

Socio-Economic and Political Effects of Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) Strike Action and the Challenges of Good Governance

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Abstract

This paper argues that the formation and operation of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has been characterized with various partisan politics such that the Congress has lost its focus on essentialities. Indeed, this has been one of the major challenges militating against good governance and sustainable development in Nigeria which is a principal road block to socio-political and economic development in the country. However, efforts at ensuring violent free society characterized with good governance have always been in vain due to the ravaging storm of corruption and other vices that post further challenges. It appears as if the mechanism put in place to checkmate the consequential effects of these vices have not yielded the expected results as every Nigerian is seemed to have been imbued with the culture of politicking and corruption. As a corollary, it is further examined that politicking is a rape on good governance, political institution and development thus working against societal integration. Hence, it is not uncommon to submit that the NLC has not demonstrated its readiness to act an agent of change which is said to have been known for. The study employs the use of both primary and secondary sources to generate the needed data for interrogation. The data sources are further reinforced with the administration of questionnaires and oral interview with relevant stakeholders and members of the public to elicit more information with a view to providing lasting solutions to challenges confronting public administration and good governance in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Good Governance, Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Corruption, and Under-development.*

Introduction

Background to the study

The formation and operation of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has been characterized with various partisan politics such that the Congress is no longer having any relevance but it has lost its focus on essentialities. Indeed, this has been one of the major challenges militating against good governance which is a principal road block to socio-political and economic development in the country. Good governance is, among other things, participatory, transparent and accountable (Maffio 2018). It is also effective and equitable. And it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of resources. Governance the UNDP further notes has three legs: economic, political and administrative. Economic governance includes decision-making processes that affect a country's economic activities and its relationships with other economies. It clearly has major implications for equity, poverty and quality of life. Political governance is the process of decision-making to formulate policy. Melvin Dubnick and McMillan (eds) (2019) Administrative governance is the system of policy implementation. Encompassing all three, good governance defines the processes and structures that guide political and socio-economic relationships. However, efforts at ensuring violent free society characterized with good governance have always been in vain due to the ravaging storm of corruption and other vices that post further challenges. It appears as if the mechanism put in place to checkmate the consequential effects of these vices have not yielded the expected results as every Nigerian is seemed to have been imbued with the culture of politicking (Alero 2016). Be that as it may, politicking is a rape on good governance and political institutions thus working against societal development. Hence, it is not uncommon to submit that the NLC has not demonstrated its readiness to be an agent of change which is said to have been known for from the beginning. This study therefore examines the politics and challenges already entrenched in the formation of the NLC with a view to emphasizing how this politics has adversely affected the performance of good governance in Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

The fact that the formation of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) is to make the agitation of the Nigerian workers more apt and position the government on the part of good governance is a good venture so that development in all fronts can result. However, this so called agitation has been hampered by the challenges of governance such as Elections' Monetization as aptly captured by. Besides, as the agent of change, the NLC is seen to promote features that engender peace, harmony, accountability and transparency, the introduction of politics in all sphere of life, a lot of selfish interest, personal aggrandizement, self-centeredness are now on the increase. In a democratic state, authority is rooted in the consent of the people, that is, in the belief that people have the right to run or at least to choose their government. Democracies impose clear, legally established limits to what elected officials can do. All participants in the system must obey the rules regarding such principles as open, free and fair elections, one person, one vote, and acceptance of majority decisions while respecting a minority's right to dissent. UNECA describes democracy as a system in which "the law guarantees extensive civil liberties, including the freedom to associate with whomever one chooses, freedom of speech

and the press, and freedom from unreasonable search and seizure” . A democracy does not claim exclusive, unquestioning loyalty from its people; in fact, if those in power overstep their authority, the people have a right, even a duty, to vote them out of office or impeach them through their representatives. Democracy is increasingly getting attention globally and with globalization it is not losing momentum in popularity. However, democracy in Nigeria is relatively young with a lot of challenges facing its survival and growth¹⁶. Corruption fuels bad governance, erodes public confidence, undermines public service delivery and entrenches square pegs in square holes in leadership positions. . It is a major impediment to governance. While insatiable wants and human greed are obviously drivers of corruption, inability to hand out prompt penalties to corrupt leaders and individuals often due to prolonged court cases. Administrative and bureaucratic procedures involved in the apprehension of corrupt elements and retrieval of looted funds is a further clog in the fight against corruption and a major leadership challenge. Ironically, all these are now the characteristic features of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC)

Research questions

The study has the research questions which are stated as follows:

- (i) How has the formation of the NLC constituted a barrier to the smooth running of good governance in Nigeria?
- (ii) What are the major challenges of governance in Nigeria?
- (iii) How has the NLC political dynamics affected good governance in Nigeria?

Objectives of the study

The under-listed are the objectives of this study which are to:

- (i) examine the how the formation of the NLC has constituted a barrier to the smooth running of good governance in Nigeria
- (ii) assess the major challenges of governance in Nigeria
- (iii) analysis the NLC political dynamics that has affected good governance in Nigeria.

Basic Assumptions

The basic assumptions for the study are indicated thus:

- (i) That the formation of the NLC has constituted a barrier to the smooth running of good governance in Nigeria.
- (ii) That as long as there is politics in the formation of the NLC, there would always be challenges against governance in Nigeria.
- (iii) That the mechanisms put in place to contain politics against good governance is a function of political class.

Significance of the study

This study is significant based on the fact that it examines the nexus between the politics of the NLC and attainment of good governance consequent upon the activities of the union in Nigeria .

Nigeria Labour Congress is a veritable institution in democratic governance. The study of this institution is justified to the extent that it will enhance deep knowledge on its activities to

societal development and citizens' freedom in Nigeria. Apart from this, the study will be beneficial to scholars and researchers in areas of democracy, good governance and labour matter affecting and its development as it will enhance their understanding and broaden their knowledge on the relevance of the NLC and accountability to good governance in a democratic setting. Policy makers, scholars, legislators and the citizens will find the work useful as it will provide impetus and new insights towards the dynamics of unionism and representativeness in promoting good governance in the democratic milieu.

Scope of the study

The scope of this study focuses majorly on the politics behind the operation and the function ability of the NLC is limited in the Nigerian geographical frontiers and politics; the total number of NLC employees to sample across the country is put at 1200 because a total of 1,200 questionnaires shall be administered to collect data on the impact of good governance with a view to considering issues and challenges surrounding all these among the civil servants in Nigeria.

Limitations to the study

The study is set to encounter some challenges; this is because the work requires collection of primary data that serves as source of information through the conduct of field survey particularly with the people at the various towns, state and ethnic make-up selected for the study⁹. Obtaining information of this nature may pose some limitations from the people who do not have adequate knowledge in explaining critical issues. However, effort will be made to reach out to the masses through the employment of local, ethnic and state guide respectively.

Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in the study.

Good Governance as used in this study connotes the following:

- (i) **NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS:** Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) is an umbrella organization for trade unions in Nigeria. It defends workers' interests, raising economical and political issues affecting the welfare of the citizens in Nigeria.
- (ii) **GOVERNANCE:** Governance is the term for the way a group of people such as a country do things. Many groups create a government to decide how things are to be done. Governance is different from politics. ... Governance is also how government decision making affects people in that nation. Governance comprises all of the processes of governing – whether undertaken by the government of a state, by a market, or by a network – over a social system (family, tribe, formal or informal organization, a territory or across territories) and whether through the laws, norms, power or language of an organized society
- (iii) **LABOUR CONGRESS DYNAMICS:** as used in this study points to the power play and methods usually adopted by the Nigeria Labour Congress in driving home their demands¹³

- (iv) **NIGERIAN GOVERNANCE SYSTEM:** this points to Nigeria system of governance as a federal republic is run with executive power exercised by the president. The president is the head of state, the head of government, and the head of a multi-party system. Legislative power is held by the federal government and the two chambers of the legislature: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual studies on the Concepts

This chapter is divided under Conceptual and Empirical review for in-dept understanding. There is also need to adopt thematic approach in reviewing some relevant Concepts for the study. Therefore, concepts like “Governance” and the “representativeness of the Nigeria Labour Congress” are thematically reviewed.

Conceptual Review

Governance as a Conceptual is seen as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. This definition is further supported by the World Bank while conceiving governance as: “The exercise of political power to manage a nation’s affairs. The manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social developments”. In the course of this definition by the World Bank, three dimensions of governance are identified which are:

- (i) The nature of political regimes;
- (ii) The exercise of authority in the management of social and economic resources and,
- (iii) The capacity of governance to design and implement policy effectively.

Governance is further perceived by the World Bank, the United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Arts and the Public (ESCAP) as: “The process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (not implemented)”

These two institutions see governance from its typologies and its characteristics. Hence, according to them, governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Characteristically, both the World Bank (2010) and U.N (ESCAP 2010) note that good governance is a product of the following (8) eight indicators:

- (i) Transparency
- (ii) Accountability
- (iii) Service Delivery
- (iv) Popular participation
- (v) Rule of law
- (vi) Consensus oriented
- (vii) Effectiveness and Efficiency
- (viii) Equitability and Inclusiveness

It can be argued that any manifestation of the afore-mentioned indices of governance is an indication that the government is on the part of proper administration and such tends to impact on the citizenry. The International Monetary Funds defines governance as: “the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizen and groups articulate their visions and interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences”. This position of IMF agrees with that of (DFID) as the latter sees governance as:

“Involving all men and women, including the physically challenged, to have a voice in decision making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their interests”. The “legitimate intermediate” as posited by (DFID) could imply the elected legislators that are expected to represent the interests, concerns and the aspirations of their people. Similarly, Nwekeaku supports the philosophical definition of the World Bank and U.N (ESCAP) on governance while maintaining that good governance involves:

enthronement of a democratic government, which guarantees equal participation of all citizens in government, provision and sustenance of the rule of law; provision and protection of the constitution, promotion and protection of the fundamental human rights of the citizens; provision and sustenance of the freedom of the press; availability of a transparent, accountable and participatory governance at all levels of governments.

It is therefore inferable from the submission of Nwekeaka that for good governance to thrive, it must exhibit the indices outlined by the World Bank; et: al. Not only this, Michael notes that: *“improved governance requires an integrated, long-term strategy built upon co-operation between government and citizens”* Michael holds the same opinions with the foregoing submissions of the scholars and institutions herein that governance involves both the participations of the citizens and the institutions of government. Commenting on good governance Akpan indicates that: *“before governance can be considered good, it has got to be effective. It must command the respect and allegiance of the people over whom it exercises powers and must satisfy certain basis 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 Integrity of the state”, “protection of lives and property”, enforcement of laws to

enhance economic development among others. According to this scholar, governance requires the ability to ensure the wherewithal of sustained government and that public authority should find it necessary to pay for services that must be provided. Corroborating the definition of Esman argues that: *“effective governance must make possible the provision for certain basic services by the state to include transport, communication, education and health services. Such to be relatively cheap and reliably affordable”*. Looking critically at this submission, it has to be so, since effective governance implies the capacity of the state, through its power of determinism or, authoritative allocation of scarce societal resources to deliver the basic necessities of life to the governed and equally facilitate the process of economic and political development. From another perspective, Landell 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 administration”*. Benson belongs to the same school of thought as he conceives “governance” from the formal and informal mechanisms that have been put in place to arrive at and implement the decision so made. Being at Variance with Benson, Boeninger sees “governance” as the “good government of society”. To him: *“good government guides the country along a course leading to the desired goal, and development”* Apart from the fact that Boeninger’s definition is criticized for not being neutral on two considerable grounds; exclusion of possible bad government and the equation of governance with democracy. It can

also be criticized on the fact that any guide or action leading to the attainment of the desired goal does not always imply development. The position of Boeninger is well advanced by Onyeka as he argues that: “Governance refers to a polity which defines a government, a state or people and stands for acceptable government and desirable leadership” It can be reviewed that Onyeka has similar belief like Boeninger. This is because, it is the acceptable government and desirable leadership that could lead a country along a course resulting in the attainment of the desired goal, and developed. However, with these definitions in mind, good governance involves being politically participatory, accountable, transparent and effective, which is the product of ideal rule of law. Also, with these definitions, as given by both Boeninger and Onyeka, it follows that the voices of the vulnerable, the poor and the oppressed are head in decision making over the allocation of development resources.

Agagu, having considered the definitions given by Boeninger and Onyeka as “imagination”. Holds that:

The pillar of good governance such as transparency, responsibility, accountability, participation and responsiveness to the need of the people are yet to occupy a pride space in the country. In the absence of these key elements, public policy may be meaningless, let alone impacting on people's lives.

He believes however, that before an acceptable government, desirable leadership could attain the desired goal, and development, such must acknowledge the place of pillars of good governance in addition to the freedom for the vulnerable and the poor. In the same vein, Kukah explains that good governance means: “government is responsible, accountable and transparent in policy formation and implementation”. The positions of Agagu and Kukah can be taken to imply that good governance imposes demands on policy makers in the exercise of power and equally encompasses an effective state that has enabling political environment for effective distribution of both natural and human resources to improve the living condition of the vulnerable. In this capacity, governance is taken to denote the employment of political authority to manage the scarce resources of the society to better the lots of the citizens. In the light of the foregoing, Beetseh, shares similar opinion with Boeninger, Onyeka Agagu and Kukah as he pointed out:

Good governance involves responsibility and responsiveness in leadership and in public service, accountability in the mobilization as well as in the utilization of resources, discipline, effective and efficiency in handling public (as well as personal) affairs, selflessness and impartial service to the people and popular participation and empowerment of the people in the conduct and management of their own affairs.

It is noted therefore, that with the above conceptualization of Beetseh development of the society coupled with good governance can only thrive, provided policy-making and policy implementation are effected through the instrumentality of laws and guidelines which are divided into major operations. It further suggests that good governance portends respect for fundamental human rights of citizens, judicious utilization of resources devoid of waste and corruption. In addition, good governance encapsulates issues of equality, justice, equity and fair play in the distribution of both human and mineral resources for the promotion and

enhancement of quality lives for the people regardless of their class status, religious affiliation and the like.

Be that as it may, Fawehinmi considered governance from another perspective as he adduced that: “The nature of governance in Nigeria makes instability and insecurity possible; and I must hasten to add that the fact that there is government does not mean that there is good governance”

The late legal luminary extended his postulation as he added:

good governance means that the affairs of the state are conducted in such a manner as to give happiness and security to the people which is a constitutional requirement, there can be no governance where: the man in the street cannot find employment, the man in the street cannot have access to good education, the man in the street cannot be housed. The man in the street is denied good infrastructure. The man in the street is denied good health delivery system. The man in the street is thrown into darkness and there is no power for his business and other needs.

He equally posited that when the man in the street is further denied the under-mentioned, then government cannot be taken to have effected good governance:

when the man in the street is weak as a result of old age and cannot get good medication. The man in the street is not allowed to determine who should govern him and make those in government accountable to him. The man in the street is inhibited by no locus standi in a court of law to question the corrupt government or to question the other acts of misgovernance. When the man in the street is denied stability in the prices of petroleum products. When the man in the street is not safe even in the street...

Comparing the words of the legal luminary as submitted above, a sense of similarity can be pointed out in relation to the World Bank and U.N (ESCAP) characteristic definitions of governance. Therefore, all the indicators of governance as itemized by the World Bank can be classified under sub-headings of the definitions of governance presented by Fawehinmi (2007). For instance, if the man in the street is allowed to determine who governs him, then it is classified under “popular participation”. Likewise, if those in government are accountable to the man in the street, it portends “Accountability”. And if the man in the street is guided by locus standi in a court of law, then the practice of “rule of law” as canvassed by the World Bank is in force. This amounts to “constitutionalism”. Danjibo is in complete agreement with Fawehinmi as he expounds that:

good governance guarantee security, and before a country can talk about development and good governance, certain basic infrastructure must be put in place such as energy (power), good road, qualitative education, well-fed citizenry and developing a healthy agricultural sector.

Nevertheless, the position canvassed by Danjibo cannot be under-rated because human lives depend entirely on some fundamental needs among which have been captured in his

definition of governance. From this also, governance can be taken to mean the activity of the political organ responsible for the day-to-day administration of the society.

In the words of Dirk Niebel, German Minister of Economic Co-operation and Development. (available at <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/governance>, [11/06/2015](#)). He asserted that:

Good governance is the foundation on/upon which a society is built and thus it is indispensable for the development of a country. For German development policy, the promotion of good governance and the protection of human rights are a priority as well as a cross-cutting issues. Because governance and human rights will remain particularly important even after 2015. We support the United Nations global thematic consultation on these issues.

To this extent, the position of Niebel points to the fact that good governance is very significant and pivotal to nation building and development. This definition of Niebel equally shares similar position with the foregoing scholarly submissions on governance. In another related development, defines governance with a view to focusing on the distribution and sharing of authority for the effective management of the general public between states and non-state organization. He describes socio-political forms of governing as: “forms in which public or private actors do not separate but in conjunction, engage in problem solving together, that is to say co-arrangements”

It is therefore noted that the position of Jon Kooimas on governance relates to forms of multi organization actors rather than involving only state institutions. Sharing similar perspectives on governance, Kiser , Ostrom , and Huder defined governance as: “the fundamental rules which regulate the relationship between the rulers and the ruled”

With this postulation of Kiser (et.al), the emphasis is on the relationship existing between the government and the people, it shows how the two can moderate and regulate their behavioural and attitudinal patterns towards each other. From all these definitions, it can be inferred that good “Governance” as a concept, is applicable to all sections of society such as the governments, legislature, judiciary, media, private sector, corporate sector, trade unions and lastly non-government organizations (NGOs). The implication is that it is only when all these and other various sections of society conduct their affairs in a socially responsible manner that the objective of achieving larger good of the largest number of people in society can be achieved Having considered various definitions of governance as postulated by different scholars, it is necessary to review the indicators outlined by the World Bank as done here under.

ACCOUNTABILITY

In the words of Collins (et al., 2008), accountability is conceived to imply: “that institutions and individuals are answerable for their commitments and responsibilities”

Equally, Dann (2006) provides that accountability connotes:

having to answer for one's action or inactions, depending on the answer to be exposed to potential sanction. This promotes a culture and practice of compliance with organizational policies and also advances learning and innovation and enables the organization to maximize its potential in relation to internal and external actors.²³

The conceptualizations of both Collins and Dann have elements of similarity but with little modification. While the former believes that accountability is for both institutions and individuals which implies that it is all encompassing. The latter holds that accountability must contain the element of sanction where possible, to pave way for the attainment of the organizational goals.

Another scholarly perspective is that of Scolt, who educates thus: “the underlying accountability is the notion that progress towards goals, commitments, responsibilities is assessed and those responsible for action in these areas are held accountable in some public functions”. It should be noted that the ultimate aim of accountability as opined by Scolt is not to pass judgement but to improve performance. Abe (2010) in his bit to conceptualize “Accountability” shares similar positions with Scolt, Dann and Collins. He posits that: “accountability conventionally refers to being answerable for one’s action”.

The belief that humans are prone to error and subjects of political authority should therefore be protected from the hazardous behaviour of their governors, gave rise to the issue of accountability.

In the perspectives of Smith and Hague, they both submitted that: “The principle of accountability requires that the government must have assurance that public funds are spent for the purposed specified and without personal gains to any private individual beyond fair compensation of his service”. Examining their submission, one may be tempted to assume that they have only limited their postulations to finance whereas there are other factors upon which accountability can be rendered; such as government assets and property like cars, houses and the like.

Accountability, as a theme, Roberston , relays that: “It concerns the process by which those who exercise power, whether government, as elected representatives or as appointed officials must be able to show that they have exercised their powers, and discharged their duties properly” Roberston’s assertion indicates that the public officials must be characterized by the element sincerity, probity and selflessness. This can further be expatiated as contained in Africa Governance Forum II that: “accountability is measured in term of clearly articulated codes of conduct” In this case, accountability connotes that those individuals and organizations Saddled with the responsibility of performing certain functions or activities are held responsible for their actions. Mclean provides a clearer argument as he opines that: “it is the requirement of the representatives to answer the represented on the utilization of powers in their disposal, act upon criticism made of them and accept (some) responsibilities, failures, incompetence or deceit”. Corroborating Mclean’s position, Adakai adds that accountability is characterized principally by three basic ideals: “Greater responsibility to elected superiors; Greater responsibility to community groups and Greater commitment to value and higher standard of morality”. Adakai’s perspective of accountability is further reinforced by Olowu who describes accountability as involving the development of objective standard of evaluation to assist the owners of an organization to rate the performance of the individual’s duties and units within the organization. He maintains that accountability thus has three components as follows: “A clear definition of responsibility, reporting mechanism and a system of review, reward and sanctions”. Accountability takes different directions. It could be upward, downward, vertical or horizontal among and between subordinates and supervisors, then horizontally among professional peers (Ibid). Viewing it vertically, Akinseye opines that: “accountability is the obligation of public officers and institutions to submit their activities for scrutiny by members

of public and by the organs and institutions to carryout such scrutiny”. Akinseye’s stand by extension, connotes that nothing should be hidden as all activities are subject to probity, clarity and possible sanctions. To Akpan , accountability implies: “the acceptance of the fact that all public servants owe and hold their position and everything associated with those positions, as trusts for the people, who are their masters”. In addition, he states: “those who are expected to render services must account to the people for their successes and failures; and those who are entrusted with the custody and disbursement of public funds must appropriately account to the people for their use”.

Examining the works of Akinseye and Akpan, there is area of similarity existing, while Akinseye employed the use of “scrutiny by members of public”, Akpan emphasized the use of “...must account to the people”. Akpan’s perception of accountability clearly demonstrates total submission and adequate rendition of activities to the electorates in the case of elected officials. It, nevertheless, addresses unreserved prudence in the case of public servants entrusted with the societal resources. However, both submissions of Akinseye and Akpan tend to achieve the same result – “Accountability”.

Harold elaborates on accountability in perfect agreement with Akinseye, but with little modification. He submits:

Accountability refers to the capacity of government institution including such “agencies of restraint” as courts, independent election tribunals, anti-corruption bodies, central bank, auditing agencies and Ombudsman – to check abuses by other public and branches of government.

Accountability is viewed from a modernized perspective through the submission of the institute of governance that: “It is much more than identifying the culprit for outcome gone awry. It entails clarifying goals or standards for performance. It encompasses the way organizations and institutions organize themselves according to appropriate standards”

The above postulation underscores the fact that more than what is required, accountability ensures proper code of conduct which is the “appropriate standard” needed for maintaining a more balanced attitudinal and behavioural pattern of individual persons in the society. In the words of Paul Thomas (1998:7), he is of the view that: “Any realistic approach to the achievement of accountability in the modern administrative state must rely greatly on the subject of responsibility on the part of public service”. Thomas provides that the issue of accountability in modern system of government is a function of greater responsibility and dependability on the citizens (ibid). This is supported by Dubnick, , as he traces the roots of accountability thus:

the roots of the contemporary concept can be traced to the reign of Williams in the decades after the 1066 Norman Conquest of England. In which he (Williams required all the property holders in his realm to render “a count” of what they processed in “Domesday Books.

He argued further that the Domesday Books contained what was in the king’s realm. Moreover, the land owner were all required to swear oaths of fealty to the crown. Be that as it may, the exercise was later evolved into a highly centralized administrative kingship that was ruled through centralised auditing and semi-annual account giving. It is seen that in contemporary political discourse, “accountability” and “accountable” no longer convey a

conventional image of book keeping and financial administration as done in Williams' period. Bovens confirms this by stating that:

moreover, the accounting relationship has almost completely perverted. Accountability does not refer to sovereigns holding their subjects to account, but on the contrary, authorities themselves are being held accountable by their citizens.

Of a truth, Bovens' submission confirms what obtains in nowadays' accountability process as the elected officials are expected to render of their performance while in office. To Benson accountability is a key requirement of good governance. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organization must be accountable to the public and to other institutional stakeholders. Benson therefore queries: "Who is accountable to who? varies, depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or institution". Benson is of the opinion that generally an organization is accountable to those who will be affected by its decision or actions. So also the entire system of government must be accountable. He concludes that: "Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and rule of law". In Boven's and Benson's point of view, an activity is transparent if all information about it, is made open, freely available and accessible.

From Davies', perspective he avers that: "accountability points to the way through which the government and its officials are expected to demonstrate responsibility for their actions in contemporary human collectivity". He presents six types of accountability to drive home his arguments which includes: 'political accountability' to connote the responsibility of the rulers to defend their actions before the ruled. He holds constantly that this doctrine originated from the theory of political mandate which makes the political office holders to be accountable to those who elect them. Other types of accountability according to Davies includes: "Legal Accountability", "Fiscal Accountability", "Programme Accountability", "Process Accountability" and "Outcome or Performance Accountability". With Davies' typologies of accountability, some inherent miscarriages are clearly identified. First, on political accountability, the elected officials as previously pointed out elsewhere in the study, are no longer accountable to the electorates rather they tend to satisfy their "god-fathers". Davies' typology on fiscal accountability is faulty, in that how many times have the officials in charge of public money come to address the public about how the money is spent. Even, when asked to undergo the process of code of conduct bureau, they find it very difficult to comply; let alone organizing public account auditing conference.

Empirical Review

This aspect will empirically review some scholarly perspectives of the representativeness of the NLC In Nigeria . The concept has been defined to denote an organ saddled with the responsibility of representing and policy formulation for public good. In the words of Lain and Alistair (2004:303), both conceive it as:

A body elected by its members to oversee the activities, income and expenditure of the union... to checkmate the excessiveness of the government... acting as a watch dog.

It is equally described as a type of representative and deliberative union with the power to adopt laws. On his own, Akinbosade (2007:6-7) conceptualizes it from the perspective of the functions which it performs, citing section 4 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic

of Nigeria which empowers the union to function independent of any authority. However, Philip (2007:9) conceives the union as the institution of government while pointing out that:

The unions are constitutionally designed institutions for giving assent to binding means of public policy, that assent being given on behalf of a political community that extends beyond the government elite responsible for formulating those measures.

Barkan, (2010) is of the opinion that this institution would provide for the good of the society essentially through the representation of the community which are the hallmarks of the true governance globally. By his definition, the union seems to act as the eyes, ears and voice of the people. He contended further that the union has an office to be at the nation's congress of opinions. He asserted thus: "The proper office of a union is to watch and control the government: to throw the light of publicity on its acts, to censure them if found condemnable".

Ogunmola (2014), while defining the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) from the functional perspective, contends that: "It is a cardinal institution of democracy: Its functions are defined in term of representation and oversight-related responsibilities, all of which are pivotal to good health of democracy, if well delivered"

Theoretical Framework

In order to have in-depth analysis of the study, Modernization Theory and Theory of Structural-functionalism have been adopted.

Modernization Theory

Modernization theory is a grand theory encompassing many different disciplines as it seeks to explain how society progresses, what variables affect that progress, and how societies can react to that progress. . Modernization theory focuses specifically on a type of modernization thought that evolved in Europe during the 17th century, which brought social mores and technological achievements into a new epoch. (Ibid).

The foundations of modernization theory date back to the age of enlightenment, when a number of philosophers began to look at how society changed and progressed. Theories were laid out as to how technological advancement necessarily led to social advancement which in turn led to an examination of how different facets of advancement were connected (Ibid).

The major thrust or basic premise of this phase of modernization theory was that humans were able to change their society within a generation, and that this change was often facilitated by advancements in technology, production and consumption. In the modern age, modernization theory looks at how new technologies and systems are leading to a more greatly homogenized world. Modernization theory encompasses the world of globalization, where cultural mores and ideas are easily spread throughout the world, leading to a sort of universal culture that serves as a baseline for all cultures. As societies in the world modernize further technologically, it is believed that those cultures will diminish. (Ibid).

Indeed, modernization theory is used to explain the process of modernization within societies. According to Beetham, modernization refers to a model of a progressive transition from a 'pre-modern' or 'traditional' to a 'modern' society. The theory looks at the internal factors of a country while assuming that, 'traditional' countries can be brought to development in the same manner the developed countries did. The theory attempts to identify the social variables that contribute to social progress and development of societies.²⁰ It therefore seeks to explain the process of social evolution.

Kjaer, while corroborating the position of Bernstein, asserts that modernization theory not only stresses the process of change, but also the responses to that change. It looks at internal dynamics while referring to social and cultural structures and the adaptation of new technologies. Modernization theory maintains that traditional societies will develop as they adopt more modern practices. Proponents of the theory like Han (2007), claim that modern states are wealthier and more powerful, and that their citizens are free to enjoy a high standard of living. (Ibid). Han further argues that developments such as new data technology and the need to update traditional methods in transport, communication and production make modernization necessary. It therefore implies that such developments control the limits of human interaction, and not vice versa. (Ibid). It also implies that human agency controls the speed and severity of modernization. Supposedly, instead of being dominated by tradition, societies undergoing the process of modernization typically arrive at forms of governance dictated by abstract principles. Traditional religious beliefs and cultural traits, according to the theory, usually become less important as modernization takes hold. Discussing the strength of the theory as related to politics, Ronald Inglehart, and Christian Welzel contend that the realization of democracy is not based solely on an expressed desire for that form of government, but that democracies are born as a result of the admixture of certain social and cultural conditions. For the foundation of a democracy are born of significant modernization and economic development that result in mass political participation. (Ibid).

Another strength of the theory is intricately linked to its impact on education which plays an essential role in society, creating knowledge, transferring it to students and fostering innovation. Modernization is a process of socio-cultural transformation. It is a thorough process of change involving values, norms, institutions and structures (Ibid). From sociological perspective, education does not arise in response to individual needs, but it arises out of the needs of the society of which the individual is a member. (Ibid). In a static society, the main function of the educational system is to transmit the cultural heritage to the new generations. However, in changing society, these keep on changing from generation to generation.

Chaudhary maintains that modernization is usually associated with urban and industrial development in which cities have grown as economic and cultural centres, and new technologies have transformed almost every aspect of life. However, critics have equally raised some fundamental arguments against the relevance of the theory on the following grounds.

On its strength to culture that modernization has encouraged the development of new forms of creative expression, such as film and television. That these forms can be easily exported and viewed all over the world. The critics argue however that a loss of culture may result from modernization. Corroborating this, Engerman and David (2007) argue that the spread of the western culture has caused young people in non-western countries to abandon their traditional customs and values. Even languages begin to disappear as urbanization encourages people to learn a country's dominant language.

The theory is also criticized on the advent of new technology which has revolutionized the speed and accuracy of production. The critics maintain that increased global trade allows businesses to sell their products anywhere. (Ibid). But increased global production may hurt domestic business when international companies can offer products at cheaper prices.

Criticisms are further raised against the theory on environment, communication and travel. On environment, natural resources like wood, water and oil are often processed in modernized society, and skyscraper and factories begin to transform the landscape. Environmental problems, such as climate change are believed to be the result of industrial

development and production. On communication and travel, new inventions such as phones, televisions and computer allow people to communicate instantly anywhere on the globe. Increased global travel allows people to visit foreign cultures for business or leisure as contact with foreign cultures fosters international cooperation, but can also result in further loss of culture as people begin to adopt the foreign cultures and languages they are exposed to (ibid)

The adoption of modernization theory in this study provides opportunity to focus some scholarly attention on the politics of Nigeria Labor Congress and the challenges of good governance to generate new ideas, innovation and insights through its fundamental responsibility service delivery to the people in order to foster development and modernize ways of life. Also, the theory is adopted since its main thrust is to institute modernization in every epoch of human development and advancement. Indeed, modernization conjures images of social change in the direction of general improvement over the past. In contemporary social sciences, modernization theory has become so vital to the study of the development of Third World or undeveloped societies.

The Nigerian governance is therefore the product of the Labour Congress dynamics . Indeed, such dynamism is said to be characterized by lobbying, protests, strikes ,demonstration and roundtable discussion to press home their demands. It is therefore not uncommon to see the society acting for the NLC members while making its dynamic demands.

METHODOLOGY.

Research Design.

The work will adopt a descriptive research method, using both primary and secondary data. The research will engaged the uses of both qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection¹. Primary data will be collected through the use of questionnaires and personal interview which will include the use of in-depth-interview (IDI). Secondary data will be sourced from relevant government security agencies, and other relevant government agencies like the Civil Service etc².

The Study Population

The study population was drawn from opinion leaders, top decision makers, NLC members and their officials (both past and present) and grass root people etc. The essence of this is for the study to cover a wide spectrum of the population and relevant stakeholders in the state with a view to eliciting required information for the study. Indeed, Selected States of Nigeria constitute the study area for this research work. Existing various States have been the major focus of the study this is because NLC members cut across all the states of the federation. This makes the study to be unique in nature,.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique.

A sample population size of 1200 was drawn for the administration of questionnaire from relevant individuals and institutions. Two hundred (200) respondents each were picked from the following six states of the federation which were selected through purposive sampling method⁶.

Description of the Research Instruments

The choice of these states across the country was informed by the need to carry out critical and analytical study of the topic in question. The samples cut across all the three senatorial districts in the country namely, North, South, and East, Senatorial districts. Some States are picked to represent each senatorial district as indicated below:

- | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| (i) | Federal Capital Territory, Abuja | } | North Senatorial District |
| (ii) | Kogi State | | |
| (iii) | Lagos State | } | South Senatorial District |
| (iv) | Bayesal State | | |
| (v) | Imo State | } | East Senatorial District ⁸ |
| (vi) | Rivers State | | |

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

The choice of these States through purposive sampling method is justified because it provides reliable data upon which validation can be established. Not only that, since Nigeria is made up of six senatorial districts, selecting the three senatorial districts, with two States each in senatorial district will amount to equal representation to be able to generate testable data capable of providing adequate responses from the selected respondents in those States and towns. Apart from these, the study will be able to gross fertilize Ideas and positions of the people about the NLC and good governance. Indeed, with choice of the States as listed above, the study will be able to compare the respondents' opinions of urban and rural local areas with a view to showing the impact of the NLC on good governance in Nigeria at any given period.¹¹ Having the foregoing in mind, the reading public might be sufficiently informed. Be that as it may, the selection of all these States has afforded the study the opportunity to generate balanced, critical and reliable data worthy of validating in the course of the fieldwork.

Methods of Data Collection.

This study has adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The methods corroborate each other thereby strengthening the outcome and reliability of the result. Questionnaires also serve the purpose for quantitative techniques while personal interview comprising In-depth-interview was employed for the qualitative data collection.

Discussion of findings

In clarifying the issues in this study, it is found out that therefore politicking and politics of the governance cannot be underestimated as they have capability and ability to effect technical influence on the NLC members while the NLC on its own adopts its dynamism to institute change as it is known for. Morita, Zubair. and Zaelke, Dadgara (2019). The challenges of good governance are often occasioned by the politics of NLC which has caused socio-political and economic backwardness as everyone in the society always feels the impact of the NLC especially during the period of strike action.

It has also been found out that various activities are paralyzed during the strike. However, most often than not, it has been noted that the NLC has always been agitating for its own selfish interest rather than seeking the welfare of the generality of the people. The recent happening in which the NLC chairman-Comrade Ajaero was mal-handled and bitten beyond recognition can attest to the foregoing (www.premiumtimesng.com 10th Nov,2023). Confronting

challenges of good governance can only be resolved should the people, society and political environment inject revolution of minds for greater development and integration

Concluding Remarks

Without much ado, the partisan politics of the NLC and the crime perpetrated by the hoodlum during protest are part of compelling challenges of governance in Nigeria. The stakeholders in the society must be on their toes to ensure that incessant strike actions are properly checkmated.

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