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GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP: AN APPROACH TO
NATIONAL PROSPERITY



Breaking New C

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INTRODUCTION

The theme of this work is titled GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP, AN APPROACH TO NATIONAL PROSPERITY. I have rather chosen to focus my intervention on how to create or mainstream effective governance and leadership for national prosperity. I will be focusing narrowly on NATIONAL or PUBLIC governance and leadership and do not cover CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP.

I would also wish to show the various inter-relationships between effective governance and leadership, and also between both variables on one hand and national prosperity on the other hand.

I argue that the critical challenge we face as a nation and economy today is how to create or mainstream some irreducible minimum standards of governance infrastructure that will promote the emergence of developmentalist leadership and hence ensure sustained prosperity in Nigeria.

My aim and objective at the end of this work is however to proffer solutions rather than provoke debate on the reformation of governance and leadership for a better economic system thereby leading to national prosperity which has its gains on the citizens of the country in the aspect of an upgrade and an increase in the living standards and their per capita income.

This work is however intended to be as explicit and simple as possible, thereby bringing into limelight the major and definite aspects of governance and leadership, applicable to practical use in our economy.

I implore you to join me as we explore the true meaning of this topic as we lead the revolution of change.

Bankole Olajide Martins

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

At the outset, we need to set the boundaries (frontiers) of our topic. First, our focus is not on corporate governance (which is also broad and also important), but on national governance and leadership. Second, we see the primary objective of such national governance and leadership as that of creating an environment for distributed national prosperity.

LEADERSHIP

To a firm leadership is about combination of essential factors (internal and external) in order to make the firm enjoy effective competitive and high performance leverage in the market/economy.

Leadership in the widest sense according to **Charles Soludo (2007)** is the ability to bring people together to dedicate themselves to the pursuit of a common goal.

Harold koontz and Heinz welhrich (management a global perspective, 2005:p366) explains leadership as the process of influencing people, so they will contribute to organizational and group goals. We should consider the fact that effective leadership should basically be based upon the fact of INFLUENCE. Such goals are often defined by the organization, firm or nation, and in some cases, the leader actually envision such goals and motivates/mobilizes people and materials to attain them.

Governance and leadership are synonymously related but are also distinct in their own ways. The definitions to what governance and leadership is however philosophical in nature (has no generally accepted/standard meaning, as many definitions exists for both terms). Here, we adopt a rather more operational/mechanical meaning of both terms.

GOVERNANCE

Governance can categorically be defined as the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is established and exercised.

Leadership itself can be viewed as the process or act of exercising that authority explained in the meaning of governance. We shall argue the fact that both terms are so closely related.

In a very important empirical (factual) work, **Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi (2004:p2-4)** conducted six (6) aggregate indicators motivated by the above mentioned definition on governance. It is important to note that the process of governance has traditions and institutions by which authority is exercised. This however includes:

- ✚ The process, by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced.
- ✚ The capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement relevant and sound policies.
- ✚ The respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.

The six (6) indicators as given by **(Kaufmann, etal)** are shown below:

- ❖ Voice and accountability.
- ❖ Political stability and absence of violence.
- ❖ Government effectiveness.
- ❖ Regulatory quality or soundness of policies.
- ❖ Rule of law.
- ❖ Control of consumption.

What is obvious is that aggregating these six (6) steps and pronouncing a judgment on whether regime is a perfect mode or is

“exemplary” or not is not very convenient and an easy task to complete. This is subject to who is judging and what each measurement, kits, parameters or economic tools the person is employing or working with as a basis for judgment. Somehow “exemplary” just like beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. However for the purpose of this topic, the key significant issue is whether the aggregate governance indicators stated above improved significantly for current and future prosperity of the economy.

Leadership as stated earlier is the act of mobilizing to get things done. These are in management varied meanings to leadership.

Heinz and Linsky (2002:3-4), Leadership on the line : staying alive through the dangers of leading suggests that to lead means putting yourselves and your ideas on the line, responding effectively to the risks and living to celebrate the meaning of your efforts. According to the authors:

To lead is to live dangerously because when leadership counts, when you lead people through difficult change, you challenge what people hold dear—their daily habits, tools, loyalties, and ways of thinking—with nothing more to offer

than a possibility. Moreover, leadership often means exceeding the authority you are given to tackle the challenge at hand. People push back when you disturb the personal and institutional equilibrium they know, and people resist in all kinds of creative and unexpected ways that can get you taken out of the game: pushed aside, undermined and eliminated.

History books are full of accounts of the danger of leadership and many people who paid the ultimate sacrifice for daring to provide leadership; Murtala Mohammed is one of such.

Leadership in another sense as given by (Harold koontz etal) in their book MANAGEMENT A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE p: 396, says it is the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive enthusiastically and willingly towards the achievement of group goals. However it is not enough for people to just develop the willingness to work, it is best that even the willingness to work with ZEAL should be added which is the responsibility of the “leader”. He is to help groups attain their objectives; this he can do by motivation.

INGREDIENTS OF LEADERSHIP

Every group of people that performs near its total capacity has some person as its head who is skilled in the art of leadership. This is proportional to the compounding or combination of four (4) major ingredients:

1. The ability to use power effectively and in a responsible manner.
 - Diligence.
 - Self control.
2. The ability to comprehend that a person has different motivating forces at different times and in different situations {valid moods and attitudes at the workplace}
 - Sensitivity.
 - Understanding of the people.
3. The ability to inspire.
4. The ability to act in a way that will create an enabling atmosphere to responding to and arousing [stirring up] motivation.

DOES GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP MATTER TO NATIONAL PROSPERITY?

In reviewing to what extent leadership and governance has contributed to national growth and prosperity, it is important to know that while a growing number of literatures and publications conclude that governance is critical for growth, there are also some who question both the governance system and measure and also the empirical results.

In a public lecture held in the year 2006 at Benin city, the Togolese president stated what might seem to be a factual relationship between governance and national development. According to him, every one (1) year of bad governance slows down national development by ten (10) years. What we may ask next is that is this statement backed up with empirical evidences?.

The point that needs emphasis is that almost all existing measures of governance that exists in the now are subjective and based mostly on normative propositions. It is however to be noted that the measurement of governance is philosophical in nature and so has no particular answer to it.

The various studies carried out by the World Bank in the last ten (10) years has revealed that good governance is a major determinant and catalyst of economic progress.

It is important to stress that governance institutions should not be seen as “constraints” on leaders, but as a framework to “guide” leadership.

Individual leaders can make the difference in the history of countries but a sound governance institution can make a difference for sustained prosperity.

TOWARDS THE DELIBERATE CREATION OF SOUND GOVERNANCE

Nigeria has, at different times and in different circumstances, experienced exemplary leadership. Unfortunately, much of these experiences were short-lived.

The emergence of effective leadership at different times in our history has been dictated by one crisis or the other, a situation which is global. Nigeria has witnessed various structural

adjustment programmes [SAP] and interventions in some of her sector of economy ranging from the likes of:

- ✚ Dora Akunyili's intervention at NAFDAC over fake drugs.
- ✚ Nasir el-rufai's intervention in re-adjusting Abuja's master plan.
- ✚ Nuhu ribadu's intervention on corruption
- ✚ Charles soludo's intervention in the banking system reformation, consolidation and adjustments. And so on.

Governance and leadership are cumulative building up past foundations, experiences, trends, examples and mistakes. A society only makes progress by building cumulatively on the successive building blocks of the past, as no government begins on a tabular rasa [fresh page].

In order to avoid the short-lived successful and effective leadership, Nigeria has witnessed in times past, below are some of the likely steps which are subject to change and debates due to varied opinions and beliefs.

REFERENCES

- ✚ **Harold koontz and Heinz welhrich** (*MANAGEMENT A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE*,P:366)
- ✚ **Kaufmann, kraay and Mastruzzi** (2004:p2-4)
- ✚ **Heinz and Linsky** (2002:3-4)

