

Using Ibrahim Index of African Governance in Evaluating Nigerian Democratic Governance

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Abstract

Nigeria began another democratic journey in 1999 after the handover of power to a democratically elected government by the military. Some scholars have buttressed the assumption with their empirical findings that democracy brings development. This assumption prompted the Ibrahim Foundation to come up with the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIGA) to evaluate governance in Africa and it also stimulates this study to appraise Nigerian democratic governance in relation to the IIGA evaluation. The study relied on secondary sources for data collection. The yearly results from the IIGA ranking showed that Nigeria has performed poorly in the four categories that the IIGA used to evaluate governance in Africa. And this was also corroborated by this study. Findings from the study have shown that democratic governance in Nigeria has not been able to move the country forward. Instead, insecurity, poverty and unemployment have been associated with the democratic journey within the country. The paper calls for good governance as a panacea to move the country forward from its present state and it also calls for further study on the evaluation of Nigerian democratic governance within the context of the IIGA.

1. Introduction

The clarion calls by pro-democracy groups such as the Campaign for the Democracy, NADECO and Civil Liberty Organization for the military to over the reign of government to civilian democratic government paid off in 1999, when General Abdusalami Abubakar organized a general election and hand over power to Olusegun Obasanjo who won the election on under the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). Omotosho (2013); Osumah and Ikelegbe (2009); Awojobi et al. (2014); Olu-Adeyemi (2012); Attah (2012); Udefuna (2012) posit that the installation of a democratic governance marked a watershed within the political history of Nigeria and that democracy is an open door for the socioeconomic development of Nigeria. However, fifteen years of uninterrupted democratic governance the situation in the country calls for concern. For example, there is a high level of poverty, insecurity, infrastructure decay and the uncertainty of the future of Nigeria statehood as the country prepared for the forthcoming general election in February 2015. According to George-Genyi (2013):

On May 29th, 1999, the country restored civil democratic rule with the swearing in of constitutional governments at the federal, state and the local government levels. Unfortunately, since the time till today, the democratic system, including the structures meant to sustain and consolidate it, has experienced strain and stress. The factor largely responsible for this state of affairs may not be unconnected to the fact that we have, as a political community, stayed far too long under different military regimes, whose common denominator was, to large an extend, their lack of democracy, accountable and good government and general strife towards societal development.

The new waves of democracy in Africa prompted Dr. Mohamed Mo Ibrahim a Sudanese billion through the Mo Ibrahim foundation established in 2007 the Ibrahim Index for African Governance (IIAG). The IIAG provides a yearly evaluation of the quality of governance in African countries and it also a structure for citizens, governments, institutions and the private

sector to precisely assess the delivery of public goods and services and policy outcome throughout Africa (IIAG, 2013).

The IIAG provides:

- A framework for stakeholders to assess the delivery of public goods and services, and policy outcomes, in every African country;
- A tool with which to govern, highlighting continental, regional, national and thematic governance results.

The data are classified within four categories:

- Safety and Rule of Law
- Participation and Human Rights
- Sustainable Economic Opportunity
- Human Development (IIAG, 2013).

Omotoso, (2012) asserts that democratic governance should be able to bring socioeconomic development, the participation of citizens in governance, accountability and transparency on the part of public elected officers. However, can Nigerians say they have derived democratic dividend since the installation of democratic governance in 1999?. It is on this ground, this study wants to evaluate Nigerian democratic governance in relation to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

2. Nigerian Democratic Governance in Perspective Since 1999

The overthrowing of the first executive civilian governance in Nigeria in 1983 gave the military the opportunity to steer the leadership of the country for 16 years. The abuse of human rights and the crisis of development during the military era ignited the civil society groups to call for the handover of power to democratic elected governance. General Abdusalami yielded to this call and handover power to an elected civilian president in the

person of Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999. Obasanjo ruled for two terms of four years each, according to the Nigerian constitution. Although, he tried to manipulate the constitution to have a third term, Nigerians were able to stop his subtle motives. Musa Yar'Adua succeeded Obasanjo after the former won the presidential election. One unique aspect of the Yar'Adua administration was the observance of the rule of law in the country, unlike his predecessor who used his military antecedent to rule the country with an iron fist. Yar'Adua was unable to complete his first term in office because he died in 2010. By virtue of the Nigerian constitution, the Vice President of the country is supposed to take over the leadership mantle of the country after the death of the president. However, the scenario in Nigeria was made complex by loyalists of the demise president who act as a stumbling block for the vice president from taking the leadership position of the country. It took the Save Nigerian Group (SNG) that composed of prominent pro-democracy Nigerians such as Professor Wole Soyinka, Pastor Tunde Bakare and Yinka Odumakin to march to the National Assembly and compiled the federal legislators to facilitate the swearing of the Vice President as the President of Nigeria. President Goodluck Jonathan who was the Vice President in Yar'Adua administration became the president in 2010 and subsequently won the presidential election in 2011.

3. Conceptualizing Governance and its Review in Nigeria

Governance has been conceptualized by the United Nations Development Programmed (UNDP) to be the exercise of political power within a nations's economic, social and political institutions in which government institutions represent organizational regulations and procedures, formal law, informal rules that together influence the motivation of public policy makers and the providers of public services (UNDP, 2007).

The World Bank defined governance as the “manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development” (World Bank, 2004). This is how Kaufman et al. (n.d.) defined governance, “the tradition and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised.” The purpose of governance in a country is to make the provision of good governance in order for the political authority (the government) to meet the needs of the populace. “In the context of a political and institutional environment that upholds human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, good governance is the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for the purposes of equitable and sustainable development” (Austrian Development Agency, 2006 & 2011). In similar fashion, the UNDP also recognized the following as fundamental attributes of good governance:

- Accountability
- Consensus Orientation
- Effectiveness and Efficiency
- Participation
- Responsiveness
- Transparency
- Strategic Vision (UNDP. 2007).

3.1 Reviews of Governance in Nigeria

Good governance is synonymous with democracy, rule of law and participation. Various democratic governments that have been in place since the installation of democracy in 1999 have initiated policies of good governance to meet the aspiration of the citizens who are eager to reap the dividends of democracy after the handover of power from the military to elected civilian government. Good governance implies the making and implementing good decision making for the benefit of all. The Obasanjo, Yar’Adua and Jonathan civilian administrations

have initiated policies to this effect. This section of this paper listed some of the policies of good governance taken by the various governments listed above.

(i) The Obasanjo government came into being in 1999 after he won the presidential election. The following are the policies undertaken by his government:

- National Economic Empowerment Strategies (NEEDS)
- State Economic Empowerment Strategies (SEEDS)
- Local Government Economic Empowerment Strategies (LEEDS)
- Monetization Policy
- Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC)
- Banking Reforms
- Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC)
- Poverty Alleviation Strategies- Microfinance, SMEDAN, PAP, SMSE
- Deregulation and Privatization Policy

(ii) Musa Yar'Adua became the president in 2007 after the expiration of Obasanjo's tenure. The policy that the administration of Yar'Adua initiated for the benefit of all Nigerians was called the Seven Point Agenda. The policy thrust of the Seven Point Agenda was to reduce poverty and provide security for Nigerians. The policy was meant to run alongside the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Policy encapsulates the following:

- Critical Infrastructure
- Niger Delta
- Food Security
- Human Capital Development
- Land Tenure and Home Ownership
- National Security and Intelligence
- Wealth Creation

However, the policy did not last in its implementation process because of the demise of the president in 2010.

(iii)By virtue of the Nigerian constitution, the vice president becomes president of the country in the case of the death of the sitting president. President Goodluck Jonathan became the president of Nigeria in 2010 and won the presidential election in 2011. In his inaugural speech, the president outlines his policy for good governance under the umbrella of the administration transformation agenda policy. The following are implanted in the transformation agenda:

- Infrastructure Development
- Poverty Reduction
- Employment Generation
- Security
- Rural and Agriculture Development
- Health and Education Sector Revitalization
- Niger Delta Development

These laudable programmes are geared toward improving the social-economic well-being of Nigerians and to make Nigerians derived the benefit of the dividends of democracy. However, these programmes have faced enormous challenges in the implementation process and some of them have ended up in total failure which prompted this study to evaluate the democratic governance in Nigeria in relation to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

4. Evaluations and Discussions

Since this study is using the Ibrahim Index of African Governance to evaluate Nigerian Democratic Governance, the evaluation will consist of the IAG four categories which are Safety and Rule of Law; Participation and Human Right; Sustainable Economic Opportunity and Human Development. The Ibrahim Index of African Governance is a yearly composite

index that makes available a statistical measure of governance performance in countries in Africa (IIAG, 2013). The table 1 below gives Nigeria overall score ranking in the four categories mentioned above.

Table 1: Nigerian Scores in the Annual IIAG Ranking

Year	Score/100
2007	43.2
2008	43.0
2009	43.2
2010	43.9
2011	43.2
2012	43.4
2013	43.4

Source: IIAG, 2013. Complied by Author

4.1 Safety and Rule of Law

In the year 2013, Nigeria scored 43.4 in the safety and the rule of law category, this was an abysmal result giving the fact Nigeria has been on democratic rule of over 14 years. Since the installation of democratic rule, the issues of safety have been of concern to all Nigerians. For instance, during the Obasanjo government in 1999-2007, the security situation in the Niger Delta was tense, aside that, kidnapping for ransom was rampant in Nigeria. When Musa Yar'Adua took over power in 2007, he initiated an amnesty policy for militants in the Niger Delta region which reduced the carnage in the restive region. However, the Boko Haram militant group from the northeast of Nigeria surfaced during the government of Yar'Adua.

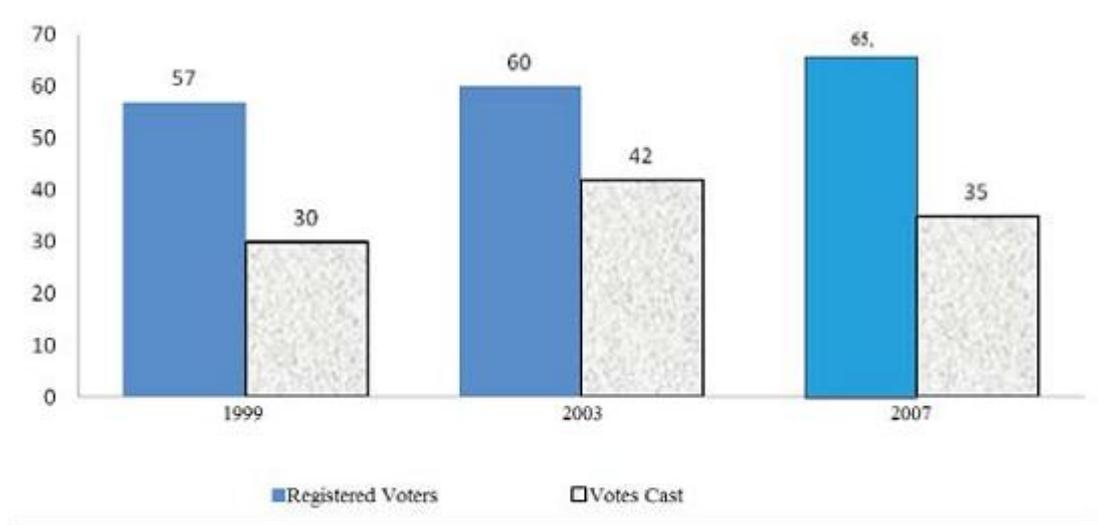
The incumbent president became the president of Nigeria after the demise of Yar'Adua in 2010. By virtue of this, the Boko Haram Islamic terrorist group intensified its bombings and the killings of innocent Nigeria. According to the Amnesty International, Boko Haram sect has killed more than 12,000 Nigerians since it launched its first outrageous attack in Bauchi state in 2009. President Jonathan has acknowledged that the activities of Boko Haram atrocity are worse than the Nigerian civil war and also admitted that the greatest challenge in his administration is insecurity. Aside the heinous crime of Boko Haram against humanity, the era of democracy in Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented loss of lives and property from communal and ethnic conflicts. For example, Jos, Kano, Taraba, Borno, Adamawa, Yobe and some other parts of Nigeria have been an epic center of violence. According to El-Rufia (2011) regardless of the dramatic increase in the poverty rate and the rise in inequality, the most notable characteristic of democratic governance in Nigeria has been the increase in insecurity in all parts of the country. One of the tenets of democracy is the rule of Law, among the three civilian presidents that have practiced the rule of law purposefully under the current democratic dispensation was the late president Musa Yar'Adua.

4.2 Participation and Human Right

One of the characteristics of democracy is periodic elections which give citizens the ample opportunity to participate in the election by contesting in elective positions and casting their vote for the preferred candidates to represent them. These opportunities were open to Nigerians in 1999 when the military organized a general election to usher in an elected democratic governance. According to Iyayi (2006) election provide the means by which citizens in a country take and resolve their claim to power through peaceful means. Participation in an election is one of the main indicators of democratic performance (Powell, 1982). The data from the IIAG shows that Nigeria performed inadequately in the areas of

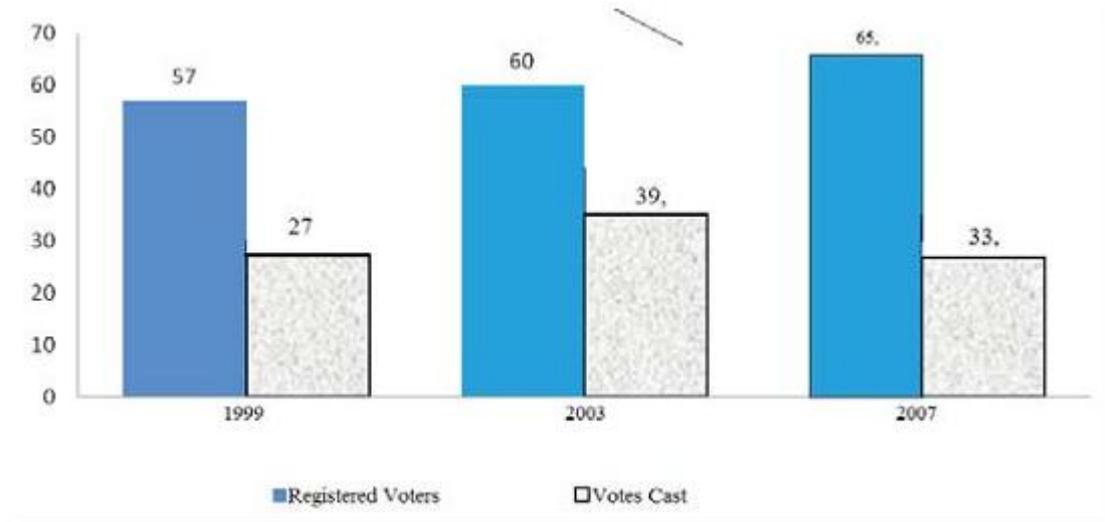
political participation. Agu et al. (2013) gave a breakdown of the trend of political participation in Nigeria from 1999 to 2007. Figures 1, 2 and 3 below illustrate the political participation in Nigeria.

Figure 1: Bar Chart demonstrating total vote cast against registered voters from 1999-2007 Presidential Election (in million)



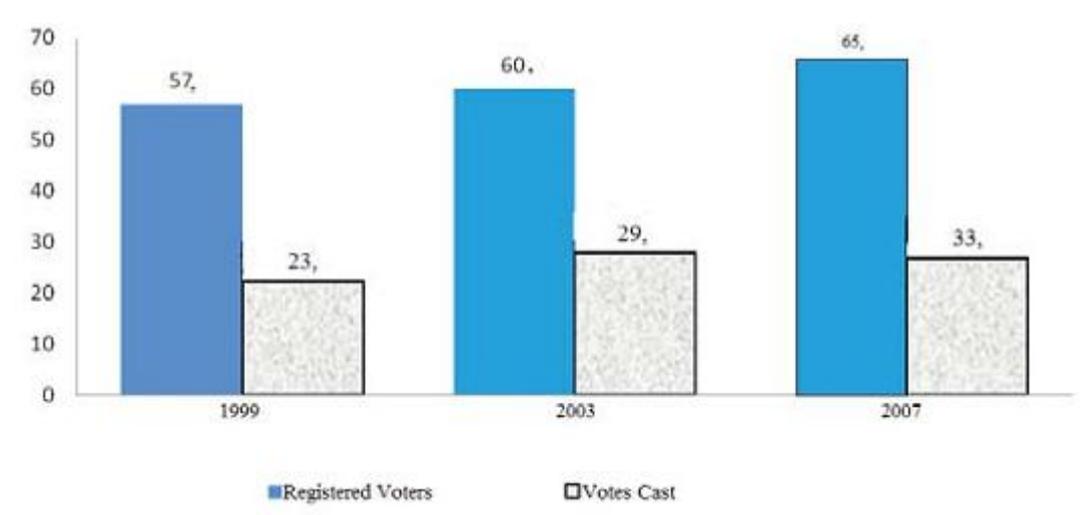
Source: Agu et al, 2013

Figure 2: Governorship Elections (Million)



Source: Agu et al, 2013

Figure 3: National Assembly Elections (Senate)



Source: Agu et al, 2013

The bar chart above gave a vivid picture of participation in the electoral process in Nigeria.

This is how Agu et al. (2013) summarized the three bar charts:

The three bar charts above present electoral trends at National and State levels since the return of civil democratic rule. Voters turnout in the 1999 general election was not quite impressive since 59, 938, 945 registered and only 30, 280, 052 cast their votes properly. In 2003, the number of registered voters increased to 60, 823, 022 and the number of voters' turnout also increased to 42, 018, 735. But in 2007, despite the increase in the number of registered voters, the total votes cast dropped significantly to 35, 397, 627 representing just half the number that registered. The same phenomenon was applicable in the gubernatorial and senatorial elections. The bar charts clearly indicated that there had been similar pattern of voters' turnout across all the two regions. The voters' turnout pattern at the national level was a mirror image of the state level pattern. This survey gained wide acceptance by recent observation by Afrobarometer (2007), which pointed out that support for democracy diminished moderately after the political transition (from 80% to 71%) and had been relatively steady since 2001.

In the Human Right aspect in the Nigerian democratic era, the situation has been that of two sides of a coin. For instance, Human Right Watch in 2014 accused the Boko Haram sect of killing 2, 053 Nigerians from January 2014-June, 2014. Human Right Watch considered the killings as crimes against humanity. In a similar vein, Amnesty International has berated the Nigerian security operatives for torturing females, males and children as punishment in order to extract money or confessional statement as a quick way so resolving disputes (Amnesty International, 2014). The United States Department of State in 2013 gave a breakdown of human rights abuses in Nigeria. The abuses are:

- Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life
- Disappearance of Persons
- Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Arbitrary Arrest or Detention
- Denial of Fair Public Trial
- Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence
- Use of Excessive Force and Other Abuses in Internal Conflicts (United States Department of State, 2013).

However, the government has given power to the National Human Right Commission (NHRC) with the amendment of the NHRC Act in 2010 in line with the resolution of the United Nation General Assembly. The main aim of the NHRC is the promotion and protection of human rights. Some of the indicators used in evaluating human right by the IAG are freedom of speech, freedom of press and workers right. The Nigerian democratic government has tried in respect of these rights, but there are still some lapses from the part of the government.

4.3 Sustainable Economic Opportunity

Indicators used by the IAG to appraise sustainable economic opportunities in African countries are public management, business environment, infrastructure and rural development. Since 1999 when democracy berth in Nigeria, the various civilian governments have introduced fiscal discipline, due process, budget monitoring and diversification of the economy, however, corruption is still high in the public service, due process in the procurement of items by government ministries has been abused. A case in point is the former Minister of Aviation, who did not follow due process when she decided to buy two bullet-proof BMW cars for her personal used at the cost of N255 million. Nigeria is still a mono-economy since 90% of its revenue is derived from crude oil sales. The business environment in Nigeria is conducive in the southern part of the country as regard to the northern part that has been engulfed in violence due to ethnic-religious skirmishes and the deadly activities of the terrorist group called Boko Haram. One of the major problems in Nigeria is infrastructure decay. Despite the promises made by politicians during their campaigns to fix Nigerian infrastructural deficiencies. Not enough has been done in this regard. For example, there is erratic power supply, the major highways are death traps and lack of potable water. These problems look insurmountable to the Nigerian government because all effort to address these

problems since 1999 have failed woefully. Poverty continues to increase on daily base in the country, data from the National Bureau of statistics indicated 112 million Nigeria live in poverty and this was corroborated by the United Nations representative in Nigeria who said in 2010 that 100 million Nigerians live in destitution. In giving credence to both statements, the World Bank in 2014, named Nigeria as the third country in the globe with a large number of poor people. Most of the poor dominate the rural areas. One of the greatest achievements in the civilian era is the making of mobile phone services available to Nigerians and the re- invigoration of the railway service.

4.4 Human Development

One major area the United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) has been using to measure member country's human development index is through the health delivery system. Fifteen years into democratic governance, the health system in Nigeria is in a comatose with outdated medical facilities despite the huge amount allocated to the sector annually. In most of the health measuring health indexes in the world, Nigeria is occupying the bottom space (World Health Organization, 2012; Jamo, 2013). The life expectancy for male in 2002 was 45 years and that of females was 46 years (NBS, 2010). However, there was slightly increased in the life expectancy of both male and female in 2010. The figure jumped to 47 years and 48 years respectively (NBS, 2010; WHO, 2012). Child and maternal mortality rates are on the high side, also with malaria. The government has been trying in reducing the increase of these health problems. One core area the government has demonstrated tremendous progress is in the area of HIV/AIDS reduction. In 2001, the HIV/AIDS prevalence was 5.8%, the number jumped down to 4.1% in 2010 ((FMOH 2010 HIV/AIDS Sero prevalence survey cited in Nigeria's Report to the Rio+20 Sumit, 2012). Education plays a vital role in the development of any society. The challenges befalling the educational sector in the current democratic

dispensation are enormous. For instance, there are incessant strikes in all educational levels in the country, lack of qualified teachers in rural schools, high level of dropout school-aged children and most schools in the northeast have been of potential targets to Boko Haram terrorist sect.

Looking at the scores of Nigeria in table 1 on the IIAG ranking, the country has done poorly in all the four categories of the IIAG in the era of democratic governance. The highest score Nigeria ever had was 43.9/100 in 2010. So the question remains, does democracies brings development? This debate lingers on in the academic arena. (Pel, 1999; Campos 1994; Jamo 2013) are the proponents of the development brings development hypothesis. On the contrary, Sirowy and Linkels (1991); Bardhan (2002); Przeworski and Lamongi (1993) objected to the assumption that democracy brings development and this is the scenario in Nigeria. The fifteen years of democracy in Nigeria as being associated with the high rate of poverty and unemployment, insecurity, infrastructure decay, epileptic power supply and frustration among the citizens of the country.

5. Conclusion

The study was carried out to appraise Nigerian democratic governance in relations to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance. Nigeria is still nurturing its uninterrupted democracy since 1999. However, fifteen years is enough for the country to meet up with some of the challenges befalling the country before the handover of power to a civilian government in 1999. The four categories that the IIAG used to evaluate democratic governance in Africa, Nigeria has shown low performance in the four areas. One way that the country can meet up with these challenges is by incorporating good governance in the day to day activities of governance. This is the only way Nigerians can enjoy the dividend of democracy. Finally, this study was done to assess Nigerian democratic governance in relation to the IIAG evaluation.

The study is not comprehensive in the analytical term. Further study is needed to holistically appraise Nigerian democratic governance in relation to the IIAG evaluation.

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