

# The Peoples Democratic Party and Governance in Nigeria, 1999- 2007

Oarhe Osumah\* and Augustine Ikelegbe\*\*

*\*Department of Public Administration, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Nigeria*

*\*\*Department of Political Science & Public Administration, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria*

**KEYWORDS** Political Party. Military Rule. Democracy. Governance

**ABSTRACT** There is a profound paradox about the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria. The party, which earned the respect and admiration of most Nigerians in the rare times of military rule, in the last eight years due to its politics and policies, is pretty loathed in the country. This paper based on direct study and use of secondary data examines the role of the PDP in governance in the last eight years. The paper revealed that the PDP government has grossly been disappointing in its performance in the management of the affairs of the Nigerian state. Thus in the last eight years, Nigerians have suffered deep crisis of expectation as there has been serious erosion, impairment and debasement of the values of governance as reflected in macro economic instability, widespread corruption, deepening democratic crisis, human rights violations, insecurity, numbing frustration, disillusionment and increasing lost of people's confidence in the PDP government. Arising from the foregoing, the paper recommended among others ways on how to reorganize the PDP for effective governance in Nigeria.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There is no denying the facts that under the long duration of the military rule that governance in Nigeria was generally a disaster. Under the military regime, government became a weapon of punishment, harassment, impoverishment, oppression and intimidation. This untoward situation generated stiff and consistent opposition from the critical political spectrum led by the pro-democracy activists and groups inclusive of the G-34, which later transformed into the PDP to put an end to military rule and subsequently, called for the enthronement of civilian democratic governance. Thus, the enthronement of civilian democratic governance in May 1999 generated a lot of hopes and expectations for many Nigerians. Civilian democratic rule was perceived as a better alternative of governance. Many Nigerians believed that the socio-economic problems of Nigeria was essentially military rule and these problems would go underground as soon as civilian democratic governance was enthroned.

Since the military disengaged from political power in May 1999, the PDP has dominated governance in Nigeria. After eight years of the party, which earned the respect and admiration of most Nigerians in the rare times of military rule, due to its politics and policies, is pretty loathed in the country. The average Nigerian encounters numbing frustration, disillusionment and psycho-

moral dislocation owing to the failure of the PDP government to deliver the expected fruits of democratic governance.

The task of this paper is to examine the role of the ruling PDP in the democratic governance of the Fourth Republic. To achieve the objective this paper is divided into eight sections. The first section introduces, the second explicates the major concepts such as political party, democracy and governance, the third focuses on the theoretical framework, the fourth explores the development of political parties in Nigeria, the fifth x-rays the origin and objectives of the PDP, the sixth summarizes the structures and organs of the PDP, the seventh assesses the PDP against its stated goals and values of good governance, and the eighth and final section concludes the discourse.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

The essence of conceptualization in any academic paper is to give operational definitions to some important concepts used in the discourse. As Rubbin and Babbie (1989) noted we specify what we mean when we use particular terms for purposes of facilitating their contextual operationalization and comprehension. In this paper, the conceptual construction of the concepts of political party, democracy and governance are undertaken for the purpose of ensuring clarity and easy comprehension of the discourse.

## 2.1 Concept of Political Party

Political party has been variously defined. For the purpose of this discourse political party is a voluntary association organized by the persons bond by common interests or aims, which seek to acquire or retain power through the election of its candidates into public office. In modern societies, political parties are distinct from other organizations. They rely on permanent structure and organization with defined offices and roles, which enhance their mobilization of supporters. Also they manifest hierarchical order from the grassroots to the highest level of government. More strikingly, political parties seek to put their candidates into public offices through election in order to realize the conscious objectives, which bond their members.

In modern societies, political parties have become essential to the development of political process. They have become veritable instruments or adjunct of democracy. In any democratic system, political parties are not only instruments for capturing political power but they are also vehicles for the aggregation of interests and ultimately the satisfaction of such interests through the control of government.

Obviously, political parties are crucial to the sustenance of democracy and governance. As Agbaje (1999) noted that the extent to which political parties aggregate freely, articulate, represent and organize determines the level of accountability in public life including access to and use of power as well as political performance. Merkl (1977: 99) summarized the basic functions of political parties as follows

- a). Recruitment and selection of leadership personnel for governmental offices
- b). Generation of programmes and policies for government
- 3). Coordination and control of governmental organs
- d). Social integration through satisfaction and reconciliation of group demands or the provision of common belief system or ideology
- e). Social integration of individuals by mobilization of support and by socialization
- f). Counter organization or subversion

## 2.2 Concept of Democracy

Like the concept of political party, democracy

has attracted varied definitions among scholars. For the purpose of this discourse, democracy is a form of government, which the supreme power of a political community rests on popular sovereignty. According to Oyovbaire (1987) democracy as a system of government which seeks to realize a generally recognized common good through a collective initiation, and discussion of policy question concerning public affairs and which delegated authority to agents to implement the broad decisions made by the people through majority vote.

As a principle of governance, democracy has been examined in both classical and contemporary contexts. In classical context, democracy is linked with the small city state of Anthen in Greece, where all adjudged male adult citizen is allowed to directly participate in the decision-making and implementation. Political philosophers articulated this form of democracy as a revolutionary antidote to dictatorship, monarchy, oligarchy, aristocracy and feudalism (Isekhure 1992). However, with the growing complexity of modern states in terms of vast territory and population, the classical democracy has become infeasible. Thus, in contemporary times, democracy has been referred to mean the expression of popular will of the political community through elected representatives. The contemporary democracy according to Raphael (1976) rests on "representative government." Here the ordinary citizen comes into the process only by casting vote in the favour of a representative or broad policy of a party. Decision on concrete issues is left to the body of representatives elected by the people and accountable to the people in the sense that it can be turned out at the next election and be replaced by a different group.

In contemporary times, democracy has remained as the most preferred form of government. The major hallmarks of democracy include popular participation, supremacy of majority will but with respect for minority rights, constitution of government by popular choices through periodic election, competition for public office, freedom of press and association, incorruptible judiciary, respect for the rule of law, open and accountable government, and existence of competing political parties whose programmes and candidates provide for alternatives for voters.

As a form of government, democracy appeals to both the government and the governed alike. First, it assures equality by opposing dis-

crimutory practices and abuse of power. Also, it assures individual liberties through constitutional safeguards such as freedom of association and free press. Furthermore, it guarantees popular participation in government.

The above values of democracy are difficult to entrench. Democracy is costly to operate and its processes of formulating policies are tortuous. Also, it serves the interest of the propertied class rather than wishes of the majority. Furthermore, it does not guarantee equality in practice (Agarwal et al. 1994). Granted that democracy cannot be regarded as a perfect system, it remains the most cherished form of government in the world today. It still offers better prospects and kindles greater hopes than any other form of government in the contemporary world.

The elements of democracy are fundamental requirements necessary for effective governance. For the success of democracy in practice, the people must desire it and be prepared to work for it and make necessary sacrifice for it. There must be tolerance for opposing views, rationality, openness and no dogmatism, militarism or authoritarian tradition. The leadership must be comprised by men of unimpeachable character and outstanding initiative rather than those lacking sense of responsibility, moral value and self-enlightenment (Agarwal et al. 1994)

### 2.3 Concept of Governance

In the literature of political science, governance has been regarded as a nebulous, ambiguous and vague. In this discourse, we have adopted Dozie's definition of the term. Governance according to Dozie (1999), relates to the totality of processes entailed in the exercise and management of the collective will of a people or group under a defined authority or constitution. Governance is not only concerned with political activities and institutions such as economy, family, and other human congregations. Thus, governance can be regarded as the provision of leadership throughout a given society for the actualization of common good.

Governance is synonymous with good government. For purpose of contemporary relevance governance needs to be qualified good (Hyden 1999). Good governance is measure in terms of certain attributes such as popular participation, transparency, accountability, effectiveness, equality, respect for the rule of law, political

stability, peace and security of lives and properties, economic self-dependency, and social welfare system. Governance is also expected to provide the mechanisms, processes and institutions for citizens and group to articulate their interests, exercise their rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences (Akande, 2004: 11). Some of the major elements of good governance include the following:

**Participation:** involvement of stakeholders in priority setting, policy-making and resource allocation as well as access to public goods and services.

**Equity and Fairness:** application of rules in equitable manner to all irrespective of ones' class or caste.

**Transparency:** clarity of public decision and openness to scrutiny of citizens.

**Decency or Respect for the Rule of Law:** enactment and administration of rules without compromising the people.

**Accountability:** to hold rulers answerable for their action or inaction and depending on the answer to be subjected to potential sanction both positive and negative.

**Efficiency and Effectiveness:** transacting public business in a manner that produces reasonable and sustainable development in the state.

### 2.4 Political Party, Democracy and Governance: What Nexus?

The concepts of political party, democracy and governance are intrinsically inter-linked, interwoven, inter-connected and inter-related as well as inter-dependent. Democracy and governance are both based on salient values and elements such as participation, collective action, legitimacy, general acceptability and accountability. Although both democracy and good governance possess common elements, they cannot be used synonymously. A democratic government may not be a good government in practical realities. Meanwhile, good governance cannot be guaranteed without the fundamental elements of democracy, as there can be no democracy without well-organized political parties. Generally, political party is very essential to democracy and good governance. It constitutes a central instrument of democracy and governance. It provides the means of promoting accountability, collective action, popular partici-

pation, inclusiveness, legitimacy and accountability through the integration of their competing principles, ideologies and goals for eventual control of the government in the state. Political parties are the intermediate institutions mediating the affairs of both the mass of the people and personnel and agencies that exercise state power. They provide the necessary stimuli, which dispose people to participate. They receive information from the state, package and disseminate through their structures to the mass of the citizenry. On the other hand, they aggregate demands from the mass of the people and channel them to political actors for processing. In addition, they provide political education, which provides the dynamic for popular participation. According to Clinton Rossiter "the condition of a nation's parties is the most evidence available of the health of its democratic values and institutions (government) (Akinwale 1999: 211). On the other hand, democracy and governance galvanize the citizenry to associate with political parties as mechanisms of relating to the political processes and government

The intrinsic relationship of a party to democracy and governance depends on its structure, organization programmes, conduct, quality of candidates (members) and its general acceptability to the citizens. The nature and conduct and conditions of political party significantly affect democratic order. The absence of a party discipline makes it difficult to encourage the citizen's active participation in the management of the state affairs. According to Ihonvbere (1996) party discipline evaporates as cliques, pursuing narrow and shallow agendas appropriate state power and use it to settle old scores, intimidate the opposition and steal public resources.

### **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS**

The goal theory is adopted as the theoretical umbrella for this discourse. The development of this theory is linked with Max Weber and Roberts Michels. However, Talcott Parsons popularized the theory by elevating goals of organization to central position as the *raison d'être* of all organization (Okoli and Okoli 1990: 196). This theory contends that all organizational activities are oriented and directed toward the achievement of set goals. Goals are regarded as value premises, which serve as the inputs to decisions. Goals are

essential elements of organization. To be effective organization must clearly spell out its goals, objectives and strategies (Mullins 1996: 292).

This theory possesses several appealing values. One of such striking values of the theory is that it provides the basis for standard performance and for passing judgement on the effectiveness of organization. Also it provides guidelines for decision-making and justification for actions taken. It also helps to develop commitment of individuals and groups to the activities of the organization. As a result attention is directed on purposeful behaviour and basis for motivation and reward systems. It is the basis for objectives and policies of the organization. Furthermore, it gives indication of what the organization is really like, its true nature and character both for members and for people outside the organization (Mullins 1996: 292).

Situated in the context of our discourse the theory is quite relevant to comprehending the true nature, character and behaviour of political party like the PDP in the political process and the extent it succeeds in meeting the salient qualities of good governance through the control of the institutions of government.

### **4. DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA**

The development of anti-colonialist and nationalist struggle and in particular the constitutional reforms prompted and fuelled the early formation of political parties in Nigeria. Herbert Macaulay one of the foremost Nigerian nationalists formed the first-ever political party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) following the constitutional changes introduced by the Clifford Constitution of 1922. The constitution introduced the elective principle into four legislative seats in the Colony of Southern Protectorate of Nigeria (3 from Lagos and 1 from Calabar). The NNDP was not national in its outlook. Its activities were confined to the Lagos area. Until the emergence of the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) in 1937, the NNDP contested and won election into the Lagos Municipal Council and the 3 Lagos elective seats. The NYM contested the 1938 election into the 3 Lagos elective seats. It also won all elective seats in the Lagos municipal council election of 1943. The strength or advantage of the NYM over the NNDP was its more national spread in terms of membership. Prominent members

of the NYM included Chief H.O. Davies, Ernest Okoli, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Samuel Akinsaya and Chief Akintola. However, the strength of the NYM declined following the introduction of ethnic and tribal sentiment sequel to the disagreement between Awolowo and Azikiwe over appointment. This disagreement led to the resignation and exit of Azikiwe and other Ibos from the party leaving the movement to a more or less Yoruba affairs (Okhaide 1995).

In 1944 Herbert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikiwe led the Ibo Union to form the National Council of Nigerians and Cameroon (NCNC). The NCNC pressurized the colonial government for greater participation of the people of the various parts of Nigeria in their own governance. The constitutional changes, which liberalized the political space for Nigerians between 1946 and 1950, paved way for the emergence of other political parties such as the Action Group (AG), Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) in 1951. Like the NCNC, AG and the NPC grew out of ethno-religious and cultural associations, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa formed the AG, while the Jamiyya Mutanem Arewa formed both the NEPU and NPC (Ikelegbe 1996: 130-136). These new political parties with the NCNC were the major political parties in Nigeria until the January 15, 1966 when the maiden military coup took place. The parties were regional bound. Respectively, the NCNC, AG and NPC operated mainly in the Eastern, Western and Northern Regions. It is instructive to note that apart from major political parties there were other smaller parties some of which broke away from the major ones. These parties included the United Middle Belt Congress, (UMBC) led by Joseph Tarka, the United National Independent Party led by Professor Eyo Ita and the Dynamic Party led by Chike Obi. By January 1966, when the military punctuated the First Republic there were 78 minority political parties representing ethnic, religious, professional and ideological interests. These parties tapped their energy from their electoral alliances with the major parties from other major regions. The NCNC and AG and their client parties NEPU, UMBC, Zamfara Commoners Party, Kano Peoples Party (KPP), the Northern Progressive Front formed the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). The NPC aligned with smaller parties like the NNNDP, the Niger Delta Congress (NDC), the Mid-West

Democratic Front (MDF) and the Dynamic Party to form the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The motivation of these "client parties" was the agitation for state creation (Ikelegbe 1996; Osaghae 2002).

In the Second Republic, five political parties were registered in December 1978 having supposedly satisfied the stipulated requirements for registration. The registered parties were the Great Nigerian Peoples Party (GNPP), the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) the Nigeria Peoples Party (NPP), the People Redemption Party (PRP), and the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). Later in 1983 a sixth party, the National Advanced Party (NAP) was registered. The NPN controlled the Federal Government and most states of the Federation. The other parties such as the UPN, GNPP, the NNPP and PRP controlled other states until December 31, 1983 when the military coup, which truncated the Second Republic, occurred. The Second Republic parties were said to be a reincarnation of the parties of the First Republic. Respectively, the NPN, the NPP and the UPN were reincarnate of the NPC, the NCNC and the AG.

In the aborted Third Republic, two political parties, the National Republic Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) were decreed into existence after the cancellation or dissolution of the political associations, which bade for registration on the ground that they were constituted along ethnic and religious lines. The two political parties, which were described as government parastatals had their programmes, constitutions, structures, funds and organization determined by the Federal Government. Government officials supervised the primaries, state congresses and national conventions of the two parties. The NRC controlled the government in 16 states against 14 of the SDP. However, the SDP had majority seats in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. Respectively, the SDP and the NRC won 52 and 37 Senatorial seats as well as 314 and 275 seats in the House of Representatives. The two parties were dissolved on November 17, 1993 when General Sani Abacha sacked Interim National Government (ING) constituted by the General Ibrahim Babandiga after the annulment of the historic June 12, 1993 Presidential election.

In the journey towards the Fourth Republic, General Sani Abacha registered five political parties, the Congress National Consensus (CNC), Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN), the Grassroots Democratic Movement (GDM), the National

Conscience Party of Nigeria (NCPN), and the United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP). The activities of these parties were fettered and goaded. The political leaders of the five parties, which critics described as “five leprosy fingers” bore the implicit stamp of military consent and cronyism. The five parties had adopted Abacha as a consensus candidate for the August 1998 Presidential Election before his sudden demise on June 8, 1998.

The five political parties were dissolved under General Abubakar Abdulsalam administration in the restarted transition programme to the Fourth Republic. Initially, nine political associations were provisionally registered to contest the Local Government elections for chairmen and councilors in December 1998. Based on the performance of the political associations in the elections, three political parties; the All Peoples Party (APP), the Alliance for Democracy (AD) and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) were registered. The three parties contested the presidential governorship, state and national assemblies of the Fourth Republic in the 1999 general elections.

Before the 2003 general elections INEC registered additional twenty-seven (27) political parties, bringing the total number of registered political parties to thirty (30). A large number of the parties are struggling to survive. Only 16 out of the 30 political parties registered before 2003 general elections fielded candidates for the presidential election. And only five of the new parties – Justice Party (JP), All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), National Conscience Party (NCP), United Nigeria Peoples party (UNPP) and Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) made noticeable showing at the elections (Obia 2006: 9-10).

After the 2003 general elections, there has been further proliferation of parties. Today there are 50 registered political parties jostling for the 2007 general elections. Several of the other new parties such as the Movement for the Restoration and Defense of Democracy (MRDD), Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD), Action Congress (AC) among others are formed by some discontented elements from the older parties like the PDP.

## 5. ORIGIN AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PDP

The PDP emerged on July 28, 1998 from a coalition of leaders of like-minded political associations such as the G-34 and the People

Democratic Movement (PDM). The PDP which prides itself as the largest political party in Africa was one of the initial nine provincially registered parties under General Abubakar Abdulsalam administration based on its satisfactory performance in the December 5, 1998 local government elections in which the chairmen and councilors were elected in all the local government councils in Nigeria. Essentially, the origin of the PDP is connected with the political developments such as the increased liberalization of participation and competitive electoral politics after prolonged years of military governance. It had in its membership the cream of Nigerian political elite which included a pack of former military officers most of whom were in the corridors of powers in the immediate years (Olarenwaju 1999: 15). The circumstance surrounding the emergence of the PDP are quite reflected in its mission, vision and objectives, which are outlined as follow

1. Maintain and preserve the integrity, unity and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as one indivisible political entity.
2. Ensure genuine restoration, permanent entrenchment and practice of democracy, the rule of law, equity and social justice.
3. Promote national integration and harmonious co-existence of the diverse communities of our society.
4. Build an egalitarian society founded on the principle of freedom, equality and justice,
5. Uphold the independence of the judiciary, a free press, as well as uphold the freedom of speech and of association.
6. Ensure that only competent, dedicated, patriotic and credible candidates are sponsored for elective offices at all levels of governance.
7. Ensure that the programmes of the party at all levels conform at all times with the fundamental objectives, and directive principles of state policy, as contained in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as well as conform at all times with ethic, aim and objectives of the constitution of the party,
8. Promote mutual respect for and understanding of the religious, traditional and cultural heritage of the various communities of our nation.
9. Eradicate illiteracy in our society and to promote learning and research, science and technology.
10. Build, promote, sustain and consolidate

political economic and social independence and self-respect for all Nigerians.

11. Cooperation with Africans and other nationalist movements and organizations working for the eradication of imperialism, neo-colonialism, racism and to strive relentlessly towards African Unity, as well as greater understanding and cohesion among all peoples of African descent.
12. Cooperate with all members nations in promoting the course of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Organization of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU), the Commonwealth and United Nations Organization (UNO) and other international and regional groupings shall be in the best interest of Nigeria and Africa, and help to find just and peaceful solutions for international disputes.
13. Build a political culture in which all Nigerians are equal members where each contributes according to his ability, where no one person dominates and where, no political party belongs to one individual.
14. Undertake other activities, which in the opinion of the party are conducive to the attainment of the aims of objectives of the party.

At this juncture, a curious mind may pose some critical questions such as how does the circumstance leading to the emergence of the PDP shapes and influences its set objectives? Is there any significant connection between the party's set objectives and the fundamental elements of good governance? If any, to what extent has the party since 1999 when it gained control over the machinery of government pursued and realized the set objectives?

We could say that there is so much connection between the political development leading to the formation of the PDP and its set objectives. A hindsight benefit revealed that the PDP essentially emerged in response to the political developments especially increase liberalism, and political participation after prolonged years of military misadministration with serious erosion of the fundamental elements of democracy and good governance. After about fourteen years (1983-1998) of unbroken military rule, Nigerians encountered anesthetizing frustration, disillusionment and disenchantment. They were not only tired but were desirous to ease the military out of power (Olawale, 1998: 15). It was this increasing need to consciously enthrone a government that

emerges from the threshold of fair and credible popular democracy and poised to meet the yearnings of the people that perhaps influenced the objectives of the PDP.

As can be gleaned from the above the PDP seeks to consolidate democratic culture, promote constitutionality, social justice, and freedom of the mass media, independence of the judiciary, socio-economic self-sufficiency and credible leadership. These objectives are in consonance with the elements of democracy and good governance. However the extent to which the activities of the ruling-party has been undertaking since its inauguration in May 1999 is a different ball game as analyzed in the latter part of this discourse.

### 5.1 The Structure and Organs of the PDP

Political parties are intricate institutions possessing both formal and informal structures (Alapiki 2004). The structures and organs of political parties help them to effectively aggregate and process the diverse societal demands. Thus, as a matter of practical necessity every political party must possess structures and organs. The structure and organization of the PDP is hierarchical, arranged from the Ward through the Local Government Area, State, Zones and National level. Based on article 10 of the party's constitution its organs are constituted as follow (i) Ward Executive, (ii) Ward Congress (iii) Local government Executive Committee (iv) Local Government Area Congress (v) Senatorial District Working Committee (vi) State Caucus (vii) State Working Committee (viii) State Executive (ix) State Congress (x) Zonal Working Committee (xi) National Caucus (xii) National Working Committee (xiii) National Executive Committee (xiv) Board of Trustees (xv) National Convention.

Although it is contended that there is no universal pattern of the structure and organs of political parties, all political parties like large organizations are inherently oligarchical. This means that the leadership of any party naturally devolves on a small number of leaders. Thus, the measure of success of a political party is a product of its leadership constitution, capability, appeal and function. The leadership of a political party establishes the general setting of its members and the focus of their solidarity. The conduct and manifest tendencies of the leadership of the PDP are revealed in the next section of this discourse.

## **6. ASSESSMENT OF THE PDP AGAINST SOME OF ITS OBJECTIVES AND THE VALUES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE**

The goal theory contends that goals are the essential elements of organization. For organization to be effective must clearly spell out its goals and objectives. It further contends that the activities of all organization are oriented and directed toward the realization of set goals. Thus, the assessment of the performance of the organization should be done on the basis of its set goals. It is in recognition of the assertion of the goal theory that we have attempted to assess the PDP against its set goals in the context of the values of good governance in the succeeding subsections.

### **6.1 The PDP and Democratic Consolidation**

A core element required for good governance is democratic consolidation. Free and fair election is quintessential for democratic consolidation. Under the PDP government only little progress has been made in the electoral process. It conducted two general elections in 2003 and 2007 respectively. Thus, it has sustained the nation's nascent democracy for as long as eight years. This is first ever in the political history of Nigeria. However, the last eight years of the PDP rule witnessed a profound assault, rape, debasement, travesty and reversal of democracy. The two general elections in 2003 and 2007 held under the PDP government were characterized by notorious electoral malpractices. The general election were like warfare with a flurry of intimidation, thuggery, outright violence, widespread electoral irregularities, horse trading, ballot box stuffing with thumb printed ballot papers, ballot box snatching, election rigging, manipulation and falsification of election outcome and announcement of preferred candidates as winners. The outcome of the two elections did not reflect the preferences of the electorate rather than the outlook of the PDP government.

Within the PDP there has also been serious erosion of democratic values. Its primaries, conventions and congresses, which are the democratic institutions for nominating party candidates for elections and electing party officials, have little been regarded. The PDP government witnessed the development of godfatherism, babaiism, personality and military

cult of the highest dimension. Horse-trading, browbeating, talk to step aside culture and imposition of preferred candidates of the god-fathers in the party have characterized the party primaries, congresses and conventions. Some of the party leaders tell candidates nursing ambition with air of finality to forget it because there is no vacancy for their desired political offices (Eni 2006: 40; Owuda 2005: 9). These situations in the party no doubt progressively restrict the democratic space and denude the nation of credible leaders required for providing good government.

The implications of electoral fraud for democracy and governance are quite numerous and grave. First, it has been contended that as a result of electoral fraud the people lost faith in the electoral process more so in opposition politics (Obia 2006: B9-10). Furthermore, electoral fraud strips election of its essence as an instrument of holding leaders accountable to the electorate. More so election rigging serve as fundamental disincentive to the existence of formidable opposition needed to keep the ruling party on its toe. This is because where election rigging becomes the ultimate means of acquiring, retaining power or changing government the party with little advantage of winning vide rigging will have no basis of existence. Furthermore, the government formed in the basis of electoral fraud can hardly endure talk-less of providing effective government. This is because election rigging strips government of the legitimacy that popular election bestows.

### **6.2 The PDP and Opposition Parties**

The PDP government liberalized the political space for opposition. The party registration laws were reformed. This paved way for the growth of political parties from 3 in 1999 to 50 in 2007. The processes of governance of the PDP since 1999 have also led to the flowering of mass media and civil society organizations. As at 2005, Nigeria was said to have over 60 newspapers and magazines, 40 television stations and about 50 radio stations. Most of the mass media are privately owned (Economics Commission For Africa 2005). To a large extent, this enhanced the information flow on national and local issues.

Nevertheless, the PDP government was at several times hostile to opposition parties, critics, mass media and civil society groups. Many of the opposition parties are struggling to survive.



About two-thirds of them are in the danger of going into extinction. The PDP maintains so much hegemony over other opposition political parties. Granted that the PDP further liberalized the political space for opposition through development of multiplicity of political parties, the multiparty system, which the PDP has encouraged, is never a liberal imperative for genuine democratic process. Its multiparty system is and has been a ploy to consolidate dominance over opposition parties. It has in fact been contended that the multiplicity of parties turn out to be the undoing of the opposition as it created more chances for different political tendencies finding their voices elsewhere (Okanlawon 2006: 38).

Furthermore, the PDP took advantage of its control of the federal bureaucracy and executive power. The PDP poached members of the other parties to whittle down their potency. Through the weapon of appointment the PDP has broken the ranks of the other parties especially the AD and ANPP. Members of the opposition parties who have held government appointments find it difficult to resist the temptation of belonging to the ruling PDP (Epia 2003: 11; Obia 2006: B9-10). Also through poaching, the PDP government has been able to infiltrate the Nigerian Bodies of Students. The institutions of higher learning which used to be the hotbed of opposition activism with recent hobnobbing with the PDP appears considerably doused in their fire of activism (Obia 2006: B9-10). There were also some cases of mistrust and demonstration of hostility against mass media in the last eight years. For instance, the African Independent Television station was shutdown for its critical comments on the ill-famed third term agenda of the PDP government. Similarly, the PDP government invoked the outdated sedition law against some journalists such as Gbenga Aruleba of the African Independent Television and Rotimi Durojaiye of Daily Independent newspaper for their comments on the state of the Nigeria's presidential aircraft. But for the intervention of well meaning Nigerians they would have been convicted. Another challenge to the freedom of press was the failure of the PDP government to pass the Freedom of Information Bill, which would have given the public and the media access to information on governmental activities.

Also, the ruling-PDP has been alleged of sponsoring internal squabbles and crises in the opposition parties. The PDP/AD electoral pact

made the AD to lose five out of the six states in general elections. In the 2003 general elections, the AD lost in its traditional stronghold to the PDP (Obia 2006: B9-10). The PDP also bayed for blood of its rival political parties. During the campaigns for the 2003 and 2007 general elections the PDP supporters clashed with several other rival political parties.

Besides, the PDP has starved the opposition parties of legitimate funding (Obia 2006: B9-10). Under the PDP led government, opposition parties have been denied police permit to hold rallies. While police and other security operatives have broken some rallies organized by opposition parties in defiance of police permit. For instance, the CNPP was denied police permit to hold rally in protest of the questionable victory of the PDP in the 2003 general election while the rally that was organized in Kano state without police permit was broken into by the police and the organizers were brutalized and teargassed. Former President of the Senate and a former chieftain of the ANPP Chuba Okadigbo died as a result of alleged complications from the ruthless police brutality. Apart from opposition political parties, the PDP has also denied civil society and organized labour opportunities (police permit) to hold rallies in protest of unpopular PDP government policies. During the frequent hike in the prices of petroleum products the PDP government deployed the police to break rallies and protest marches organized by a coalition of the civil society and the organized labour. Many of the protesters were beaten up, arrested and detained by the police on spurious charges.

### 6.3 The PDP and Conflict Management

Since its first tenure the party has been become an academy of intrigues ridden by lack of coherence, cordiality, internal wrangling, squabble, divisions, schisms and factions. The various levels of party hierarchy have been factionalized. At the national level of the party a schism developed between President Olusegun Obasanjo and his vice Alhaji Abubakar Atiku. The PDP also had problems at the various state branches such as Edo, Delta, Oyo, Imo, Anambra, Ekiti, Kwara, and Plateau. The crises in the states and other levels of the party are induced by the attitude of the PDP headquarter to control or influence the machinery of the party state level.

The inability of the party to manage these

self-inflicted antagonisms, crises and conflicts have resulted in the withdrawal or decamping of many of the founding fathers and chieftains of the party among others are chiefs Awoniyi, Edwin Ume-Ezeoke, Bamanga Tukur, Audu Ogbе former chairman of the PDP, Vincent Ogbulafor, former executive secretary of the PDP, Olabode George, former Vice Chairman of the PDP West Zone. The heightened level of conflicts within the PDP resulted also in the establishment of parallel PDP secretariats at the national level and in most states such as Delta, Edo, and Imo. The problem also manifested in divisions in the state houses of assembly into two blocs along the lines of the rivalry within the party. In Delta State, the crisis between the Obielum faction backed by the national government in Abuja and the Governor James Ibori faction had resulted in the impeachment of Honourable Young Daniel Igburde, speaker of the State House of Assembly and an ardent loyalist of Ibori. Also in Edo State, the crisis of confidence and in-fighting between Chief Anthony Anenih and Governor Lucky Igbinedion had also degenerated into the split of the state Legislature into two blocs, which warranted the change of its leadership twice. (Agwu 2003: C8; Akhigbe 2004). Also in Plateau State, the schism between the Deputy Senate President and an Obasanjo right hand man Alhaji Ibrahim Mantu, former Science and Technology Minister Paullen Tallen and Fidelis Tapgun, Industries Minister on the one hand and the State Governor Chief Joshua Chidi Dariye on the other hand resulted in the split of the State House of Assembly into two blocs and the eventual unconstitutional impeachment of Governor Dariye for alleged gross misconduct by eight of the law makers under the leadership of Hon. Michael Dapalong backed by national PDP (Onuorah et al. 2006: 1 & 2).

In resolving these conflicts the PDP had demonstrated preferences for the coercive or military strategies such as suspension, expulsion, intimidation, denial of privileges and outright violence against perceived political enemies. In Ogun state, the schism between Governor Gbenga Daniel and a PDP senator, Ibikunle Amosun resulted in the masterminding of impeachment of two of its local council chairmen – those of Abeokuta South and Imeko Afrom Local Government Councils loyal to the senator ((Esajere 2005: 19 & 21; Odunaro 2006: B6). In fact the PDP has been imputed with so much

atrocities. Most of the high profile political killings in Nigeria since the inception of this democratic experiment are believed to have the imprimatur of the PDP machine (Okumo 2004: 19). Apparently, it is the resort to coercive measures rather consensus and peace building in resolving the conflicts that prompted Wole Soyinka with particular reference to the Anambra State PDP crisis in an open letter to the President to note thus

“I repeat, indeed, I insist that there is a nest of killers within the PDP. From Ngige’s recent experience, the well-laid plans for his ultimate fate, it is evident that the vipers in the nest do not only strike outwards but inwards” (Okumo 2004: 19).

Apparently, the creeping crises within the PDP at the various levels are antithetical to democratic consolidation and good governance in Nigeria. Two implications can be drawn from the widespread crises in the PDP and the style it adopts in managing them. First, the various crises apart from heating up the polity, undermines the conditions necessary for the success of democracy and implementation of development programmes of the government. The various crises within the PDP create intense atmosphere across the country, and distracts the focus and direction of the elected representatives in government. As Mumeh (2006) noted “the present leadership can’t think, act and work together. It is clear now that Nigeria is at crossroad because we have strange bedfellows operating in a parallel line as leaders in government”. Second, the coercive or quasi military measures the PDP has adopted in resolving these crises within it no doubt poses great danger to the rights of Nigerian across the country and the prospect for peaceful election as well as scaring decent persons from vying for elective position thus leaving the governance of the country in the hands of mediocre, and midnight rascals.

#### **6.4 Respect for Fundamental Human Rights**

Although there has been significant difference between the human rights situation since inauguration of the PDP government in May 1999 than it was under the immediate years of military rule, the government has perpetrated several cases of violation of human rights of many Nigerians. Extra-judicial killings by the police and military personnel have been rife. The Apo killings

of 2005 in Abuja, the Okigwe killings in Anambra state, the police brutality against anti-fuel price hike protesters and state violence and bombardment of communities in the Niger Delta region, Zarki Biam in Benue State, Odi in Bayelsa state are classic cases of human rights violation under the PDP government.

### **6.5 Independence of the Judiciary**

The judiciary under the PDP government has enjoyed considerable independence from the other branches of government. Some of the major landslide rulings and pronouncements of the Supreme Court in some cases involving the federal government and other levels of government ending in the favor of the latter indicate this. However, the PDP hardly obeys the court ruling on cases involving it and some of its members or the opposition.

### **6.6 Constitutionality of Government**

Under the PDP there has been low adherence to the constitution and due process of governance. The PDP federal government in many instances took certain decisions and actions, which utterly and brazenly violates the constitutional rights of the states and legislative power. The PDP government has been characterized by personalized rule and executive dominance. The legislature charged with oversight administrative functions has been recklessly marginalized, compromised and undermined in making major decisions. There are many major decisions that were taken unilaterally by the executive before consulting the National Assembly. For instance, the PDP government embarked on several extra budgetary spending without the consent or approval of the National Assembly. The PDP Federal government withheld Lagos state local government council funds over its creation of more local councils until the intervention of the Supreme Court. Also, the same illegality was committed in Plateau state when the federal government was losing the battle against Governor Joshua Dariye, and in Ekiti state after the National Assembly failed to form quorum to deliberate on extending the tenure of Major General Tunji Olurin at the expiration of the first six months emergency rule as the sole administrator.

There were sporadic impeachment threats and processes against the president for constitutional

breaches, personalization of government, unconventional approach and reactions to issues. In the first term of the PDP government, the House of Representatives compiled about 15 constitutional breaches to underscore the motion for the impeachment of the president on August 18, 2002. It took the intervention of Shehu Shagari to persuade the legislators to drop the impeachment bid against the PDP presidency, which had then reached a delicate stage. Also, in 2000, the National Assembly passed a vote of no confidence against the PDP Presidency, which it shelved only to respect Bill Clinton who was on a visit to Nigeria. In November 2005 the House of Representatives served impeachment notice on the president (Lasisi 2007: 11). The PDP presidency sought to influence the National Assembly to take decisions that were not necessarily in the national interest through the offer or promise of financial inducement, lobbying, resort to plebiscitary appeals of creating parliamentary irresponsibility or rascality in the minds of the public by the president, and sometimes intimidations (Umar 2002: 1&4; Lohor 2002: 1; Okocha 2002: 8).

The state governments in the face of most of these constitutional violations have been pliant (Vanguard 14/9/07: 36). Apart from the Lagos State Governor Bola Tinubu and his counterpart in Abia State, Chief Orji Kalu other governors that served with Obasanjo had accepted his Babaism (kabiyaism) {kingship or domineering posture}.

### **6.7 Accountability and Transparency**

Governance under the PDP has witnessed the establishment of several anticrime and corruption commissions such as, the cyber-crime commission, the code of conduct bureau, the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Crimes Commission (ICPC) and Economic Financial and Crimes Commission (EFCC). Although these commissions have served as instruments of restraints on the corrupt tendencies and practices of the public officeholders, their impact is still less than expected at their often public and vocal launch. Corruption still undermines economic policies and the efficient functioning of state institutions. In fact, there is the perception that the anti-crimes and corruption laws are not evenly applied to all Nigerians. There has been the colony of the untouchables never subjected to scrutiny. Moreover, the anti-graft crusade has been suborned as instrument for witch-hunt, blackmail, intimidation and political vendetta.

### **6.8 The PDP And Economic Reforms Performance**

When the PDP took over the rein of governance in 1999 the Nigerian economy was in comatose. In response to the problem, the PDP government has embarked on myriad of programmes, policies and reforms of the public sectors, financial and monetary institutions to enhance macroeconomic stability and public financial management as well as resource mobilization. Some of these economic reforms include the promulgation of privatization and commercialization act, bank consolidation, budgetary control, eradication of poverty and pursuit of foreign direct investment. The backlash effects of most of these economic reforms have been high cost of living and unemployment due to mass rationalization of the workforce.

The implementation of the privatization and commercialization programme has mainly helped some powerful Nigerians to pocket our national inheritance like the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) and National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) now Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN). The privatization programmes also resulted in the mass retrenchment of workers in the affected establishments. Also the Poverty Alleviation Programme of the Federal Government has been fundamentally flawed. Chunk of financial resource committed for the implementation of the poverty alleviation could not be accounted for (Osumah and Oyibo 2006). According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) about 48.5% of Nigerians were living on less than one dollar per day in 1998 but by the year 2006 the figure has increased to 70%. Nigeria has become one of the 20 poorest nations in the world. The level of unemployment even among graduates of polytechnics and universities remain high. Although the PDP government has made the Paris Club to write off Nigeria's debt after paying \$12 billion of the \$18 billion, the World Bank has classified Nigeria as heavily indebted country. There has been substantial increase in domestic debt (Fafowora 2003: C8). There has also been unprecedented increase in the rate of inflation while there has been steady decline in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

There have also been huge deficits in the annual budgets of the Federal Government. These

deficits have average 20% of the budget, the exception being in 1999 when some efforts were made to reduce the deficit. In 2002, the deficit was nearly 50% with the budget of N720 billion being exceeded by nearly N500 billion (Fafowora 2003: C8). There has been no serious effort on infrastructure development. The roads and rails are dilapidated and un-maintained. There has also been no noticeable improvement in the aviation sector, which had recorded a number of human carnage. The electricity and water supply are still chaotic. The low cost housing scheme has been quite elusive.

In the area of agriculture, the PDP has also performed poorly. This indicated by rising prices of foodstuff. The PDP also intended to eradicate illiteracy in our society and promote learning and research, science and technology. In pursuit of this objective the PDP government implemented the Universal Basic Education and the Teachers Education programmes. But they were inadequate and ineffective to achieve the intended objective, as preparation for the programmes was shoddy. It was also undermined by teacher shortage (Vanguard 14/09/2007: 36). Also the several industrial actions and the current strike of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) over the PDP government breach of the 2001 agreement between ASUU and the federal government over the funding of the universities are indications of the level of commitment to this objective.

Similarly, the performance of the PDP-government in the areas of youth and women empowerment has been abysmally low. Here, it is needless to overemphasize the large under-representation of youths and women in the PDP government.

### **6.9 National Integration and Respect For Religious And Cultural Groups**

The constitutional provision of the PDP to pursue the objective of national integration and foster peaceful and harmonious relationship among the religious and cultural groups in the country is far from been realized. Since the inauguration of the nascent democracy in 1999 the nation's path has been dogged by heightened level of ethno-religious, communal clashes, age-long boundary disputes, and domestic violence and explosions. There was the gravitation of the age long boundary disputes especially the Ife-Modakeke in Osun State, Tiv-Junkun in Plateaus

State, and the youth militancy in the Niger Delta Region. Many towns and cities in the country have witnessed ethno-religious clashes and violence with huge carnage. Religion has become a weapon for ulterior motivated equalization or dissembling schemes, employing the grandiose term of propagation for religious cleansing that more often than not end in avoidable, nauseating, and barbaric acts or carnage (Momodu 2001: 12). The ethno-religious conflagration in Plateau state in 2004 led to the imposition of emergency rule in the state.

#### **6.10 Legitimacy and Credibility of Governance**

The legitimacy and credibility, which heralded the inauguration of the democratic governance has been declining in rapidity. The citizenry have been retreating into ethnic shelters due to the increasing irrelevance of the state in meeting their needs. The PDP government disappointing performance in the area of security as indicated by the heightened level of insecurity of property and killings of many high profile personalities such as the former Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Chief Bola Ige, former PDP Vice Chairman South-South, Chief Asari Dikibo, former ANPP chieftain, Chief Harry Marshal, Chief Funso Williams, a PDP gubernatorial aspirant in Lagos state among others resulted in loss of hope in the ability of the nation's security agencies to maintain and protect of lives and property. Although the PDP government made efforts to strengthen the police in terms of manpower and operational facilities, social crimes have been widespread. Armed robbers lay siege everywhere. The citizens and residents of both low and high profile in the country have virtually been left at the mercy of brutal armed robbers. The loss of sense of security has been ascribed to the proliferation and illegal possession of arms among street urchins and miscreants used during the general elections held under the PDP. The street urchins and miscreants converted most of the arms for robbery, acts of terrorism and other criminalities. The state of insecurity prompted many citizens to resort to ethnic militias and vigilante groups for security and protection of life and property.

Furthermore, the opposition parties, mass media, activists, civil society groups and members of the international community opposition to some decisions, intentions and strong desire for change of government reflect the declining legitimacy of the PDP government. There was wide rejection

of the purported PDP government third term agenda for elected officials. It got to a point that the anti-third term agenda protesters hauled and pelted the president motorcade with stones in Kano State. Also the United States government through her embassy in Nigeria in an official statement rejected the third term bid. The unpopularity of the PDP government grew tremendously during the continual hike in the prices of petroleum products, which characterized the eight years of its government. Then the populace would rather obey the leadership of the coalition of organized Nigerian Labour Congress and the civil society groups rather than the PDP government. The serious erosion of the legitimacy and acceptance of the PDP government precipitated an intense desire to change it as indicated in the large number of political parties which fielded candidates in the 2003 and 2007 general elections and the opposition parties and civil society groups to accept its renewed mandate based on the outcome of the elections. In the 2003 general elections the Conference of Nigeria Political Parties (CNPP) a coalition of twenty political parties which fielded presidential candidates for the presidential election save for National Conscience Party (NCP) and All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) apart from rejecting the outcome of the election, threatened not to, and even called on the international community not to recognize any government in the country constituted on the basis of the election. It is instructive to note that NCP and APGA rejected the outcome of the 2003 general election in their own capacities respectively. Individuals and groups heightened their calls for the convocation of sovereign national conference.

#### **7. COMMENTS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PDP**

Based on the foregoing assessment it has been clearly established that the PDP between 1999 and 2007 against all hopes and expectations performed dismally low in promoting good governance. Several factors can be ascribed for the poor performance of the PDP in government. First, is the problem of godfatherism. This is the consciousness of a political officeholder that a highly placed individual is behind him to shield him from the troubles and penalties of violation of standards of political accountability and transparency in governance. Godfathers are political financiers who raise money fund to sponsor

candidates (political godsons) for the state executive and legislative elective positions based on agreement and perceived loyalty. In return the godson promises loyalty, enormous powers, influence in the running of the state, contracts, money, allocation of resources, amenities, employment, appointments etc in favour of the godfathers. The practice of godfatherism smacks of political criminality and subverts the values of democracy and good governance (Obia 2004: C6). It also results in the enthronement and retention of criminals, mid-night rascals and mediocre in governance. It also encourages the political office holders (godsons) to be little concerned with of the values of good governance such as transparency and accountability. Thus, it encourages brazen rascality and irresponsibility on the part of political office holders to mobilize and use the resources of the state to serve the interest of select few in the society.

Another factor that contributed to the poor performance of the PDP in governance is widespread corruption. In spite of the declaration of Obasanjo to have zero tolerance for corruption and the subsequent enactment of anti-corruption agencies, corruption in during his administration has been pervasive. Many of the elected officials have been accused of various dimensions of corruption ranging from embezzlement to misappropriation of public funds without caring for rules of accountability and transparency. The anti-corruption agencies themselves have been suborned as instruments of fighting perceived political enemies while loyalists were sacred cows that must not be touched.

Lack of party discipline is also a contributory factor to the failure of the PDP in governance. Lack discipline in the PDP manifests in official wrangling, accusation and counter accusations, washing of dirty linen in the press, litigation, decamping, carpet crossing, and use of arm tactics. A team of undisciplined personnel cannot promote stability and good governance.

Another explanation for the failure of the PDP in governance is executive lawlessness. The chief executives at the various levels of government were infused with the governing and supreme power of the party. Thus, increased their tendency for the abuse of office.

## **8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This paper in the context of the contention of

the goal theory that the set goals and objectives of organizational constitute the basis for passing judgment on the standard performance examined the ruling PDP and governance in Nigeria since 1999. It established that the PDP has demonstrated incompetence in nurturing the values of democracy and governance. The PDP impairs the fundamental elements of democracy and good governance through its inability to promote equality, popular participation, accountability, transparency, and respect rule of law. Although the programmes and goals of the PDP are quite laudable, the party has not been able to systematically pursue and realize them. The PDP has been relentlessly bogged down by internal wrangling, squabbles, mutual distrust, open antagonism, vindictive war, washing of dirty linen in the public, and intolerance for opposition parties with little or no energy, time and resources left to pursue its programmes and objectives. Thus, there has been the disconnection between its policies and politics. Rather than pursue common interest, the party is beholden to the interest of select few. This style of politics and governance has led to mounting mass disillusionment and discontentment with the government. In fact more than ever the people are increasingly alienated from the Nigerian state due to its rapid decline in capacity, legitimacy and relevance in promoting genuine development and sense of security among the teeming populace.

Arising from the above one might pose the question, what then is to be done for democracy and good governance to thrive under PDP especially as it is remaining in power in the next four years having secured controversial mandate in the just concluded 2007 general elections.

First, the party must develop a mass based, oriented and directed approach. Politics is the struggle for power and power in democracy and as proclaimed in the slogan of the PDP belongs to the people. It is not enough therefore to say power belongs to the people when in reality power belongs to only a pocket of individuals.

Secondly, there has to be unity of command in the party leadership. Disciplinary actions must be taking against individuals or groups for actions contrary to the party ideology.

Thirdly, the leadership of the party must be involved in policy articulation and policymaking and implementation in order to keep its government at various levels to the objectives of the party.

Fourthly, we suggest the adoption of a two-party system in the country to ensure effective

and vibrant opposition to the PDP in subsequent general elections. The multi-party system as we are currently operating cannot guarantee the kind of effective and vibrant opposition required to put the PDP on its toes. The opposition parties should be strong enough to mobilize the electorates to defend their votes and prevent massive rigging.

Finally, the members of the PDP must learn to develop the spirit of sportsmanship in politics. Life is a game of give and take. The game of politics should not be regarded as do or die battle. As the saying goes he who fights and run away lives to fight another day. But if one fights and destroys others their ghost would forever haunt him. Thus, the spirit of sportsmanship is a major way to curb indiscipline and enhance elements of democracy and good governance.

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