

## The Concepts of Democracy and Governance: A Theoretical and Empirical X-ray of their Linkage and Practical Application within the Nigerian Political Landscape

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**KEY WORDS** Monocracy; rule-ruler-ruled relationship; path dependency; premature centralization, authoritarian tutelage, ethnic/religious separatism; accountability/transparency.

**ABSTRACT** This paper analyses the concepts of democracy and governance. It concretely articulates the central thesis of democracy as a form of political organization on which the multidimensional systemic existence of all political animals within the universe anchored. On the same token, governance as a concept that weaves economic, political and social aspects of any given political community was highlighted in addition to the elucidation of its three dimensions- (nature of political regime; the exercise of authority in the management of social and economic resources and; the capacity of government to design and implement policy in the discharge of its functions). While identifying their respective elements, prominence was given to the historical or evolutionary trends of both concepts. We also theoretically and empirically attempted the affinity between them from the perspectives of the Nigerian citizenry. Consequent on these efforts, it was discovered that, the affinity of the two concepts as theoretically and empirically determined notwithstanding, Nigerians, irrespective of geo-political location or sex, felt that, there is need for improvement in the country (Nigeria), if the social movement for democracy is to be positively beneficial to all.

### INTRODUCTION

Few years before the 21st century, there was some inexplicable concern of many statesmen and important world bodies for all nations to adopt democracy as a form of government. Although, in most countries inequality is entrenched in the socio-political system, yet the spokesmen insist that life of men on earth will be greatly improved morally, physically and mentally if all people came to live under democratic government (Awa, 1997)

It is innocuous to adopt the foregoing statement as a premise for the commencement of the

analytical articulation of the central thesis of this paper. This is principally so, because, the issue of good governance which, according to Akindele (1995a: 137), is historically deepseated, is explicitly decipherable from it, as being anchored on the concept of democracy as does the centrality of the combination of both (i.e. democracy and governance) to the multidimensional systemic existence of all political animals<sup>1</sup> within the universe. And, from it, one could infer that the issue can hardly be taken for-granted without severe consequences for mankind relative to the:

Universal applicability of certain standards, namely legitimate rule, pluralism, rule of law, accountability and fair representation of societal interest (Schmitz, 1997: 17)

Given this premise, and, the fact that “an essential ingredient of democracy is based on the equality of all the people within a nation’s boundary” (Nyerere, 1999: 3), most polities - particularly the world powers in the western nations- within the global political community have consistently striven through democracy or democratic process for the attainment of good governance for effective citizenship. Such polities have gone through committed reliance on holistic approach that properly weaves together the asymmetrical aspirations and goals of the various groups and interests that form the core of their pluralistic pillars in ways conducive to positive nation-building.

In other words, one of the mechanisms that had been practically adopted in these political systems is a system of governance explainable within the conceptual parameters of democracy. This, argued Lipset (1995: 770), demonstrates why democracy had often been conceived of as a safeguard for individual liberties in most of these polities. And, according to Awa (op cit: 7), it explains why:

the spokesmen of the world power especially those of the western nations and western political analysts emphasize the

need to have democracy as the open sesame to effective governance.

Generally, though, more importantly, as Olowu (1995:2) rightly argued, “the collapse of systems such as theocracy, monarchy, fascism, Marxism and socialism has left democracy as the only option” for good governance. It can also be argued, that, the realisation of this, and, the need to protest against the failure of the centralised post-colonial states to democratically meet peoples expectation due to monarchy (Olowu, 1995; Wunsch and Olowu, 1990; Hyden, 1999), equally led to “the growth of a new social movement for democracy in Africa” (AAPS: 1995) as does the “process of democratic political change in Nigeria” (Nwankwo, 1996: 8)

With these in view, it is unobtrusively arguable that, it is now a universally accepted aphorism that the fertility of democracy is causally related to good governance and, that, the latter’s pursuit has now gained a wider currency as one of the most, if not the most important core of the operational catechism of most nations within the global political community (Akindele, 1987; Akindele and Obiyan, 1996). Put differently, today, one can hardly talk of governance of men, its goodness or otherwise, anywhere within our world, regardless of ideological orientation or partitioning, without reference to the concept of democracy. This, among other things, according to Lipset, (1995: op cit; 770) is due to the fact that democracy “shapes the realities of decision making and popular participation in government”.

Without doubt, a cumulative interlacing of the foregoing makes the two concepts under reference here, mutually inclusive with democracy subsuming the concept of governance. And, in perfect consonance with this analytical orientation, this paper, employing empirical standard where applicable, deals with a genealogical theoretical examination of the concept of democracy and, its affinity with the governance of men in our world, zeroing in on the Nigerian political landscape.

In doing this, the paper is divided into six parts. The first is the introduction and, the second part, which is theoretical, examines the concept of democracy, its elements and evolution from its ancient roots to the contemporary epoch of the governance of mankind. The third part in a theoretical manner, equally examines the concept of governance as we have come to know of it today. The analysis here, stresses its dimensions and

elements vis-à-vis the rule – ruler – ruled relationship characteristic of the governing of mankind.

Against the analytical outcome of parts one, two, and three, the fourth part of the paper attempts a theoretical linkage between the two concepts as a prelude to our empirical approach in part five. In other words, the fifth part, using empirical approach based on our adoption of certain parts of the primary data earlier generated in our other research endeavours<sup>2</sup> on the core variables in the area of focus here, attempts a possible empirical linkage between democracy and (good) governance. The sixth part is the conclusion

### Concept of Democracy<sup>3</sup>

Within the eclectic disciplines of the social sciences and particularly in political science, democracy as a form of political organisation, like other concepts of its calibre, has not been easy to define without ideological equivocation (Akindele and Obiyan, 1996: 84; Akindele and Olaopa, 1997: 5; Akindele, 1995b; Akindele and Ajila, 1992: 85-86; Akindele, 1992, 1993). The major problem in this area is that of ideological secretarianism vis-à-vis the nitty-gritty of democracy as a form of political governance hence, as Olowu (1995, Op Cit, 2) once opined, democracy as a “concept of governance has become all things to all men”.

This notwithstanding however, from a concrete perusal of the tomes that have been written on it by classical and contemporary philosophers and scholars of repute, it is clear without equivocation that democracy had its first appearance in the fifth century B.C. This followed its coinage by the great historian-Herodotus. This historical initial effort catalyzed the genesis of democratic ideas in antiquity (Akindele, 1987).

Democratic ideas in antiquity combined two Greek words, “demo”, meaning people and “Kratein” meaning the rule. Thus, the original meaning of democracy was the “rule of (by) the people”. At this time, Herodotus included among its specific features, “equality before the law and popular deliberations” (Akindele, 1987: 41).

Subsequent Greek thinkers like Plato and Aristotle did not look with favour upon democracy (ibid). While Plato’s attitude was decidedly hostile to democratic ideas, Aristotle accepted the ideas with severe qualifications (Rejai, 1967: 2). This explains why ancient democracy did not

presuppose equality of all individuals. In it, existed the prevalence of slavery and, a minority of the populace had no political rights. Athens, the greatest of the city democracies, limited its franchise to the native born citizens (Funk and Wagnalls).

Greek discussion of democracy was followed by Rome's contribution to democratic ideas and government in antiquity. The hallmark of this contribution was Rome's development of the "idea of constitutionalism" and her emphasis on laws as the system of norms binding on both the "rulers" and "ruled" (Ibid.).

However, the civilization of antiquity collapsed after a while. This collapse, and the then increasing predominance of religion over all aspects of life led to the evolution of medieval democratic ideas. More interestingly, the existence of the Christian religion, which emphasized the rights of the underprivileged and equality of all men before God contributed to the development of democratic ideas in the medieval period. In addition, most of the Christian ideas stressed the notion of a "moral law of nature", and the quest for a universal society.

The medieval period was followed by the Renaissance which furthered optimism with regards to the future of man through its emphasis on the emancipation of man from medieval ties (Rejai, op.cit. 10-12). The core of the renaissance was the discovery of man and the emphasis on individual self-expression, self-realization, glory and fame (Ibid; 11).

After the renaissance era came the 17th and 18th centuries when John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau in addition to Thomas Hobbes popularised the concept of the "Social Contract" (Ibid; 11), which may be said to be the most rational of all the theories about the democratic origin of states and civil government (Khan et al 1972: 27; Baker, 1969; Akindele et al., 1998; Akindele et al., 2000).

Even though, many obstacles riddled the historical stages of democratic ideas, it gained ground in the nineteenth century when "every important Western European monarch started to adopt a constitution limiting the power of the crown and giving a considerable share of power to its people" (Funk and Wagnalls, op.cit p. 2655). This period witnessed the various elaborations of democratic theory by people like Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, John Stuart Mill and Alex de Tocqueville. In short, the historical background of democratic ideas as outlined up to this point is

what sets the stage for what is today known and called democracy.

This being the case, what actually is democracy? As earlier stated, it is by no means a simple task to give a coherent definition of democracy in view of the different definitions already given. Many normative definitions of democracy had been given. Their general focus had been on values and norms of society. Empirical definitions of democracy, which focused on political reality, had also been given. While the normative definitions focused on shared beliefs and attitudes, the "normative-empirical" definitions combined empiricism and normative aspects of society.

The normative definition of democracy was variously approached by people like Thomas Hobbes, Jean Jacques Rousseau, John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and John Stuart Mill. This explains why Thomas Hobbes, in his explanation of the social contract and its consequent by-product (state), treated the solitary, nasty, brutish and alienating state of nature as the catalyst for the volitional collective agreement - social contract - between men.

On the same token, Rousseau, in his work, identified people's surrender of "natural rights" for "civil rights" as the basis of the emergence of a social contract which created the general will of the people (Khan et al., op cit 27-28). The creation of the general will through the social contract in Rousseau's view resulted in the existing state of nature when men were limited by their individual incapacities for self governance.

In addition to Hobbes and Rousseau, John Locke also theorized about the concept of social contract. However, unlike Rousseau's views of the individual's incapacities, John Locke believed that life in the state of nature was pleasant, but men were hampered by the absence of any socially recognised authority to adjudicate and settle disputes and conflicts between them hence the need for democratic government (Ibid. p. 20)

As for John Stuart Mill, he believed in the welfare of the individual, as well as individual liberties. Writing on Democracy and liberty, he maintained that the only way power can be, or, should be exercised over any member in the society against his will, is when it can be established that, such individual intends to injure, or, do harm to other (Rejai op.cit 77). He further emphasized the notion of liberty within the framework of representative government. Along this analytical

plane, argued, Awa (1997 op.cit: 7, Akindele, 1993; Akindele et al., 1998), Schumpeter (1955) defines democracy as:

the institutional arrangement for arriving at political decision, in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.

Due to the nature of their reasoning, Rousseau and other theorists (e.g. Lincoln) mainly concerned with the welfare of the community as a whole, are classified into the "collectivistic school of thought", while John Locke and John Stuart Mill are classified into the "individualistic school" relative to the emergence of democratic system of government which emphasizes equality and liberty of men.

Representative democracy has been variously defined. In his book, *Democracy*, Burns (1935, 29-46) defined representative democracy as a system whereby "all (i.e. people) elected a few to do for them what they could not do together". On the same token, John Stuart Mill concentrated a significant portion of his writing on representative democracy. While accepting the desirability of equal participation by everybody in the affairs of the government, he nevertheless claims that, it cannot be realized. Instead, he argued that representative government is the perfect form of government (Mill, 1962: 73-74). But, he further argued that, for representative government to be democratic, it must be accompanied by universal adult suffrage, free elections, short terms of office and individual liberty. Without these things, any government will, in Mill's view, cease to be democratic.

In recent times, and, in line with the catalyzing principles of the "fight against system of economic exploitation, political repression, cultural oppression" and, their accompanying "moral, political, economic and social decay" (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2001), other scholars have come to increasingly pay attention to the issue of democracy and its propensity for good governance (Ade-Ajayi, 1982; Nzongola-Ntalaja and Lee, 1977; Omoruyi, 1993; Held, 1987; Olowu, et al., 1995; 1999; Wunsch and Olowu, 1990; Sartori, 1987; Olowu et al., 1995; Joseph, 1987, Chabal, 1992; Hyden, 1980, 1999; Hyden and Bratton, 1992; Olowu and Erero, 1997; Akindele and Ajila 1992, 1995, Akindele and Obiyan, 1996, Akindele and Olaopa, 1997, Enyinla, 1998; Bello-Imam, 1997; Obadan, 1998, Akindele, 1998, Peter Anyang Nyong, 1987). Infact, this explains why

Olowu et al. (1995: IX) once opined that "democracy constitutes both the main buzz-word and activity of these times" in most polities of the world.

According to Nzongola-Ntalaja (2001) "democracy is a universal form of rule" which, even though, "may have variable manifestations in different historical and social settings", have such manifestations tied together by a common thread". Democracy in this sense, according to him, refers to "three basic ideas":

Democracy as a moral imperative, in the sense that it represents a permanent aspiration of human beings for freedom, for better social and political order, one that is more human and more or less egalitarian.

Democracy as a social process, in that it is a continuous process of promoting equal access to fundamental human rights and civil liberties for all and,

Democracy as political practice or a mode of governance based on the principles of popular sovereignty, the rule of law, accountability, participation and alternance (meaning leadership renewal or change) (Ibid).

In his contemporary contribution to the concept of democracy, Olowu (1995:16) opined that "democratic arrangement constitutes an approach to connecting the "rule-ruler-ruled relationship" which forms the core of governance. This probably explains his definition of democracy as:

a system of governance that underscores the plural nature of politics and hence gives recognition to the diversity of social forces in any political community.

On the same token, Sartori (1987:34) had earlier claimed that:

Democracy exists when the relation between the governed and the government abides by the principles that state is at the service of the citizens and not the citizens at the service of the state; that the government exists for the people and not vice-versa.

Olowu (1995:16) re-echoed this position by asserting that, "the bottom line of a democratic regime is that, it serves the citizens rather than the other way round" hence, as Ejituwu (1997) once claimed "power resides with the people

and, in a normal democratic situation, it is transferred to the leaders by a process of election”.

In putting democracy into a proper perspective as a mechanism for enhancing people’s right to participate in making the decisions that affect them, Imam (1991) argues that:

Democracy must include the right of people to have their own aspirations and programmes, not only in political life, but also in economic, cultural, religious and other aspects of life. In other words, democracy includes ending the crisscrossing networks of oppression, exploitation and domination.

This position is supported by Omoruyi’s (1993) observation that:

today, democracy has certain known principles: participation, pluralism and restraint on authority and, (that), these principles are in turn associated with other terms: electoral systems, basic problems such as freedom of expression and association, guaranteed human rights, pluralism, public contestation, constitutional framework. All these tend to conjure for democracy, identical meanings, ideas, institutions and habit.

This explains why Obadan (1998:24) opined that “democracy and good governance (government) have, in recent years, become increasingly important for efficient economic management and development”. It equally explains Omoruyi’s (1993) position that “both democracy and good governance are necessary preconditions for development and, should therefore, be incorporated into the political systems” particularly in the continent of Africa.

In his contribution to the current global relevance of democracy Held (1987), noted thus:

Nearly everyone today says they are democrats no matter whether their views are on the left, centre, or right. Political regimes of all kinds for instance, Western Europe, the Eastern bloc and Latin America claim (or, are claiming) to be democracies. Democracy seems to bestow an aura of legitimacy on modern political life; rules, laws, policies and decisions appear justified and appropriate when they are democratic (*and representative of all*

*interests without discrimination within the polity*) (*Empasis mine*).

This being the case, we would define democracy as a system of government through which representatives are periodically elected by the qualified adult voters to be responsible for directing and deliberating on the affairs of the state on behalf of the electors. As herein conceptually elucidated, democracy emphasizes the need for equitable governance of men without non-challance for the essential needs of any group within the society.

The foregoing, put together, brings us to the discussonal analysis of the concept of governance.

### Concept of Governance

Like most concepts of its kind, the concept of governance due to its complex weaving of “economic, political and social aspects of a Nation” (Shehu, 1999), has not been amenable to easy or simplistic definition. In other words, the concept has not been an exception to the volatility and eclecticism for which the disciplines in the Social Sciences have been globally noted whenever it comes to the conceptualisation of core issues.

This explains Esman’s (1997: 1) claim that “no two political scientists would agree on what the concept of governance is, or what it means”. Infact, as Hyden (1999) once noted, “only few authors (have) define(d) it (the concept of governance) with a view to serving analytical purpose” hence, “governance as a concept has not been extensively used (or defined) in the political literature until very recently when it gained currency” (Nkom and Sorkaa, 1996).

This notwithstanding, as Hyden (1999: 24) once argued, “the concept of governance has come to occupy a more prominent position in the discourse of international development”. If this is correct or, should be taken to be correct, the question needs to be asked that: what exactly or actually is governance?

World Bank (1989) defines governance as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”. According to the World Bank (1993), governance has three dimensions. These dimensions which, Eyinla (1998), equally noted are: “the nature of political

regimes; the exercise of authority in the management of social and economic resources and, the capacity of government to design and implement policy and to discharge its functions”.

These dimensions were specifically identified and concretely elucidated by Olowu and Erero (1997) who, both conceptualized governance as relating to the “rule-ruler-ruled relationship”. Specifically, Olowu and Erero (Ibid) identified the three dimensions of governance in the context of “rule-ruler-ruled relationship” as inclusive of “functionalism, “structuralism” and “normativism”. According to them, functionally, governance deals with “rule-making, legitimization, and enforcement” while it structurally comprises of three distinct institutions: the “ruler or the state”, the “ruled or the society” and, the “rule of law”. In this regard, Olowu and Erero (ibid) viewed governance as the “relationship between state and society institutions”. In the same vein, they claimed that “normatively, this relationship highlights the values associated with good governance”. These values according to them include: “transparency, organizational effectiveness, accountability, predictability, legitimacy, popular participation and plurality of policy choices”.

Within the same context, Boeninger (1992), defines governance as the ‘good government of society’. According to this scholar, governance has three dimensions: political, technical and institutional. Nkom and Sorkaa (1996) synopsisized the interrelatedness of these dimensions thus:

The political revolves around the commitment to exercise authority or public control in a just, legitimate and rule oriented fashion. The technical concerns issues of efficiency, competence or the capacity to manage public affairs effectively to solve problems, and to produce good results in resource mobilization and public management. The institutional involves options, choices and growth – enhancing activities by the public while ensuring honest or good conduct on the part of the public officials.

In the same vein, Landell-Mills and Serageldin (1992) argued that governance encompasses two interrelated dimensions: political and technical both of which consist of the government’s “will to govern well and the capacity to efficiently

and competently handle public management”. Governance, according to Gould (1972) refers to the act of exercising control over others, inducing others to behave in specified ways as required by law. It is “policy making and policy execution regulated by systems of law and guidelines which are segregated into specific operations to achieve specific national objectives (Shehu, 1999: 1). To Brautigam (1991) and Ikpeze (1999:73), governance connotes “the exercise of power and authority in both political and economic spheres”. Thus, as Ejituwu (1997), argued, “governance implies the exercise of power by a person or group of persons for the benefit of the populace” because, as he equally later claimed, it is through governance, that “the government in power dictates the form of relationship it establishes between it and the people as well as the goal of the state in economic, political and social terms” (Ibid).

Implicit in the foregoing conceptual analysis of governance is the fact that, the latter connotes “the use of political authority and exercise of control over a society and the management of resources” (Wai, 1995). Hence, according to Obadan (1998: 24), governance - (in this sense) – includes:

institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes, policy formulation, implementation, capacity development of personnel, information flows, and the nature and style of leadership within a political system.

In his contribution to the conceptual discourse on governance, Idowu (1998: 74) had this to say:

governance refers to the functions undertaken by a government maintaining a unified state, defending its territorial integrity and running its economy... It (equally) means the effective and efficient functioning of government towards securing the well-being of its citizens.

Jega (1999: 101) analysed the concept of governance in relations to the “person entrusted with political power and authority”. In this regard, governance according to him, involves the following:

- (a) responsibility and responsiveness in leadership and in public service;
- (b) accountability in the mobilization as well as in the utilization of resources;
- (c) discipline, effectiveness and efficiency in

- handling public (as well as personal) affairs;
- (d) Selflessness and impartial service to the people; and
  - (e) Popular participation and empowerment of the people in the conduct and management of their common affairs (Ibid).

For governance as the “duty of government to see to the orderly and stable management of the economy” (Ukpong, 1999), to have the foregoing attributes and, be effective, efficient and beneficial for democratic political arrangement, it has to be good. This is more so, since we can, as well, have bad governance.

The possibility of bad governance could be said to be what the World Bank had in mind in 1989, when it began to dichotomize between good and bad governance by “advocating a political reform approach to government as a way of ensuring positive economic growth” (World Bank, 1989; Idowu, 1998).

In fact, the World Bank (1992) identified the features of bad governance as follows:

- Failure to make a clear separation between what is public and what is private, hence a tendency to divert public resources for private gain;
- Failure to establish a predictable framework for law and government behaviour in a manner that is conducive to development, or arbitrariness in the application of rules and laws;
- Excessive rules, regulations, licensing requirements, etc, which impede the functioning of markets and encourage rent-seeking;
- Priorities that are inconsistent with development, thus, resulting in a misallocation of resources;
- Excessively narrow base for, non-transparency, or, decision-making.

This explains Obadan’s (1998: 25) characterization of bad governance as a system dominated by “ugly problems like pervasive corruption, lack of public accountability and “capture” of public services by the elites among others”.

These, put together, lead us to the discussion of good governance at this point of the paper.

It is decipherable from the chronology of the discussion in this paper so far, on the concept of governance, that, its goodness and utility to mankind cannot be taken for granted without severe consequences. This is particularly so, in that, as Ogunba (1997: 1), once noted “the way a

people are governed is of paramount importance in determining the quality of life of the people”. It is equally more so, if as Esman (1997: 1), opined, “governance is a process that requires a viable authority” through which “the leaders are expected to exercise the power that resides with them in the interest of the state” (Ejituwu, 1997 op cit: 37).

The need for good governance is not far fetched looking at the fact that:

If governance is arbitrary, oppressive and capricious, the collective psyche of a people can be damaged and individuals within the community can suffer various forms of disorientation. If, on the other hand, governance is open, democratic and humanistic, a people can experience a sense of rejuvenation and fulfillment, which can lead to highly positive achievements (Ogunba, 1997 op cit: 1).

This explains Obadan’s (1998: 39) position that, “it is the responsibility of citizens to demand good governance” because “it (i.e., good governance) may not be forthcoming from the political leaders without prodding”. Commenting on good governance, Esman (1997: 1) argued thus:

before governance can be considered good, government has got to be effective. It must first command the respect and allegiance of the people over whom it exercises governance and, must satisfy certain basic collective needs.

He went further to identify some minimal elements and/or essentials of effective (good) governance as inclusive of: “provision of security for the people”, “defence of the territorial borders of the state”, “protection of lives and property”, “enforcement of laws to enhance predictability” and, “economic development”. According to this scholar, “governance requires the ability to ensure the wherewithal of sustained government”. He equally asserted that “effective (good) governance requires that public authority be able to raise the revenues necessary to pay for services that must be provided”. The essence of this argument is that, “effective governance must be able to make possible the performance by the state of certain basic services” – transportation, communication, education and health services – “relatively cheaply and reliably” (Erero, 1996, Esman Ibid).

This is more so, since effective governance

means the capacity of the state - through its power of determinism or, authoritative allocation of scarce critical societal resources - to deliver the basic necessities of life to the governed and, equally "facilitate the process of economic development".

These lines of argument tally with those of Obadan (1998: 25) and Amoako (1997: 10), who have posited that:

good governance implies efficient and effective public administration, good policies and sound management of natural resources. It calls for the ability of a state to anticipate challenges to its well-being, provide core services with people and then augment these services, act as a catalyst of change, and guide the various forces in a society toward harmony (*and national development devoid of ideological imperialism and multi-dimensional genocidal tendencies*) (*Emphasis mine*).

Pursuing the same line of argument, Obadan (1998) further claimed that:

Good governance implies ruling on the basis of equity and social justice, and an end to corruption, nepotism and political manipulation of public institutions. Only when citizens have the belief that their government operates on their behalf, in an open and accountable manner, will government be able to obtain their willing co-operation in, for example, mobilizing resources for development.

Driving home this line of argument, Obadan (Ibid: 34), emphasized that, through good governance, a government should be able to effectively perform, among others, the following tasks:

- Establishing a foundation of law;
- Maintaining a non distortionary policy environment, including macro-economic stability;
- Investing in basic social services, infrastructure,
- Protecting the vulnerable group in the society; and
- Protecting the environment.

Other scholars have considered good governance vis-à-vis the *raison d'être* of statehood in this manner as well (Kaufman, et al., 1999; Corkery and Bossuyt, 1990; Healey and Robinson, 1992, 1994; Bello- Imam, 1997; Ayo

and Awotokun, 1996, 1997; Nkom and Sorkaa, 1996; World Bank, 1989, 1992, 1993). These scholars' works on the concept of good governance treat it as a system of rulership that is devoid of political expediency and antidemocratic political ends. It is deducible from their works that, good governance stands for dignified existence of all political animals in democratic political settings within the global political community. According to Obadan (1998: 24) "good governance consists of five fundamental elements". He listed them thus:

- Accountability of government officials (political leaders and bureaucrats) for public funds and resources;
- Transparency in government procedures, processes, investment decisions, contracts and appointments. Transparency is a means of preventing corruption and enhancing economic efficiency;
- Predictability in government behavior. This is particularly critical to the carrying out of economic transactions between individuals and in taking investment decisions: governments and public institutions should not be capricious in their behaviour and actions;
- Openness in government transactions and a reliable flow of the information necessary for economic activity and development to take place. Without information, rules will not be known, accountability is low, and risks and uncertainties are many. With these the cost of committing capital is also huge. An open system should, thus, be encouraged to release information to stakeholders and promote dialogue among the people as well as ensure their active participation in the socio-economic development of the country.
- Observance of the rule of law must be adhered to by government and its citizens; this means that governments and institutions should be subject to rules and regulations, which are understood by everyone in the society (Ibid).

The foregoing, put together, undeniably point to the fact that, there is a relational umbilical cord between governance and democracy. In other words, it points to the fact that, there exists a significant degree of affinity between the two. This is the subject matter of focus in the next section to which we now turn.



### **The Affinity Between Democracy and Governance**

From the discussion of the concepts of democracy and governance within the context of this paper so far, we found it innocuous to contend that, the affinity between the two vis-à-vis the governance of men and/or the relational thrust between the “ruler” and the “ruled” within most political systems particularly, the democratic polities of the world, is self evident. Without gainsaying, it is deducible from this discussion and/or analysis that both concepts constitute the traditional and contemporary flashpoints, which cannot but provoke the mindset of the elites and the laymen in equal measure. The concepts are both fundamental and inalienable vis-à-vis the socio-political and economic systemic existence of all human beings within the various if not all polities of the world today hence, as Obadan (1998: 39) rightly argued, “when democracies are working well, they tend to create strong incentives for accountability, good governance and development.

Concretely put, however, we would like to contend that, the affinity between democracy and governance vis-à-vis the fortunes and/or misfortunes of the larger citizenry could actually, in the real sense of it, be better appreciated, determined and analysed within the context of the evolution of most, if not all polities of the world over time.

This is particularly so, if as Hyden (1995: 58), once opined, “no society escapes its past” and, “there is a definite path dependency” that “bears on the present”. It is equally more so if “building democracy is not an exercise that starts from a clean state” (but), on the “ruins of the past order”.

The political history of most African states (particularly Nigeria) with respect to the issues of democracy and governance becomes relevant in this regard. For example, as Esman (1997: 2) once argued:

Most African states took over from centralized and unrepresentative colonial ethnic and religious separatism – tribalism – and become victims to centrifugal aspirations of ambitious politicians speaking in the name of ethnic, religious and regional minorities.

Government (in Africa) at this time was not based on the consent of the governed and, the

latter had no voice in choosing their leaders who were not really accountable to them. Joseph’s (1987) study of prebendalism in Nigeria and, his “argument that the rulers in Africa are unable to act independently of the community they serve” echoed this. This explains why Hyden (1999), once claimed that, “the state in Africa failed to live up to the expectation people had in them in the first two decades of independence”. Infact, as Nzongola-Ntalaja (2001) noted, this was the case, because the leaders at that period of time were “more interested in advancing their own narrow class interest whose realization require authoritarian methods of rule and neglect of the general welfare”.

This trend, the reasons for it, and, its consequences which, in part, catalysed the quest and struggle for alternative paradigm (democracy) vis-à-vis the governance of the African people and, which has attracted the intellectual attention of scholars of repute - (See Migdal, 1988; Chabal, 1992; Hyden, 1980; Rweyemamu and Hyden, 1975) – were equally clearly put into perspective by Olowu (1995); Wunsch and Olowu (1990), Hyden and Bratton (1992), Hyden (1999), Olowu and Rasheed (1993), Dia (1993), Makinde and Aladekomo (1997), Erero (1996), Nzongola-Ntalaja (2001). Specifically, commenting on the disillusionment about the inherited legacy of state – based, monocratic or centralized political order adopted in Africa at the inception of independent democratic governance, Olowu (1995), claimed that:

the monocratic political order (which derives from the Hobbesian notion/conception of the state) not only failed as a system but led to serious and in some cases disastrous consequences for the economy and people of Africa.

These consequences include(d): wars, political violence, economic decline, systemic governmental corruption and, social and infrastructural decay.

This failure, according to Wunsch and Olowu (1990), Olowu (1995), Nzongola-Ntalaja (2001), was due to the “premature centralization” and, the “development of democratic process by fits and starts” (Akinkugbe, 2001) due to over assumption of its political utility and relevance to the needs of the people.

This, consequently, led to the agitation for democratic political change and good governance in most African states, Nigeria inclusive (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2001). The spontaneous angry reactions, civil disobedience,

demonstrations by Nigerians following the annulment in 1993 of the June 12, 1993 presidential election is a case in point. The insistence then by Nigerians on their political preferences (accountable democratic governance) couldn't but have been progenized by the attractiveness of the undercurrents of democracy as a form of political organisation that had long remained a mechanism for cohesion, peace and security within and across nations and, their determination to achieve the deannulment of the election.

This could be argued to have been largely so because, the annulment, borrowing the language of Schmitter (1994: 57), revealed the "unprecedented challenges", "serious dangers and dilemma" of modern democracy in the 1990s and beyond. The annulment perfectly fits within the parameters of "authoritarian tutelage" and its assumed efficacy by entrenched Autocrats, Monarchs, Dictators and Nativists. It was actually a negation in Nigeria, at that time, of what Gyimah – Boadi (1994: 75) called "the apparent rebirth of political freedom" because, it dashed the democratic hopes of the Nigerians and general supporters of democracy all over the world prior to the commencement of democratic governance in Nigeria in 1999.

Democracy as we come to know and think of it today, to be meaningful as a mechanism of governance, it has to encompass the elements and/or essentials of (good) governance as articulated within the context of this paper.

To examine the practical possibility of this nexus between the two concepts we adopted an empirico-scientific method. In this regard, we went to the field to empirically gauge the feelings and thinking of Nigerians on the two concepts as far as the Nigerian political landscape is concerned. The important issues raised by our questions form the core of our discussion in the empirical analysis of the affinity between democracy and governance contained in the next part of this paper.

### Empirical Linkage of Democracy with Governance

In view of the constant though, often assumed linkage of democracy with governance within various polities of the world and, as could be clearly deciphered from the discussion in the preceding sections of this paper, this part empirically

attempts the real linkage or otherwise between the two concepts.

To pursue this scientific endeavour, we administered a five-point continuum likert-scale structured questionnaires to four thousand, five hundred (4,500) male and female Nigerians in all the thirty (30) states of the federation<sup>4</sup>. This was done on equal basis in the ratio of one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires (75 to male and 75 to female Nigerians) per state.

We recorded an average of *eighty per cent (80%) response rate*. This translates to an average of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents per state. On this basis, we took three thousand six hundred (3600) subjects as our sample, equally divided between our two (male and female) major statistical variables in the proportion of one thousand eight hundred (1800) per each category.

This was subjected to both descriptive and test of significance statistical analyses based on the following research assumptions:

1. Democracy will bring about good governance in our society
2. The pursuit of real and genuine process of governance in Nigeria will further enliven her good governance for effective citizenship
3. The barrenness of Nigeria's political development relative to democratic aspirations of Nigerians upto now is related to the increasing demand for a real process of democratic political change in Nigeria
4. The current process of democratic political change in Nigeria will lead to her democratic political stability.

### Descriptive Statistical Analysis

The cumulative responses of our sampled 3600 subjects to the questionnaire tied to the above four research assumptions (RA) are analyzed below:

**Table 1: The cumulative responses to our research assumptions (as per the questionnaire administered)**

Research Assumptions	RESPONSES	
	Mean	Standard Deviation
RA1	4.11	0.80
RA2	4.45	0.78
RA3	4.31	0.89
RA4	3.19	1.27

(N 3600)

From the content of this table, it is easily discernible that our second research assumption that sought a possible linkage between democracy and good governance in Nigeria had the highest mean score of 4.45 from the respondents. This responses of our sampled subjects to this assumption could be interpreted at a glance from the low standard deviation of 0.78 which shows the range of responses between 4.45 -0.78 and 4.45 + 0.78. That is between 3.67 and 5.00 (maximum). This outcome shows that a preponderant majority of our sampled 3600 subjects positively responded to the idea that good governance in Nigeria is principally anchored on genuine government’s commitment to the real pursuit of democratic system of government based among other requirements, on what Nyerere (op.cit:3) called “a scrupulous respect for the constitution” which, according to him is the “basis of the principle of rule of law”.

The responses to our third research assumption were positive, judging from its second highest mean of 4.31 and standard deviation of 0.89 and its dispersion which shows the range of 4.31 -0.89 to 4.31 + 0.89 or 3.42 to 5.00 (maximum). It is obvious from the pattern of responses to this assumption that a generality of Nigerians blamed the barrenness of Nigeria’s political past (Akindele, 1996: 8 & 9) for her political heartache and, identified same as the causal factor of the constant committed demands for a real process of democratic political change within her political landscape.

This explains the cumulative rejection of the fourth assumption, which has the highest standard deviation of 1.27. This outcome seem to show that a preponderant majority of Nigerians tend to believe that the current process of democratic political change requires more commitment and fine-tuning for the fourth Republic to be stable. Its lowest mean of 3.19 and highest standard deviation of 1.27 gives a range of 3.19-1.27 to 3.19 + 1.27 or 1.92 to 5.00 (maximum).

On the same plane, our first assumption which sought positive causality between democracy and good governance in society has the third highest mean of 4.11 and second lowest standard deviation of 0.80. The range of 4.11-0.80 to 4.11 +0.80 which gives a relational dispersion of 3.21 to 5.00 (maximum) shows that Nigerians seem to see no alternative to democracy as a mechanism for attaining legitimate rule, benefits of pluralism,

accountability, rule of law and fair representation of societal interests.

**t-Test Statistical Analysis**

In the pursuit of our goals in this paper, we went further to present our four research assumptions the responses to which were descriptively analyzed above, in form of null hypotheses. We did this, to further enhance their statistical testing. The null hypotheses are formulated thus:

**Null (Research) Hypotheses**

There is no significant difference between male and female Nigerians as to whether:

1. Democracy will bring about good governance in our society
2. The pursuit of real and genuine process of democratic governance in Nigeria will further enliven her good governance for effective citizenship.
3. The barrenness of Nigeria’s political development relative to democratic aspirations of Nigerians uptill now is related to the increasing demand for a real process of democratic political change in Nigeria.
4. The current process of democratic political change in Nigeria will lead to her democratic political stability.

These four null hypotheses were tested for disgnificance at  $p \leq 0.05$  using the student t-test of significance for our male - female dichotomy (or analytical variables) for each of the hypotheses.

$H_{0j}$ : There is no significant difference between male and female Nigerians as to whether democracy will bring about good governance in our society.

This hypothesis was effectively tested for significance using the student t-test as could be seen from table 2 below.

**Table 2: T-TEST ANALYSIS FOR  $H_{0j}$**

Variables	Sample Size	Mean	S.D	$T_{cal}$	$T_{table}$
Male	1800	4.05	0.68	0.12	1.65
Female	1800	4.05	1.07		

df = 3598 pooled variance  
 $p \leq 0.05$

This hypothesis is accepted at  $p \leq d'' 0.05$

principally because the critical value of 1.65 is greater than the calculated value of 0.12. The acceptance of this hypothesis is an indication that there is no significant difference between the responses of our male and female Nigerians as to the positive causal relationship between the existence of democracy and good governance in our society. This shows that the sex of the generality of Nigerians has no bearing on their perception and recognition of democracy as a mechanism for the attainment of good governance.

$H_{O_2}$ : There is no significant difference between male and female Nigerians as to whether the pursuit of real and genuine process of democratic governance in Nigeria will further enliven her governance for effective citizenship.

**Table 3: t-Test analysis for  $H_{O_2}$**

Variables	Sample size	Mean	S.D	$T_{cal}$	$T_{table}$
Male	1800	4.38	0.71	0.09	1.65
Female	1800	4.38	0.71		

df = 3598 pooled variance  
 p ≤ 0.05

This hypothesis as formulated is not rejected at  $P \leq 0.05$  since  $0.09 \leq 1.65$  which implies that  $t_{cal} < t_{table}$ . This made it to fall within the acceptance region. Infact, there appears to be a perfect agreement as the mean responses for the male and female are exactly the same (4.38). This shows that a preponderant majority of Nigerians agreed that the pursuit of a genuine process of democratic political change would enhance good citizenship through its accompanying good governance.

$H_{O_3}$ : There is no significant difference between male and female Nigerians as to whether the barrenness of Nigeria's political development relative to democratic aspirations of Nigerians upto now is related to the increasing demand for a real process of democratic political change in Nigeria.

This hypothesis was tested for significance at  $P \leq 0.05$  using 't' test. The table below gives the summary analysis.

**Table 4: t-Test analysis for  $H_{O_3}$**

Variables	Sample Size	Mean	S.D	$T_{cal}$	$T_{table}$
Male	1800	4.27	0.79	1.01	1.65
Female	1800	4.28	0.81		

df = 3598 pooled variance  
 p ≤ 0.05

The critical value is 1.65 for the one table level of significance at  $p \leq 0.05 + 1.01 < 1.65$ .

The fact that this hypothesis is not rejected implies that no significant difference between our male and female sampled subjects as to the issues raised in the hypothesis. This goes to show that the hollowness of the past democratic process in Nigeria remains a great concern to Nigerians hence the increasing demand and hope for a real democratic political change.

$H_{O_4}$ : There is no significant difference between male and female Nigerians as to whether the current process of democratic political change in Nigeria will lead to her democratic political stability.

**Table 5: t-Test analysis for  $H_{O_4}$**

Variables	Sample size	Mean	S.D	$T_{cal}$	$T_{table}$
Male	1800	3.36	1.31	3.81	1.65
Female	1800	3.11	1.38		

df = 3598 pooled variance  
 p ≤ 0.05

This hypothesis is rejected at  $p > 0.05$ . The calculated value of 3.81 is quite greater than the critical value of 1.65. The male sampled subjects clearly disagreed on the possible linkage between the current process of democratic political change in Nigeria and the latter's democratic political stability. This notwithstanding, the female subjects were less critical in their rejection of the hypothesis. One can explain this divergence and the subtle overtures of the female sampled subjects on the issues raised in the hypothesis from the angle that, the female Nigerians are more understanding and, are more of the opinion that even though, the current overtures of government are not encompassing as envisaged, they are movements in the right direction. One could equally infer from them, that, this may futuristically perfect democratic system of governance in Nigeria in manners conducive to the happiness of all.

Our analysis of the data collected on this aspect of our paper up to this point, shows that three of our four null hypotheses which were formulated from the four research assumptions earlier subjected to descriptive statistical analysis were accepted at  $p \leq 0.05$ . One was rejected at  $p > 0.05$ . The summary analysis is shown in table 6 below.

**Table 6: SUMMARY OF 'T' -TEST ANALYSIS FOR OUR MALE AND female variables (as per the questionnaire administered) (=N3,600)**

Hypotheses	$t_{cal}$	$t_{table}$	Decision at $p \leq 0.05$
HO <sub>1</sub>	0.12	1.61	Accepted
HO <sub>2</sub>	0.09	1.65	Accepted
HO <sub>3</sub>	1.01	1.65	Accepted
HO <sub>4</sub>	3.81	1.65	Rejected

$p < 0.05$  df = 3598

Source: Tables 2-5

### CONCLUSION

The concepts of democracy and governance have been theoretically and empirically analyzed in this paper. In doing this, the central thesis of democracy as a form of political organisation was examined giving prominence to its ancient roots, and, the philosophical and intellectual attentions it has attracted over the years.

Against this background, its linkage with the governance of men in the past and current period was empirically attempted. From these efforts, it was analytically discovered that, practically, political animals, all over the world and, particularly in Nigeria attach serious importance to democracy as a mechanism of political governance. And, that, through it, pluralism, rule of law, legitimate rule, accountability and fair representation of the societal interests could be pursued and made manifest for the betterment of mankind. And, that, this would be more so for the Nigerian women if they could imbibe the selflessness and mobilisational ideology which have seen the women through in their quest for political emancipation in Latin America and other parts of the world.

On this same plane, it was discovered that irrespective of geo-political location or sex of Nigerians, there is still the need for improvement in Nigeria if the "social movement for democracy in Africa" is to be positively beneficial to her and her citizenry. Implicit in this, are, in the first place, the indispensable parting of ways with the retrogressive principles of democracy of the amusement park (Akindele, 1996) that had been variously pursued in Nigeria to the detriment of the citizenry. And, secondly, the need for a more encompassing and real process of democratic political change in Nigeria. And, we further opined that the fertility of this real democratic political change is anchored on selflessness, fearlessness,

patriotism for all rather than pseudo patriotism which uptill now, constitutes the core of the manacling bumps on the path of Nigeria's march to democratic greatness.

### NOTES

1. According to Aristotle, all humans are political animals, and, they are consciously or unconsciously involved in politics - (see Merkel, 1969; Rodee et al., 1993; Akindele et al., 1998 op. cit.)
2. In 1996 as a follow-up to the data which we had earlier collected for a research we embarked upon in 1994, on the annulment of June 12, 1993 presidential election, we carried out a survey research on other dimensions not initially included. Some of the data generated in these areas fall within the scope of the present paper. Consequently, we thought it fit to adopt same to further enhance our analytical precision vis-à-vis the affinity or otherwise between democracy and governance within a polity like Nigeria.
3. This portion of the paper is principally X-rayed from my earlier research works on the concept of democracy (see Akindele, 1987; Akindele and Ajila 1992; Akindele 1995a, b, c, d; Akindele and Obiyan 1996; Akindele and Olaopa 1997, Akindele et al., 1998; Akindele 1998, Akindele et al., 2000).
4. This survey was carried out before the 1996 October 1st, creation of additional six (06) States of Ekiti, Ebonyi, Bayelsa, Zamfara, Nassarawa and Gombe, by the Government of General Sani-Abacha. However, the resultant findings from our utilization of the data collected are still applicable to the new states since the inhabitants are still the same Nigerians they were when the survey was carried out.

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