



Democracy, Good Governance and Development in Nasarawa State

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ABSTRACT

Democracy is said to generate and sustain good governance and development, but the scenario in Nigeria has left much to be desired, thus, this paper attempts to survey, describe and analysed the nature of democracy, its relationship with good governance and development in Nasarawa State. The study adopted Relative Deprivation Theory as its theoretical framework. The population of the study area is 1,383,676 as at 2006 population census while the sample size is 400 drawn from the entire population through the use of Taro Yamane formula. The paper employed cluster and random sampling method to collect data. The findings revealed that States that emerged through credible elections are more likely to consult their people in the decision-making than the ones that emerged through electoral malpractices. The research also concludes that the more democratic State is, the more likely to practice good governance. Finally, the research recommends that, states should adopt a transparent and credible electoral processes and policy in order to conduct a fair and free elections, it also recommends that, government at all level should promote the spirit of democratic governance which involves the full participation of the citizens in decision making to yield a good governance.

Keywords: Democracy, Good Governance and Development

INTRODUCTION

The relation between democracy, good governance and development lie at the heart of this study. Essentially, the sole responsibility of any society is to reconstruct, educate, organise and mobilise the citizens with the view to ensuring that democratic pace is expanded, democratic culture is deepened and democracy itself is consolidated and made to become sustainable and irreversible. Today, civil society faces greater challenges and more onerous responsibility in helping to consolidate democracy and make it sustainable as well as irreversible than it did in the struggle to enthrone it. It must therefore, remain active and alert now that a formal transition from authoritarian rule to democratic rule has been achieved (Akindele, 2004:190). Democracy as a system of government which means "a set of ideas, institution and processes of governance that allows the broad mass of the people to choose their leaders and that guarantees them

a broad range of civil right (Enemu, 2005:145), originated from the Greek city state of Athens. However, modern democracy emerged at the end of the eighteenth century and adopted by several countries such as Iran, Portugal, Botswana and Namibia thereby replacing the various dictatorship regimes.

Nigeria's 1999 transition to civilian government ushered in Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as president. At the time of political hand over, many Nigerians expressed hopes for "democracy and good governance dividend" that would expand political liberties, improved performance of government, encourage accountability among leaders and revive the ailing economy. The anticipated benefits of democracy have been slow to emerge, and those that emerged failed to fulfil the expectation of many Nigerian's. Analysts, commentators and average Nigerians express deep concern about political violence, corruption, government, unresponsive leadership and economic deprivation associated with Nasarawa State. The democratic wave in 1974 grew into a global phenomenon. Today, not only the rich western countries are democracies but so are 90% of Latin American and the Caribbean states, almost two-third of the former communist countries, and two-fifth or more of Asia and Africa. It was due to the reactions from civil society organizations and pressures from international agencies and super power that military rules in Africa initiated transition to civil rule. For example, after fifteen years of military rule in Nigeria, Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar handed over power to a democratically elected government in 1999 of Olosegun Obasanjo. There was similar handing over in all the 36 states of the Nigeria federation where military governors handed over to their civilian counterparts who later went on to organize elections in almost all the 774 local government area councils in the country (Yusuf, et al, 2009:12). In the same vein series of elections were conducted at state and local government levels of the federation.

Statement of the Research Problem

The Nigerian state since political independence in 1960 has not been able to live up to expectations in its developmental attempt to full fledge nation state status. Be it military or civilian rule, the ordeal has been very



pathetic, hence certain basic question has been asked to ascertain the true state of the Nigeria democracy, good governance and development.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this work are:

- i. To establish the relationship between democracy, good governance and development in Nasarawa State.
- ii. To ascertain the implication of democratic dispensations on good governance in Nasarawa State.

Research Questions

To examine the relationship between democracy, good governance, and development in Nasarawa State the research shall attempt to answer the following questions:

- i. What is the relationship between democracy and good governance in Nasarawa State?
- ii. To what extent is the implications of democratic dispensation on good governance and development in Nasarawa State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will guide the study:

- i. There is no significant relationship between democracy and good governance in Nasarawa State.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between the implications of democratic dispensation on good governance and development in Nasarawa State.

Significance of the Study

This study is significance because it will help strengthen democracy, entrench good governance and development not only in Nasarawa state, but in Nigeria in general. The theoretical significance of the study is that, it will add value to the existing literature on democracy, good governance and development. It will widen the horizon of the society, and in turn encourage political participation and deepen democracy in Nasarawa State.

Scope of the Study

This research work will focus on Nasarawa State only from 1999 to 2007. The research shall cover four Local government areas of Nasarawa State. They are Keffi, Nasarawa and Karu Local governments areas of Nasarawa State.

Conceptual Frame Work

Democracy: While Okpeh (1997:12) sees democracy as a representative government based on the decision of the people and the rule of law for the purpose of this research, the concept of democracy entails any institution or state which holds the popular views of the people and where the people to a large extent, have the ultimate right to determine what is good for themselves from the dominance of the ruling elites.

Good Governance: On the other hand means a regime of accountability, rule of law, human right, and provision of basic social amenities and total transformation of a society, Good Governance brings about development through some process Ujo (2004:102).

Development: is a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular activities and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of absolute poverty. Todaro (1989)

Literature Review

Democracy has generated a lot of scholarly debates and analyses. It is the best form of government because of its basic attributes: Equality, sovereignty of the people, popular participation and rule of law, respect for human life and liberty of the individuals. Indeed, the word 'democracy' derived from two Greek words, 'Demos' which means the people and 'Kratein' which means 'rule of or by' Enemou (2005: 141) defined democracy as "rule by the people", he further analyzed various forms of democracy like modern democracy which is evolved from such medieval institutions as the British parliament and the jury and from the political theories of the seventeenth century such as "equality of men, natural rights and sovereignty". Recent historical and archaeological research has however, shown that some of the basic principles of democracy existed in other civilizations: the "principle of accountability", consensus - building and popular participation were important features of many



pre-colonial systems of government in Africa. Democracy therefore consists of principles that have universal relevance and multiple sources (Enemou, 2005: 141).

Enemou has succeeded in pin-pointing the basic features of democracy especially equality which means one-man one –vote. Nevertheless, he failed to describe the behaviour of elected councillors which also determines the levels of good governance. Some scholars view democracy based on modernization theory that evolved to replace dictatorship which found a powerful collation between democracy and the level of economic development. In other words, democracy has become a universal phenomenon, ideally to change the society for the better, although according to Diamond (2009:50):

“many new democracies around the world are performing very poorly and are in fact quiet illiberal, if they can be called democracies at all due to the fact that what many (or most) citizens actually experience is a mix of distressed governance: abusive police forces, domineering local oligarchies, incompetent and indifferent state bureaucracies, corrupt and inaccessible judiciaries and venal ruling elites contemptuous of the rule of law and accountable to no one but themselves”

Democracy has to do with popular participation of the people towards establishing a sound democracy that will enhance good governance and to reduce corruption in the society. In this case, Diamond (2009:48) opined that:

“the fate of democracy is not simply driven by abstract historical and structural forces. It is a consequence of struggle, strategy, ingenuity, vision, courage, conviction, compromise and choice by human actors. In order to spur a renewed democratic boom; new emphasis must be placed on good governance, the rule of law, security, protection of individual right, vibrant civil society and shared economic prosperity. Only then will the spirit of democracy be assured”

Increasingly however, Diamond analyzed the correlation of democracy and development considering the fact that with every step in a country/s level of economic development, the level of liberal democracy transforms a society in several ways that make it more difficult to sustain the

concentration of power in one man or party or narrow elite. He stated that economic development enlarges the middle class and raises levels of education and information among the general public. With these sweeping social and psychological changes, people in growing numbers form and join organization including professional and student associations, trade unions, human right and civil groups... to service their interest and needs. As these independent organizations grow in number resources, and sophistication, they became more assertive and more capable of checking and challenging the state, generating the foundations for a vibrant civil society. So as a country gets richer the balance of power shifts from the state to the society. For democracy to be liberal that will bring about high levels of participation, equality, transparency and social justice, Diamond (2009: 51) suggested that we should aspire to the achievements of the **ten thick dimensions** of democracy. A system is not a liberal democracy unless it also ensures the following attributes:

- i. Substantial individual freedom of belief, opinion, discussion, speech publication, broadcast, assembly, demonstration, petition and the internet.
- ii. Freedom of ethnic, religious, racial and other minority groups (as well as historical excluded majorities) to practice their religion and culture and to participate in political social life.
- iii. The right of all adult citizens to vote and to run for office (if they meet certain minimum age and the competency requirements).
- iv. Genuine openness and competition in the electoral area, enabling any group that adheres to constitutional principles to form any party and contest for offices;
- v. Legal equality of all citizens under the rule of law, in which the laws are clear, publicly known, universal, stable and non-retroactive.
- vi. An independent judiciary to neutrally and consistently apply the law and protect individual and group rights;
- vii. Due process of law and freedom of individuals from torture, terror and unjustified detention, exile or interference in their personal lives by the state or non-state actors;
- viii. Institutional check on the power of elected officials by an independent legislature, court system and other autonomous agencies;
- ix. Real pluralism in sources of information and forms of organization independent of the state; and thus, a vibrant 'civil society'.



- x. Control over the military and state security apparatus by civilian who are ultimately accountable to the people through elections.

According to Anyaele (2003:62), the basic tenets of democracy are that all men are equal before the law and citizens have equal opportunities of life and that sovereignty is the absolute power of a state to exercise supreme legal authority over its own affairs within its territory without any external control. In an attempt to view Nigerian democracy especially within the last decade, Yusuf (2009:1) try to analyse the nature, structure and problems faced by Nigerian governments during the last ten years. Although it's the first time since independence nearly fifty years ago that the country has enjoyed uninterrupted civilian rule for so long but Yusuf claim that there is however, a grand's well of disillusionment with the whole democratic project because of the perception that people's vote does not seem to count. More practically many say that, ten years of continues civil rule has not delivered on the key concerns of ordinary Nigerians.

Research Design

The design of this study is a descriptive survey research design which seeks to investigate the relationship between democracy, good governance and development in Nasarawa State. The rational for choosing a descriptive survey research design is in line with Ali (1996) who stated that Descriptive survey design is mainly concerned with describing events as they are without any manipulation of what is being observed. It involves collection of data from relevant population of the target audience, on which generalization will be made.

Method of Data Collection

For the purpose of this study both primary and Secondary Methods of data collection will be used. The primary Methods of data collection for this study intends to use questionnaire and interview instruments. The choice of these instruments is informed by their ability to elicit first hand information from their original sources. The study combined the two techniques because they have the capacity to complement each other. While the secondary sources comprises of Textbooks, Journals and previous work related to the work.

Methods of Data Analysis

For the purpose of this study statistical package for social science (SPSS) will be used to present the data collected from the field. Having done that, table, frequency and simple percentage will be used to describe the data. In addition, the study intends to cross tabulate some key variables in the study with the aim of establishing correlation between and among the variables.

Population of the Study

The Population of Nasarawa State is 1,383,676 as at 2006 census population count.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques.

The study sample size is 400 drawn from the entire population of 1,383,676 using Taro

Yamane formula, thus;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

n = sample size

N = given population

1 = constant

e = level of significances

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Therefore;

$$N = 1,383,676$$

$$1 = \text{constant } 1$$

$$e = 0.0025$$

therefore substitute the figure in the formular as above;

$$n = \frac{1,383,676}{1 + 1,383,676 \times 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{1,383,676}{1 + 3,459}$$

$$n = \frac{1,383,676}{3,460}$$

$$n = \frac{399.9}{}$$

$$\text{Approximately, } n = 400$$



Table 1

Do you know what democracy is all about? (Yes, or No) here 78% of the respondents indicated that they were aware of what democracy was all about, while 22% were not aware.

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	278	74.1%
No	97	25.9%
Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

74.1% of the respondents indicated that they were aware of what democracy was all about, while 25.9% were not aware.

Table 2

Do you know the relationship between democracy, good governance and development in Nasarawa State.? (Yes or No).

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	257	68.5
No	118	31.5
Total	375	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

68.5% felt the impact of democracy and their major reasons were fertilizer distribution, government is closer to people, road, dispensaries, boreholes, school construction, while 31.5% have not felt the impact and their reasons are: No equal distribution of income, corruption and bad elections, the remaining respondents were undecided.

Table 3

Is there any relationship between the implications of democracy on good governance and development in Nasarawa State.(Yes or No)

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	278	74.1%
No	97	25.9%
Total	375	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table above indicates that, 74.1% of the total respondents were of the view that, there is relationship between the implications of democracy on good governance and development in Nasarawa State while 25.9% shows that there no relationship between the two variables. This shows that

majority of the respondents were of the view that, there is relationship between the implications of democracy on good governance and development in Nasarawa State as indicated by 278 total respondents i.e 74.1%.

Table 4:

If table four above were ye have you participated in any budget debates its formulation and implementation? (Yes or No) for this question,

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	125	33.3%
No	250	66.7%
Total	375	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

only 33% have participated in one or the through “word project” which is sampling demands of the people in each word by the councils, while 66.7% have not.

Question 5: Has democracy improved the educational and health standard in Nasarawa State?

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	250	66.7%
No	125	33.3%
Total	375	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

67% has improve educational and health standard in Nasarawa. State, while 33% respondent said No

Table 6: Do you think there is any correlation between democracy, good governance and development? (Yes or No).

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	250	66.7%
No	125	33.3%
Undecided	00	00%
Total	375	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

66.7% were of the view that there is a correlation between democracy, good governance and development, while 33.3% disagrees and 0% undecided.



Table 7

Sir, what can you say about consultation of the people on the development policies in Nasarawa State?(Yes or No).

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	97	25.9%
No	278	74.1%
Unaided	00	0%
Total	375	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

25.9% have been invited to participate in some of the development policy while 74.1% have not been given the opportunity and 0% have not testified to it.

Table 8

: How can you rate the credibility of the previous election in Nasarawa State (1999 to 2007)? (Very high, high, very low, low).

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very high	188	50.1%
High	127	33.9%
Low	60	16%
Very low	00	00%
Total	375	100%

Source: Field survey, 2022

50.1% rated the elections very high, while 33.9% rate it very low, 16% rated it low and 0% remained silent. The reason for those whose rating is low and very low was rigging, and malpractices.

Table 9: Have you felt the impact of democracy in Nasarawa State? (Yes or No)

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	188	50.1%
No	127	33.3%
Undecided	60	16%
Total	375	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

50.1% have felt the impact of democracy and their reasons were local State government render assistance programme to the handicapped, electricity generations within the wards, water supply and local roads construction, while 33.3% disagreed and their reasons were poor administration, corruption, injustice and favouritism, and 16% were undecided.

Question12: Do you think democracy reduced poverty In Nasarawa State?

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	257	68.5%
No	118	31.5%
Total	375	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Here 68.5% have agreed that democracy has reduced poverty in Nasarawa State. Their reasons were: employment generation, handicapped assistances and other poverty alleviation programs like given to farmers while 31.5% disagree.

Table 10: Sir what do you think are the major problems of democracy, good governance and development in Nasarawa State?

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Corruption	60	16%
Injustice	33	33%
Election irregularities	188	50.1%
Mismanagement of public funds	127	33.9%
Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

While respondents 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 indicates that there is massive corruption, mismanagement of public funds, injustice, election irregularities, respondent 4 opined that there is no any problem with the nature of democracy in Nasarawa State.



Table II: How do you rate credibility of the State from 1999 to 2007? (Good, Fair or Bad).

Respond	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Good	00	0%
Fair	118	31.5%
Bad	257	68.5%
Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

0% considered the election good, their reason being elections were conducted to bring the leaders to power instead of being appointed as was during the military, while 31.5% rated the election fair and 68.5% rated the election bad, their reasons were bad candidates, no free and fair election, rigging and other electoral malpractices such as stealing of ballot boxes and so on.

CONCLUSION

People should be allowed to choose whoever they want, elected leaders should stay with their people so that he/she can know their basic problem and address them, there should be popular consultations on whatever development policies shall be implemented in the State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is, therefore, recommended that:

- 1-For democracy to be successful, the basic due elements of it must be given the due process through a designed proper means of representation and all operators of the constitution or leaders of government must submit or adhere strictly to the to the principles of the rule of law.
- 2-The civil society should be re-articulated and reinforced to have nationalistic ideas and devoid of parochialism and sectional sentiments. Through capacity building, civil society can become the vanguard of sustaining democracy and good governance. If this is effectively pursued, it will help in terms of inculcating nationalistic and periodic values and attitudes amongst the majority of the citizens.
- 3-Good governance is about free and fair elections and independent judiciary and the rule of law, freedom of speech and press, investment in human capital and combating corruption.

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