

Governance and Human Security: How can Nigeria Go Beyond the Rhetoric?

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Abstract The paper analyzes health – related and poverty issues as critical components of governance and human security in Nigeria. There have been studies in these areas, but there are still gaps in view of the increasing poverty levels coupled with the recurrence of common ailments such as malaria and several that are connected to poor hygiene and sanitary conditions. Other identifiable diseases include Ebola, Lassa Fever, and the Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19), the latter with global devastating effects from December 2019. Data is drawn from secondary materials for the conceptual and theoretical sections of the paper. This is complemented by primary data from events analyses and content analyses of reports, including the United Nations (UN) Human Development Index (HDI), Legatum Prosperity Index, Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), and the Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI), for 2010-2018. The paper's analytic frame draws strength from a combination of the institutional approach and the state fragility perspective. The main finding in the paper is located in the ineffectiveness and poor governance arising from the lack of autonomy of the institutions responsible for health services and poverty reduction in Nigeria and, in particular, the pursuit of vested and private interests by public officials. Recommendations are made in line with examples of best practices deployed for illustration in the paper.

Keywords Self-interest, State Fragility, Ineffective

Governance, Human Security, Underdevelopment

1. Introduction

Nigeria has, despite the huge expectation of development that accompanied the reintroduction of democracy in 1999, been confronted by a myriad of problems out of which this paper has selected the issues of health and poverty, both of which are critical components of human security. Nigeria is an endowed country: its population represents one-quarter of sub-Saharan Africa and one-fifth of the black race; it has about the sixth-largest deposit of gas in the world; and it is the eighth-largest Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil producer. Yet, the country has variously been classified as fragile or failed¹ along with less endowed countries such as Sao Tome, Papua New Guinea, Djibouti, and Uzbekistan.

Nigeria's capacity is undermined by weak economic and political structures, poorly performing institutions and

¹ According to the United States of America (USA) Fund for Peace Think-Tank organization, countries categorized as fragile or failed lack capacity for policy formulation and implementation for sustainable development goals, including security of life and property, human rights and freedom.

processes, consisting of quarrelsome, inept and unaccountable political and bureaucratic officials. Efforts (Yagboyaju 2019; Falola 2018; Aning 2016; Adamolekun 2016; Bello and Roslan 2010; Simbine and Oladeji 2010; Ajakaiye and Olomola 2003) have been made at studying and analyzing the several issues around and about ineffective governance in Nigeria. However, the unabated character of certain issues and in particular, the outbreak of pandemics such as COVID-19 coupled with the effects on the living conditions of the generality of ordinary citizens compel renewed efforts, with this being one of such.

1.1. Study Questions and Objectives

- i) How and why is lack of institutional capacity, poor leadership, and ineffective governance connected in Nigeria?
- ii) What key factors account for the threats to human security and high poverty levels in the country?
- iii) What has the performance of Nigeria been in international development rankings in the decade starting from 2010?
- iv) How can best practices from around the world help in addressing threats to human security and high levels of poverty in Nigeria?

This study aims to analyze the relationship between the nature and character of public institutions, gap in political leadership, and ineffective governance in Nigeria, especially 20 years after the 1999 reintroduction of democracy in the country. The specific objectives are analyses of isolated factors that account for threats to human security and high poverty levels in Nigeria and content analyses of selected international documents and reports to draw examples of best practices from all the world.

The rest of the paper is divided into four main parts. These are namely: conceptual/theoretical issues and review of literature; recent efforts on human security in Nigeria; content analyses of selected documents and discussion of findings; and conclusion.

2. Conceptual/Theoretical Issues and Review of Literature

Governance is a concept with broad interpretations. It can be viewed from the simple perspective of efficiency and rationality in allocating resources within any organization, to the more complex as the process of steering the state and society toward the realization of collective and oftentimes contradictory goals. Studies (Oyeshile and Offor 2016; Yagboyaju 2016; Simbine and Oladeji 2010; Hyden and Bratton 1992; Chazan 1992) are in agreement on the relevance of the categorization of governance into the political, economic, and social

resources.

The World Bank (2007) provides a framework in which six dimensions of governance are enunciated. These are namely: *Voice and Accountability (VA)* – measuring perceptions of the extent to which citizens of a country are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media; *Political Stability and Absence of Violence (PV)* – measuring perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically – motivated violence and terrorism; *Government Effectiveness (GE)* – measuring perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government’s commitment to such policies; *Regulatory Quality (RQ)* – measuring perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development; *Rule of Law (RL)* – measuring perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in, and abide by, the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence; *Control of Corruption (CC)* – measuring perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as *capture*² of the state by the elite and private interests.

These dimensions concentrate on political or public governance. However, it must be noted that the concept of governance cannot be reduced to the government, as there are also levels of governance outside of the core government. These can be categorized as economic and social governance. Economic governance involves the private sector and its relationships to the policies, the processes, and organizational mechanisms that are necessary to produce and distribute goods and services. Social governance, whose authority is the civil society, includes citizens and non-profit organizations and non-governmental organizations. It relates to a system of values and beliefs that are necessary for social behaviours to happen and for public decisions to be taken.

From the definitions and allusions above, governance can be described as involving the manner in which allocative and regulatory mechanisms are exercised in the management of resources for the good of the citizenry. Governance of social, economic, and natural resources

2 The concept of *state capture* has been deployed by the World Bank in describing abuse of policy formulation and implementation processes by corrupt public officials. See, World Bank, *Anticorruption in Transition: A Contribution to the Policy Debate*, Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2000.

presupposes public good and broadly embraces the formal and informal institutions by which authority is exercised. Therefore, poor or ineffective governance leads, according to Rogers and Hall (2003:2), to “increased political and social risks, institutional failure and rigidity and a deterioration in the capacity to cope with shared problems”. Following up from this, Kaufmann, Kraay, and Zoido-Lobaton (1999:4) have observed the strong “causal relationship between better governance and better development outcomes such as higher per capita incomes, lower infant mortality and higher literacy”.

The problem of poor leadership cannot be separated from poor or ineffective governance. From Achebe (1983) to Musa (cited in Simbine and Oladeji 2010:807 and Shahadah (2012), the argument about the relationship between poor leadership and underdevelopment in Nigeria and many other parts of Africa has been consistent. What supposedly is leadership in many of these societies is so removed from the people such that “leaders” are often regarded as foreigners. The problem of poor leadership in Africa has been closely “linked to corruption, greed, nepotism, indiscipline and outright theft” that have left the region “more or less stagnant after decades of self-rule” (Simbine and Oladeji, p. 807). This is mostly found at the political leadership levels, where elective and appointive positions are often characterized by affective and emotional relationships.

“Health is wealth” is an age-long aphorism, which can simply be interpreted to mean that only the health can be fully productive, and productivity leads to wealth³. In this context, health has been widely accepted as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or disability” (Omigbodun 2010:479). In simple terms, health security can be described as every activity towards securing health and health conditions. A concept that has been popularized by the United Nations (UN), the World Health Organization (WHO), and similar others has individual, national, and international dimensions. In one of these, global health security is, according to the WHO, defined as the “activities required to minimize the danger and impact of acute public health events that endanger the collective health of populations living across geographical regions and international boundaries” (www.who.int/health-security). This and similar state-centric definitions have been criticized because of their lack of concentration on individual well-being.

This brings the concept of human security in focus. The concept refers to the security of people and communities, as opposed to the security of states. Human security

recognizes that there are several dimensions related to feeling safe, such as “freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity” (www.gppac.net>human-security). According to Aning (p. 13), common threats to health that can be isolated include “scarce water and sanitation systems, disease pandemics, physical and emotional violence, inadequate access to maternal and child healthcare, and precarious roads and transportation systems”. In broader terms, elements of human security also include food security, environmental security, economic security, personal security, and community security. These headings cover issues such as sufficiency of nutrition; air pollution; water and sanitation; employment opportunities; protection from threats of war, crime, violence, rape, child abuse and drug abuse; and promotion of healthy lifestyles and strong social systems as well as political security, including human dignity and rights protection. It is necessary to note the extensive nature of human security, covering human rights, rule of law and other developmental issues, the critical importance of health security notwithstanding.

The concept of poverty is often viewed and defined only from an economic perspective. The phenomenon of poverty in Nigeria transcends economic and financial realms. It is a multidimensional phenomenon covering wide sectors of the economy, including agriculture, education, technology, housing, politics, and social sectors. In light of the above, poverty can be defined as a state or condition of lack or impoverishment and deprivation. Navigating submissions by key development agencies such as the World Bank (2000) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2000), the consensus on the multidimensional nature of poverty, and it’s being an indication of deprivation or insufficiency of one or more dimensions of well-being have been noted by McGee and Brock (2001). It is in this vein that the common theme of experiencing powerlessness⁴ by poor people is relevant. It implies that poor people live without fundamental freedoms of action and choice that takes the better-off for granted.

Issues of health and poverty are critical to the development of every society. Detailed analyses of these and how Nigeria is affected are in section 4.0 of this paper. However, a careful examination of studies, debates, and policies by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and the UN on poverty is relevant. For example, poverty reduction became the overarching objective in international cooperation and development in the 1990s. In

3 For opinions on this and its connection to Nigeria, see Adeyinka O. Omigbodun, *Developments in the Health Sector*. In: S.O. Akande and A.J. Kumuyi (Eds.) *Nigeria at 50 – Accomplishments, Challenges and Prospects*, Ibadan: NISER, 2010.

4 D. Olu Ajakaiye, Olusade Taiwo and Louis N. Chete, *Economy, Poverty and Democracy*. In: D. Olu Ajakaiye and F.O. Nyemutu Roberts (Eds.) *Meeting the Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria*, Ibadan: NISER, 2002, illustrated poor people’s common experience of powerlessness. This was supported by the report of researches conducted in 1999 involving over 200,000 poor people from 23 countries.

1999, the IMF and World Bank launched the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), following similar development assistance in 1996 by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In 2000 and 2015, the UN adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) respectively. The first out of the eight MDGs is the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, and this is the same in the expanded 17 SDGs (www.un.org/en/development/desa/dest/2030/). Half of the remaining goals in both the MDGs and SDGs are not only connected to health issue, but they also concentrate on concerns for society's most vulnerable – women and the youths.

Human development is presented as being at the core of economic and social development. It is generally regarded as a process of expanding human choice and enabling people to enjoy long, healthy, and creative lives. Studies (Yagboyaju 2016a:99-132; Erinoshio 2010:59-92) have distinguished between growth and development. In this light, growth according to Umo and Ukpong (2010:587) would be regarded as:

- *Jobless* if it fails to expand employment opportunities;
- *Rudderless* if its fruits accrue only to the rich;
- *Voiceless* where it lacks democratic empowerment and participation;
- *Rootless* where it eliminates people's cultural identity; and
- *Futureless* where it fails to provide for the future generation through indiscriminate consumption.

For example, this explains why Nigeria, despite the country's occasional economic prosperity brought about by the rise in the international price of crude oil, has consistently performed poorly in all the leading global development reports in the first two decades of the 21st century.

Before closing this section of the paper, a brief discussion of the analytic frame is necessary. Institutionalism is a theoretical approach that anchors analysis on the role of institutions and organizations. In the public sphere, these include the legislature, executive and judiciary. Others are: the civil service; Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs); political parties; and the party system. Such institutions are studied to discover persistent patterns of activities, constitutional and legal arrangements, especially as they relate to functions and powers of the institutions (see Onah 2010:95pp; Leeds 1981:1-12). Inter-agency relationship or cooperation and collaboration between institutions is important in view of the commonality of the purpose of government. The institutional approach has been criticized for being too formalistic and for neglecting the informal aspects of organizations, which are also important in political analyses. The emergence of the behavioural movement and the behavioural approach partly accounted for a momentary relegation of institutionalism. However, there

has been a resurgence of the institutional approach. For example, the efforts of Suberu (2018), as well as Acemoglu and Robinson (2012), have been acknowledged in this regard⁵. Historical institutionalism has also emerged. This is a new approach that uses institutions to find sequences of social, political, economic behaviour, and change across time. It is a comparative approach to the study of all organizations and does so by relying heavily on case studies (see Sanders 2008; Steinmo 2008).

The state fragility perspective has been used in describing states that lack the capacity to discharge their normal functions (policy formulation, implementation, and interpretation) and drive forward development. This implies weak state capacity or weak state legitimacy. With the lack of capacity to engage productively with their citizens so as to ensure the security of life and property, safeguard human rights and provide basic institutional and infrastructure for development, these are states that suffer from one governance crisis to another... (Simbine and Oladeji, p. 808). Pioneering efforts (World Bank 1988; 1992), followed by Osaghae (2007 and 2010), have documented evidence on the consequences of state fragility for development aspirations.

Despite the sharp difference along ideological lines, there is a consensus of opinions that the role of the modern state cannot be overemphasized in the attainment of development aspirations and goals. Studies (Bayart 1993; Chazan 1988; Callaghy 1987; Alavi 1979) have, therefore, analyzed how the state has performed in Africa and in parts of the Third World. In Nigeria, Agbaje (cited in Simbine and Oladeji, p. 807) has described the state as "an unfinished state of uncertainty, a state of aspirations unmatched by reality". This implies huge expectations, especially by the people, but limited capacity for development by the state and its institutions.

3. Recent Efforts on Human Security in Nigeria

The isolated aspects of human security, health, and poverty management, are key components of human development. Therefore, examining recent efforts on human security in Nigeria is to partly examine human development policies in the country. This concentrates on the country's budgetary allocations and expenditures in the selected sectors, as well as the main development plans and agenda in the 20 years after the commencement of the Fourth Republic. The latter includes: the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy

⁵ Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson's bestseller, *Why Nations Fail*, has been widely cited for its emphasis on the role of institutions in determining power, prosperity and poverty levels in societies.

(NEEDS), 1999-2007; the Seven-point Agenda, 2007-2010; the Transformation Agenda, 2010-2015; and the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), 2016 till date. Other special and intervention programmes include the activities of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), the North East Development Commission, and the economic stimuli and relief packages in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences.

Documents from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), from 2000 to 2018 (cited in Yagboyaju 2019a, 2019 and 2016a), Crisp and Onwukwe (2000) and Erinoshio (2010) have shown improved attention in Nigeria's health sector since after the reintroduction of democracy in 1999. This has been in the form of infrastructural refurbishment, upgrading and construction in tertiary, secondary and primary health facilities around the country, concerted efforts in the procurement of drugs and other consumables for the treatment and management of common ailments such as malaria as well as several communicable and non-communicable diseases. There have also been evidences of concern in policy statements and action plans on HIV/AIDS and opportunistic diseases such as tuberculosis. These included the setting up of the National Agency for the Control of Aids (NACA) and its equivalents at the State and Local Government levels, as well as the expansion of access to Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) and free anti-retroviral (ART) treatment for those living with HIV and AIDS. There were also the enhanced job-specific allowances, including "the Call Duty Allowance, Risk-related Allowance, Relocation Allowance and Scarce Skills Allowance, all of which have favoured workers in the country's health sector" (Yagboyaju 2016a:115). This was apart from the general public wage review, in which the minimum public wage shot up from ₦250 per month to ₦5,500 per month, in May 2000, and the plan for a similar review at the end of every fifth year subsequently.

The National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), the National Programme on Immunization (NPI) and the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) are also programmes and establishments whose implementation and formation have boosted activities in Nigeria's health delivery services. The NHIS has so far been beneficial to workers in certain federal government-owned establishments, while NAFDAC has been responsible for preventing drug adulteration and faking of medicine, processed drinks and food items.

All the social and economic programmes in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, including NEEDS, the Seven-point Agenda, the Transformation Agenda, and the ERGP have contents directed at addressing the issue of poverty and its consequences. Usually, these include issues of income and wealth distribution, employment opportunities, food

security, and sustainable development. There have been the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) under which interest-free loans were granted to certain categories of poor people. In addition to the micro-credit scheme, which mainly focused on the automobile (commercial motorcycle and tri-cycle transporters) industry, the programme also supported youth vocational training, internship as well as support for Vesicovaginal Fistula (VVF) patients. In 2012, the Federal Government set up the Subsidy Reinvestment and Economic Empowerment Programme (SURE P), which was essentially meant to manage government savings from fuel subsidy removal for critical infrastructural projects and social safety net. The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programme has been on since 2017. In one aspect, the unbanked, those without social media accounts or smartphones and, in fact, those without education are paid ₦5,000 or about US \$14 every month. This is a regular and predictable transfer to the poorest of the poor. There is also the school feeding programme at no cost to pupils of public schools. In another aspect, the "Trader Moni" or "Market Moni" is a micro-credit scheme in which small traders, market men and women are granted interest-free loans (see Aiyede, Sina, Haruna, Olutayo, Ogunkola and Best 2015). The CCT in Nigeria, according to Ogunlesi (2015:35), is "patterned after the Bolsa Familia" in Brazil, and is, therefore designed to lift tens of millions of ordinary Nigerians out of poverty⁶. Three years after the 2017 commencement date, the performance of Nigeria's CCT has been under scrutiny with the outbreak of COVID-19 and the several steps taken in addressing the pandemic at different governmental levels in Nigeria.

The efforts made in the several programmes cited above have been largely ineffective for some reasons. These include: the country's long encounter with military rule and abandonment of social spendings and infrastructural development in the social sector; focus on grandiose projects, not necessarily based on felt needs of the ordinary citizens, in the twenty years of democratization; and corruption. For long, the citizens have also not been engaging their representatives in terms of demanding accountability. This implies that the civil societies including community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs) have not effectively been contributing in Nigeria like their counterparts in societies such as the United States of America (USA), France, Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK), where governance has noticeably been more effective.

6 This has been repeated by President Muhammadu Buhari, in his inauguration and several subsequent speeches. See, Vanguard Online, <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/05/read-president-buhari-inaugural-speech/> (Accessed on 25/05/2020).

4. Analyses of Selected Documents and Discussion of Findings

There are five tables, in which Nigeria's position in the UN HDI, Legatum Prosperity Index and the IAG, for 2010-2018, is analyzed. The sixth table, in which the country's position in the TI's CPI is analyzed, becomes necessary in the light of the recurrence of corruption as a factor in policy performance in Nigeria. Discussion of findings is connected to events analyses by the authors, in March and April 2020, when the latter observed events during the COVID-19 induced lockdown in the Nigerian cities of Ibadan and Abuja. Issues relating to health and poverty levels are the focus of analyses in the six tables. However, Tables 1 and 6 provide a broad framework of the criteria for prosperity assessment and Nigeria's CPI ranking respectively.

The key point being raised in the summary of Tables 1-5 is that Nigeria's capacity to attain prosperity through two critical elements of human security-health and low poverty level is weak. This can be viewed from the following points: Nigeria has been a low human development country since the inception of the HDI in the 1990s, and from 2010 – 2018 in the UN report analyzed in Table 3; the country consistently ranked in the bottom tenth percentile in the

Legatum Prosperity Report; it scored above 50% only in one out of the nine years in the IAG report and it has been in the bottom one-third of the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries. In particular, Nigeria's 2018 IAG score of 47.9 placed the country lower than the West African average of 49.9. None of the high performing countries of Denmark, Norway, and Switzerland are as endowed as Nigeria, in terms of human and natural resources. This implies better and effective management of resources on the part of the high performers. In Table 6, attention is drawn to Nigeria's score and ranking in the TI's CPI because governance crises and the consequences on health-related issues, poverty levels, and the living conditions of the generality of the ordinary citizens in Nigeria can hardly be analyzed without examining the factor of corruption. Corruption has been described as the greatest obstacle to human development in Nigeria (Yagboyaju 2017:45-74). It erodes the legitimacy of the government, undermines its institutions and worsens living conditions because it accounts for the illegal diversion of resources meant for infrastructural development and provision of the good things of life. Nigeria's CPI score and ranking fluctuated substantially over the decade in the report but has never been enough to significantly enhance human development in the country.

Table 1. Criteria for Prosperity Assessment

Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG)	Legatum Institute's Prosperity Report	Human Development Index (HDI)
1. Sustainable Economic Opportunity (Infrastructure, Public Management, Business Environment, Rural Sector)	Economy (Macro-Economic policies, economic satisfaction and expectations, foundations for growth, and financial sector efficiency).	GDP per Capita (Income)
2. Safety and Rule of Law (Personal Safety, National Security, Accountability, Rule of Law)	Entrepreneurship and Opportunity (entrepreneurial environment, promotion of innovative activity, and evenness of opportunity).	Health-longevity (life expectancy at birth).
3. Participation and Human Rights (Participation, rights, gender)	Governance (effective and accountable government, fair elections and political participation, rule of law)	Education – (literacy rate and combined enrolment ratio).
4. Human Development (Education, Health, Welfare).	Education (access to education, quality of education, and human capital)	
	5. Health (basic health outcomes, health infrastructure, and preventive care).	
	6. Safety and Security (national security and personal security)	
	7. Personal Freedom (individual freedom, and encouraging social tolerance).	
	8. Social Capital (social cohesion and engagement, and community and family networks).	

Source: Authors (based on information available on websites of Mo Ibrahim Foundation, Legatum Institute and UNDP – 25/04/2020 @ 14.06hrs).

Table 2. Nigeria's Prosperity Assessment, 2010-2018

Year	Legatum Prosperity Index (Ranking of Countries)	Ibrahim Index of African Governance (Ranking)
2010	106 th out of 110	40 th out of 48; 43.0
2011	104 th out of 110	41 st out of 53; 43.4
2012	123 rd out of 142	43 rd out of 52; 44.9
2013	123 rd out of 142	41 st out of 52; 43.4
2014	125 th out of 142	37 th out of 52; 45.8
2015	125 th out of 142	36 th out of 54; 44
2016	136 th out of 142	35 th out of 54; 48.1
2017	132 nd out of 142	Not available
2018	129 th out of 149	33 rd out of 54; 47.9

Source: Authors (based on information available on the websites of Legatum Institute and Mo Ibrahim Foundation – accessed on 25/04/2020 @ 14.10hrs).

Table 3. Nigeria's score and ranking in HDI, 2010-2018

Year	Value	Ranking
2010	0.493	158/177
2011	0.499	156/187
2012	0.505	153/186
2013	0.511	153/187
2014	0.514	145/187
2015	0.514	152/188
2016	0.532	152/188
2017	0.532	157/189
2018	0.534	158/189

Source: Authors (based on information available on the websites of UNDP).

*The bounce from GDP rebasing in 2014 accounts for the significant improvement in the scores since 2010 – the impact of GDP rebase was used to re-calculate the HDP up to 2010 on UNDP website – accessed on 25/04/2020. (The scores are out of a total of 1.0).

Table 4. Nigeria's score and ranking in IAG, 2018 & average score, 2008-2017

CRITERA	2018 (Ranking and Score)	2008-2017 Average Score
1. Sustainable Economic Opportunity (Infrastructure, Public Management, Business Environment, Rural Sector)	29 th (43.5%)	34.1%
2. Safety and Rule of Law (Personal Safety, National Security, Accountability, Rule of Law)	38 th (46.4%)	48.8%
3. Participation and Human Rights (Participation, rights, gender)	24 th (53.2%)	47%
4. Human Development (Education, Health, Welfare).	34 th (48.7%)	45.7%
OVERALL RANKING	36 th (47.9%)	43.2%

Source: Authors (based on information available on the websites of Mo Ibrahim Foundation – 25/04/2020).

Table 5. Nigeria's ranking in Legatum's Prosperity Report, 2018

Sub-Indices	2018 Ranking (Total = 167)
1. Economy: macro-economic policies; economic satisfaction and expectations	157 th
2. Entrepreneurship and Opportunity: entrepreneurial environment, promotion of innovative activity, and evenness of opportunity.	131 st
3. Governance: effective and accountable government, fair elections and political participation, rule of law	126 th
4. Education: access to education, quality of education, and human capital	138 th
5. Health: basic health outcomes, health infrastructure, and preventive care.	162 nd
6. Safety and Security: national security and personal security	157 th
7. Personal Freedom: individual freedom, and encouraging social tolerance.	102 nd
8. Social Capital: social cohesion and engagement, and community and family networks.	69 th
OVERALL RANKING	148 th

Source: Authors (based on information available on the website of Legatum Institute – accessed on 25/04/2020).

Table 6. Nigeria's score and ranking in TI's CPI, 2010-2018

Year	CPI Score	Nigeria's CPI Ranking	Remarks
2010	2.4	134/178	44 th most corrupt
2011	24%	143/182	39 th most corrupt
2012	27%	139/174	35 th most corrupt
2013	25%	144/175	31 st most corrupt
2014	27%	136/174	38 th most corrupt
2015	26%	136/167	31 st most corrupt
2016	28%	136/176	35 th most corrupt
2017	27%	148/180	35 th most corrupt
2018	27%	144/180	34 th most corrupt

Source: Authors (based on data from the website of Transparency International – accessed on 25/04/2020).

Nigeria has performed abysmally in similar reports, pointing to something fundamental. For example, in 2013, the *Economist Intelligence Unit* and the global charity, *Save the Children*, reported the country as “one of the ten worst countries in the world to have a child” (*The Punch* 2013:24). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “6.9 million children under age 5 died in 2011 globally”, “19,000 each day, and about 800 every hour”. Out of these statistics, Nigeria accounted for “13 under age 5 deaths, every minute” (*The Punch* 2013a:57). These reports were part of assessments for life expectancy in countries around the world.

Interactions with cross-sections of traders and buyers in major markets, including Bodija, Oje, Orita-Merin and Agbeni, in Ibadan, the capital city of Oyo State, and in Gwarinpa and Wuse markets, in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city, during the COVID-19 induced lockdown, also provided useful information. There was a restriction on intercity movements and dusk to dawn curfew in Oyo State, leaving regular day-to-day activities especially in markets and business places, while there was total lockdown, except on Wednesdays and Saturdays in Abuja. In both Oyo State and Abuja, the restrictions exempted essential services such as medicals and pharmaceuticals, food supplies, telecommunication, energy supplies, media, security, petroleum and gas supplies, among others. The government emphasized in both places the need for six feet physical distancing, between people, the use of mouth and nose mask, regular washing of hands with soap and application of hand sanitizer.

These measures have several limitations and implications. Those that are connected to institutional capacity, health-related issues and poverty management include: effective enforcement of the regulations on movement restrictions, physical distancing and the use of mask; distribution of food, palliatives and economic stimuli; and the aftermath in terms of food security.

Enforcement of movement restriction regulations appeared largely effective, considering the evidently reduced vehicular movement. Schools, government and other public offices, except those connected to essential services, were closed. However, there was hardly a

presence of community health workers and inspectors in the markets and other open places. In light of this, regulations on physical distancing and the use of masks were flouted. Six out of ten respondents in the markets or 60% did not understand why they should maintain physical distance from others and why it was necessary to protect themselves with the use of the mask. Eight out of ten respondents or 80% said COVID-19 was unreal because they had not seen anyone around them who contacted it, while the same number of respondents said they are unlikely to be infected because the disease is alien to Nigeria. Among the other categories in the markets are the market dwellers who, being homeless, reside permanently in the markets. This category is joined by the dozens of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who, for lack of space and adequate attention in the IDPs camps, opted for the market places and the surrounding slums. None of the respondents among the latter category had benefited from the government's palliatives and economic stimuli packages. According to these respondents, they “are homeless and they can't recognize the community leader who will include their identities on the list of the poorest of the poor”, the targeted beneficiaries of the government support. However, it was observed that indigent citizens also benefited from palliatives which CBOs, NGOs, and CSOs organized at different points in time during the lockdown.

Another critical information is that five out of ten respondents or 50% from the food section (grains, tubers, crops, onions, pepper, and tomatoes) are both farmers and traders. Many of them were held down by the inter-state vehicular restrictions in different parts of the country. While some could not go back for the planting season at the commencement of rainfall in April, others who had just harvested could not get their products across to the markets. Going by the records⁷, the above implies great threat to

7 There are implications for delayed planting and harvesting in Nigeria, in view of the country's weak food processing and storage systems. See, A.F. Alonge, Food Processing, Prevention and Storages for Economic

food security and the general well-being of the ordinary citizens in Nigeria.

There have been other opinions in form of policy responses to COVID-19 in Nigeria. Many of these point to the poor status of health infrastructure in the country, coupled with a planning strategy which muddles through and, then, returns to business as usual after each crisis is over. For example, Olukotun (2020:48) illustrates by harping on the “very low and relatively slow testing capacity”, partly as a result of the shortage of equipment. In contrast to South Africa, which had tested “over 80,000 of its citizens and 38,000 by the Ghanaian authorities, as at 17 April 2020, Nigeria had tested 5,000” (Olukotun, p. 48). In the light of this, opinions⁸ differ as to whether a one-size-fits-all policy approach could be adopted by Nigeria and China, Germany and Switzerland where, in the latter cases, policy responses had proven effective.

In the practical application of institutional approach and prebendal perspective, it is acknowledged that there exists in Nigeria institutions and agencies of government as in Finland, Norway, Germany, and Switzerland among others with higher performances in the HDI, Legatum Index, IIAG and CPI analyzed earlier in this section. However, there is a difference in the functionality of the institutions in these countries and in Nigeria. While they function optimally for effective governance in Germany, Switzerland, Finland, Norway, the performance in Nigeria is poor because the operations of the institutions are largely personalized in a prebendal setting for the vested interests of officials in charge. The poverty level is high in today’s Nigeria, with many⁹ earning below the \$1 per day benchmark, because of poor governance and large scale corruption in public places. In the light of this, the processes for the distribution of palliatives and relief materials, whether in normal times or during emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, are most probably compromised by the officials in charge. There are hardly inter-agency collaborations for the attainment of common developmental goals. Individual officials see their areas of control as prebends and may cooperate with others if such cooperation would boost their personal benefits. Traditional, digital, and social media programmes monitored¹⁰ indicate violations of regulations without any

form of reprimand from enforcement agencies.

In the light of above, Nigeria can hardly go beyond the rhetoric of high sounding policy statements but low performance in terms of attaining development goals of human security, including good health and reduced poverty levels and, in particular, effective governance. The consequences are dire, going by the country’s performance in the world’s leading development indexes, in the decade since 2010. With COVID-19 and its consequences, part of which accounted for the plummeting international price of crude oil, threats to food security in view of the gradual squandering of the country’s planting season for some major crops and food items and possible job losses¹¹ as well as ruined livelihoods, the immediate future looks bleak for Nigeria. Businesses, including banking, hospitality and tourism were shut and, therefore, many workers were not paid at this time. It will take time for normalcy to return even if the corona pandemic ends by December 2020, seven months from now.

5. Conclusion

Governance has largely been ineffective in Nigeria despite the country’s return to democracy in 1999. Twenty years after the great hope and aspiration of going beyond the rhetoric in the country have been elusive. Viewing governance from aspects of its primary functions of addressing issues of human security, this paper is concluding that Nigeria has not only been unable to move beyond the rhetorical level in terms of development goals, but its existence has also been threatened. Public institutions saddled with the responsibility of health services provision and poverty reduction among other elements of human security perform abysmally. CBOs, NGOs, and CSOs are involved at some points but this has not been consistent, methodical, and systematic as to have similar effects as in societies with visibly more effective systems. Corruption is rife, while inter-agency collaboration is weak. It is observed that the fragile nature of the state and the lack of autonomy in the character of its institutions are not unconnected to the pursuit of self-interest by public officials whose conduct also affects the capacity of groups outside the core government.

Recommendations

The recommendations begin with broad views on the

Development in Nigeria. Lead Paper at the *Conference of the Nigerian Institute of Agricultural Engineers (NIAE)*, 17-20 October, 2011; see also, Olayide, OE; Tetteh, IK; Porter, JR; and Popoola, L, Review and Analysis of Vulnerability of Rainfall Variability and Policy Responses to Agricultural Water Supply in Nigeria, *Journal of Food, Agriculture and Environment*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 152-155 (2016).

⁸ Most leading media outfits, monitored by the authors in March and April 2020, had series of programmes on COVID-19. These consisted of editorials, viewpoints and call-in live broadcasts.

⁹ Tens of millions are supposed to benefit from the ₦5,000 or approximately \$14 per month CCT to the poorest of the poor in Nigeria.

¹⁰ Reports from situation room analyses on COVID-19 gave instances of bribe-collecting security agents allowing illegal movements of people despite inter-state restrictions. For example, author monitored one of such programmes on the Broadcasting Corporation of Oyo State (BCOS Radio

98.5fm), from 11.00am on 06 May 2020.

¹¹ For example, it took the intervention of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Bankers Committee to halt an impending sack of bank workers immediately after the relaxation of the lockdown. See, www.vanguardngr.com – Breaking: CBN, Bankers Committee halt sack of banks’ workers. Accessed 07 May 2020 @ 09.53hrs.

roles of leaders, civil society, and NGOs, before addressing specific issues.

- Directional and transformational leadership: The role of leaders across ages cannot be overemphasized. In the light of this and, in particular, in view of the problem of poor leadership in Nigeria's underdevelopment, the country needs directional and transformational leadership at several levels. Obviously, the political level is critical.
- The civil society has a key role to play in supporting a directional leader in a democratic setting. This is important at both the level of election into the office and at the follow-up level of support for people-oriented policies.

In specific terms, there are long and immediate term recommendations.

- In the long term, the autonomy and functionality of public institutions must be restored in Nigeria. There is also a role for directional leaders and a virile civil society in this exercise. Part of this, for example, is a consistency of health-related and poverty reduction policies.
- In the immediate term, primary and secondary health facilities must be strengthened through purposive budgetary allocations and releases, while also not forgetting tertiary facilities for complex cases.
- As a matter of urgency, food storage facilities must be reactivated so as to mop up food items such as grains and others that can be preserved for a relatively long time. The National Strategic Grain Reserve, from which the President ordered the release of 70,000 metric tonnes of grains to the poor and the vulnerable, in April 2020, is an indication of how useful food storage is.
- Palliatives such as the CCT, the federal government – aided school feeding programme and other similar programmes at the lower governmental levels must continue for a reasonable time to come.
- Evidences from Germany and other countries that came out early from the lockdown effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as from Finland, Sweden, and Switzerland among others that have persistently performed well in the HDI, IIAG, CPI and Legatum Prosperity Index are indications that discipline, commitment, and purposiveness are critical for the attainment of effective governance. Nigeria must borrow from such best practices if the country must go beyond the usual rhetoric.

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