EDUCATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE: A PSYCHO-POLITICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract
Nigeria today is facing a serious psycho-political and economic crisis. The time demands that scholars and practitioners should think a loud and come out with suggestions regarding the possible solutions to our problems. This paper is design to review the present psycho-political and economical conditions in the country and then goes on to argue that for a quick recovery from the depression there is the need for all Nigerians to develop what has been called the mind of good governance and this type of mind can only be effectively inculcated through the educational system in the country. It goes on to state in this direction that the school curriculum and the method of imparting any desirable knowledge and skill should have built in challenges. So that the products of the system would be able to face more squarely the hard problems of existence as are witnessed today in the country.

Keywords: Education, Psycho- Political, Economic and Good Governance.

Introduction
There is not much to be happy about concerning the psycho-political and economic situation in Nigeria today. Series of measures announced, thus alerting all and sundry of the grave psycho-political and economic situation facing the nation. Prices have risen to push the economy from strato to hyper inflation and unemployment has since been on the increase and is fast assuming on alarming rate. We now have pronounced graduate unemployment a situation that poses a great danger to the nation because of its psycho-social implications. Our standard of living is steadily declining because of the steady decline in our gross domestic product over the years. In effects the economy by 2018 had come almost to a halt. The current experiences are the direct result of the structural deficiencies of our economy. Ours is said to be a monocultural economy in that it is heavily dependent upon one major source of income which is the oil. Furthermore, this oil depends mainly on foreign market for its sale and in a modern world that is constantly engaging in geo-political warfare one can be sure that the nation is kept in a very vulnerable position. The evidence of this, is the recent attempt at strangulation of our economy by the western conspirators who decide to price down our oil and infact reduce the total purchase from us.

We can see that in absolute terms the amount realized from oil revenue declined. The percentage share also declined. The heavy dependence on oil and the decline in the sale of this oil created balance of payments problem. It is this that led to the severe restriction that has been placed on importation of goods (Food and non food materials). Infact, it is only when any positive step taken to revamp the economy starts to yield dividend that we can justifiably anticipate a relaxation of the restriction on importation. So we cannot expect a drastic change in the very near feature. As has been said earlier, there is not much for rejoicing. The
situation is grave and effect can be biting. Today’s working class is finding it difficult to feed itself. Long queues were formed by the people wanting to withdraw money and many traders crossed their legs, gaping into the sky as customers were nowhere around. This really makes one start asking questions about our education and all it stands for. Should we not rationalize our education system so as to ensure that the products of the system would not find it difficult to be gainfully employed? What is the essence of education if its recipients can remain for so long unemployed and can be cast into the streets to beg for arms? At this juncture we shall pause a bit and examine briefly the meaning and essence of education so that in the final analysis we can reflect upon the type of education that we need if we must ensure good governance in our country Nigeria.

The Meaning and Essence of Education

In the modern world of today, most people think of education as what is learned by pupils and students in schools, colleges and universities. In a way this is true, but we must be careful to distinguish formal education in the above sense and learning in a moral general sense, including all that young people learn before going to school (if they go to school) all they learn outside school, what they learn formally in school and all that people learn after finishing their formal studies. To an educational psychologist, education includes both the formal and the informal processes of learning. In modern Africa these two processes are more or less separate, but this was not true in many societies before European missionaries began bringing formal education to African (Iffih, 1998). According to the concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, education means systematic instruction. This entails imparting knowledge to someone by someone else. But we have to realize that there is a normative aspect of education in the sense that it is not every knowledge that is to be imparted. Rather it implies imparting worth-while knowledge, that is, knowledge that is deemed socially desirable. Not only is it expected that the knowledge being imparted should be morally desirable but also the method of imparting this must not be socially objectionable (Ezeaku, 1984).

Why education? The answer to this question may not be all that easy since different people may have different answer to give especially with reference to different societies. For instance, we are told that the aim of education in Ancient Rome was the development of the ability to read and write. In Germany during the time of William II education was primarily used to foster the spirit of nationalism and to achieve further social integration. Following the Declaration of independence in 1776 education in the United States was restructured to reflect the spirit of the time – freedom and equality of all men. It was the “designed for the intellectual and moral development of all for responsible and intelligent exercise of citizenship” (Ukeje, 1978). In the case of Nigeria, after the civil war in 1970, education was set to achieve among other things social integration, hence Federal Government Secondary Schools were built in many places and these were called “Unity Schools”. Although as has been shown above, specific objectives of education can vary from society to society and even from time to time, the main essence of education cannot be in question. It is fundamentally to ensure a desirable change in the state of the mind and thus make the individual to be useful to himself or herself and to the society.

In order to enable the individual to be useful to him/herself and the society, education seeks to impact skills and develop the intellectual and creative potentials of the individuals while helping him or her to cultivate attitudes that would most lead to effective utilization of the acquired knowledge and skills (Ogbogu, 2017). The attitudes to be cultivated very much depend upon the dominant values of the society. In the case of Nigeria policy on education enunciated by the Federal Government stated that the quality of instruction at all levels has to be oriented towards inculcating the following values.

- Respect for the worth and dignity of the individuals
- Faith in man’s ability to make rational decisions
- Moral and spiritual values in inter-personal and human relations
- Shared responsibility for the common good of the society
- Respect for the dignity of Labor and
- Promotion of the emotional, physical and psychological health of all children (Nigeria, 1981:7)
No doubt these are positive values which if fully cultivated can help the nation to build a strong, virile and self-reliant economy in keeping with the national objectives. However, there is a value that appears to have been left out but which one would consider very important. The issue of respect for the dignity of Labor encourages people to be interested in engaging in gainful employment and to respect other people no matter the type of work they do. But there is no positive step to discourage idleness. Encouraging interest in work does not necessarily imply discouraging interest in idleness. What is in effect is being suggested is that we should state boldly and unequivocally that one of the values to be cultivated is shared disregard for idleness in whatever form or shape and in whatever circumstances. If people are brought up to be constantly conscious of the fact that idleness is totally condemned no matter the circumstance every individual and the society will be more positive about creating developing alternative sources of gainful employment when one is not immediately available. At times the body may be strong but the mind may be unwilling. The Nigerian leaders in their governance may set noble objectives for the nation and the educational planners may very well incorporate or reflect these national objectives in the educational policies and objectives and yet the nation may not attain the warranted growth rate. In no other time has Nigeria faced the challenge of Psycho-political and economic survival as is the case today. Our very psycho-political and economic existence is threatened and so Nigerians must collectively and individually fight hard to ward-off the threat of psycho-political and economic strangulation. This we can do if the mind is there. And the mind that will save Nigeria from the threat of psycho-political and economic annihilation and social pogrom is what one will choose to call the mind of good governance. What then is this mind of good governance? What are its implication in a period like this? This naturally brings us to the next concern of this paper. The mind of good governance: An ingredient for psycho-political and economic growth and survival.

The mind of good governance: An ingredient for psycho-political, economic growth and survival.

Governance consists of traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced. The capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and psycho-social interactions among them, make up the body of governance (Ogege, 2013). World Bank report 1989 in Goerge-Genyi (2013), defines good governance as the exercise of political power in the management of nation’s affairs. Continuing, the study affirmed that the world Bank opinion implies that governance encompasses the state’s institutional and structural arrangements, decision making processes and implementation capacity and the relationship between the governing apparatus and the governed i.e. the people in terms of their standard of living. The disposition above, throws light on a clearer understanding of the concept of governance in itself. Governance is all that the government does to positively better and enhances the standard of life of her citizens (Ekesiobi, Madubueze & Ude, 2015).

Odock (2006) while writing on “Democracy and Good Governance in Nigeria” sees good governance as a system of government based on good leadership respect for the rule of law and due process, the accountability of the political leadership to the electorate as well as transparency in the operations of government. Odock (2006) went further to clarify good governance and stressed that it is a positive societal goal and development. The position of good governance of Odock (2006), appraises that fact that good governance entails a lot. The basic elements of it according to him are: rule of law, good leadership, due process, accountability and transparency in the operation of government. To us, the absence of these basic elements highlighted brings nothing other than insecurity of life and property. Also, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) explained in simplest measure, the concept of Good governance involves the following basic elements:-

- **Participating**: This involves both men and women as a key cornerstone. It could be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions. It emphasizes that freedom of association and an organized civil society.

- **Consensus Oriented**: The interest of the various institutions in the society has to be taking into account in this. It requires a broad and long term perspective on what is needed for sustainable human development and how to achieve the objective without rancor.
• **Accountable:** It is a key element in good governance because of its sensitivity. This simply requires the governments prudence in all her actions in policy formulation and implementation.

• **Transparency:** Transparency means that decision taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It also means that enough information is provided in easily understandable forms and media.

• **Effective and efficient:** This requires that institutions of government produces the result which they are set to achieve while making use of the available resources and most importantly protecting the environment while doing so.

• **Equitable and inclusive:** This requires the feelings of the masses despite culture and environment that they have a stake in the activities of the government. It entails all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well being.

• **Rule of Law:** This requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially. Independent of the judiciary in order to ensure full protection of the human right and incorruptible police force.

*Diagrammatically the above explained elements can be explained thus:*

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Rule of Law                     Consensus oriented
                        Participating                
                       Effective and efficient  Good Governance
                                                               
                      Responsively                  Accountability
                                                               
                      Equitable and Inclusive
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Sources Authors.

Nevertheless, Ogbugu (2013) highlighted strategies often seen as best practices that promote and validate good governance. Such practice include:

• Promoting democracy and political governance which emphasizes the sustenance of political consensus and in so doing minimizing political conflicts in the society that negatively affect the rights of the citizens.

• Enhancing economic government and management, particularly in diversifying its economic base and thus moving away from dominance of commercial activities, fiscal indiscipline, and other factors that set debilitating constraints on economic management.

• Bolstering corporate governance, largely in terms of preventing environmental pollution and degradation, and promoting sanitation and laws that are meaningfully supportive of the enforcement or implementation of necessary behaviour in this direction.

• Promoting socio-Economic development through the implementation of specification of the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDs), State Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDs) and Local Government Economic Empowerment Development
Strategy (LEEDs); and in addition, heightening community-based Economic Empowerment Development strategy (CEEDs).

For there to be a sustainable and healthy agitation for good governance, there are two fundamental elements that must be present in the system before the agitation can be hopeful these are:-

1. Genuine Democracy:
The 1999 Constitution in Chapter II, Section 14(1) states that:
“The Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a state based on the principles of democracy and social justice”.

This section of the constitution provided a sound basis for any intellectual argument or conventional discourse about the concept. But the Salient fact about the prevailing democratic culture in Nigeria is that the ‘elections’ it has conducted so far, have not show that deep-down-rooted democracy is in practice. This is a reflection of opposite of what good governance is. In other words, what obtains in Nigeria is enough to demonstrate that the so-called democratic elections, if continued the way it is being conducted, cannot stimulate genuine democracy and will not automatically produce good governance even when it is perceived and declared free, fair and credible. This is because all Nigerian politicians are wearing mask.

...complete democracy was to be obtained not just by extending voting right but also by ensuring that there exist a fully formed public opinion, accompanied by effective communication among citizens, experts, and politicians, with the latter being accountable for the policies they adopt... (John F. Dewey, 1985 – 1992).

Roskin, Cord, Medeiros and Jones (2010), argued that democracy seldom lasts in poor countries... but it mostly works in middle-income and higher income countries. Below are their reasons for this assertion:

- Economic growth creates a large middle class, which has a stake in the system; the middle class may wish to reform it but not overthrow it.
- Education level has risen; most people are high school graduates, and many are college graduates. They are no longer ignorant and do not fall for demagogues or extremist ideas.
- People increasingly recognize their interests and express them: pluralism. They voice business, professional regional and religious demands. They can spot cruel, corrupt, or inefficient government and do not like being treated like children.
- The market itself teaches citizens about self-reliance, pluralism, tolerance, and not expecting too much. All these attitudes sustain democracy.

However, they further observed that there are some general characteristics that tend to inhibit democracy from flourishing, which include but are not limited to;

1. Poverty
2. Major inequality
3. No middle class
4. Oil
5. Little civil society
6. No democratic country nearby
7. Low education level
8. No earlier democratic experience.

Factually, none of the above listed features of good governance is justified to inhibit Nigeria, because a critical look at the multi-sided nature of the composition of Nigeria reveals that the country and her citizens are richly endowed with natural and human capital to defend and develop the country. Therefore, her citizens have the audacity to say, that they have what it requires for democracy to flourish and for Nigeria to be counted among the fastest growing economics. What then is the reason for Nigerians retarded development? The only problem is education and the opposite of good governance.

Nyerere, (1998), brought to force, one covert fact about democracy when he said that:

...an essential ingredient in democracy is that it is based on the equality of all the people within a nations boundary, and that all the Laws of the land apply to all adults without expectation. The nations constitution must provide methods by which
the people can, without resource to violence, control the government which emerges in accordance with it and even specify the means for its own amendment. In shorthand, the constitution itself must be based on the principles of the rule of law.

2. Good Leadership

Good governance may be difficult to attain or put differently, may not be practicable if there is no god leadership. What is termed good leadership is a wider concept that could be given infinite definition. What is meant here is that in a definition of good leadership is a wider concept that could be given infinite definition. What is meant here is that in a definition of good leadership, commitment, honesty, rule of law, respect for human right, ability to inspire and selflessness, are its rudimentary strength. More so, Effiong, as cited in Ukwuije, (2014) says:

I feel that with the right type of leadership and motivation, the Nigerian person, endowed as he is with nature’s generosity, can achieve enviable heights at home and abroad. What he need is time, motivation, opportunity, encouragement, a genuine sense of belonging and above all, a dynamic and meaningful leadership.

The supposed needs of the Nigerian person as enunciated above are all within and around him. The only factor inhibiting him from achieving enviable height is the letter - a dynamic and meaningful leadership. In order to function effectively, every leadership requires authority, and that was Max Weber, as cited in Okoye (2014), observed that throughout history, there have been three sources of authority for leadership namely;

- Traditional: Which is based on traditional values of the society;
- Charismatic – which derive from the extra ordinary personality of the leader;

It is important to point out the import of good governance and what is required of Nigerian as citizens, to key into the depending race of good governance, as seen in other developing nations. But more importantly, it is to bring to fore, those factors that are responsible from the slow pace of the agitation in this country. In this regard, Oguoma, (2015) succinctly put it that:

...No Nigerian, from the president down to the lowest, should be above the law. A situation where the law is only made for the middle and lower classes while the rich, famous, politicians and government officials flout the law with impurity cannot augur well for this nation... those who make the law are the greatest law breakers and those who enforce the law are the worst law breakers. Those who interpret the law are the cynical law breakers, while those who teach the law and those who practice it are the noisy law breakers. What is the outcome – general lawlessness.

Can there be good governance in a lawless nation? “Part of the problems with democracy in Africa is the low level of political education and awareness, which is another factor of bad governance and underdevelopment. There have been situations where voters refused to go out to vote, because they have been thoroughly disillusioned by their past experiences. There have been other situations where the voting was no more than a farce, such as one party system, in which the party won a priori regardless of the number which turned out to vote” (Etuk, 2002). Further, he stated that,

... it is not possible to talk about human dignity, welfare and development, as these terms are understood today, outside of democracy. The concern of democracy are not with abstraction and foreign ideologies; but with good governance, stable societies, orderly changes in government, peace and security. In order words, democracy is man – centered; it is a governing of human beings by other human beings not by “monster” such as many African countries have known.

This was why Babangida, (1987.5) posited that:

What really is at the bottom of our past dilemma is the absence of a viable political arrangement. The political history of this nation is partly one of disillusionment with politicians. Intermittent bad governments have left us a legacy of economic mismanagement and a chain of political instability... To avoid the mistakes of the past, we must aim at establishing a political system capable of ensuring:
i. Justice
ii. Opportunity for the people to participate in the decision making process
iii. A new social and economic order based on peace, stability, harmony, and
iv. An open equitable distribution of national resources and opportunities.

When democracy is subjected to test of practical consequences, the result can be seen in the political, economic, developmental, psycho-social and environmental processes of the Western countries where democracy is an accepted way of life. No one is claiming for democracy that it is a perfect system, but those who resist the global democratization sweep should undertake the onus of providing anything which is better suited as “an engine of liberation and a catalyst agent of human development” (Etuk, 2002).

... apart from the president, there are other leaders whose co-operative efforts will make the consummation of the (good governance) agenda possible. Unfortunately we have leaders who are crassly incompetent and irresponsible. There is leadership deficiency in Nigeria. Today we need leaders who have not only the passion but the vision to bring about true change. We need leaders who must put their country above self, who are creative, dynamic and who appreciates issues that drive development at the local, national and international levels. There is no evidence to show that Nigerian leaders have changed or are expecting fellowship that is committed to change. In the absence of government – induced attitudinal change, all facet of our psycho-social and political life in which the led ought to borrow a leaf from the good example of the leadership have remained as they are. Some have even gone worse. The leadership remain morally bankrupt and a blot on the image of the country (Onah, 2014).

However, Nigeria is not making practical progress in the ranking of good governance in Africa. Years back, the organization founded by Sudanese billionaire entrepreneur, Mohammed Ibrahim, delivered a demining verdict on Nigeria when it claimed that Nigeria have not experienced realistic governance since 2006. The 2012 survey scored Nigeria low in security, rule of law, political freedom, transparency and accountability and human development. However, last year’s survey described as the most comprehensive in recent years, could be said to be an encouraging report, even thought the detailed survey shows that Nigeria is still “below average” in good governance in Africa as well as the West African Region. Among the criteria used in this latest survey are security human rights, economic stability, rule of law, free and fair elections corruption, infrastructure, poverty level, health and education. Can Nigeria claim to be champion in any of this? It is obvious that there is a low level of human right recognition, poor security situation, and an alarming rate of corruption and poverty. So, good governance is still far from reality (Ukuije, 2018). To settle this issue, one can suggest education for good governance under difficult condition.

Education for Good Governance Under Difficult conditions
As has been pointed out earlier, education mainly seeks to help recipient to grow in knowledge and skill. At times we discover that the knowledge and skill may not be functional in the sense that they are not utilized to serve the interest of the individual and the society. The knowledge may be acquired but may not have outlet. For instance one may train as an engineer and later on come out to discover that he has no engineering job or work to do. In this case the knowledge is not functional. An educational system that produces non-functional knowledge is itself non-functional. According to Mokwugo Okoye,

“A learning that is not closely related to the problems of the working world, not offering sufficient instruction in house – keeping and child welfare, business training and manual skills, budgeting and interior decoration, agriculture and human relationships (sex, emotions and communal relation) and so not giving due emphasis to the study of the aims and mechanics of government in addition to those myriad data with which teachers are wont to stuff the heads of their pupils, is a misdirected effort” (Okoye, 1970).

What in effect Okoye is calling for is not necessarily an educational system that teaches the individual all these skills. What is implied is the economic, political and psycho-social problems that confront Nigeria today are such that demand that all Nigerians should come out with their best – best in terms of effort, best in terms of ideas, best in terms of commitment, and in terms of leadership and governance and best in terms
of resourcefulness and creativity. How can these bests to imparted into all Nigerians? It is through education. Our students should be taught how to govern. The teacher should inspire than to aim at great heights and avoid bemoaning their fate when faced with hard and difficult problems of leadership and governance. This in effect means that the curriculum and the method of imparting the desirable knowledge and skills should have built in challenges. The result of this would be the production of student and scholars who would face situations squarely not minding the odds. The institutions should condition the students and scholars to the hard realities of life that they are going to face as the future leaders outside the institution. The education should be the type that would be able to inculcate discipline in the minds of the people and make them not to afraid or look down on any leadership or governance responsibilities no matter how such is socially desirable.

Conclusion

The contemporary formal education which ideally is supposed to make the educated critical of the status quo leading him to question existing answers and raise new questions to be answered is, the type of education relevant to the present context—education for good governance. Today the myriad of security and underdevelopment challenges facing Nigeria are the consequences of bad governance the country has continued to experience overtime the absence of an ideal and functional democracy and its accompanying principles account for the absence of good governance in the country (Nwakodo, Alum & Sigwe, 2013). Our economy has gone to the dogs. Any hope for good governance lies in education and one would therefore challenge our educational planners and administrators to give us the education that we need for good governance. such must be the education that will imbue the leaders with what has been designated earlier on as the mind of governance, the mind of creativity, endurance and perseverance, the mind of love for one fatherland, and the mind of industry and hard work. If this is pursued and realized, there can be no doubt that we will not remain for too long in the present deep rooted psycho-political and economic depression and Nigerian will Survive ad govern as a Nation.

References


