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**THE NEGATION OF ETHICS, GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIA’S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**Austin A. Mbachu, Ph.D**

Department of Philosophy, Imo State University Owerri, Imo State

[audraustin@gmail.com](mailto:audraustin@gmail.com)

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**Kenechukwu K. Makwudo, Ph.D**

Philosophy Department, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, University, Igbariam

[Ugochimmelueze1@gmail.com](mailto:Ugochimmelueze1@gmail.com), [kk.makwudo@coou.edu.ng](mailto:kk.makwudo@coou.edu.ng)

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**Johnson U. Ofoegbu, Ph.D**

Department of Educational Foundations/Management, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of  
Education, Owerri, Imo State

[johnson.ofoegbu@alvanikoku.edu.ng](mailto:johnson.ofoegbu@alvanikoku.edu.ng)

**Abstract**

*Ethical governance is crucial for achieving sustainable development. When ethics, good governance, and democracy are compromised, it creates a negation that hinders progress. A commitment to good governance, including transparency, accountability, and citizen participation, is essential for Nigeria to achieve sustainable development goals. The purpose of this paper is to analysis the implications of ethic, good governance and democracy as a negation for prospective sustainable development. It is in this note, the erosion of ethics and good governance within a democratic framework undermines sustainable development by creating a climate of corruption, inequality and instability. The findings of this paper hinder Nigeria’s progress towards social, economic and environmental well-being, ultimately hindering its ability to achieve sustainable development goals. The ethics of good governance in Nigeria has been in a state of shamble. This paper adopts analytic method in exploring the nature of ethical dispositions, good governance and democracy in Nigeria and its implications as a negation for sustainable development. Democracy in Nigeria has become traumatizing experience due to the evils of corruption, selfish aggrandizement of Nigeria political leaders and the twisted usage of the common good as the ingredient of good democratic experience. For democracy to work there must be a clear expression of the right to freedom of expression, independence of the judiciary, an unhindered opposition and a periodic return to the electorate for assessment in the form of an election. The sustainability of constitutional ethic, good governance and democracy in Nigeria at large solely depends on providing effective and purposeful leadership for the people of Nigeria. The paper recommended that for Nigeria to experience sustainable development there must be an effective use of ethics, good governance and democracy are properly address. Nigeria is in dire need of purposeful leadership that is people-driven based on accountability or stewardship and transparency. This paper, therefore, concludes that democracy and its ethical principle ought to*



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*be more realistic and should be fundamentally inspired by providing the legitimizing foundation of the common good as its common denominator in a real world situation.*

**Keywords:** Ethics, Good Governance, Negation, Democracy, Nigeria, Sustainable Development.

## **Introduction**

Good governance, ethic and democracy is universally acknowledged as a critical factor in the progress and development of any nation. In Nigeria, both the elite and the common people share this profound understanding of governance's impact on the country's trajectory. However, despite this shared understanding, these groups have a significant divide in their conception of what constitute good governance. Most public office holders in Nigeria are ethically and morally bankrupt. They indulge in such vices, as corruption, abuse office, nepotism, conflict of interest, influence peddling, fraudulence, political victimization, seeking pleasure by using their official positions to favor relatives and friends, lacking or misusing government information. Ethics is the basic concept and fundamental principle of human conduct. It includes the study of universal values such as the essential equality of all men and women, human or natural rights, obedience to the law of the land, concern for health and safety and also for natural environment. The problem of development requires moral assessment or ethical reflection, according to Asegbu Matyin, *political legitimacy* development has a definitional difficulty<sup>1</sup>: it constitutes a multifaceted form and it aims at human improvement and economic efficiency. Development seeks to address global economic equality, hunger, human deprivation through a more viable alternative of policy components. The ethics, good governance and democracy is the attainment of sustainable development that is the desirable of all nation including Nigeria, whether by their own volition or as made so by the world bodies.

Democracy is aimed at the common good. So we are left with the practical problem of deciding what is for the common good. According to Arua Kelven, *Democracy in Nigeria, assert that*, democratic citizen must abide by common consent and the common consent adds to the State's power<sup>2</sup>, the authority or right to give orders, and since it is acting as an agent or channel for moral obligations, our obligations to fellow citizens are channeled into an obligation to follow the arrangements made by the State. The whole essence of democracy and the ethics of governance in Nigeria ought to guarantee the common good of the people in society. Clearly such a system could only work in a very small State and with relatively simple business to decide, otherwise, the logistics of getting the whole citizenship together and getting through the business of government would thwart all other activity. Rousseau recognizes the attraction of such direct democracy when the practical difficulties can be overcome, but points out that "so perfect a government' is better suited to cool the mortals. Without the possibility of recovering the common good, Rousseau's theory of democracy would eventually crumble. Democracy is embedded on the theory of the common good and the theory of justice. As with the theory of justice, it follows from the utilitarian that if a particular government is harming instead of helping the promotion of the common good, it loses its right to obedience.

## **The Implication of Democracy, Ethics, and Good Governance in Nigeria**



In Nigeria, democracy, ethics and good governance are intertwined and crucial for national development. Democracy provides the framework for political participation and the rule of law, while ethical behavior within government is essential for building trust and ensuring responsible use of resources. Good governance, in turn, aims to deliver on the promises of democracy by improving infrastructure, social services, and the overall well-being of citizens. One of fundamental reasons for Nigeria's governance challenges is the high rate of illiteracy, which is fundamentally incompatible with the demands of a functional democracy. Economic stagnation: this is where corruption and bad governance hinder economic growth and job creation, leading to poverty and inequality. Social Instability is another implication of the lack of ethical, good governance and democracy of leadership and democratic accountability that can spark conflict and unrest, disrupting social cohesion and development alike from different perspectives, which had tended to emphasis different aspects of the process. Democracy, the word has been conceptualized by scholars and statement. As goal, they try to understand human behavior through such descriptions and analysis.

Descriptive theories of ethics are a brand of analytic philosophy that makes analysis the real function of philosophical preoccupation. This paper, therefore, assert that everyone would accept the common good theory as providing one of the grounds of political obligation. Political obligation depends on pursuing the ends of justice and the common good, and that citizens are not obliged unless the State's laws are effectively directed towards these ends. However, an account of political obligation purely in terms of the moral functions of the State is not enough. Furthermore, as far as democracy is concerned, the ethics of governance is very crucial element for practical philosophy. Practical philosophy is a philosophy of proper behaviour. Good governance requires transperact and accountable public processes, where officials are responsible for their actions and the use of public funds. All must behave well, act in dignity, freedom and solidarity. For Iroegbu, in his work titled "*Globalized Ethics*", he defines ethics as the science and art of proper behaviour. It is a branch of philosophy that studies human actions in terms of their<sup>3</sup> rights or wrong. Ethics is the science of good and evil. The good is what is to be done and the evil is what is to be avoided. It is also the science of what is permitted and may be done or what is forbidden should not be done. Ethics has to do with proper behavior and proper behavior is now a global affair<sup>4</sup>. Ethics is both prescriptive and descriptive. Prescriptive ethics is described as a science that ordains, legislates and prescribed norms of good behaviour. It is the proper science of do good and avoids evil put into practice. Partly it appeals to responsibility (deontology), to ends (teleology) to emotions (emotivism) or authority. For Iroegbu, descriptive theories of ethics describes what is happening in the moral world, they account for what people do and what people say should be done<sup>5</sup>. It is worthy of note that the motif in ethics is goodness just like the motif in democratic governance. The motif in ethics is goodness, it enquires into what makes a man a good man, and the good is symbolized as well as expressed in words and actions.

### **The Confusion of Democracy Ethics and Good Governance in Nigeria**

The confusion is while the democratic process is in place, it's not fully realized. Factors like electoral irregularities, political violence and the influence of money in elections hinder the



effectiveness of democracy. The ethical concern behaviour is within the political sphere is often undermined by corruption, which permeates all levels of governance. The first principle is that all members of the society (citizens) have equal access to power and that all members (citizens) enjoy universally recognized freedoms and liberties<sup>6</sup>. The problem and the question of governance in contemporary Nigeria is fundamentally inspired by bad leadership structure, ignorance, terror and terrorism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, food shortages, corruption or the culture of wastages of human and natural resources, ethnic chauvinism, god-fatherism ethno-religious crises, lack of law and order, poor per capita income, illiteracy, bad road network, poor communication network, poor system of taxation, poor health care system, poor water supply, epileptic power supply, child abuses, trade imbalances, poor educational system, poverty and hunger, sicknesses and diseases, lack of development and environmental sustainability and low life expectancy. Okediadi Nkechinyere *promoting democracy* assert that, democracy has failed in Nigeria and many<sup>7</sup> African countries such as, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Liberia, South Africa,

For Okediadia: The term democracy is a form of government in which power is held directly by citizens in a free electoral system. In political theory, democracy describes a small number of related forms of government and also a political philosophy. Even though, there is no universally accepted definition of democracy, there are two principles that any definition of democracy must include. An essential process in representative democracies are competitive elections<sup>7</sup>, that are fair both substantially and procedurally. Democracy implies free and equal representation of people; in more concrete language, it implies free and equal rights of every single soul to participate in a system of government. Democracy is a reflection on the fact that a government must be voted into power through a free and fair election. For Raphael problems of political philosophy, and so, no government may presume to direct the affairs of the governed if it is not legitimated. Legitimacy is fundamental to any government<sup>8</sup>. It is worthy of note that any government, which usurps power and suspends the constitution, as often do the military, automatically not legislate. Robert Dahl like most theorists of democracy repeatedly asserts that true democracy is only an ideal that no actual regime has ever met nor will ever meet it. Robert Dahl insists that to deny the term democracy to any regime nor fully democratic in the ideal sense would be equivalent to saying that no democratic regime that has ever existed just like language so purified is inconsistent with usage in other domains of ideal value, such as justice, beauty, love and virtue.

### **Nigeria, Ethics and the Democratic Experience**

In contemporary Nigerian society the nation's law-makers are so incompetent and they so corrupted themselves that they have lost<sup>10</sup>. Effective leadership does not occur in a vacuum it requires string institutional frameworks that guide and support the governance process. A robust civil society is essential for fostering participatory democracy and ethics, holding leaders accountable and ensuring that governance serves the public interest. Democracy in the Nigeria has been paradoxical. It means that bargaining and maneuvering are allowed in the contemporary Nigerian society, particularly among the various interest groups who claim to be born to rule. It means that in Nigeria the few does what sooth the collective interests irrespective of the feelings



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of the masses. Democracy as we have it in this decade means that power belongs to the more powerful; in other words, it means the might is right<sup>11</sup> syndrome – whether economics, political or military. Every iota of moral legitimacy to compel Nigerian presidents to make amends. Another significant factor contributing to Nigeria’s governance challenges is the weakness of civil society. Equality is the cornerstone of every democratic society<sup>12</sup> which aspires to the attainment of social justice and human rights. The popularity of democracy would suggest that the principles of liberty and equality on which it is based are not just accidents or the results of ethnocentric prejudice, but are in fact discoveries about the nature of man as man. Democracy is based on the desire for equal recognition or recognition by equals<sup>13</sup>. Democratic constitutionalism is characterized by the principle of liberalism. Liberalism grows out of and eventually opposes absolutism, and the conflict between the extremes resolves into constitutionalism which attempts to accommodate both and transcend them. The notion of democracy, which upholds the principle of equality and liberty – appears presently to be the embodiment of the best social organization for man. For Aghamelu, democracy is based on truth and action<sup>14</sup>. Dewey’s belief in the changing nature of truth and his confidence in human reasoning led him to advocate social engineering. Democratic socialism is hinged on the principle of pluralism. Pluralism recognizes that the individual must join with other people to achieve his or her political goals. Consequently, in this pluralistic system of democracy, the interest group is sandwiched between the people and the legislation. Existentially, democracy is described as the highest form of civilization. Dividends of democracy are the proceeds for the voters (electorates) who have given something (his/her vote) earlier and must be given something in return. Democracy is based on the tenets of liberty and equality. However, pluralism has certain problems. To begin with, it removes the individual a step further from the policymaking process, creating important philosophical difficulties. Democracy involved in the 26 policy formulation process. Democracy requires the principle of collective responsibility.

Democratic socialism is based on utilitarian principle. Democratic socialism is the introduction of utilitarianism and positivist law into democratic theory led to a whole new concept of popular government. The relationship of people to their government had changed drastically since Locke’s era and even since the time of Madison. Democracy has many critics at every point on the political spectrum. It is attacked by the far left as well as by the far right. Some critics argued that democracy is a hopelessly visionary idea based on a number of impossible principles that can never really work because they are too idealistic. Plato argues that the chief danger of democracy is that it will lead to a social and political dissolution where order can only be restored through tyranny. Democracy is aimed at the improvement of the welfare or the common good of the people. The aim of all good governments, Mill assumes, is the improvement of the people. Democracy is also attacked as being slow and inefficient. Democracy and freedom are intimately connected, as Plato realized, but freedom alone does not justify democracy; freedom is a value that we (should) all have and to willingly sacrifice for the sake of (non-democratic) political order. For Mill, it is the duty of each elector to put their own selfish interests to one side and to consider the interest of the public. Mill argues that it is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied. It is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. Democracy and capitalism appear to us today as intimately interwoven. Who are the people of a democratic State, a group of isolated individuals or a community bound together by shared interests? Fundamentally, democracy accommodates



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individual freedom on collective freedom. Democratic government is not simply about the protection of liberty or the promotion of a Free State: it is also fundamentally about the equality of each person in the State to have a say in government. 'One person, one vote' encapsulates this central egalitarian dimension of the democratic ideal. And yet, this egalitarian dimension of the democratic ideal is not as clear cut as it may appear. The general plight of contemporary liberal democracies has been and continues to be a source of concern for democratic theorists in political philosophy. Representatives are supposed to represent the whole of society but it seems unlikely that this could ever be the case, especially as the global movement of peoples makes Nation-States more internally heterogenous. We should, therefore, consider whether our politicians should be seen as representatives at all.

This considered and settled opinion was actually supported by Edmund Burke and John Stuart Mill. Edmund Burke addressed this concern in his acceptance speech in 1774 acknowledging that a member of parliament should ever and in all cases prioritize the interests of his constituents above his own selfish interest. Democracy as an acclaimed best form of government has failed woefully in the Nigeria government due to bad political leadership. It has been fundamentally observed that one has no effective influence on the running of government; it is fair to say that democracy enhances neither one's freedom nor one's equality. Democracy, as the most acceptable way of conferring legitimacy on any modern government, has a direct link with the performance of political leaders. Nigeria is besieged by many problems due to poor democratic governance or poor ethics of governance. Apart from poor leadership structure, there are other almost intractable problems attendant on the very existence of modern Nigeria States and their colonial heritage. Among these are low population density, poverty, hunger, geographical fragmentation, extremely poor prospects of economic development, dominance of large multinational corporations, giving rise to dependency; disparity between different regimes of the same State; ethno-linguistic and religious differences; the uneconomic geographic shape of many States, and natural disasters such as famine and flooding. The problem of democracy in Nigeria is also caused by trade imbalance, unnecessary intervention by International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Trade Organization and World Health Organization; the poor environmental sustainability, terror and terrorism in Nigeria and food shortages or crises and grand corruption. The need for good governance in Nigeria has been a far cry. Governance can be defined as the ability to dispose available means to achieve desired or predetermined goals or common objectives. Very often good governance requires good leadership ability, especially where human beings are part of the means or the factors to be reckoned with. It appears, however, that the two can be distinguished, vital though each of them is for the progress of the crisis-ridden continent of Africa. Good governance in modern times requires more technocratic ability than leadership. Good governance will help to create the necessary atmosphere for advancement, first, in sciento-technology and, second, in the flowering of identity feeling. Democracy attempts to obviate the socio-cultural and politico-economic needs that today bedevil the Nigeria continent. Democracy is bedeviled by crass ignorance and inexperienced leadership, corruption, greed and inability to learn from history and turn a new leaf are some of the ills of the Nigeria elites and these are responsible for our inability to govern ourselves. Our inability to govern effectively is not a function of the form of government that has been adopted by African states. Democracy should be governed by political participation and ought



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to be guided by the principles of solidarity .Democracy is aimed at the promotion and protection of the national interest, promotion of Nigeria integration and support for Nigeria unity and promotion of international cooperation for consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of all forms of discrimination. Political obligation is the moral obligation to obey the State. Many political theorists, especially anarchists, question whether political obligation is possible.

Nigeria democracy is an appeal to duty and public spiritedness as an important factor in the definition of personhood and abhorrence of all forms of selfish individualism, including greed and exploitation. Democracy is a reflection on a society in which people govern themselves. Democracy requires political legitimacy. Democratic government entails legitimacy not only from the logical persuasiveness of ideas of the chiefs and leaders or political leaders but also from the moral force of the people in a political community. Democracy is determined by redefining the human personhood and the stress on interdependence and solidarity as principles of social organizations was a by-product of a moral conception of personhood. Thus, a person is determined by the fulfillment of his social obligations and duties to the whole community and to his fellow neighbor. Democracy and political obligation are interwoven concepts. Democracy is a system of government in which power is vested in the citizen body and in which members of that citizen body participate directly or indirectly in the decision making process. Democracy is hinged on the operationalization of governments. Government means the resolution of conflicts of interest. It can occur at every level in society; it is inherent in social relationships and needs to be contrasted with the State.

For Hoffman and Graham:

Democracy has been more and more widely acclaimed from almost all sections of the political spectrum, so that it has become increasingly confusing as a concept. Democracy involves both direct participation and representation, and representations needs to be based on a sense that the representative can empathize with the problems of their constituents. There is a tension between democracy and the concept of the State, and this creates problems for Held's case for a "cosmopolitan democracy". A relational view of democracy enables us to tackle the 'tyranny thesis' and to defend the rational kernel of political correctness<sup>15</sup>.

Democracy and government are interwoven. Government means the organizational structure that directs and coordinates people's involvement in a country's or some other territory's (city, country, State) political activities. The term democracy means rule of the people, but such a concept has created real problems for those who believe that political theory should be value free in character. As democracy has become more and more widely praised, it has become more and more difficult to pin it down. However, consider the following; participation versus representation; the collective versus the individual; socialism versus capitalism. All have been defended as being essential to democracy. What makes democracy so confusing is that it is a concept subject to almost universal acclaimed: but this was not always the position. Even in the nineteenth century, social liberals like



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J.S. Mill felt it necessary to defend liberty against democracies. It is worthy of note that only after the First World War that democracy becomes a respectable term.

It is true that Adolf Hitler condemned democracy as the political counterpart to economic communism, but Mussolini, the Italian fascist, could declare in a speech in Berlin in 1936 that “the greatest band most genuine democracies in the world today are the German and the Italian. As observed by Crick, the term democracy has become a bland synonym for “All Things Bright and Beautiful”, a hurrah world without any specific content. The glow of approval has made it an idea very difficult to pin down. Rousseau, the eighteenth – century French theorist, felt that democracy was unworkable<sup>16</sup>. It assumed perfectionism that human nature believed, and was a form of government ever liable to civil war and internecine strife. Democracy was an exclusive idea the demos – the people with the right to participate in decision making, were certainly not all the adults who lived in the society. For Hoffman and Graham: Democracy must be linked to liberalism so that the term liberal qualifies democracy. A democratic society must respect the rights of. A Critique of Democracy and the Ethics of... minorities are as well as majorities. Otherwise, democracy can become dictatorial and oppress individuals by imposing majority tastes and preferences on society as a whole. Joseph Schumpeter, an Australian economist and socialist, led the way, contending that the notion of democracy must be stripped of its moral qualities. There is nothing about democracy that makes it desirable. Accordingly, Hoffman and Graham argued that in Schumpeter's view, democracy is simply a political method. A democracy is more realistically defined as a political method by which politicians are elected by means of a competitive vote<sup>17</sup>. The people do not rule: their role is to elect those who do. Democracy is a system of elected and competing elites. It is an arrangement for reaching political decisions: it is an end in itself. Schumpeter accepts that in contemporary liberal societies, all adults should have the right to vote, but this does not mean that they will use this right or participate more directly in the political processes. In fact, he argues that it is a good idea if the mass of the population do not participate, since the masses are too irrational, emotional, parochial and primitive to make good decisions..

### **Recommendations**

This is a fair assessment of the grim harvest of decades of independence in the Nigeria continent. To this end, I invite you all to take a quick panoramic view of the continent as things stand today. We have argued in this paper that the pathetic situations of terror and terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, armed robbery, hired assassination, thousands of riot – ready unemployed Nigerian youths, insecurity of life and property, god-fatherism, ethno-religions crises, low per capita income, bribery and corruption, election rigging, epileptic power supply, poor health care system, bad road network, poor communication system, low life expectancy, poverty, hunger, sickness and diseases, natural disasters, food shortages, herdsmen – farmers clashes could only be taken care of by good governance, and since that is not the case, this is partly why we can say there is a crisis of governance in the whole of Africa. For Okere: A crisis is a point of danger, a critical turn, the peak of a problem, here in Africa, the term tragedy is more appropriate, a tragedy that has already happened and is happening<sup>18</sup>. Nigerian is looking like a basket case. The entire map is littered with the debris of rogue States, failed governments, violent successions, coup villains, and



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victims, violently repressed secessions, interminable wars, interminable rows of wandering refugees, endemic diseases, endemic poverty, hopeless debt burdens, ugly slums, desperate recourse to religion and magic, massive unemployment of Nigeria youths, above all, the absence of hope on the horizon. If Nigeria and indeed the world at large are serious about responsible governance, the “people” must be taken seriously in democratic governance. Democratic government undertakes to take care of certain needs and rights of the people – needs and rights we can call the public good. It is the failure of Nigeria governments to provide these needs and the gradual destruction of the hope of ever realizing them that result in the woes and tragedies of democracy government and the ethics of governance in Nigeria. Start from where we are and look west there is Liberia, Sierra Leone and until now, everybody's pride, even Ivory Coast – it is war. Now go North and east of us, from Sudan through the Central African and Uganda. It is war. Go South East of us to the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, there's war. A little more South and South East, Angola is on and off war. Zimbabwe is being prepared for a war for white interests. In the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Somalia the home of the war lords – these are conterminous with quasi permanent war. But the phenomenon of war is the quit essence of the failure of governance, the very image of chaos. Clamant Arma, silent leges (At the clash of arms, the laws are silent). The rule of law ends giving way to the rule of war. But war is barbarism, a regress to chaos. What have we not got in Nigeria? Through bad governance Nigeria leads the world in virtually every form of crime against good governance and crime against humanity. The democratic solution is based on erecting a political structure that is service oriented in which service becomes the hallmark of political leadership. In solving Nigeria's enormous problems, democracy must be based on the will of the people. The will of the people is the basis of sovereignty and legitimacy.

For Oguejiofor for though the problems of governance and leadership are in themselves weighty enough to occupy the minds of concerned thinkers, certain issues prop up as concomitantly – important, either because of their sheer currency in the socio-political equation of Nigeria<sup>19</sup> or because they are perceived as a necessity for the entrenchment of good governance and leadership. The illusion of democracy has led to the creation of political parties as associations or elitist clubs that takes care of their mundane interests. For Onah: The political party has been recognized as an association that takes care of the interests of groups of citizens<sup>20</sup>. A claim to genuine democratic governance is based on ensuring the general welfare of the people. African countries must realize that more than ever before, their greatest resources is their people and that it is through their active and full participation that. Africa can surmount the difficulties that lie ahead. In reality, though, political parties are elitist clubs that pursue only the interests of those who provide the huge finances needed to run them. Parties are usually hijacked by their powerful financiers, usually financiers and entrepreneurs who see the entire nation and even the whole world as business firms or markets. Since modern democracies are run by political parties and political parties are run by the rich, modern democracies are, indeed, in effect, plutocracies. In political parties, political decisions are usually made on the basis of the political and economic interests of a few powerful individual or groups. The so called democracies are, at best, pluralistic dictatorships in which selfish and unscrupulous tyrants ride on the shoulders of “the people” in order to defend only their personal interest and those of their political cronies and clubs. Democracy in consonance with the



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American style means that power belongs to the more powerful; in very simple terms, it means that might is right – whether that might is economic, political or military. In modern democracies in Nigeria the political gladiators delicately but consciously manipulate the press in the political arena what we may refer to as the gagging of the press. Most of Nigeria at present is therefore, in a state of emergency and cannot afford to continue deceiving itself with the political gimmicks of Western style democracy.

### **Conclusion**

Democracy in the Nigeria has been a failure due to corruption, culture of wastages, bad leadership structure and lack of people oriented programmes. The whole essence of democratic governance is to guarantee the legitimizing foundation of the common good of the people. Democracy should be deeply rooted in the common good of the people as a unifying factor of human co-existence. The major indices of the ethics of good governance in any democratic country are; good road network, good standard of living of the people, regular power supply, good water supply, high per capita income, taxation, transparency and accountability in democratic governance, good judicial system, strong government institutions, law and order or rule of law, good health care system, good educational system, effective policy framework, effective leadership structure, and good communication system.

It is worthy of note that in our considered and settled contention democracy may be a more tolerable system of government for many nations of the world at some points in their history. There is no theoretical or practical basis in its universal acceptability as far as our humanity or human experience is concern and it cannot always be a universal standard for all peoples at all times of our human history. Democracy is characterized by two fundamental elements such as truth and action. Every democratic government requires the normative possibility of social order. Democracy cannot thrive in an atmosphere of rancour or violent orientation. For Arendth, democracy abhors any violent eruption. Democracy could only be meaningful by guaranteeing the public good of the people in contemporary human society. Democracy is deeply rooted on the tenets of power and authority. It is worthy of note that every democratic government rests on the fact that sovereignty resides with the people. Democracy is ordered on truth, action and it should be people-oriented. Democracy in contemporary Nigerian society is in a state of emergency. However, the problem of corruption, looting of public funds, and lackadaisical attitudes of Nigerian law makers are some of the major challenges of democracy in Nigeria. Many Nigerian law makers are corrupt politicians who are only interested in their personal matters and not in the collective interests of the people. They place their personal interests before the collective interests of the people. This has fundamentally hampered the dividends of democracy in contemporary Nigerian society. Nigeria is a blessed country with so much human and natural resources but the country – Nigeria has been bedeviled by the fundamental challenges of ineffective leadership structure and massive corruption. The situation of democratic governance in Nigeria is a very gloomy situation. Nigeria is faced with vital problems of economic development, national integration and lack of political participation by the people. Nigeria as a country lacks purposeful leadership. It is worthy of note that democracy in Nigeria should aimed at eradicating bribery and



corruption, tribalism, regionalism or sensationalism, misery, hunger, poverty and squalour, Islamic fundamentalism, food shortages, and inflation. Inflation has become a very serious menace in contemporary Nigerian society. This bizarre and ferocious phenomenon has created the impression as an essential and integral part of democracy in Nigeria.

Democracy in Nigeria should be consolidated because it paves the way for popular participation in the political processes and not a situation where many democratic Nigerian citizens are denied their rights of enfranchisement by not registering eligible voters or even a situation where there are election malpractices in a country like Nigeria. The Nigerian political system has given rise to a corrupt, undemocratic and self-seeking style of democratic governance by the elite who are fond of sharing the national resources of the Nigerian State than with keeping the principles of fairness, justice, equality, accountability, transparency, and productivity. However, due to lack of purposeful leadership there has been a failure on the parts of African countries to inculcate proper political culture in the populace. The problem of governance in Nigeria has nothing to do with the system of government as such, but with the problem of ineffective leadership structure in Nigeria. The promotion of the principles of democracy in Nigeria and the world at large should be based on ensuring popular participation, democratic accountability, the rule of law, and there should be purposeful leadership that should fulfill its obligations, especially, the promotion of the welfare and happiness of the people. All these should be the hallmarks of true democracy. The sustainability of constitutional democracy in Nigeria and Africa at large solely depends on providing effective and purposeful leadership for the people of Nigeria. Nigeria is in dire need of purposeful leadership that is people-driven based on accountability or stewardship and transparency. Democracy can only be disillusioned when the collective interests of the people is taken care of or guaranteed. Purposeful leadership is enthusiastic, optimistic, strategic, effective, progressive, proactive, truthful and people-oriented. Finally, democracy is all about truth and action for the people in a political community. The philosophy behind this paper is that democracy should blend with other variants of “isms” such as democratic capitalism, democratic liberalism and democratic socialism – every African person ought to have a sense of belonging in the decision making process. Nigeria democracy should have a communication outlook.

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