practices in order to feed families; improving literacy, schooling, and the basic knowledge of hygiene, health care, and family planning; using technologies that are compatible with the level of education, Local infrastructure, and labour force (Johnston *ibid*:485). This approach to development is carried out at the micro rather than the macro level,

and it is implemented through local projects. Its goal is not economic growth, but to meet human needs, regardless of the ultimate success or failure of any attempt to become integrated into the world markets (and most advocates of this kind of development are skeptical about the ability of developing countries to achieve that integration).

Development is the objective programme of government, but it must be anchored on the growth of human person who is the primary beneficiary. When a state deprives people of their rights, land and property this kind of development becomes dangerous. This was why the world rose against the injustice of apartheid, the classic expression of this misguided concept of development (Kukah 200:58). Development requires the mobilization of surplus labour to generate both urban and rural capital in the form of economic and social infrastructure. Todaro (1985:108) is of the view that development is a multi-dimensional process, involving the organization and reorientation of the entire economic and social system..... an improvement of income and output, radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures as in popular attitudes customs and beliefs. Everett (1989:84) cited in Olowe 1995:4 asserts that development can be assumed to be: Progressive and multi-dimensional in nature; Societal and individualistic; Generic in approach encompassing a whole class of element of change. The objectives of development are: Life sustenance; Self esteem/respect; and Freedom (Goulet 1971).

Maclean and Wood (2001:67) explain that development is a concept that embraces not only the provision of basic needs and the expansion of economic activity, but also health, individual freedoms, education and human longevity. It relates to a widely participatory process (democracy as against autocracy) of directed social change in a social and material advancement for the majority of the people through gaining total control over their environment.

Thus, there has been much debate and controversy about development, with many changing views as to its definition, and the strategies by means of which, however development is defined, it may be pursued. It should however, be stressed that development covers both theory and practice, that is both ideas about how development should or might occur, and real world effort to put various aspects of development into practice (Robert, 2002:61).

The concept of development according to Tella and Salami (2002:64), is a catch-all term used to describe and characterize the multiple claims of hopes and aspirations of the collectivity. Hope and aspiration might be expressed as “good government:, good living condition, adequate security, general social happiness, individual and collective prosperity among others. All of these, they argue, might not be achieved by using the same or similar method and approach considering the fact that individuals are of different background.

Mabogunje (cited in *ibid*) opines that:

To ideas undergird my understanding of development, The first is that development is about wealth creation; the second is that every society succeeds best in this endeavour when it adopts and transforms its own institutions, its mores and the general attitude of its people towards the achievement of this goal.

Oyeshola (2008:212) argues that development must necessarily include the conditions of reality that allow every person to take his or her destiny into their own hands. This will include economic, social, political, psychological, environmental, cultural, religious and international dimensions. Better still, development can be defined in terms of the ability and capability of a people.

To procure sufficient natural resources to meet the basic needs of all in a self-reliant manner; adjust to adverse environmental changes with minimal disastrous consequences; have a stable, democratic and independent system of government, and maintained harmony within the human community and between human and the rest of the environment (ibid).

As Hirst (cited in Jenkins, op cit) argues in his survey of governance, the study and practice of development is just one of several contexts in which the term has taken root. Hirst identifies five versions corresponding to the field of: (i) Economic development; (ii) International institutions and regimes; (iii) Corporate governance; (iv) New public management; and (v) Network governance, the increasingly popular deliberative for a found in (mainly) Western polities that addresses sets of related issue through a structured process of consultation and negotiation among relevant civil society and governmental actors.

Linked to the concept of development is the issue of sustainability. Sustainable development recognizes that many models of economic growth result in severe environmental degradation and the depletion of non-renewable resources. While such models may succeed in kick-starting economic growth and the process of development, they are unsustainable in the longer term (Maclean and Wood 2001:213). Sustainable development seeks a model of economic growth that uses renewable resources and does not destroy the environment in which human beings have to live (Guy 2001:1).

The precursor of good governance is democracy. It is agreed generally that the worst democratic government is better than the most benevolent military government, Democracy is a way of life that involves freedom to make choices about what one does, where he lives and how he uses his earnings, the operation of institutions, the home, the church, local, state and federal government; the right of justified property ownership, social justice and fairness; the absence of social and class barriers; equality of opportunity; and the solution of common problems through the exercise of the free will of the people (Mbachu 1994:12). Mbachu (1990) agrees that theoretically democracy is a political system in which the eligible people (electorates) in any

country participate actively not only in determining the kind of people that govern them, but also participate actively in shaping the policy output of government. To Juyane (1994:260) democracy means the rule of the people in which political equality, freedom and popular sovereignty of all normal adult citizens are presupposed. Democracy is that form of Government where public policy is conceptualized, formulated and released through the people as expressed by their elected representatives (The Comet:2003:13). Rustov (1985) no less agrees with this when he admits that democracy is a problem solving formula for power sharing, involving negotiations among groups and representatives.

GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT: THE STATE AND DONOR CONNECTION

There is a good reason why development assistance still focuses largely on nation and national state structures. True, some states have collapsed, and we are seeing in succession alternative to the classic Westphalia state structure in the wake of state collapse, in such places as Somalia. Where this happens, donors must respond with new paradigms. But for most part, national state persist as the framework for governance and as indispensable facilitators of economic growth and poverty reduction. If we are going to witness large-scale reductions in poverty, for instance, it will only be because states themselves become more capable, effective, open, accountable, responsible, honest, decent, and just (Diamond 2004).

The 1980s saw a dramatic expansion of condition and lending-quick disbursing loans in the form of programme lending to help meet balance of payment and public progress towards liberal democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights, in developing and post-communist states (Burnell, 2002:475).

The end of the Cold War and Soviet collapse, as earlier noted in this paper, made it possible for DAC donors to attach explicit political conditionalities to their aid, additional to economic, environmental and other conditionalities. Prior to this era however, development activity was for long virtually the monopoly of the state. Though the lack of alternatives did not mean the state was always a positive force for development. While other agencies of development such as the World Bank, the IMF and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), gained a higher profile in the late twentieth century, the state's claim to this monopoly weakened

The state provides an enabling environment structure for development by other agencies. The state is the network of government, quasi-government and non-governmental institutions that co-ordinates, regulates and monitors economic and social activities. The role of non-state actors, therefore, seems destined to grow as the power of the nation-state declines and global economic activity intensified (ibid).

The idea that governance was central to official development assistance received one of its earliest manifestations in a 1990 speech by British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd. Over the next two years, Hurd's statement was echoed by similar declarations from his counterparts in other rich countries. The shift toward governance thus coincided with the end of the cold war. This was in fact, no coincidence, as the governance agenda represented whatever the merit of conception or execution a further intrusion and the sovereignty of aid-recipient state (ibid).

Beyond the donor-recipient dimension of our subject matter or whose initiative the governance agenda is, one noticeable fact is that good governance promotes broad-based development. We have noted in this paper that good governance is sine-qua-non to effective use of public resources to generate public goods. These include physical infrastructure-roads, bridges, ports, sanitation, portable-water, electric power, telecommunications, public transport-and social, economic and political infrastructure-school, clinics, market, courts, vaccination programmes, improved agricultural techniques, a neutral and capable state bureaucracy.

Diamond (ibid:2) affirms that good governance consists of several dimensions which we also believe are mechanisms or institutional platforms that could engender development. One is the capacity of the state to function in the service of public good. Effective functioning requires knowledge of the policies and rules that best serve the public good, and hence training of state officials in their various professional realms. It requires a professional civil service with a set of norms and structures that promote fidelity to public rules and duties, in part by rewarding those who perform well in their roles.

This, according to him, relates intimately to the second dimension-commitment to the public good. This may be generated by dedicated and charismatic leadership. Or it may derive from a cultural ethic that appreciates and a structure of institutional incentives that rewards disciplined service to the nation or the general community over the use of office for private benefit.

A third dimension of good governance is transparency; the openness of state business and conduct to the scrutiny of other state actors and of the public. Transparency is intimately related to accountability. Governing agents are more likely to be responsible when they are answerable for their conduct to the society in general and to other specific institutions that monitor their behavior and can impose sanctions upon them.

The fourth dimension is the rule of law. Governance can only be good and effective when it is restrained by the law, when the law is applied equally to the lowly and the mighty, and when there are professional independent authorities to enforce the law in a neutral, predictable fashion. Both effective government and well functioning markets require that there be clear rules about what constitutes acceptable conduct in all realms of economic, social and political life.

The fifth dimension consists of participation and dialogue that enable the public to provide input to the policy process, to correct mistakes in policy design and implementation, and to promote social inclusion. Policies will be more likely to be stable and sustainable when they enjoy popular understanding and support.

Development is not only about choice at the individual level but also about making difficult choices at the collective level. The central focus of development therefore, is not necessarily to boost the production of material goods; instead, it should be to foster and enhance people's capability to have a role to play in their societies development. To this end, people should be willingly involved in a wide range of development activities, as agents and beneficiaries of development. It is this participation that is important. We believe it is needed both as a goal and a tool of development with a view to achieving good governance.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) identifies eight similar characteristics of good governance. It is participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making.

CONCLUSION

It is often claimed that good governance can always be obtained under a democratic setting. Some basic features of a democracy highlighted in this paper include popular sovereignty, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law (constitutionalism), separation of powers, periodic free and fair election and independence of the judiciary. Democracy emphasizes government formed with the consent of the people. Mukandala (2001:2) posits that a consensus exists about the content of liberal democracy. Democracy is characterized by a constitutional order and political practices that provide for political representation, participation and accountability through regular competitive elections held under conditions of civil and political liberties guaranteed by the rule of law.

Democracy has a number of distinguishing characteristics, amongst which have been highlighted above. In a democratic state, personalization of (state) power, inability of the ruling authorities to meet the basic needs of the people, abuse of human rights, violation of the rule of law; failure to demonstrate accountability and transparency are regarded as undemocratic and constitute bad governance. Through negotiations, agreements are reached with groups making concessions for each other. This shows the level of tolerance, moderation, mutual respect, fair play and readiness to compromise which democracy behooves to create good governance.

All Governments must be surrounded by checks and balances, limited for the protection of both minorities and individuals. These restrictions take the form of device to prevent the abuse of power, but in the main, they consist of guarantees of civil and personal rights.

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