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Public Leadership, Responsibility and the Nigerian Paradox

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Preface

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Abstract

Ideally, in functional societies there is a close connection between public leadership and public responsibility. The strong knitting of these two accounts for a wise and responsive government that seeks to and enhances the welfare of citizens. That, however, is not the case in Nigeria, a society that seems to exhibit an increasing gap between public leadership and public responsibility with ordinary citizens bearing the harsh brunt of the divide. Given this backdrop this paper uses the elite theory to answer the disturbing theoretical question: Why has the Nigerian state continued to espouse a contrasting paradox?

Keywords: Corruption, information, leadership, responsibility, public good, transparency, value.

1. Introduction

In governance, people cannot be factored out of the equation even though we need laws more. In spite of the elaborate and complex nature of the institutional fabric of government, however overwhelming the situational pressures and contextual constraints at the end of the day, it is down to individuals and groups taking up strategic challenges and dilemmas of managing the public's business to give direction to governing (Hart and Uhr, 2008).In this sphere, people matter in governance even though some people matter more than others (Hart and Uhr, 2008). These groups of public leaders are important not necessarily because they are better in getting things done but because they are responsible for creating and authoritatively allocating values in society.

Public leadership represents a democratic design, that is, civic, political and bureaucratic, and as a solution it enables the elimination of challenges faced by the people at all times (Hart and Uhr, 2008). Public leadership is also responsible for the fracturing of human security in society. Obviously, a government is structured and has responsibilities to execute within the limits of its geopolitical space. Seen through the lens of the public, the moral stance of any government must be judged by how appropriate it is in the creation of values: better outcomes, services and trust. This is premised on the belief that public value is a broader concept than is normally implied in public management literature. It includes trust and legitimacy as well as outcomes and the means used to deliver them (Birney et al., 2010:5). Thus, real government is wired to execute responsibilities within the limits of its geopolitical space.

In most developing societies, the privileges imposed on public leaders to allocate values permit them to engage in opportunistic behaviors. Notwithstanding this, opportunities to exercise such leadership are vested particularly in the holders of certain pivotal public offices. In government, key offices and their holders are readily discernible: heads of states, heads of governments, leaders of parliamentary political parties, heads of the judiciary and the top layer of the civil service (Hart and Uhr, 2008). Heads of NGOs and other private bodies that account for the provision of public goods also fall within the category of public leaders.

In scrutinizing public leadership it is impossible to divorce it from responsiveness in evolving and enforcing acceptable values for the good of society. The central idea about responsiveness is that public leaders should use their positions to advance the general political goal being pursued by the elected component of the government and the political community as a whole (Rosenbloom, 2009:232). In government, public leaders are expected to defend the common good in the most responsive manner considering that most of their responsibilities are values determined by societal demands. Relating public leadership to values draws this concept to the turbulent question of whether the delivery of those public goods in Nigeria is equitable in a responsive and responsible manner, that is, is the leadership free-willed and value-free. Its actions are defined and influenced by social demands. On which side of the spectrum the public leadership style rests and its traits swing to have implications for responsiveness. Hence, the dramatized character of leadership unmasks the manner in which a leader responds to public demand and it also speaks volumes of what kind of values the public will receive.

Though work on public leadership exists in extant literature, a bulk of these studies essentially deal with particular characteristics and behaviors of individuals occupying high public offices (Hart and Uhr, 2008). Significant as these efforts are, they have in some way neglected to look at their disposition and enthusiasm in responding to social demands within the confines of law. This dimension is needed as virtue itself hath limits in which case a society has to be aware of the good man as well as the bad man as each in his own way may give the public what it does not want (Finer, 2010:448). That is to say, a system which gives a good man the freedom of action in the expectation of benefiting from all the 'good' he has in him must sooner or later (since no man is without faults) cause his faults to be loaded on to the public also (Finer, 2010:448). It is for this reason that it is important to isolate and examine how the actions or inactions of public leadership within a particular period impose on society. Each of these spheres entails a number of challenges and opportunities awaiting holders of public offices as well as others aspiring to exercise leadership in public spheres. Thus, understanding this is vital for public leadership to be applied properly and successfully in the future (Hart and Uhr, 2008).

In societies where governments are people-centered, public leadership has continued to strive to improve human security, that is, to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedom and human fulfillment by bringing together elements of security, rights and development and in the process guaranteeing people's freedom from fear and want, with equal opportunities to enjoy all their rights and to fully develop their potential (Akume et al., 2014:144-145). In Nigeria, as in most developing societies, public leaders have fallen short of this requirement. In these societies, the unrestrained manner in which money meant for enhancing human security in its real sense is misappropriated leaves much to be desired. The consequent unwholesome socioeconomic environment that pervades the Nigerian space seems to point to the poor choices made by those entrusted with ensuring the security of the people in the country. This display of irresponsibility by public leaders to the well-being of the people accounts for the gap between public leadership and public responsibility in Nigeria. The equally obvious public apathy due to lack of trust and public support for the government in Nigeria speaks volumes of the existing gap between leadership and responsibility. Even with the thinning of government functions inspired by liberalization which have resulted in market dominance public leaders still have significant roles to perform in facilitating human security.

The government has not been oblivious to this and its other responsibilities. The significant budgetary allocations for this purpose show that the government is to some extent conscious of its responsibilities to the people. However, how the monies are spent is not only questionable but leaves much to be desired considering that public leadership in Nigeria have been caught flatfooted and has been unable to curtail the rising menace of social insecurity in the country. Ironically, however, the role of public leaders standing in the place of the state to ensure the execution of this responsibility has been found liable of thwarting, and worst still, failing to perform the most basic of their responsibilities to citizens.

The infraction of what ought to be is an eyesore if it is accepted that public leaders evolve as an adaptive response to the non-routine, strategic challenges in a society. Arising therefrom, the theoretical question this paper seeks to answer is why has the Nigerian state

represented the insecurity paradox? Seeing the evident contradiction, the objective of this paper is to examine the theoretical reasons for the gap between public leadership and the demands of being responsible. To better examine this subject, this paper begins with a reflection on the concept of public leadership and responsibility and then proceeds to explore the current cause of the existing gaps between the two and their implications for the country.

2. Conceptual Reflection on Public Leadership: Unmasking the Concept

Leadership has to do with influence. It is the process of influencing others to understand and agree on what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individuals and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Yukl, 2007:1). Leadership is about influence, that is, the capacity to affect others' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors in some desired way. From this angle, power is related to but is different from leader to leader. Power determines the degree of influence that its holder has on the others. It is derived from position, knowledge, the capacity to reward and charisma. Relational-wise leadership operates in the context of a group; as a process it involves goal attainment and it entails defining a vision and ensuring its spread and acceptability by a group of shared objectives (Yukl, 2007:1-2). These elements form the theoretical basis of discussions on leadership (Bolden, 2004:5).

In every social, economic or political structure there exist two types of power: personal and positional. Personal power is derived from charisma and knowledge of some sort. It evolves from the interpersonal relationships that leaders develop with followers which make them likable by their subordinates. Positional power comes from holding a particular office, position or rank in an organization. The overuse of positional power may erode the ability of a leader to influence people (Yukl 2007:3). Leadership is a skill, which if better expressed, allows society to perform near its total capacity. This skill comprises of the ability to:

i) use power effectively and in a responsible manner;

ii) comprehend that human beings have different motivational forces in different situations;

iii) inspire;

iv) act in a manner that will develop a climate conducive to responding to, and arousing motivation (Nwagwu, 2014:322).

Leadership then is more about taking the right action than just taking a position. Hence, it is a process and not a position (Walker, 2012). It is a complex moral relationship between people, based on trust, obligations, commitment and a shared vision of the good (Ciulla, 1998). It is expected that a public leader will epitomize selflessness, openness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability and leadership at all times (Kelly, 2013:24). These should be anchored in strong public sector ethics that aim to raise the standards of a leader and the services that he provides (Pope, 2007:118-119). A reflection on the generic leadership framework shows that leadership comprises of three strategic abilities: i) thinking strategically; ii) people --manage self, manage and lead people, direction and culture,

manage relationships; and iii) task abilities --manage information, resources, activities and quality (Bolden, 2004:17).

These cannot be effectively exercised unless a leader has five qualities: physical --health, vigor and appearance; mental ability to learn and understand, judgment, mental vigor and adaptability; moral --energy, initiative, willingness to accept responsibility and tact; general education --general acquaintance with matters not belonging exclusively to the functions performed; special knowledge --technical, commercial, financial, managerial, etc.; experience -- knowledge arising from the work involved (Sapru, 2008:114). These are vital if the leadership is to effectively deal with people and their dynamics which are continually changing. In a state of flux, the leadership's challenge is to create change and facilitate growth (Soundview, 2012:2). The practical expression of these leadership qualities is aptly captured by hierarchy leadership. Its specific components are: i) position; ii) permission; iii) production; iv) people development; and v) pinnacle (Soundview, 2012:1). These levels are arranged hierarchically and each level on the vertical ladder is directly linked to its immediate higher level. As such, the action of the lower level leadership determines a leader's progress to the next level.

Position is at the lowest echelon in the leadership hierarchy and growth upwards begins at this point. Positional leadership is based on rights granted by the position and title of one's office in addition to being a poor substitute for influence. Nevertheless, it signifies that the holder has some leadership qualities which can be cultivated, harnessed and utilized; the holder's authority is recognized, it is an invitation to grow, and it is also a call that allows potential leaders to shape and define their leadership abilities (Walker, 2012:3). If, however, the choice to place a person in the position of leadership is based on a wrong evaluation of the person's potential to lead, it is likely to result in the leader becoming egocentric, autocratic and manipulative of subordinates to get the job done and to hold on to the position of leadership. This leaves the organization in a precarious position as its subordinates are under duress and are not self-motivated.

The second level is permission. Here it is established that a leader has the right attitude that positively affects his subordinates. This is shown by the leader's willingness to build strong cordial working relationships with followers that is based on trust. The openness of the leader creates an enjoyable working environment, increases the energies of his followers, allows free flow of information and allows followers to focus on organizational values and that of the group simultaneously without jeopardizing the interests of any. This kind of an environment permits trust to be built fast and easily between and among members. The concern, however, is that there is the likelihood of members becoming complacent especially if the leader fails to enforce organizational codes in a fair and responsible manner.

The third level on the hierarchy is referred to as production which is more than just creating a pleasant positive working environment for subordinates. The drive at this level is to utilize the influence gained to facilitate the overall productivity of the group, i.e., getting things done by getting set goal achieved. At this level, leadership is by example. The drive to get things done and the goal to be achieved, often results in a situation where leaders become insensitive to members' needs due to the firm's focus on productivity and output.

Overcoming this challenge requires a leader to be balanced by practicing the Pareto principle (Walker, 2012:8).

Leadership at the fourth level is aimed at people development. This means that a leader should be able to change the lives of the people he leads by using his position, relationships and productivity to invest in his followers and develop them until they also become leaders in their own right (Maxwell cited in Walker, 2012:9). Developing and empowering people can be hampered by a leader's sense of insecurity. To this end, a leader must seek to overcome self-centeredness and shortsightedness which deter him/her from seeing the need to invest in and empowering people. It should be understood that developing subordinates is a one-stop-shop for developing future successors who are capable of taking the right risks, who encourage innovation and growth in the system. It is the right path to good succession training in an organization.

At the top of the ladder is the pinnacle. Rare is a leader who reaches Level5- the Pinnacle. Not only is the leadership at this level a culmination of leading well on the other four levels, but it also requires both a high degree of skills and some amount of innate leadership abilities (Soundview, 2012:7). At this point the goal is to take followers who have leadership potential and exhibit such capabilities to the top. This is predicated on the fact that the leadership journey has the potential to take individuals through a lifelong process in three phases: learn, earn and return. Achieving this feat requires leading by example, motivating, mentoring, inspiring, coaching, teamwork, envisioning, and most importantly, delegating which allows followers to learn by doing. Leadership at this level lifts the entire organization by creating the environment that benefits everyone in it, thereby contributing to their success (Soundview, 2012:7).Despite the insights gleaned from this narrative, the fault-line is that it is wrong to assume that everyone with leadership potential gets selected or follows the straight line projection as ascribed by the hierarchy of leadership. Most people do get identified and are permitted to exercise such potential in an organization or in society.

Public leadership is a critical component of good governance in general and good public governance in particular (Cetin, 2012:75). This is so because leaders are responsible for solving the problems and challenges faced in a specific environment. Consequently, a good leader is one who is responsible for two dominant factors: technical knowledge and public sentiment (Finer, 2010:451). These two play vital roles in shaping social values. Leadership is the force that facilitates the enforcement of a society's values; it then holds that leadership as the flesh on the bone of the constitution which specifies its responsibilities (OECD, 2001:1). Any policy which violates either standard, or which fails to crystallize in spite of urgent imperatives, renders the official responsible for it liable to the charge of irresponsible conduct (Finer, 2010:451).This makes leadership a crucial variable that produces enhanced management capacity and system integration by permitting institutional adaptations of public interest and espousing the need to promote certain fundamental values that engender public spiritedness in society (OECD, 2001:1). In this regard, public leadership is conceptualized as a number of distinctive functions that need to be performed for a polity to govern itself effectively (Hart and Uhr, 2008).

Functionally, leaders are expected to think and proffer solutions (Finer 2010:451) and also to do the right thing (Cetin, 2012:75). Public leaders who execute their responsibilities

effectively help to significantly narrow existing social gaps, reduce inequalities and mitigate social exclusion. Good leadership is essential in society because it is responsible for addressing the gap between the public sector and how the interests of the nation need to be addressed now or in the future (OECD, 2001:1). Leadership is what breathes life into the institutions that inhabit and constitute public governance (Hart and Uhr, 2008) and as such they are not value neutral in the public space; leadership is not [wholly] a moral concept. Leaders are like the rest of us: trustworthy and deceitful, cowardly and brave, greedy and generous. To assume that all leaders are good people is to be willfully blind to the reality of the human condition and this severely limits our scope of becoming more effective at leadership (Bolden, 2004:4).

Theoretical meaning about leadership has revolved around two main theses: transformational and transactional (Van-Wart, 2003:217).There are a few other theories that also fit neatly in a discussion on leadership styles or behaviors (see Bolden et al., 2003:7-17). These categories are trait, great man and contingency theories. Leadership behavioral patterns can assume autocratic, charismatic or laissez-faire styles. Transformational leaders are those who elevate the desires of their followers for achievement and self-development while also promoting the development of groups and organizations (Bass and Avolio, 1988 in Masood, 2006). Transformational leaders incite self-motivation among their followers. The transformational leadership theory emphasizes the importance of inspiring subordinates to seek to attain the goals of an organization; it also incites and assists members of an organization to achieve their own individual goals. In this case, no member is left behind to walk the road alone nor is it the desire of this kind of leadership to develop only a few subordinates while leaving the majority behind. Transformational leadership strives for a balance in work relationships, that is, between the needs of an organization and that of its members. Instead of responding to the immediate self-interest of followers with either a carrot or a stick, transformational leaders arouse in an individual a heightened awareness of key issues for the group and the organization while increasing the confidence of followers, and gradually moving them from concerns about existence to concerns about achievements, growth and development (Masood, 2006:7).

Ideally, a transformational leader creates an organizational culture that facilitates collaboration driven by integrity and fairness. Such a leader instills in his employees the need for achievement and encourages them to reach self-actualization (Cossin and Caballero, 2013:7) by creating a supportive and productive work setting that permits self-development. A transformational leader focuses on vision and organizational change that positively affect the whole organization (Cetin, 2012:77). A transformational leader is characterized by several patterns of behavior. First, he employs charisma to gain the respect and trust of stakeholders. Second, he uses inspiration to redirect followers' efforts. His third attribute is that he is intellectually stimulating and finally he offers individualized considerations in mentoring subordinates (Cossin and Caballero, 2013:5). The interactive character of a leader permits a high degree of interconnectedness that enables effective goal attainment and entrenching desired change. A leader invests in subordinates and this in turn impacts individual members' job satisfaction and performance. Another goal of transformational leadership is to transform people and organizations in a literal sense -- to change them in mind and heart; enlarge vision, insight and understanding; clarify purposes; make behaviors

congruent with beliefs, principles or values; and bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating and momentum building (Bass and Avolio, 1994 in Bolden, 2004:11).

Transactional leadership contrasts sharply with transformational leadership in that the former lays more emphasis on pursuing and attaining organizational goals with less weight on inspiring members to achieve their own goals; as such, transactional leaders are far removed from the goal of ensuring balance in an organization. A transactional leader's relationship with followers is based on contingent rewards and practices, active management by exception and passive management by exception; it is also characterized as laissez-faire (Cossin and Caballero, 2013:5). In spite of a leader's foremost concern for productivity he/she avoids taking decisions and is more inclined to relinquish all responsibilities to subordinates. This is in stark contrast to a transformational leader who treats subordinates individually offering them personal attention and where necessary providing coaching and advice to them thereby stirring their emotions and passions and getting them to look beyond their own self-interests and reaching for higher goals (Cossin and Caballero, 2013:6).

Both leadership types find expression in the public domain. A unique leadership challenge in the public sector appears to be the shift away from traditional technical or operational roles on the one hand and from advisory roles on the other to more collaborative, networked leadership roles. These leadership roles carry with them high levels of accountability yet less authority, implying the need for greater political awareness and more collaborative and engaging leadership behavior with exceptional influential skills (Gill, 2009:2). Operating within both frames also raises the fundamental problem of measuring effective public leadership. On a general note, the elements of output, resource use and timely delivery, appropriateness and usefulness or utility may easily suffice but a critical review of these criteria exposes one evident flaw -- these elements can give a false measure of an effective public leadership in the sense that services or projects can be executed in a cost effective manner but fall short of the required standard and quality and hence fail to meet the right utility of the consumer of a service or project. This is an obvious reality in Nigeria where projects are executed or services provided but are stalled and unusable shortly after they are put to use. A more valid measure of effective leadership can be drawn from Hart's work (2011):

    i)   Impact --as the value of the community and/or organizational outcomes that can be attributed to a leader's posture, decisions and actions.

    ii)   Support --as responses leaders evoke in both their authorizing and network environments.

    iii)   Trustworthiness --as the degree to which leaders can be said to respect the responsibilities attached to their roles, including observing the institutional limitations placed upon the exercise of their roles; striking a viable balance between the requirements of prudence, support and trustworthiness (Hart, 2011:325).

There is no best model for developing local leadership. However, it is suggested that a good general trend for leadership development should be to develop comprehensive strategies, set

up new institutions for leadership development and to link existing management training to leadership development (OECD, 2001:2). This presupposes that leadership does not evolve on its own; it involves learning, nurturing, identifying and selecting potential leaders based on society's identified competency profiles of future leaders and values. It also encourages the mentoring and training of such identified candidates with potential leadership qualities and characteristics and ensures keeping leadership development in society sustainable (OECD, 2001:2). It has been noticed that developing public leadership has its advantages but it also has its pitfalls. That is, if a group of leaders begins to pursue its own interests rather than the national interest, the country may suffer. Such a group may become closed and insufficiently responsive to wider changes in society (OECD, 2001:2).

3. Public Responsibility: Unbundling and Tying the Loose Ends of the Concept

A careful reflection on the preceding discussion about leadership espouses one vital clue -- leadership is associated with responsibility, i.e., to the community/organization, the group and the individual. Responsibility is what makes leadership prized. Public responsibility can be understood in two contrasting ways. First, it means to act in a sensible, reasonable or morally correct fashion, often in the face of pressure to act or behave otherwise. Second, responsibility means accountability or answerability. This implies the existence of a higher authority to which an individual or body is subject and by which it can be controlled (Heywood, 2006:318). Public responsibilities are wrapped in the functions of the government which are entrusted to public leaders. The admitted function of a government embraces a much wider field than can easily be included within the ring-fence of any restrictive definition and it is hardly possible to find any ground for justification common to all of them except a comprehensive one of general expediency (Woodrow, 1918).

The government has first and second level functions. The first includes general public services, defense, public order and safety, economic affairs, environmental protection, housing and community amenities, health, recreation, culture and religion, education and social protection. The second-level functions are specific responsibilities attached to first-level functions (OECD, 2011:195). According to Woodrow (1918):

These are all functions which in one shape or another, all governments alike have undertaken. Changed conceptions of the nature and duty of the state have arisen, issuing from changed historical conditions, deeply altered historical circumstances; and part of the change which has thus affected the idea of the state has been change in the method and extent of governmental functions; but change conceptions have left the functions of government a kind of the same. Diversities of conception are very much marked than diversities of practice.

The role of the government, therefore, is to create public social value (Moore and Khagram, 2004:2) or political goods or values (Almondet et al., 2011:147).Values are not pursued in the abstract as ends in themselves; there is also no universal agreement on which should be emphasized at any given time. No matter how vigorous the pursuit of any one value at any given time, the others are never obliterated. More so, no matter how determined the quest for one value, it is never realized as fully as its most extreme advocates would like (Kaufman,

2007:266-267). Values are generated through the enhanced provision of system goods -- system maintenance and system adaptation; process goods --participation in political inputs, compliance and support, procedural justice, effectiveness and efficiency; and policy goods --welfare, security, fairness and liberty (Almondet et al., 2011:147-149). Not all these functions can be categorized as pure public goods; those that are not within this class, however, fall within the market supporting and market augmenting public goods. As such, the market and the third sector can also engage in the production of some of these goods at a cost. Factoring in the element of cost means that unconditional private actions will lead to under-provision of these public goods; this raises the issue of what institutional arrangements have a comparative advantage in dealing with this under-provision (Besley and Ghatak, 2004:2).

Citizens' welfare cannot be appropriately enhanced without the provision of public goods and services. A public good is something that benefits all members of a community but that no one can be prevented from using; every member of a community can enjoy its benefits whether that person has paid for it or not (Shively, 2008:53). Public goods have three symbolic characteristics -- they are non-ravlrous and non-excludable in consumption (Holcombe, 1997:2-3; Oakland, 1987:485). A third element is that they have the impossibility of rejection, that is, people cannot abstain from their consumption, even if they wish to do so (Scott and Marshall, 2005:535). They are non-ravlrous in the sense that the use of a unit of a good by one consumer does not preclude or diminish its benefit to another consumer or of using the same unit of the good. It presupposes therefore that there is jointness in consumption of a good, that is, one unit of a good produced generates multiple units of consumption. It also implies that the opportunity cost of the marginal user is zero.

Public goods are non-excludable as it is impossible to prevent others from jointly consuming a unit of a good once produced even as they are likely to also create disutility or reduced profit. This is despite the fact that public goods are not used in the act of consumption production (Oakland, 1987:485). Whether goods are excludable or non-excludable, is a function of the cost of setting up and enforcing private property rights to the goods in question. To be considered public goods, they must be of interest to more than one consumer. Otherwise, the fact that the consumption possibilities of others are undermined is irrelevant (Oakland, 1987:485). Evidently, plenty of the things that the government does are not public goods since they could in-principle be given selectively only to those who pay for them (Shively, 2008:53).

Public goods are also associated with certain core values such as security, prosperity, equality, liberty and justice. These rights fall into two general classes: i) limitations on the government --these are things that the government is forbidden to do to an individual, and ii) obligations of a government --a series of duties that a government pledges to perform for an individual (Ranney 1975, in Enemuo, 2005:149b). However, it is generally agreed that the most important function of a government is to secure the rights and freedoms of individual citizens (Taft, 1968). Political goods can be divided into three main levels with ten sub-classifications of the goods and varying content and examples all impacting an individual to enhance his well-being(Almond et al., 2011:149). Given its broad base and importance the mechanism for effective delivery of public goods and services is therefore

central to credible poverty reduction strategies (Besley and Ghatak, 2004:2). Sadly in Nigeria, rising alienation and frustration with the failure to develop stable, honest and responsive institutions are increasingly evident (Mundt et al., 2011:687).

The subject of public goods has remained relatively undisputed by both capitalists and socialists. The gray areas of differences are nested in the issue of redistribution of incentives. Nonetheless, the mode of control and the degree of state engagement also differ significantly. Delivering public goods to the people represents navigational guides by which the ship of the state is kept on course. Arguments about whether to tack this way or that given the prevailing political current and crosswinds make up the essence of most public policy debates (Magstadt, 2009:32). The traditional view equates public goods with government provision but the present reality shows that market and non-governmental institutions also account for the provision of public goods and services in society (Cheema, 2007:48)even though the latter two tend to lead to patchy solutions to public goods provision (Besley and Ghatak, 2004:9). Public goods certainly exist in the sense that these are goods that fit the economic definition of public goods but production of public goods in the public sector is neither necessary nor sufficient for their efficient production (Holcombe, 1997:1).

Seeing the weaknesses of other sources of providing public goods, the onus of efficiently delivering public goods and services still remains the prime responsibility of the government. Such efficiency is facilitated if a government has functional institutions and public leaders are responsible for the functioning of public institutions established to implement public policies in the communities that they serve. The institutions that they lead have fixed jurisdictional areas and office hierarchies designed to attain rational objectives in the most efficient and effective manner (Imhonopi and Ogochukwu, 2013:80). In this complex structure, the honor of any leader lies in an exclusive personal responsibility for what he does --a responsibility he cannot and must not reject or transfer (Thompson, 1980). Responsibility in the sense of an interpersonal, externally sanctioned duty is then the dominant consideration for public leaders (Finer, 2010:451).

This Weberian view of public institutions differs significantly from the Marxian view. The latter sees public institutions as instruments of oppression, exploitation and marginalization of the people by the elites that control them. In this view public services as an instrument of the state reflect the biases, interests and preferences of the ruling dominant class. This intention is, however, concealed by the elites and the bureaucrats as efforts are constantly made to project the bureaucracy as a neutral and developmental agency working for the interests of every one (Imhonopi and Ogochukwu, 2013:80). Responding to elite bias is unfortunately the character of Nigeria's public institutions. That notwithstanding, from the point of determining what is to be produced (policy initiation) and its execution (policy implementation), it is the responsibility of public leaders at different levels of the political and bureaucratic production hierarchy to be wholly involved and accountable. This is important considering that in the public domain values drive the end-game and these two are inextricably intertwined in deciding public goods.

Debates over public policy almost always assume that there is something real about the public goods or public interest; that it is the government's role to identify and pursue common goals (things of benefit to society as a whole rather than to a privileged few)

(Magstadt, 2009:32). Hence, it is not sufficient for a public manager to have his/her own view of public value; others have to share it. In particular, a group of people in positions that could confer legitimacy and provide financial support to a manager will have to agree with the concept of public value that is to be pursued (Moore and Khagram, 2004:9). Public value must respond to popular sentiments, that is, an organization's customer's wishes are clothed with very real power (Long, 2010:101). If a community does not command, there is no call for technical knowledge whatsoever and however magnificent the grasp of technical knowledge and the desire to use it, it must be declared irresponsible whenever it becomes operative except under a direct or implied obligation (Finer, 2010:451).

The importance of building on what the public conception of value is, is nested in the idea of gaining legitimacy and support of public leaders authorizing the environment and the 'customers' (Long, 2010:101). This is couched in the fact that much of the capacity that a public leader needs for producing public value lies outside the scope of the organization he/she could control directly (Moore and Khagram, 2004:9). Unfortunately, the challenge has been that the value premises of those forming vital elements of political support are often far from uniform. As such, a major and most time-consuming aspect of administration consists of the wide range of activities designed to secure enough customer acceptance to survive and, if fortunate, develop a consensus which is adequate for program formulation and execution (Long, 2010:101).

The fact is that the current reality has seen the modern de-socialization of the state and yet the task of the government has not much diminished. Hence, the government may be doing substantially the same things as of old but an altered conception of its responsibility deeply modifies the way in which it does them (Woodrow,1918). This change informs the reasons that drive the provision of goods or services which are to redistribute public wealth as well as equalize consumption and welfare of the poor in society. This is needed because in society the rich have the option of seeking private alternatives, lobbying for better services, or if need be, moving to different areas. The poor frequently do not. This accentuates deprivation (Besley and Ghatak, 2004:1-2) which if it is not quickly and rightly addressed is likely to incite social disorder. As such, the provision of public goods and services is symbolic in addressing the problems of insecurity arising from deprivation and exclusion if privately provided. More so, their adequate and appropriate provision enables the government to get its citizens to further the government's interests (Holcombe, 1997:2).

In this light, a concern has been that when a government takes on the responsibility for individuals' economic security, it not only gains greater leverage and control over individuals' lives but it is inevitable that nearly all important individual preferences will be replaced by governmental preferences and important economic and social questions will be transformed into political ones (Rosenbloom, 2009:440-441). In such settings, the government becomes the focus of efforts to enhance one's well-being and much of the political effort is directed towards obtaining economic benefits from it. In this environment the struggle between and among groups becomes a zero-sum-game especially if state resources are few and there are many hands to take care of. Quintessentially, given such a milieu it has been realized that public officials are monopolists no less than the grand men of business who have abrogated to themselves the exclusive control of manufacturing or sale

of a commodity and therewith its domination. This is subject to potentially grievous servitude (Finer, 2010:448) thereby opening the road to serfdom (Rosenbloom, 2009:441).

Demolishing this structure requires genuine citizens' participation. Getting the citizenry to be involved is no small feat even as the strategic challenge for public managers is that of imagining and articulating a vision of public value that can command legitimacy and support and is operationally doable in the domain for which he/she has responsibility (Moore and Khagram, 2004:9).In spite of this challenge, some action is better than none (Finer, 2010:448). Structurally, this problem is significantly resolved through decentralization where an innovative government finds appropriate ways of de-concentration or devolving authority, resources and responsibilities to local sub-national units and NGOs in order to elicit greater participation in political and administrative decision-making and to deliver social services that are essential for creating a strong economy (Rondinelli, 2007:19). Decentralization is thus a more effective means of ensuring accountability, providing a framework for group and individual participation, promoting checks and balances and reducing red tape, rigid and uniform procedures (Cheema, 2007:38). Oddly, most, if not all, independent African state leaders are more inclined to consolidate power at the political center and extract considerable economic resources from society (Afegbua and Adejuwon, 2012:142; Antwi-Boasiako, 2010:167) than to heed the call to fully decentralize power, resources and responsibilities.

Better and efficient service delivery informs the need for strong institutions and decentralization so as to elicit strong and committed public followers. Strong economic institutions which guide incentives towards creating wealth can only be achieved through more political freedom. Sadly, however, political leaders who control the system are less willing to relinquish their hold on the system by allowing political freedom in society primarily because it will erode their ability to control its resources and allocate them for their private benefits. Despite the unwillingness of political elites, political inclusiveness and the distribution of political power within society are key elements that determine the failure or the success of nations (Vukovic, 2012:323). The essence of governmental institutions is that they are established to produce those goods or services or both classified as public and to ensure that they are effectively distributed among members of society adequately and impartially in an efficient manner. Arising from this responsibility is the challenge for leaders in all countries to redefine the roles of government and to build the capacity of public and private institutions to play beneficial roles in helping citizens to cope with the uncertainties and opportunities existing in their communities (Rondinelli, 2007:3).

Efficiency consideration is and has been the reason for governments' involvement in the economy. The question then is what yardstick should be used to determine public institutional efficiency? The two main criteria are: information about social outcomes and client overall satisfaction (Moore and Khagram, 2004:7). These criteria combine together to determine the net value of an organization and whether the public institution is a net creator of value or not for society. The argument is:

> to find value creating products and services, to allocate resources to the
> highest value uses, to find ways to reduce cost and widen the gap between
> cost and the value of what is being produced in particular product line-is

radically diminished when the [public leader] lacks precise, objective, quantitative information about the value of the products and services being produced (Moore and Khagram, 2004:7).

This is an internally challenging concern for organizational efficiency that requires an organization's leadership to identify and solve it. Exogenously, the efficacy of public institutions is threatened and in some instances compromised by political power play and interest. In this context, economic institutions' inefficiency originates from a desire of political elites to protect their political power. Political power serves as a source of income, economic rent and privileges for political elites. If the political power of the elites is eroded, their economic rents and privileges will cease (Acemoglu et al., 2005, in Wanju, 2015:82-83). To prevent this from occurring political elites evaluate every property right and its consequences for their economic rent and privileges (Acemoglu et al., 2005, in Wanju, 2015:82-83) in order to ensure that their advantage is uppermost and secured in whatever direction the institutions take to reinvent society. If those changes threaten their interests they are inclined to circumvent such actions even before they are implemented. Most saddening is the fact that the threat of being political losers can make political elites block reforming economic institutions that will enhance the growth of society (Acemogluet et al., 2005, in Wanju, 2015:83). This unholy action is against the ethos of good leadership which is to ensure the prosperity of all by enhancing the spread of inclusive institutions which create circles of innovation, economic expansion and more widely held wealth (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013).

Incentives in the production and provision of public goods and services are as important as the issue of efficiency. Drawing on capitalist beliefs it is assumed that in virtually all economies no government in the history of mankind has ever created wealth. As such, the people who work to create it have to be protected and rewarded adequately. Incentives are central to the question of production and economic security essentially because economic security for all is impossible without widespread abundance. Abundance is impossible without industrious and efficient production. Such production is impossible without energetic, willing and eager laborers. This is not possible without incentives (Taft, 1968). Both systems raise the fundamental moral question of how to ensure balance and fairness in the reward system.

Since capitalism extols the virtues of freedom, independence, individualism, initiatives, invention and innovation, risk-taking and rewards for success (Magstadt 2009:39) it favors individual incentives. Communism promotes collective action and incentivization and is fundamentally opposed to capitalism. In communism, public goods are best served by common ownership and administration of a political community's means of production and distribution (Magstadt, 2009:41). The argument in support of collective rewards is morally plausible because individuals are unequally endowed with different capabilities, with some highly blessed as compared to others in society. This presupposes that some people are naturally disadvantaged than others and hence have to be helped by the state and communal effort. The economic rationale for social investments is not only for social protection but also social promotion such as reducing inequalities (Ikeanyibe, 2013:181) and social exclusion.

Collectivism is wrapped in the belief that it is possible that people though diverse are capable of living together cooperatively and free from demeaning and invidious social distinctions (Magstadt, 2009:41). The general discontent that accounted for the collapse of collectivism in Russia and its allied eastern bloc countries was not unconnected to the problem of central planning which discouraged initiatives in line with changing times. This result only evidenced the fact that such creation was merely a myth that failed to stand the test of time (Magstadt, 2009:240). That aside, considering that human beings are rational in their choices and actions it is inconceivable to accept that an individual will want to work only for his/her reward to be shared with some other persons. It is thus morally acceptable and right that individuals should be independently rewarded. This is vital because all forms of incentives allow the freedom to attain a reward for one's labor -- it is simply the right to plan and to earn and to enjoy the fruits of your labor (Taft, 1968). This is necessary for motivating society to engage in productive enterprises vital for national economic growth and development. The issue, however, is that even when incentives are effective in changing behavior they often create other problems (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013:130) which specifically relate to raising the cost of production. However, capitalism still permits better incentives and self-motivation. This is so because capitalism strongly admonishes that:

i) the role of the government should be limited to the maintenance of law and order, upholding the sanctity of contracts, regulating currency, raising taxes and containing external aggression;

ii) economic power should be diffused among many property owners rather than being concentrated in the hands of one owner, that is, the state; and

iii) the government should not engage in any effort to redistribute economic rewards since the system ensures that wealth goes to those who serve the needs of society best while poverty goes to those who contribute little (Enemuo, 2005:81a).

The ascendancy of capitalism has been reinforced by the rise of liberalism. Three conditions drive liberalism:

i) a recognition of the rights of an individual to opportunities to demonstrate his or her innate potential;

ii) an insistence that political power should be in the hands of those who own property and those who have demonstrated ingenuity and therefore the capacity to lead;

iii) the conception that the duty of the government should be restricted to the protection of an individual and his rights (Enemuo, 2005:81a).

Capitalism served as the basis for the de-socialization of most societies (Woodrow, 1918). Despite the primacy of capitalist standards that have transcended old governance practices they still allow necessary constraints under the rule of law even though it is strongly opposed to high taxes (especially on business), social welfare and government giveaways. Though capitalism is strongly opposed to these, it also seeks tax favors, subsidies and concessions

for itself while fighting antitrust legislations at every turn (Magstadt, 2009:40). This seems to be the high point of capitalist hypocrisy, fraud and conspiracy against the pursuit of fairness, social equity and public welfare in society.

The idea behind socialism is that the government has full responsibility for the well-being of the people and in order to discharge this responsibility for the welfare of the people, it must assume control of all their activities (Taft, 1968). In this light, socialism sees a human being as primarily an economic creature, whose material well-being is all important and his privacy and freedom are strictly secondary (Taft, 1968). State control under this structure is seen to limit individual rights and more so:

> profit motive diminishes…regulations and taxes increase to deny the fruits of success to those who produce. Therefore any attempt through governmental intervention to redistribute the material rewards of labour can only result in the eventual destruction of the productive base of society, without which real abundance and security for more than the ruling elite is quite impossible (Taft, 1968).

Despite their highs and lows, both ideologies agree on the need for enhancing the welfare of the people even though they differ in the way in which it should be done. Nonetheless, it is the desire of both worlds to guarantee equality for members of society but the methods for addressing concerns about equality are also the reasons for the sharp variations between them. On a critical note, capitalism is seen as an elaborate myth system used to justify class privileges of a wealthy elite and the exploitation of workers who produce societal wealth (Magstadt, 2009:39). It thus means that capitalism is in some way associated with inequality which presupposes that it has to be regulated to ensure social balance and broadly spread societal welfare through the provision of public goods.

The concept of pure public goods has been subjected to sharp criticism in that it fails to characterize those activities actually carried out by modern governments. Secondly, most public services are subject to congestion in contrast to the zero marginal user cost of pure public goods. Thirdly, most services are equally consumed by all members of society. Fourthly, a wide class of government services involves private goods which generate external effects when consumed. And, finally, many government services have the characteristics of intermediate goods (Oakland, 1987:492). Even more evident is the fact this fails to admit the possibility of exclusion or crowding (Ellickson, 1972:1). Based on this criticism the idea of public goods seems to be somewhat shallow.

On the contrary, public goods are quite a robust idea for which policy attaches high significance because they meet the needs of a significant majority who cannot access such goods adequately without government provisions. Without the state, they tend to be inefficiently provided by private arrangements such as the market mechanism (Oakland, 1987:485). Given that the process involved in providing public goods invariably involves distributional impacts, the objective of economic efficiency is of secondary importance in political decisions (Oakland, 1987:533). Considering that production choices of public goods and services are enclosed by politics means that as markets fail to reach the theoretical ideal of Pareto efficiency, there is no guarantee that government production will be more

efficient than private production. Another concern is that their production and distribution may be captured by a few powerful hands in society.

4. Theoretical Alignment and Discussion

The origin of the elite theory can be traced to the works of Robert Michael (1915) (iron law of oligarchy), Pareto Vilfrado (1935) (law of elite circulation) and Gaetano Mosca (1939) (political circulation) (Lopez, 2013; Mustafa, 2000). According to the elite theory, the political system is divided into two groups: the elite or the political entrepreneurs, who possess ideological commitments and manipulative skills and the citizens at large, the masses, or the apolitical clay of the system, a much larger class of passive, inert followers who have little knowledge of public affairs and even less interest in them (Arjun, 2014; Walker, 1966:286). The main strata in the elite stratum are (a) governing, (b) non-governing, and (c) political elite (Mustafa, 2000:324). Central to the elitist theory is the presumption of an average citizen's inadequacies. As a consequence, the political system must rely on the wisdom, loyalty and skill of political leaders and not on the people. In contrast, the people consist of many minds and degrees of talent, not of undifferentiated ignorance and empty-mindedness (Finer, 2010:451). As such, to assume that the mass of the population is inadequate to govern itself is preposterous.

Normative, classical and modern elitism (Heywood, 2006:79-80) agrees that the elite represent a selected and small group of citizens and/or organizations that control a large amount of power (Vergara, 2013:32). They are persons who by virtue of their strategic locations in large or otherwise pivotal organizations and movements are able to affect political outcomes regularly and substantially (Higley, 2010). Although the electorate can decide which elite rules it cannot change the fact that power is always exercised by elites (Heywood, 2006:80). Says Higley (2010):

> The collectives of any size and complexities require decisions by persons who happen to be strategically located in them because such collectivities are concentration of power in the wider society, their top decision makers have disproportionate societal power and influence, and they nearly always enjoy disproportionate privileges and protection.

The degree of elite dominance in society is a function of their influence and the resources that they control. Weak government systems also facilitate elite dominance in the state. In Nigeria, state institutions remain the best opportunity for social advancement as they provide the most lucrative sources for state patronage. As such, the state itself continues to be the prize of political competition (Thomson, 2007:190). The dominance so achieved through these channels is justified through a set of values that give it legitimation (Scott and Marshall, 2005:183). In developed democracies, elite capacity to control state apparatuses is to some extent limited but it does not totally impair their powers. This is not the picture in weak or failed states (Akume and Dahida, 2013). Public leaders are a significant part of societal elites. They represent a distinct group of people who control power or have access to sites of power in society. Based on their social distinction with regard to other groups of

the lower strata, most of these selected groups are constantly searching differentiations as well as separation from the rest of society (Vergara, 2013:32).

The focus of elite leadership is to persist and reproduce its power overtime at political and economic levels. The composition of the ruling elite reflects the balance of power among the underling social forces (Scott and Marshall, 2005:183). They are persons with the organizational capacity to make real political trouble without being promptly repressed. This rising character of the elites indicates that they are active, strong and dedicated in character (Mustafa, 2000:324). As elites rise so also they decline; rising and declining of the elites take place at the same time. Two indicators provide evidence of elite decline:

(i)   they become softer, milder, more humane and less apt to defend their own power;

(ii)   they lose their rapacity and greed for the good of others, but rather tend as much as possible to increase their unlawful appropriations and indulge in major usurpation of national patrimony (Pareto 1968, in Mustafa, 2000:324).

The elites consist not only of prestigious and established leaders --top politicians, important businessmen, high-level civil servants, senior military officers --but also, in varying degrees in different societies, relatively transitory and less individually known leaders of mass organizations such as trade unions, important voluntary associations and politically consequential mass movements (Higley, 2010). Elites control or sit at the top of societies (Vergara, 2013:32) and the processes of allocating resources in those societies. They do not just seek to rule but utilize their control over the policy process to articulate and covertly express their preferences as public interest so as to benefit directly or indirectly through their cronies. They achieve this by directing attention to the source of policy flow and whose interests public policy serves (Okeke, 2014:324).

Accepted that given the increase in population and the difficulty to easily articulate and speedily arrive at an acceptable consensus on issues of public concern by the larger population, there is need for it to be governed by a few groups. Since there is lack of uniformity of interest among the elites, the relationship among them is based on continuous transactions and exchanges which facilitate their interests and profits at all times. To them representation is neither simply a means of political adjustment to social pressures nor an instrument of manipulation. It involves both functions since the purpose of representation is to locate the combinations of relationships between parties and social bases which make possible the operations of an efficient government (Walker, 1966:286). In reality, the purpose of representation by the elites is not in public interest as in most societies the people submit themselves to the iron law of an oligarch or the rule of a few powerful not necessarily out of free will, but most often it is done under the influence of elite manipulation and coercion (Heywood, 2006:79).

This is particularly true of African countries with the most current example being Burundi. The picture is no different in Nigeria. Obviously, previous Nigerian local, state and federal elections have espoused this abnormal tendency strongly. Unfortunately, under such an environment, tension and violence precede and endure long after local, regional/provincial or national elections (Kifordu, 2011:2). This unstable setting instrumentally allows power-hungry elites to manipulate the system and its processes in their favor with or without the

consent of the people to attain power or perpetuate their hold on power. It is therefore not surprising that wise governments are few and far between in developing countries with its attendant bad governance choices and elite-centered actions.

Nigeria, since her independence has witnessed the emergence and circulation of diverse elite groups with wide ranging colorations that encompass ethnic, professional and other socioeconomic associational groups all exerting and representing dominant power centers in the political game being played out in contemporary Nigeria (Julius, 2014:2). Though they have shown variations in their configurations, one common denominator that ties them together is rent-seeking. Their struggle to benefit from rent has ensured that the national agitation for economic renewal that favors the diversification of the national economy, from one that relies on oil and rents that accrue from it, to one that will be more industrialized and modernize other sectors remains compromised (Julius, 2014:2). The pursuit of self-interest by Nigerian elites has continued to undermine human security; this has by extension, adversely affected political stability, investments and employment in Nigeria. Increasing evidence of public leaders' irresponsibilities has made the challenge of insecurity a primary reason for the under-performance of the Nigerian economy, and by extension a fractured state.

Three approaches explain why there is poor growth and under-development: i) the geographical position of the country; ii) the cultural attributes; and iii) the ignorance of the country's ruling elites (Vukovic, 2001:324). In Nigeria's case the first two factors may be strongly linked to the problem of under-development in the country. The third element, however, also cannot be dismissed as a reason for the weak character of the Nigerian state. Studies have shown that elites in Nigeria are responsible for the deepening insecurity, conflict, corruption and rent-seeking (Ogbeidi, 2009a; 2012b). Essentially, the narrow elite rule organizing society for its own rent-seeking interests is a common trajectory (Vukovic, 2012:324). In Nigeria's case it is indisputable that political leaders can seize on a particular problem out of a desire to secure political advantage. The reason, therefore, for including an issue in the agenda status is to a large extent political (Ikeanyibe, 2013:96) rather than a sincere moral response to solving a problem for the good of all.

The consequences of taking this route is that Nigeria is oscillating between democratic stagnancy and governance backwardness, principally because of elite tendencies that are reflective of the pursuit of personal aggrandizement and promotion of egocentricism rather than altruistic policies that are nationalistic and people-centric in nature (Okeke, 2014:322). Hence, it is evident that a combination of economic power, bureaucratic control and access to the highest levels of the executive branch of the government, enables the power elite to shape key history-making decisions, especially in the field of defense and foreign policy, as well as strategic economic policy. Considering the degree of their influence, it is certain that the power-elite model suggests that elite groups are structures of exploitation (Heywood, 2006:79).

Leaders are prized for their innovativeness, responsiveness and flexibility, all thanks to the frequency and consistency of transformational leadership behavior. Innovation evolves out of a leader's flexibility and ingenuity in responding to social demands. In this case, innovative ideas must be identified and transformed into specific courses of action and new

policies and programs must be proposed to undertake them. An assessment of innovations must take into account their results, outcomes and dispositions (Rondinelli, 2007:10). Following this trend has the capacity to transform rule driven bureaucracies into mission-oriented organizations aided by more transformational and less transactional leadership (Masood, 2006:6). It therefore means that leaders should not only inspire selfless-service but should themselves reflect such characteristics both in deeds and actions. This will serve as a lighthouse to guide the way for subordinates to follow. This means that in carrying out public interest, leaders must not permit malfeasance, misfeasance or nonfeasance (Grover, 2008:168-169) as assigned responsibility holds one responsible for outcomes insofar as we cause them and do not act in ignorance or under compulsion (Thompson, 1980:905). This presumes that:

> Good public sector leaders understand the limits and opportunities of their role. The government they serve configure their authorizing environment and the agencies they manage will differ in purpose and function. Within this context, they can add value to government by the quality of the advice they give and the innovation they encourage. Above all else, they need the public interest as their guide and inspiration. It reminds them of their broader accountabilities to the public and their obligation to ensure that proper processes and procedures are carried out within government (Gallop, 2011).

A prime example of a public good in traditional public finance theory is national defense (Holcombe, 1997:15). Good national defense is vital for improved human security because it inspires confidence in society and it is critical for attracting local and foreign direct investments (FDI). This justifies the huge allocations to the sector. A summary breakdown of defense allocation indicates that in 2008–N 444.6 billion; in 2009–N 233 billion; in 2010–N 264 billion (Umar, Yar' Adua); in 2011–N 348 billion; in 2012–N 921.91 billion; in 2013–N 1.005 trillion; and in 2014 N 4.962 trillion was budgeted out of which the allocation for defense was N 9.68.127 billion ($6.25billion) representing 20 per cent of the national budget (Gbemre, 2015). In 2015, the government budgeted N985.9 ($6 billion). The amount budgeted was not significantly different from that in 2014 (Obadina, 2015).

In most countries, the defense budget is given high premium because of its role in facilitating better human security in society. Out of the allocations to various sectors, the military is given a significant slice of the pie which has been subject to abuse. There is also an issue of public accountability which becomes apparent especially in the use of public funds. This is a central issue in democratic states where one of the purposes of the legislature is control and allocation of resources. Areas of contention in procurement are in the allocation of contracts. Records of cost controls, delivery times and performance are hard to gauge, monitor or hold responsible (Segell, 1997:310).

In spite of the huge financial allocations that the defense sector got, the insecurity situation has grown from bad to worse with every part of Nigeria remaining unsafe and insecure because most of these funds were overshadowed by breaches due to the existence of fraud in military procurement (Wilson, 2011:324). To cover up for the colossal fraud in the system, the military high command blamed the foot soldiers of incompetence. However, recent revelations show that the poor choices of the governing elite responsible for equipping them

failed to do the right thing. Sadly, the leadership resorted to repressive tactics to spur the ill-equipped soldiers to fight the well-equipped insurgent group. The resulting effect was that the Nigerian military continued to suffer significant casualties.

In Nigeria, as in most African countries, the use of arbitrary and repressive measures by African elites and their inability to apply governmental regulations throughout the national territory is a sign of weakness (Afegbua and Adejuwon, 2012:142). This weakness helps perpetuate breaching of the law thereby further exposing the shadow side of the leadership. This shadow side includes the negative influences of power, privilege, deception, inconsistency, irresponsibility and misplaced loyalties. Unfortunately, over time, followers have become exposed to the consequences of shadow behavior which has resulted in the people losing trust and respect for their leaders. This is the narrative that is now being played out in Nigeria arising from the misappropriation of a $2.1 billion arms deal by the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA).

Given the failure of the military to rout insurgency in the north-east, on assuming office in 2015 President Buhari among other things immediately set up a presidential committee to audit the procurement of arms meant to combat insurgency in Nigeria in 2007-15. The committee discovered various forms of financial and contractual irregularities. Some of these are no-specifications of procurement costs, absence of contract agreements, award of contracts beyond authorized thresholds, transfer of public funds for unidentified purposes and general non-adherence to provisions of the Public Procurement Act (*Premium Times*, 15 January 2016). The committee report showed that extra budgetary spending of N643.8 billion and an additional spending of about $2.1 billion were made.

Consequent upon this discovery, President Buhari ordered EFCC to carry out further investigations into the misconduct of 17 top military officers implicated in these abuses. Prominent among them are Air Marshal Badeh, A. S., Umar, M. D., Balogun, I. A., Tsakr, A. G., Major General Chioba and Dasuki, Sambo, the National Security Adviser to President Goodluck Jonathan. Linked to these misdeeds were 21 private companies in close alliance with ONSA and the Nigerian airforce. The offences included over-invoicing of items purchased, under-supply of the actual military hardware requested and the supply of outdated and unserviceable military jets, helicopters and other equipment. Even within ONSA there were inside dealings that compromised the quality of equipment that was ordered for use by the military in combating insurgency in the north-east.

Looking at the billions of nairas and dollars that were budgeted for defense-related expenditure in Nigeria every year, it is observable that this did not justify the output on the ground. From 2009 to 2015, there were many complaints from foot soldiers regarding the poorly-equipped status of the Nigerian defense, which contributed to its struggle and difficulty in curtailing the excesses of the Boko Haram sect and the insecurity situation in the country (Gbemre, 2015). While this failure is unacceptable, what is even more disheartening and disturbing is the manner in which $2.1 billion meant for arms purchase to combat insurgency was not used for this purpose but was diverted and distributed among Nigerian political elites ostensibly to facilitate the re-election of President Goodluck Jonathan. Unfortunately none of those so-called public leaders had the moral bite to question why they were given such monies when the daily cry from the government was that it had

no monies to strengthen public security as attacks by the insurgency group were becoming more daring and fearless.

Aside from the military elite that are engulfed in the misappropriation of defense funds, political and other community leaders to form part of the list. Among the prominent political leaders on the list areOluFalae (N100m), Tanko Yakassai-(N63m), Jim Nwobodo-(N500m), Adamu Muazu-(N600m), Tony Anenih-(N260m), Raymond Dokpesi-(N2.1b), OlisaMetuh-(N400m), Bode George-(N100m), Peter Odili-(N100m), Rashidi Ladoja-(N100m), Jafaru Lawal Isa-(N100m), Attahiru Baffarawa-(N4.2b), Bashir Yuguda-(N1.9b), Abububakar Kure-(600m), Saliu Atawodi-(N600m), Matawelle Bello-(N300m), Nduka Obaigbena-(N650m), Iyorchia Ayu-(N345m), Mahmud Shikafi-(N50m), Ex-PDP chairman Ahmadu Ali-(N100m). Also included are Yerima Abdullahi-(N100m), Bello Sarkin Yarki-(N200m), Mohammed Bello and son Abba Mohammed-(N300m), BAM Properties–(N300m), Dalhatu Investment Limited-(N1.5b) and Acacia Holdings-(N600m).

Others on the list of beneficiaries include prominent first class traditional rulers. The painful issue in the diversion of funds is that those who benefitted once represented the Nigerian state secretary to the federal government, two-term state governors, federal permanent secretaries, senior special adviser (*Vanguard*, 9 December 2015; *Ecomium*, 22 December 2015; *Vanguard*, 24 January 2016; *The Harald*, 8 January 2016), while Olu Falae was the main front-runner in the 1999 presidential elections against the eventual winner Obasanjo.

Painfully too most of them do not see anything wrong in their involvement and neither are they apologetic about figuring in the narrative of shame (*Vanguard*, 24 January 2016; *The Harald*, 8 January 2016). A good number of Nigerian politicians have sacrificed the lives of innocent Nigerians on the altar of corruption by sharing the $2.1 billion among themselves (Hakeem, 2016). The abhorring implications have been that the Boko Haram's four-year-old insurgency has pitched neighbor against neighbor, cost more than 4,000 lives (an average of 1,000 deaths a year), displaced closed to half a million, destroyed hundreds of schools and government buildings and devastated an already ravaged economy in the north-east, one of Nigeria's poorest regions (ICG, 2014; Obadina, 2015). Considering these huge losses and the huge military spending and flawed arms import flowing from weak budgetary and procurement processes that failed to provide economic or security benefits, it can be said that public spending in this area merely wasted scarce resources needed to address the basic needs of the population (Gbemre, 2015).

Uncontested is the fact that introducing decorum in public leadership will mean enforcing ethical standards. Relating leadership to the question of ethics draws us to the three historical approaches to ethical leadership. The first approach is that a leader maximizes the welfare of his followers as defined by the utilitarianism theory. The second holds that a leader protects the freedom of individuals, which is noted in the libertarianism theory. The third sees a leader as focused solely on promoting the right things to do regardless of the consequences as seen in Kant's theory (Monahan, 2012:58). These ethical theories can be seen as signposts of a good service charter for which the public can hold their leaders responsible. This is particularly needed especially in an era where high profile lapses by public leaders in ethical and moral judgments are frequently exposed with painful consequences for society. Citizens have increasingly come to expect higher standards of

ethical conduct as a broad range of activities are now viewed as immoral (McDougles, 2002:2). Despite the preponderance of an amoral leadership:

> Standards of behaviour matter. They are particularly important where public money is being spent on public services or public functions. Citizens have a right to expect that holders of public offices who take decisions which affect their lives should do so with impartiality, should be truthful about what they are doing and should use public money wisely. Society can expect better outcomes when decisions are made fairly and on merit and not influenced by personal or private interest (Kelly, 2013:5).

Given the magnitude of leadership corruption and abuse of due process, in Nigeria this public demand has continued to fall on deaf ears. This is dangerously unhealthy for the system as such amoral actions fail to: i) obey the law, ii) serve public interest, iii) avoid doing harm, iv) take responsibility for the process and its consequences, and v) treat incompetence as an abuse of office (McDougles, 2007:7). In the past six years of intense bombings and ceaseless killings by Boko Haram terrorists, Nigerians have continued to wonder why the war has persisted for so long and how the rag-tag BokoHaram could occupy at least three states of the federation despite the fact that Nigeria's armed forces are known to be one of the best in the world (Hakeem, 2016). Though much of the criticism of the government's inability to defeat Boko Haram is based on issues of corruption and the presumed lack of commitment of Nigerian leaders to end the crisis, lack of incentives may also be an apparent weakness of the Nigerian state. However, the main issue is that the financial cost of defeating Boko Haram and other insurgents has risen over the past five years (Obadina, 2015).

This situation is significantly helped by the absence of transparency in the elite's use of resources. This lack of transparency creates high vulnerability for corruption, especially in arms procurement processes. In Nigeria, the military tends to be one of the most corrupt sectors of the government because of the level of secrecy often observed by the players in this sector. The prevailing deficiency in the way military budgets and arms purchases are decided and controlled have led to higher levels of inefficient military expenditure and inappropriate weapon purchases (Gbemre, 2015). Hitherto, the military institution attracted high levels of public trust which had some impact on the recent events. The fact that some of the inappropriate behaviors may also have been covered up has been especially shocking to members of the public. Even where there has been no apparent dishonesty, the leadership has been seen to have failed to inculcate a culture of high standards in tune with public expectations (Kelly, 2013:5).

This high standard is reinforced by an element of integrity. Without doubt, integrity is required for sound financial management and sound financial management of a country's security sector is key to having efficient and effective security forces that are capable of responding to the population's legitimate security needs (Gbemre, 2015). Paradoxically, the need for secrecy by the armed forces hinders the availability of information to the legislature in determining who is accountable to whom and for what (Segell, 1997:310). This problem is even more constraining especially where information about organizations and their activities should not be made public when such publicity could threaten citizens' vital interests. This stopping rule has implications for many different information policies and

working out its implications is often controversial (Archon, 2013:198). This stopping rule has ensured that both the general public and Nigerian security agencies have continued to suffer mis-use and misapplication of financial resources without accountability for diversion or illicit award of contracts (ICG, 2014:5). The question then is why is the situation as it is? The answer can be found in the nature of elite relations. This is aptly captured by Segell (1997:7):

> The process by which national security decisions are reached is influenced by industrial elites whose leverage is largely defined by the organizational positions that they enjoy within the design, production and control…where they sit affords them special standing and access to the central decision making centers. The government elites in control of those critical state functions have increasingly influenced and sway over scarce economic resources and relations with other nations.

Despite past reforms to rid the sector of corruption and make it more responsive, the state has failed to change those political institutions which introduce constraints on the exercise of power, or create pluralism to capture power and enrich one group at the expense of the rest (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013:344). Elites' hold on the system is facilitated by their capacity to create deeply entrenched extractive political institutions:

> Extractive political institutions lead to extractive economic institutions, which enrich a few at the expense of many. Those who benefit from extractive institutions thus have the resources to build their (private) armies and mercenaries, to buy their judges, and to rig their elections in order remain in power. They also have every interest in defending the system. Therefore, extractive economic institutions create the platform for extractive political institutions to persist. Power is valuable in regimes with extractive political institutions, because power is unchecked and brings riches (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013:34).

What can be gleaned from this observation is that society can be kept in a vulnerable state because of elite deals that are dubious compromises. In Nigeria, this kind of space has permitted selfish, mediocre, tribal leaders and opportunistic small money-minded people masquerading as leaders to continue to regenerate overtime in the system (Imhonopi and Ugochukwu, 2013:81). These groups of purposeless leaders have thrown the country over the precipice where now the people face general insecurity. This consequence has further revalidated the theoretical conclusion that elite behaviors have a causal effect on state outcomes (Mustafa, 2000).

This contrasts sharply with the right idea of responsibility as articulated by Heywood (2006:318) which holds that public leaders must resist pressures and risk unpopularity by pursuing policies designed to meet long-term public interests. By doing so they have to ensure that their actions are open to public scrutiny. This requirement has an important moral dimension which implies that public leaders must be willing to accept blame and bear an appropriate penalty if need be. Enforcing these standards in the public place is dependent on the public having access to information about the daily functioning of the government. In

the public space, information is a critical resource primarily because people need information to assess whether organizations protect their interests or predate upon them to choose which organizations to rely upon, to decide whether to oppose or support various organizations and to develop and execute strategies to affect and interact with them (Archon, 2013:184).

As such, the provision of such information is vital for societal development in all its ramifications: this is dependent on how it is processed and disseminated in ways that support or undermine the real utopian values of equality, freedom and democracy (Archon, 2013:184). In the area of public spending, information and authority to enforce change derives significantly from the budget (Manning and Parison, 2004:10). The provision of such information is governed by principles of democratic transparency. Democratic transparency both extends and critiques current enthusiasm about transparency. It urges us to conceptualize information politically as a resource to turn the behaviors of large organizations in socially beneficial ways (Archon, 2013:183). If this resource is scarce, pursuing the public good is compromised. To ensure that public good is at the core of a public leader's pursuit requires a transparent government. Transparency is essential because it is aimed at checking the actions of those in government; perpetuating an open government; creating informed citizens; garnering public participation; ensuring that the leadership is accountable to the people; enriching and facilitating good governance; and facilitating the avoidance of/or preventing a tyrannical rule in society (Archon, 2013:183).

Transparency ensures that the actions of public leaders are not only open in the public domain but they are in harmony with set standards. Lack of transparency about government activities is an overture for corruption and abuse of due process by public leadership. Transparency in and of itself does not necessarily bring accountability (Pope, 2007:162) it has to be enforced. And as such transparency is a solution for the problems that lack of information pose (Archon, 2013:183). It is a vital tool for good leadership. Transparency in governance consists of four principles:

i) Information about the operations and actions of organizations that affect citizens' interests should be rich, deep and readily available to the public.

ii) The amount of available information should be proportionate to the extent to which the organizations (government) jeopardize citizens' interests.

iii) Information should be organized and provided in ways that are accessible to individuals and groups that use the information.

iv) The social, political and economic structures of society should be organized in ways that allow individuals and groups to take action based on infotopia's public disclosures (Archon, 2013:183).

Real time information is vital for enforcing responsive leadership and it should encompass the following elements: i) availability --such that it is salient to individual values, offered in a timely manner that matches the habits of information acquisition and is compatible with individuals' economies of information processing and behavioral limitations; ii) proportionality --capturing appropriately product and service risks, domination risks and externalities, spillovers and systemic risks; iii) accessibility; and iv) actionability --it has to

respond to individual choices and the civic immune system (Archon, 2013:191-205). Thus, avoiding wasteful leadership requires high levels of transparency.

In this sense public spending must adhere to government-wide public expenditure management (PEM) principles of comprehensiveness, discipline, legitimacy, flexibility, predictability, contestability, honesty, information, transparency and accountability (Gbemre, 2015).Though these suggestions are system enriching, plausible and valid, it should be understood that they are difficult to apply, especially in a country that is elite driven and burdened under its extractive political and economic institutions. They provide no checks against abuses of power in such an environment, there is little check against the exercise of power, however distorted and sociopathic it may become (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013:344&343).

5. Conclusion

A study of politics is a study of influence and the influential. The influential are those who get the most of what there is to get, those who get the most are the elites; the rest are the masses (Rustow, 1966:690). If this influence is not properly regulated it has severe consequences for ordinary citizens. This observation is true as it is clearly depicted by the elite leadership struggle that played out in Nigeria from 2011 to 2015.Elite leadership struggle is not of recent origin, as in the past to the Nigerian-state had appropriated substantial resources which were diverted and used to boost officials' private incomes and also to buy legitimacy through the provision of patronage and public services. This structure of organization did not last long as the state structure began to disintegrate; by the 1980s, the crises of accumulation and governance had badly damaged Nigerian elite's abilities to control state institutions effectively. It became obvious that Nigeria was on the road to collapse (Thomson, 2007:211).

The continuation of this practice in present day Nigeria has ensured that the onslaught of insurgency groups with retrogressive consequences for human security has continued and the state's collapse has showed glaringly as national institutions of enforcement, execution and decision-making have failed. At the moment, there is no rule of law, no security from internal aggression and few public services (Thomson, 2007:211).These events have unequivocally exposed the observable gap between public leadership and responsibility. From the discussion in this article it is obvious that the occupation of the Nigerian state by the elite has not only resulted in her being a fractured state (ICG, 2014:1) but it has also weakened her institutions responsible for the articulation of public interest and capabilities to effectively respond to people's social demands.

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