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## Legitimate governance and visual arts as veritable tools for rebranding Nigeria

<sup>1</sup>Ekpo, Eno BASSEY, <sup>2</sup>Usang, Eteng ELOMA and <sup>3</sup>Oluwole, OLOIDI

<sup>1</sup>National Open University of Nigeria, Calabar Study Centre, Calabar, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Cross River University of Technology, Centre For General Studies, Calabar, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Department of Visual Arts & Technology, Cross River University of Technology (Crutech) Calabar

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### ABSTRACT

*In Nigeria, a decade after a political transition to democracy, citizens continue to face enormous challenges. More than 60% still wallow in poverty, corruption is endemic, HIV/AIDS is spreading like wildfire, unemployment is growing, about 70 million are illiterate and life expectancy year is decreasing. Besides, there are crises of legitimacy, constitutionalism, security, national questions, and dwindling international image. Democratic reversal rather than democratic consolidation is imminent in Nigeria. This study is therefore aimed at addressing this sad democratic situation of Nigeria by rebranding flawed electoral process in Nigeria, such that legislative governance could be a veritable democratic tool for the rebranding Nigeria image. To address this situation, a null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. A-5 items questionnaire was developed and validated in generating data, from where 200 (two hundred) respondents' responses were utilized. The design of the study was ex- post facto, while the generated data were analyzed using the Pearson product moment correlation ( $r$ ) and contingency chi-square ( $x$ ) statistical procedures. The analyses revealed that: There is significant relationship between legitimate governance and visual arts as veritable democratic tools for the rebranding Nigeria image. It was concluded that the rebranding image of Nigeria is significantly influenced by legitimate governance. The recommendation was that the government should see to it that current anti-corruption strategies must be strengthened to ensure total cleansing of the social malady among the mighty and the low in the country.*

**Keywords:** Governance, rebranding, veritable tool, democracy, legislature, Nigeria

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### INTRODUCTION

Lafenwa, (2009)[1] a decade after a political transition to democracy in Nigeria, citizens continue to face enormous challenges. More than 60% still wallow in poverty, corruption is endemic, HIV/AIDS is spreading like wildfire, unemployment is growing about 70 million are illiterate and life expectancy year is decreasing. Besides, there are crises of legitimacy, constitutionalism, security, national question, and dwindling international image. Although varied reasons have been adduced for these scenarios, it is assumed that most of these challenges facing democratic experiment in Africa particularly in Nigeria have their root in the weak legislative institutions.

There is democratic reversal rather than democratic consolidation with flawed electoral processes in Nigeria. It is important to point out that rampant electoral fraud is indicative of why democracy in this nation has continued to

degenerate at an alarming rate. The prevalence of electoral corruption and electoral violence in this country is a manifestation of a trapped democratic process (Robert Pastor, 1999)[2]

In other words, democracy characterized by an ability to respond to popular demands for socio-economic reforms and an ability to incorporate popular sector in any meaningful way; is still absent. According to Abrahamsen, (2000)[3] this is a key factor in explaining the social unrest and instability that has plagued many of the new democracy in sub-Saharan African, Nigeria the main focus.

Recently, over 70% of Nigerians are reported to be living below \$2 per day and the 2009 Global Corruption Barometer released by Transparency International listed Nigeria among the most politically corrupt nations in the world. The pertinent question at this point is still: Will democracy survive in the wake of electoral fraud and violence, unrest and instability, poverty and squalor as well as gradual erosion of democratic standard in Africa in general and in Nigeria in particular?

The legislature is the engine of democratic governance, as laws made by it set the agenda for the government and regulate the conduct of the people. Apart, its oversight and representational duties are critical to sustainable development which considered as one of the ends of democracy. Most of the studies on consolidation of democratic governance in developing countries place less prominence on the significance of the legislature in addressing challenges of democracy. This may be due to the perceived declining role of this institution of politics. Though there are negative connotations of the legislature as “rump” assemblies, theaters of illusion, or even mere rubber-stamp chambers, it remains a veritable hub of democracy. Lafenwa (2009) [1]

Abdulrasheed, A. (1999-2007)[4] the issue of corruption no doubt occupies a front burner on issues of governance across the world. The universality of its affliction and the extent to which it punctures social, political and economic development demands that national and international initiatives be harnessed towards eradication. At the national level, it requires appropriate law making bodies, such as the legislature, to put in place legislature that guarantee a corruption free society.

Although legislature may exercise different functions from time to time and depending on the political system, two are central and common to all legislatures in democracy without which democracy becomes messed up. These are the task of law making and acting as watchdog on behalf of the people. Conveying the sanctity of these roles deserves an extensive quote from Odinga (1994; 123), who noted that: If the constitution is the embodiment of the aspirations, ideas and collective will of the people, the parliament is the collective defender and watchdog of the aspiration, ideas and collective will of the people, if the constitution is the social contract between the people and their government, the parliament is the advocate for the people and the arbiter of the national interest. Indeed, if the constitution is (like the Bible, the Quran and other religious treatises) the covenant between the people and their leaders, the parliament is the repository and protector of the oracles of the political covenant and social contract between the people and their government. Abdul rasheed (1999-2007) [4]

For any democracy to have meaning or grow, the legislature not only make laws for the good ordering of the society (including appropriation laws) but must as well ensure that laws and orders are not flagrantly violated by other arms especially the executive. This it does by acting as watchdog over their actions and policies through its oversight function.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### **i. Purpose of the study**

There exist lots of uncomplimentary remarks about Nigeria both at home and at international level. This negative picture of Nigeria has so many deteriorating effects on the body politics of country when viewed from outside the shores of the nation, hence the need to become more proactive, in rebranding and reshaping the image of the country in other that foreign investors may change their minds and opinion about Nigeria.

The purpose of this study therefore, points to the fact that if Nigeria is considered not good enough it is as a result of false electoral process in Nigeria and the way we paint ourselves to the world. To be seen as normal, this paper provides many solutions as to what should be done, for instance, if Nigerians are said to be corrupt, dishonest,

intolerant, parochial etcetera, then that goes a long way to remind us that Nigeria is not what she ought to be, therefore, the study is aimed at providing us with the following specific objectives:

- a. Provide logical answers to why the image laundering project embarked upon by the Nigeria government has not achieved the desired result.
- b. Ensure relatively conducive environment that will be attractive to investors, tourist and Nigerians themselves.
- c. Provide ways to rekindle Nigeria social status in international community
- d. Highlight the effectiveness of legitimate governance in rebranding
- e. Make recommendation based on the research findings.

#### **ii. Hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between legitimate governance as a veritable democratic tool and rebranding Nigeria image.

#### **iii. The scope of the study**

The research work was carried out on 5 selected public institutions in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria.

The parastatals are:

1. Power Holding Company
2. Cross River State Water Board Ltd
3. Cross River State Internal Revenue Service
4. Industrial Training Fund
5. Cross River State Civil Service Commission

The scope of the study was delimited to addressing Nigeria battered image, the number of image laundering projects embarked upon by the government in the last 8 years and why it has not achieved the desired results.

#### **iv. Theoretical framework**

Attempt is made to define legislature and democratic governance, although the term “legislature bears different names like ‘Parliament’ ‘National Assembly’ ‘Congress’ and the like, there is no serious contention about its definition. It is generally referred to as an official body, usually chosen by election, with the power to make, change and repeal laws; as well as power to represent the constituent units and control government. Verrnon, B. (1991)[5]

Loewenberg, G. (1995)[6] conceptualizes legislatures as “assemblies of elected representatives from geographically defined constituencies, with lawmaking functions in the governmental process”. In the same vein, Jewell, (1997)[7] identified two features that distinguish legislatures from other branches of government. According to him, they (legislatures) have formal authority to pass laws, which are implemented and interpreted by the executive and judicial branches and their members normally are elected to represent various elements in the population.

According Mbone, (2003)[8] governance may refer to “the manner in which this institutional apparatus performs its role in terms of efficiency and effectiveness with respect to its outputs and outcomes respectively.

According to 1989 World Bank Report on Sub-Saharan Africa: from crisis to sustainable growth, governance is defined “as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development “.

Abrahamsen, R. (2008)[3] democratic governance can be understood in terms of its constitutive elements. For instance, the National League of cities defines democratic governance as “the art of governing a community in participatory, deliberative, and collaborative ways”.

Roberts and Edwards opined that democratic governance entails popular participation, absolute respect for the rule of law, a general guarantee of fundamental freedom which lubricate popular participation, periodic, competitive, free and fair elections with the vote of every citizen counting equally, respect for majority to acquiesce in the decision of the majority, accountability, guarantee of separation of power in practice, transparency and responsiveness in governance and opportunity for change of governance or any leadership found wanting.

Agbaje, A (2000)[9] recognizes the legislature as the most representative of the three branches of modern democratic institution. To him, “the roles performed by legislature could facilitate the smooth functioning of the democratic system or by default its decline and ultimate collapse”.

Claude, A. (1996)[10] It is adduced that “a powerful legislature is needed to engender a democracy in which people have some real decision making power over and above the formal consent of electoral choice”.

In their own analysis, Johnson and Nakamura,(1999)[11] pointed out that “a powerful legislature contribute to effective governance by performing important functions necessary to sustain democracy in complex and diverse societies”. To them, democratic societies need the arena for the airing of societal differences provided by representative assemblies with vital ties to the populace. They need institutions that are capable of writing good laws in both the political sense of getting agreement from participants, and in the technical sense of achieving the intended purpose.

Bello-Imam, (2004)[12] in a democracy, legislatures play three major roles: they express the will of the people, they pass laws, and they hold government, to account. They also control and administer national budgets, put differently, legislative institutions perform rule making, representational and oversight functions, which have serious implications for national development. These are fundamental responsibilities that needed to be effectively carried out, if challenges of democratization are to be addressed effectively. For example, the ultimate objective of the oversight function of the legislature is to promote accountability, transparency and responsiveness on the part of the executive and by extension check and balance his public actions.

#### **v. Research Design**

This research was concerned with the method that was used for data collection, organization and analyses. This research was however a combination of two approaches namely descriptive and inferential research methods. It is descriptive because certain facts were obtained from the primary and secondary sources which were described on the basis of inferences and results made from the analysis, policy recommendations were proffered by the nature of the research and the data gathered, tables and summary calculations were used in some cases to facilitate the analysis. In planning this research, the researchers made use of two principles sources of data gathering which are primary and secondary sources.

#### **vi. Sample size**

The population of thee study comprised all workers in the five parastatals listed earlier.

**Table 1 Distribution of study population by parastatals /cluster and gender Available population**

S/N		Male	Female	Total	(%)
1.	Internal Revenue Service	146	116	262	31.23
2.	Industrial Training Fund (ITF)	16	17	33	3.93
3.	Power Holding Co. (PHC)	144	56	200	3.84
4.	Civil Service Comm.	28	33	61	7.27
5.	CRS Water Board	246	37	283	33.73
<b>Total</b>		<b>580(63.13)</b>	<b>259(30.87)</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>100.00</b>

*Source: Researchers field survey 2014*

#### **vii. Procedure for data collection**

The questionnaire was administered to workers in their various places of work by the researchers with the aid of some research assistants. The instrument was completed and retrieved by the Administrators for analysis.

#### **viii. Method of data analysis**

The researchers collected the data and organized them according to the questions formulated for the study. The generated data were then subjected to statistical analysis procedures using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis for the relationship between legitimate governance and the rebranding Nigeria gospel in Nigeria.

**ix. Test of Hypothesis**

The hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between legitimate governance and visual arts as veritable tools for rebranding Nigeria image.

The dependent variable(y) in this hypothesis was rebranding Nigeria gospel, while the independent variable(x) was legitimate governance as a veritable democratic tool.

To test this hypothesis data for the independent variable was extracted from the data bank and summarized into means ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard derivation (SD) sums ( $\sum x \sum y$ ), squares ( $\sum x^2 \sum y^2$ ) and product  $\sum xy$ .

The summarized data were subjected to statistical analysis using the Pearson product moment correlation analysis procedure. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2

**Table2: Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis for the relationship between legitimate governance and the rebranding gospel.N=200**

Variable	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\sum x \sum y$	$\sum x^2 \sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	df	r-cal	p-val
Legitimate Governance(x)	12.521	2.182	2504	14678				
					6896	198	0.743	0.000
Rebranding Gospel(y)	14.326	3.141	2865.20	16146				

*Result significant at p<0.05,df=198,crit-r =0.195(2-tailed); Source: Field survey 2014*

**x. Discussion of the findings**

The statistical analysis of this study has made us to understand that there is significant relationship between legislative governance as a veritable democratic tool and the rebranding Nigeria gospel; the existence of legitimate governance as a veritable democratic tool, the more effective is the rebranding change among the populace.

These findings are in tune with Vernon, (1991) [5] who sees the term legislative as bearing different names like ‘Parliament’, ‘National Assembly’ ‘Congress’ there is no serious contention about the definition as it is generally referred to as an official body, usually chosen by election, with the power to make change, and repeal laws, as well as power to represent the constituent units and control government.

According to Mbone(2003)[8] governance “may refer to the manner in which this institutional apparatus performs its role in terms of efficiency and effective with respect to its output and outcome respectively”.

According to World Bank Report on sub-Sahara Africa(1989): From crisis to sustainable growth governance is defined “as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”. Thus, Abrahamsen,(2000)[2]democratic governance refers to a democratic mode of exercising powers and performing functions by the established institutions to achieve development goals.

In like manner, Roberts and Edwards opine that democratic governance entails popular participation, absolute respect for the rule of law, a general guarantee of fundamental freedoms which lubricate popular participation, periodic, complete, free and fair elections with the vote of every citizen counting equally, respect for majority rule as well as the readiness of majority to acquiesce in the decision of the majority, accountability, guarantee of separation of powers in practice, transparency and responsiveness in governance and opportunity for change of government or any leadership found wanting.

Consequently, the researchers also support the above authors in the sense that election should be fair and credible in order to make the rebranding gospel possible which is the major purpose of this study. Also elections is not a do or die affair therefore, individuals should accept the result of the elections with good faith for sustainable peace in the country.

**xi. Summary of the study**

This study was conducted to determine the effect of legislative governance as a veritable democratic tool and rebranding Nigeria image. To give the study a focus, one (1) research question was posed on the identified major independent variable of legislative governance as a veritable democratic tool.

This research question was transformed into a null hypothesis, which then directed the entire study. It was therefore recommended among others that to truly correct the negative image of Nigeria as a nation, the federal government should enhance projects aimed at laundering the image of the country by dealing with brand eroders including insecurity, corruption, poverty, illiteracy and electoral process among others.

#### **xii. Conclusion of the study**

On the basis of the statistical analysis of the null hypothesis formulated for this study, the following conclusions (which could be regarded as an addition to knowledge bank) were carried out.

There is significant relationship between legitimate governance as a veritable democratic tool, and the rebranding Nigeria image. The more refined the democratic process of governance, the better the rebranding Nigeria image.

#### **xiii. Recommendations**

Based on statistical revelations of the null hypothesis that guided the study, as well as the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- a. Considering the effects of legitimate governance that would serve as a veritable democratic tool, the government should see to it that current anti-corruption strategies must be strengthened to ensure total cleansing of the social malady among the mighty and the low in the country.
- b. Lastly, there is need for the citizens and civil society group to be more alive in serving as watchdogs for elected public office holders particularly, the legislature. It is expected that where these are achieved, it holds better prospect for the attainment of good government and democratic growth in Nigeria.

#### **xiv. Suggestions for further study**

This same research topic and other issues could further be researched into, but involving a wider research area (like senatorial districts, or a whole state) with a larger population and representative sample for a better generalization of results and findings.

The issue of security challenges and Northern governors' agitation could also be researched into, in any of the researcher's interest.

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