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Title

**DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE: A
REVISITATIONAL DISCOURSE.**

Author(s)

S. T. AKINDELE, PhD

*Department of Political Science,
Obafemi Awolowo University,
ILE-IFE, Nigeria.*

O. O. ADEYEMI

*Department of Local Government Studies,
Obafemi Awolowo University,
ILE-IFE, Nigeria.*

ABSTRACT:

The concepts of democracy and governance have come to occupy a more “prominent position in the discourse of national and international development”. They have become key notions in which “citizens can have a more active role” which should enhance their positive view of the “increase legitimacy of the state”. As a matter of fact, both concepts are inseparable from the existential characteristics of all political animals all over the world. They continue to determine the “democratic political arrangement” and, dictate the landscapes and operational nerves of all civilized democratic polities in today’s ICT-driven world particularly in terms of the functional performance of the horizontal organs of government which have increasingly gained prominence vis-à-vis public policy and responsive service delivery.

One of the critical components/units of these horizontal organs – [Executive, Legislature and Judiciary] - is the Legislature. The Legislature and its functionaries - the Legislators constitute a cardinal part of the major pillars of the governance process in the democratic political systems of today’s world, Nigeria inclusive.

Against this background, this paper in a revisitational manner deals with the discourses of these concepts. In the process it highlights their theoretical underpinnings in ways they can be easily discerned for today’s governance process and the democratic aspects and landscapes of most nations of the world vis-à-vis the existential wherewithal of the citizens.

INTRODUCTION:

Without active citizenship, democracy will be the monopoly of big men in fancy spouting buzzwords. “The people” will be treated as passive recipients of fertilizer, maize, schools, bridges, and other necessities but not real power to influence decisions (Kanyongolo, 2007 cited in Kubalasa and Nsapato, 2010).

The accountability of state actors is a consequence of the implicit social compact between citizens and their delegated representatives and agents in a democracy. The social compact, in turn, derives from notions of human and citizen rights, as enshrined in the General

Assembly of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in many national constitutions. A fundamental principle of democracy is that citizens have both the right and the responsibility to demand accountability and to ensure that government acts in the best interests of the people. Public actors can and should be held accountable for both their conduct and performance. In other words, citizens have the right to ensure that public actors (a) obey the law and not abuse their powers, and (b) serve the public interest in an efficient, effective, and fair manner. In an institutional environment for good governance, certain conditions underpin the ability of governments to be accountable (supply-side conditions) and the ability of citizens and civil society to hold governments accountable (demand-side conditions). Supply-side and demand-side mechanisms of accountability are complementary and mutually reinforcing (Melana and McNeil, 2010).

International and domestic legislation are important mechanisms for ensuring that citizen participation and inclusion are not dependent on whims of politicians and changing circumstances. However, laws alone are not enough. Systems and structures for making citizen participation rights operational and mechanisms for dealing with complaints and sanctioning the state when it fails to respect these rights are critical (McNeil and Melana, 2010).

The existential needs of all political animals some of which are clearly embedded within the matrix of the opening quotations above in terms of self-fulfillment, aspiration, goals, realization of dreams, vision, mission, citizenship, accountability of the system; political participation, good governance, effective legislation, proper law enforcement, unfettered democratic process and, other wherewithal of humanity form the core of the relational threads of the people with the state. The latter is largely seen and has come to be continuously seen as the macro ecology within which the asymmetrical needs of the people exist and mutually pursued by all without irredeemable fatality to the continuous existence of the state. This explains why the

state is conceived as “a people inhabiting a territory” (Akindele et al, 2000). The state as a political entity continues to function as the macro and all encompassing governance ecology irrespective of the multiple diversities created within it by the value preferences; political orientations and philosophies of the people through the existence of the various operational mechanisms serving as its foundational pillars.

These operational mechanisms include the twin-issues of democracy and governance which on their own have been used as conceptual instruments for the governing of men in terms of the determinism involved in the authoritative allocation of the scarce critical societal values and resources and; the relationship of the political system with its environment – principally the governed. The functionalism of these twin-issues vis-à-vis public policy making and responsive service delivery to the citizenry in most polities of the world, Nigeria inclusive, has been made a continuous reality through appropriate political apparatuses and institutional arrangements, all of which have deep-seated historical roots in relations to the political existence of mankind and nations all over the globe.

These institutional arrangements and apparatuses of democratic governance include the horizontal organs of government – [Executive, Legislature and Judiciary]. Without these organs, the raison d’être of democracy and governance would be a mirage. It is through these institutions that most polities have become models to the rest of the world today with all the nations that are desirous of peaceful, purposeful, meaningful, stable political environment and existence striving to be like them.

These desires irrespective of the slippery political terrains and landscapes of most of these nations particularly the developing ones continue to dominate the political vision and mission of such nations all over the world. As a matter of fact, such nations continue to predicate their governance process on the operational catechism of these institutions.

Against this background, this paper deals with a revisitational discourse of the concepts of democracy and governance and their linkage through the institutional mechanisms of the horizontal organs of government. It is divided into four sections consisting of the introduction; conceptual analysis of democracy and governance; the linkage of the two concepts and; the conclusion.

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS: Democracy and Governance¹:

Democracy, governance and, the horizontal organs of government - [Executive, Legislature and, Judiciary] – are the core concepts in this paper. Thus, this section deals with the discourses of the concepts as the foundation of its analysis.

This analytical orientation is compelled by the fact that the existential wherewithal of the legislature and its functionaries – the legislators which forms the focus of our thinking vis-à-vis the democratic governance process can only be meaningfully analyzed within the parameters of these conceptual pillars all of which have deep-seated historical roots.

Democracy:

The concept of democracy on its own has generated a lot of controversies, analytical disputations, ideological and philosophical camps. These have largely been engendered by the various scholastic and research attentions that have been focused on it in the course of pedagogical processes; concerns and determination to identify with clear precision the place of all political animals within the state and its various political terrains that have over the years concerned themselves with the determinism involved the dispensation and allocations of the scarce critical societal resources to the people. The various views though, not definitions, contained below on the concept clearly drive home the complexities which have attended the efforts to find a mutually or universally acceptable conceptual unanimity on its subject matter. These are:

Democracy is a very dubious concept. It is hard to define simply, and yet we toss it around as if we all agree on and understand its meaning. Everyone claims to support and love democracy claiming the democratic mantle is practically a fundamental requirement for any totalitarian dictatorship these days – but it does

¹ *This section of the paper benefits considerably from the author's previous works particularly on democracy, governance, organs of government and other research papers. These sources are hereby accordingly acknowledged.*

not seem that there is any consensus about what it means ([http://www.inferralramblings.com/article/Global_socio-politics/1697/...](http://www.inferralramblings.com/article/Global_socio-politics/1697/)).

Democracy is by far the most challenging form of government – both for politicians and the people (<http://www.democracy-building.info/definition-democracy.htm>).

No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except those other forms that have been tried from time to time (Sir Wilson Churchill [1874-1965] on democracy).

Majority rule is often listed as a characteristic of democracy. However, it is also possible for a minority to be oppressed by a tyranny of the majority in the absence of governmental or constitutional protections of the individual and/or group rights (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy>).

Democracy today remains the most credible means of constituting the machinery of state that will be responsible for the authoritative allocation of values in any society. This is so, because the system allows the majority of the people to have their way, while at the same time provide the minority the opportunity to ventilate their own views (Babawale and Ashiru, 2006).

The tyranny of the majority is the fear that a direct democratic government, reflecting the majority view, can take action that oppresses a particular minority; for instance a minority holding wealth, property ownership, or power. Theoretically, the majority is a majority of all citizens. If citizens are not compelled by law to vote it is usually a majority of those who chose to vote. If such people constitute a minority then it is possible that a minority could, in theory oppress another in the name of the majority (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/liberal> democracy).

The recent trend towards democratization in countries across the globe has challenged scholars to pursue two potentially contradictory goals. On the one hand, they seek to increase analytic differentiation in order to capture the diverse

forms of democracy that have emerged. On the other hand, they are concerned with conceptual validity. Specifically, they seek to avoid the problem of conceptual stretching that arises when concept of democracy is applied to cases for which by relevant scholarly standards it is not appropriate (Collier David, Levitsky Steve, 1997; http://muse.jhu.edu/login?Uri=/journals/word_politics/vo49/49.3_collier.html).

Without meaning to be unnecessarily repetitive, these “tower of Babel-like” quotations/statements on democracy clearly show the controversies, disputations, confusions and complexities which the concept has generated over the years as well as the attendant involvement of such complexities in the process of democratic governance. As a matter of fact, this continues to be so amidst a plethora of conflicting demands of the citizens for democratic dividends, just and accountable solutions to intricate issues of governance. These statements clearly reveal the problems, challenges and impediments faced by some of the relevant functionaries - involved in the governance process – whose infallibility and “Angel-like” behaviours are always expected by the governed vis-à-vis the actions and inactions of the state and, its end result – responsive service delivery.

Democracy as a form of political organization, like other concepts of its calibre, has not been easy to define without ideological equivocation (Akindele and Obiyan; 1996:84, Akindele and Olaopa; 1997:5, Akindele, 1995b; Akindele and Ajila, 1992:85-86; Akindele, 1992 and Akindele, 1993). The major problem in this area is that of ideological secretarianism vis-a-vis the nitty-gritty of democracy as a form of political governance hence, as Olowu (1995, Op Cit, 2) once opined, democracy as a “concept of governance has become all things to all men”.

This notwithstanding however, from a concrete perusal of the tomes that have been written on it by scholars of repute, it is clear without equivocation that democracy had its first appearance in the fifth century B.C. This followed its coinage by the great historian-Herodotus. This historical initial effort catalyzed the genesis of democratic ideas in antiquity (Akindele, 1987).

Democratic ideas in antiquity combined two Greek words, "demo", meaning people and "Kratein" meaning the rule. Thus, the original meaning of democracy was the "rule of (by) the

people". At this time, Herodotus included among its specific features, "equality before the law and popular deliberations" (Akindele, 1987:41).

Subsequent Greek thinkers like Plato and Aristotle did not look with favour upon democracy (ibid). While Plato's attitude was decidedly hostile to democratic ideas, Aristotle accepted the ideas with severe qualifications (Rejai, 1967:2). This explains why ancient democracy did not presuppose equality of all individuals. In it existed the prevalence of slavery and, a minority of the populace had no political rights. Athens, the greatest of the city democracies, limited its franchise to the native born citizens (Funk and Wagnalls).

Greek discussion of democracy was followed by Rome's contribution to democratic ideas and government in antiquity. The hallmark of this contribution was Rome's development of the "idea of constitutionalism" and her emphasis on laws as the system of norms binding on both the "rulers" and "ruled" (Ibid.).

However, the civilization of antiquity collapsed after a while. This collapse, and the then increasing predominance of religion over all aspects of life led to the evolution of medieval democratic ideas. More interestingly, the existence of the Christian religion, which emphasized the rights of the underprivileged and equality of all men before God contributed to the development of democratic ideas in the medieval period. In addition, most of the Christian ideas stressed the notion of a "moral law of nature", and the quest for a universal society.

The medieval period was followed by the Renaissance which furthered optimism with regards to the future of man through its emphasis on the emancipation of man from medieval ties (Rejai, op.cit. 10-12). The core of the renaissance was the discovery of man and the emphasis on individual self-expression, self-realization, glory and fame (Ibid; 11).

After the renaissance era came the 17th and 18th centuries when John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau in addition to Thomas Hobbes popularised the concept of the "Social Contract (Ibid; 11), which may be said to be the most rational of all the theories about the democratic origin of states and civil government (Khan et al 1972; 27, Baker, 1969 Akindele, Obiyan, and Owoeye, 1998, Akindele, Obiyan, Owoeye, 2000; Akindele 2002).

Even though, many obstacles riddled the historical stages of democratic ideas, it gained ground in the nineteenth century when "every important Western European monarch started to adopt a constitution limiting the power of the crown and giving a considerable share of power to its people" (Funk and Wagnalls, op.cit p. 2655). This period witnessed the various elaborations of democratic theory by people like Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, John Stuart Mill and Alex de Tocqueville. In short, the historical background of democratic ideas as outlined up to this point is what sets the stage for what is today known and called democracy.

Many normative definitions of democracy had been given. Their general focus had been on value and norms of society. Empirical definitions of democracy which focused on political reality had also been given. While the normative definitions focused on shared beliefs and attitudes, the "normative-empirical" definitions combined empiricism and normative aspects of society.

The normative definition of democracy was variously approached by people like Thomas Hobbes, Jean Jacques Rousseau, John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and John Stuart Mill. This explains why Thomas Hobbes, in his explanation of the social contract and its consequent by-product (state), treated the solitary, nasty, brutish and alienating state of nature as the catalyst for the volitional collective agreement - social contract - between men.

On the same token, Rousseau, in his work, identified people's surrender of "natural rights" for "civil rights" as the basis of the emergence of a social contract which created the general will of the people (Khan et. al., op cit 27-28). The creation of the general will through the social contract in Rousseau's view resulted in the existing state of nature when men were limited by their individual incapacities for self governance.

In addition to Hobbes and Rousseau, John Locke also theorized about the concept of social contract. However, unlike Rousseau's views of the individual's incapability, John Locke believed that life in the state of nature was pleasant, but men were hampered by the absence of any socially recognised authority to adjudicate and settle disputes and conflicts between them hence the need for democratic government (Ibid. p. 20)

As for John Stuart Mills, he believed in the welfare of the individual, as well as individual liberties. Writing on Democracy and liberty, he maintained that the only way power can be, or, should be exercised over any member in the society against his will, is when it can be established that, such individual intends to injure, or, do harm to other (Rejai op.cit 77). He further emphasized the notion of liberty within the framework of representative government. Along this analytical plane, argued, Awa (1997 op.cit:7, Akindele, 1993; Akindele et. al., 1998), Schumpeter (1955) defines democracy as:

the institutional arrangement for arriving at political decision, in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.

Due to the nature of their reasoning, Rousseau and other theorists (e.g. Lincoln) mainly concerned with the welfare of the community as a whole, are classified into the "collectivistic school of thought", while John Locke and John Stuart Mills are classified into the "individualistic school" relative to the emergence of democratic system of government which emphasizes equality and liberty of men.

Representative democracy has been variously defined. In his book, Democracy, Burns (1935, 29-46) defined representative democracy as a system whereby " all (i.e. people) elected a few to do for them what they could not do together". On the same token, John Stuart Mill concentrated a significant portion of his writing on representative democracy. While accepting the desirability of equal participation by everybody in the affairs of the government, he nevertheless claims that, it cannot be realized. Instead, he argued that representative government is the perfect form of government (Mill, 1962: 73-74). But, he further argued that, for representative government to be democratic, it must be accompanied by universal adult suffrage, free elections, short terms of office and individual liberty. Without these things, any government will, in Mill's view, cease to be democratic.

Contemporarily, and, in line with the "fight against system of economic exploitation, political repression, cultural oppression" and, their accompanying "moral, political, economic and social decay" (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2001), other scholars have increasingly paid attention to the issue of democracy and its propensity for good governance (Ade-Ajayi, 1982; Nzongola-Ntalaja and Lee, 1977; Omoruyi, 1993; Held, 1987; Olowu, Soremekun and Williams, 1995;

Olowu, Williams and Soremekun, 1999; Wunsch and Olowu, 1990; Sartori, 1987; Olowu, 1995; Joseph, 1987, Chabal, 1992; Hyden, 1980, 1999; Hyden and Brattox, 1992; Olowu and Erero, 1997; Akindele and Ajila 1992, 1995, Akindele and Obiyan, 1996, Akindele and Olaopa, 1997, Enyinla, 1998; Bello-Imam, 1997; Obadan, 1998, Akindele, 1998, Peter Anyang Nyong, 1987). In fact, this explains why Olowu et al (1995: IX) once opined that “democracy constitutes both the main buzz-word and activity of these times” in most polities of the world.

According to Nzongola-Ntalaja (2001) “democracy is a universal form of rule” which, even though, “may have variable manifestations in different historical and social settings”, have such manifestations tied together by a common thread”. Democracy in this sense according to him refers to “three basic ideas”:

- Democracy as a moral imperative, in the sense that it represents a permanent aspiration of human beings for freedom, for better social and political order, one that is more human and more or less egalitarian.
- Democracy as a social process, in that it is a continuous process of promoting equal access to fundamental human rights and civil liberties for all and,
- Democracy as political practice or a mode of governance based on the principles of popular sovereignty, the rule of law, accountability, participation and alternance (meaning leadership renewal or change) (Ibid).

In his contemporary contribution to the concept of democracy, Olowu (1995:16) opined that “democratic arrangement constitutes an approach to connecting the rule-ruler-ruled relationship” which forms the core of governance. This probably explains his definition of democracy as:

a system of governance that underscores the plural nature of politics and hence gives recognition to the diversity of social forces in any political community.

On the same token, Sartori (1987:34) had earlier claimed that:

Democracy exists when the relation between the governed and the government abides by the principles that state is at the service of the citizens and not the citizens at the service of the state; that the government exists for the people and not vice-versa.

Olowu (1995:16) re-echoed this position when he later asserted that “the bottom line of a democratic regime is that, it serves the citizens rather than the other way round” hence, as Ejituwu (1997) once claimed that “power resides with the people and, in a normal democratic situation, it is transferred to the leaders by a process of election”.

In putting democracy into a proper perspective as a mechanism for enhancing people’s right to participate in making the decisions that affect them, Imam (1991) argues that:

Democracy must include the right of people to have their own aspirations and programmes, not only in political life, but also in economic, cultural, religious and other aspects of life. In other words, democracy includes ending the criss-crossing networks of oppression, exploitation and discrimination.

This position is supported by Omoruyi’s (1993) observation that:

today, democracy has certain known principles: participation, pluralism and restraint on authority and, (that), these principles are in turn associated with other terms: electoral systems, basic problems such as freedom of expression and association, guaranteed human rights, pluralism, public contestation, constitutional framework. All these tend to conjure for democracy, identical meanings, ideas, institutions and habit.

This explains why Obadan (1998:24) opined that “democracy and good governance (government) have, in recent years become increasingly important for efficient economic management and development”. It equally explains Omoruyi’s (1993) position that “both democracy and good governance are necessary preconditions for development and, should therefore, be incorporated into the political systems” particularly in the continent of Africa.

In his contribution to the current global relevance of democracy Held (1987), noted thus:

Nearly everyone today says they are democrats no matter whether their views are on the left, centre, or right. Political regimes of all kinds for instance, Western Europe, the Eastern bloc and Latin America claim (or, are claiming) to be democracies. Democracy seems to bestow an aura of legitimacy on modern political life; rules, laws, policies and decisions appear justified and appropriate when they are democratic (and representative of all interests without discrimination within the polity) (Emphasis mine).

This being the case, we would define democracy as a system of government through which representatives are periodically elected by the qualified adult voters to be responsible for directing and deliberating on the affairs of the state on behalf of the electors. As herein conceptually elucidated, democracy emphasizes the need for equitable governance of men without non-challance for the essential need of any group within the society regardless of administrative or bureaucratic prescriptions.

Governance:

Unfettered peoples’ participation is one of the cardinal values of democracy and governance thus, “the principle of participation appears to be an institutional means to mitigate problems of global change, reconciling local people....with development” (Haller and Galvin, 2008).

Humankind today is confronted with numerous threats brought about by the speed, scope and unpredictable interconnectedness of global change dynamics. A concerted approach to solutions is required to address the

magnitude and severity of the numerous crises we are facing, related to the global economy, climate change and natural resource degradation, food security, poverty and social exclusion, water and sanitation, and conflict and governance (Hurni, 2010).

Since the last decade of the twentieth century, many countries have pursued new mechanisms to promote more direct citizen engagement in the processes of governance, ranging from the creation of new decentralised institutions, to a wide variety of participatory and consultative processes in national and global policy deliberations (Gaventa, 2002).

As a result of its complex weaving of “economic, political and social aspects of a Nation” (Shehu 1999), the concept of governance has not been amenable to easy or simplistic definition. In other words, it has not been an exception to the volatility and eclecticism for which the disciplines in the Social Sciences have been globally noted.

The concept, “even though, not new, means different things to different people” (<http://www.gdre.org/u-gov/governance-understand.htm>) thus, its definition has attracted a lot of attentions and, in the process generated various analyses from different perspectives thereby creating a plethora of analytical discourses. This tendency as cited in the Website of South Africa National Party; Governance Barometer, Policy guidelines for good governance (Ibid.), has created the notions that:

- Governance is a synonym for government or the act or process of governing, specifically authoritative direction and control.
- Governance is a broader notion than government.
- Governance involves interaction between the formal institutions and those in civil Society.
- Governance not only encompasses but transcends the collective meaning of related concepts like state government, regime and good government.
- Governance is the conscious management of regime structures, with a view to enhancing the public realm.

- Governance as an “umbrella concept” emphasizes the creative potential of politics, especially with the ability of leaders to rise above the existing structure of the ordinary, to change the rules of the game and inspire others to partake in efforts to move society forward in new and productive directions.
- Governance comprises the institutions, processes and traditions which determine how power is exercised, knowledge decisions are taken, how citizens have their say (Johnson, 1997, CIDA).
- Governance is not only about the organs or actors (of government). It is about the quality of the governance which expresses itself through elements and dimensions (Abdul Hye Hasnat, 2001).
- Governance is the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development (Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary, 1979).
- Governance encompasses the capacity of the state, the commitment to the public good, rule of law, degree of transparency and accountability, the level of people’s participation and social capital (<http://www.adb.org/Documents/manuals/operations/om54.asp?p=aadb>).
- Governance is the act of governing. It relates to decisions that define expectations, grant power to verify performance. It consists of either a separate process or part of management or leadership processes (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governance>).
- Governance connotes the rules of the political system to solve conflicts between actors and adopt decision (legality). It is used to describe the proper functioning of the institutions and their acceptance by the public (legitimacy) and; to involve the efficacy of government and the achievement of consensus by democratic means (participation) (Applebaugh, 2010).
- Governance describes the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (UNESCAP, 2009).

- Governance conveys the administrative and process-oriented elements of governing rather than its antagonistic ones (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governance>).

These notions, coupled with the fact that the concept of governance has over the years gained momentum and a wider meaning as an instrument of public affairs management and, a useful mechanism to enhance the legitimacy of the public realm (<http://www.gdre.org/u-gov/governance-understand.htm>) and; the centrality of the concept to the existential characteristics of all political animals have given additional impetus to the scholastic and, analytical efforts that have been made to widen its scope.

Such efforts include the attempts to redefine it in order to allow the consideration of “all interactions among everyone involved in decision making” (Johnson, 1997). This thinking has been predicated on what appears to be the restrictive nature of its traditional or orthodox conceptions within the various terrains and landscapes of most polities across the globe.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has been quite prominent in this area of thinking. This Agency believes that the orthodox or traditional perspective and, conception of governance has been rather restrictive as “it reduces the concept to activities and power relationships that involve government alone” to the neglect of the “influence, needs, contributions and responsibility of civil society or the private sector” (Ibid.). These concerns of CIDA which are quite attributable to its employees led to its contention of a redesigned definition of governance as:

- We need to adopt a broader definition of governance that lets us go beyond the theme of public-sector management and consider how all sectors of civil can act as a catalyst.
- Governance is not the business of government alone. We need to define governance from two perspectives: government and the people.
- Governance must include and be able to respond to issues relating to the process of change, which characterizes many governments in developing countries and countries in transition.
- Unlike the term “good governance”, “governance” facilitates dialogue because the concept is less restrictive and less political.

- Governance issues are closely related to several development activities, and can be approached as a theme that cuts across projects which meet CIDA priorities. For example, eliminating poverty, creating jobs, protecting the environment, social integration, economic management, agricultural reform, population control, and women's issues all depend on effective governance.
- The word "good" is condescending and even imperialistic. It should be replaced by "sound" or "effective", or eliminated altogether, (Do we speak of "good" education, "good" health? Then why "good" governance?) (Ibid.).

These various perspectives of what constitutes governance notwithstanding, the concept continue to evoke more disputations and definitions in the research and scholastic quest for a global unanimity on its subject-matter. According to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA):

Governance is a concept that has developed considerably since it emerged in discussions of development issues around the late 1980s. The first classic political science essays on the subject talked about the concept of "governability", which made the rule of law the core of development. With the of the Cold War, "governability" gave way to the concept of governance, defined as redesigning or re-inventing public administration, in the broad sense of the term, to meet the new challenges of development in the era of globalization. Governance now deals with the issues relating to the mechanisms needed to negotiate various interests in society. It is increasingly seen as a concept that that encompasses a series of mechanisms and processes designed to maintain the system, to empower the population and to ensure that society owns the process.

This explains Esman's (1997:1) claim that "no two political scientists would agree on what the concept of governance is or what it means". In fact, as Hyden (1999) once noted, "only few authors (have) define(d) it (the concept of governance) with a view to serving analytical purpose" hence, "governance as a concept has not been extensively used (or defined) in the political literature until very recently when it gained currency" (Nkom and Sorkaa, 1996).

This notwithstanding, as Hyden (1999:24) once argued, “the concept of governance has come to occupy a more prominent position in the discourse of international development”. If this is correct or, should be taken to be correct, the question needs to be asked that: what exactly or actually is governance?

World Bank (1989) defines governance as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”. According to the World Bank (1993), governance has three dimensions. These dimensions which, Eyinla (1998) equally noted are: “the nature of political regimes; the exercise of authority in the management of social and economic resources and, the capacity of government to design and implement policy and to discharge its functions”.

These dimensions were specifically identified and concretely elucidated by Olowu and Erero (1997) who both conceptualized governance as relating to the “rule-ruler-ruled relationship”. Specifically, Olowu and Erero (Ibid) identified the three dimensions of governance in the context of “rule-ruler-ruled relationship” as inclusive of “functionalism, “structuralism” and “normativism”. According to them, functionally, governance deals with “rule-making, legitimization, and enforcement” while it structurally comprises of three distinct institutions: the “ruler or the state”, the “ruled or the society” and, the “rule of law”. In this regard, Olowu and Erero (ibid) viewed governance as the “relationship between state and society institutions”. In the same vein, they claimed that “normatively, this relationship highlights the values associated with good governance”. These values according to them, include: “transparency, organizational effectiveness, accountability, predictability, legitimacy, popular participation and plurality of policy choices”.

Within the same context, Boeninger (1992), defines governance as the ‘good government of society’. According to this scholar, governance has three dimensions: political, technical and institutional. Nkom and Sorkaa (1996) synopsis the interrelatedness of these dimensions thus:

The political revolves around the commitment to exercise authority or public control in a just, legitimate and rule oriented fashion. The technical concerns issues of efficiency, competence or the capacity to manage public affairs effectively to solve problems, and to produce good results in resource mobilization and public management. The

institutional involves options, choices and growth – enhancing activities by the public while ensuring honest or good conduct on the part of the public officials.

In the same vein, Landell-Mills and Serageldin (1992) argued that governance encompasses two interrelated dimensions: political and technical both of which consist of the government's "will to govern well and the capacity to efficiently and competently handle public management". Governance, according to Gould (1972) refers to the act of exercising control over others, inducing others to behave in specified ways as required by law. It is "policy making and policy execution regulated by systems of law and guidelines which are segregated into specific operations to achieve specific national objectives (Shehu, 1999:1). To Brautigam (1991) and Ikpeze (1999:73), governance connotes "the exercise of power and authority in both political and economic spheres". Thus, as Ejituwu (1997), argued, "governance implies the exercise of power by a person or group of persons for the benefit of the populace" because, as he equally later claimed, it is through governance, that "the government in power dictates the form of relationship it establishes between it and the people as well as the goal of the state in economic, political and social terms" (Ibid). Other views on the concept of governance include the following:

- Governance is a conceptual approach that, when fully elaborated, can frame a comparative analysis of macro-politics.
- Governance concerns "big" questions of a "constitutional" nature that establish the rules of political conduct.
- Governance involves creative intervention by political actors to change structures that inhibit the expression of human potential.
- Governance is a rational concept, emphasising the nature of interactions between state and social actors, and among social actors themselves.
- Governance refers to particular types of relationships among political actors: that is, those which are socially sanctioned rather than arbitrary (<http://www.gdrc.org/u-governance-understand.htm>).

Implicit in the foregoing conceptual analysis of governance is the fact that, the latter connotes “the use of political authority and exercise of control over a society and the management of resources” (Wai, 1995). Hence, according to Obadan (1998:24), governance - (in this sense) – includes:

Institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes, policy formulation, implementation, capacity development of personnel, information flows, and the nature and style of leadership within a political system.

In his contribution to the conceptual discourse on governance, Idowu (1998:74) had this to say:

Governance refers to the functions undertaken by a government maintaining a unified state, defending its territorial integrity and running its economy... It (equally) means the effective and efficient functioning of government towards securing the well-being of its citizens.

Jega (1999:101) analysed the concept of governance in relations to the “person entrusted with political power and authority”. In this regard, governance according to him, involves the following:

- Responsibility and responsiveness in leadership and in public service;
- Accountability in the mobilization as well as in the utilization of resources;
- Discipline, effectiveness and efficiency in handling public (as well as personal) affairs;
- Selflessness and impartial service to the people; and
- Popular participation and empowerment of the people in the conduct and management of their common affairs (Ibid).

For governance as the “duty of government to see to the orderly and stable management of the economy” (Ukpong, 1999), to have the foregoing attributes and, be effective, efficient and beneficial for democratic political arrangement, it has to be good. This is more so, since we can, as well, have bad governance.

Bad Governance:

The possibility of bad governance could be said to be what the World Bank had in mind in 1989, when it began to dichotomize between good and bad governance by “advocating a political reform approach to government as a way of ensuring positive economic growth” (World Bank, 1989, Idowu, 1998).

In fact, the World Bank (1992) identified the features of bad governance as follows:

- Failure to make a clear separation between what is public and what is private, hence a tendency to divert public resources for private gain;
- Failure to establish a predictable framework for law and government behaviour in a manner that is conducive to development, or arbitrariness in the application of rules and laws;
- Excessive rules, regulations, licensing requirements, etc, which impede the functioning of markets and encourage rent-seeking;
- Priorities that are inconsistent with development, thus, resulting in a mis-allocation of resources;
- Excessively narrow base for, or non-transparence, decision-making.

This explains Obadan’s (1998:25) characterization of bad governance as a system dominated by “ugly problems like pervasive corruption, lack of public accountability and “capture” of public services by the elites among others”.

Good Governance:

The concept of good governance has been variously defined. It “has come into regular use in political science, public administration and, more particularly, development management. It appears alongside such terms as democracy, civil society, participation, human rights and sustainable development. In the last decade, it has been closely associated with the public sector reform” (UNESCO-CI, 2005, http://unesco.org/ci/ev.php-URL_ID=5205&URL_DO=D...). The concept has no single and exhaustive definition, nor is there a delimitation of its scope, that

commands acceptance (HR/PUB/07/4, cited in <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/development/governance/>). As a matter of fact, “apart from the universal acceptance of its importance, differences prevail in respect of theoretical formulations, policy prescriptions and conceptualisation of the subject itself (Abdellatiff, 2003).

The multidimensionality of its definition and, the “flexibility of its usage” even though, advantageous have created some difficulties at the operational level (Ibid.) thus, attempts have been made to redefine what it actually means (See Johnson, 1997 and CIDA). In fact, many of the definitions of the concept, according to Corbridge (2008) and, SDC (2007 cited in Geiser and Rist, 2009) “include the demand for decentralisation linking (it) with other demands for state reform such as democratisation, participatory development, accountability of public servants, professionalism as well as transparency, non-discrimination and efficiency”. It has equally been defined thus:

Good governance has 8 major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making (OECD, 2001, cited in UNESCO-CI, 2005, http://.unesco.org/ci/ev.php-URL_ID=5205&URL_DO=D...)

This, according to SDC (2007) explains why “good governance continues to be based on the broad consensus among development circles that the state plays a key role in determining the rules of the game, enforcing those rules, and in making its resources available to the entire population”. It equally explains why Gaventa (2002) and SDC (2008) according to Geiser and Rist (2009), noted that “good governance” has become “a key notion in which citizens can have a more active role” which should “increase legitimacy (of the state) in their views.

It is decipherable from the chronology of the discussion in this paper so far on the concept of governance, that, the issue of the latter (i.e. governance), its goodness and utility to mankind cannot be taken for granted without severe consequences. This is particularly so, in that, as Ogunba (1997:1), once noted “the way a people are governed is of paramount importance in determining the quality of life of the people”. It is equally more so, if as Esman (1997:1), opined, “governance is a process that requires a viable authority” through which “the leaders are

expected to exercise the power that resides with them in the interest of the state” (Ejituwu, 1997 op cit: 37).

The need for good governance - which according to Johnson (1997) is the exercise of power by various levels of government that is effective, honest, equitable, transparent and accountable” - is not far fetched looking at the fact that:

If governance is arbitrary, oppressive and capricious, the collective psyche of a people can be damaged and individuals within the community can suffer various forms of disorientation. If, on the other hand, governance is open, democratic and humanistic, a people can experience a sense of rejuvenation and fulfilment which can lead to highly positive achievements (Ogunba 1997 op cit: 1).

This explains Obadan’s (1998:39) position that, “it is the responsibility of citizens to demand good governance” because “it (i.e., good governance) may not be forthcoming from the political leaders without prodding”.

Commenting on good governance, Esman (1997:1) argued thus:

before governance can be considered good, government has got to be effective. It must first command the respect and allegiance of the people over whom it exercises governance and, must satisfy certain basic collective needs.

He went further to identify some minimal elements and/or essentials of effective (good) governance as inclusive of: “provision of security for the people”, “defence of the territorial borders of the state”, “protection of lives and property”, “enforcement of laws to enhance predictability” and, “economic development”. According to this scholar, “governance requires the ability to ensure the wherewithal of sustained government”. He equally asserted that “effective (good) governance requires that public authority be able to raise the revenues necessary to pay for services that must be provided”. The essence of this argument is that, “effective governance must be able to make possible the performance by the state of certain basic services” – transportation, communication, education and health services – “relatively cheaply and reliably” (Erero, 1996, Esman Ibid).

This is more so, since effective governance means the capacity of the state, through its power of determinism or, authoritative allocation of scarce critical societal resources – to deliver the basic necessities of life to the governed and, equally “facilitate the process of economic development”.

These lines of argument tally with those of Obadan (1998:25) and Amoako (1997:10), who have posited that:

good governance implies efficient and effective public administration, good policies and sound management of natural resources. It calls for the ability of a state to anticipate challenges to its well-being, provide core services with people and then argument these services, act as a catalyst of change, and guide the various forces in a society toward harmony (and national development) devoid of ideological imperialism and multi-dimensional genocidal tendencies) (Emphasis mine).

Pursuing the same line of argument, Obadan (Ibid), further claimed that:

Good governance implies ruling on the basis of equity and social justice, and an end to corruption, nepotism and political manipulation of public institutions. Only when citizens have the belief that their government operates on their behalf, in an open and accountable manner, will government be able to obtain their willing co-operation in, for example, mobilizing resources for development.

Driving home this line of argument, Obadan (Ibid: 34), emphasized that, through good governance, a government should be able to effectively perform, among others, the following tasks:

- Establishing a foundation of law;
- Maintaining a non distortionary policy environment, including macro-economic stability;
- Investing in basic social services, infrastructure,
- Protecting the vulnerable group in the society; and

- Protecting the environment.

Other scholars have considered good governance vis-à-vis the raison d'être of statehood in this manner as well (Kaufman, Kraay and Zoido-Lobaton, 1999; Corkery and Bossuyt, 1990; Healey and Robinson, 1992, 1994; Bello – Imam, 1997; Ayo and Awotokun, 1996, 1997; Nkom and Sorkaa, 1996; World Bank, 1989, 1992, 1993). These scholars' works on the concept of good governance treat the latter as a system of rulership that is devoid of political expediency and antidemocratic political ends. It is deducible from their works that, good governance stands for dignified existence of all political animals in democratic political settings within the global political community. According to Obadan (1998:24) "good governance consists of five fundamental elements". He listed them thus:

- Accountability of government officials (political leaders and bureaucrats) for public funds and resources;
- Transparency in government procedures, processes, investment decisions, contracts and appointments. Transparency is a means of preventing corruption and enhancing economic efficiency;
- Predictability in government behaviour. This is particularly critical to the carrying out of economic transactions between individuals and in taking investment decisions: governments and public institutions should not be capricious in their behaviour and actions;
- Openness in government transactions and a reliable flow of the information necessary for economic activity and development to take place. Without information, rules will not be known, accountability is low, and risks and uncertainties are many. With these the cost of committing capital is also huge. An open system should, thus, be encouraged to release information to stakeholders and promote dialogue among the people as well as ensure their active participation in the socio-economic development of the country.
- Observance of the rule of law must be adhered to by government and its citizens; this means that governments and institutions should be subject to rules and regulations which are understood by everyone in the society (Ibid).

The essence of Obadan's position is clearly located within and, deducible from the World Bank's view on good governance which states that:

Good governance is epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policy-making, a bureaucracy imbued with professional ethos acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of law, transparent processes, and a strong civil society participating in public affairs. Poor governance (on the other hand) is characterized by arbitrary policy making, unaccountable bureaucracies, unenforced or unjust legal system, the abuse of executive power, a civil society unengaged in public life, and widespread corruption (<http://www.gdre.org/u - gov/governance -understand.htm>)

This view highlights the notion of movement "toward political and economic liberalisation" and, "greater state responsiveness, accountability, political stability and economic development" (Ibid.). It equally forms the core of the Bank's expressed notion (Ibid.) as follows: Efforts to create an enabling environment and to build capacities will be wasted if the political context is not favourable. Ultimately, better governance requires political renewal. This means a concerted attack on corruption from the highest to the lowest level. This can be done by setting a good example, by strengthening accountability, by encouraging public debate, and by nurturing a free press. It also means... fostering grassroots and non-governmental organisations such as farmers' associations, co-operatives, and women's groups (Ibid.)

The concept of good governance vis-a-vis a responsive service delivery is explainable within the boundaries of John Healey and Mark Robinson's conceptualisation of governance - (cited in understanding the concept of governance, <http://www.gdre.org/u - gov/governance - understanding.htm>) - as inclusive of the "elements and principles" underlying "good government" and, his consequent analysis that good governance:

Implies a high level of organisational effectiveness in relation to policy-formulation and the policies actually pursued, especially in the conduct of economic policy and its contribution to growth, stability and popular welfare. Good government also implies accountability, transparency, participation, openness and the rule of law. It does not

necessarily presuppose a value judgement, for example, a healthy respect for civil and political liberties, although good government tends to be a prerequisite for political legitimacy.

LINKAGE OF DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE: The consequent involvement of the Horizontal Organs of Government.:

The foregoing put together, undeniably points to the fact that, there is a relational umbilical cord between governance and democracy vis-a-vis the governance process and the involvement of all relevant units in it most especially the horizontal organs of government particularly the Legislature and its functionaries- the Legislators. As a matter of fact the linkage between democracy and governance is to a larger extent concretely put into existence by these organs which, in addition to the electoral process clearly act as the practicalizing agents of the theoretical underpinnings of the two broader concepts. This takes the analysis in this paper to the discourse of the horizontal organs.

Without meaning to be unnecessarily repetitive the attainment and continuous sustenance of democracy and good governance as articulated above, and, the propensity of same for effective public service delivery to the citizens and, creation of a worthy national road map to economic development in any country and, particularly, in a country like Nigeria, require a friction-free political landscape the type of which can only be attained and nurtured to fruition through collaboration among the requisite units, agencies or organs of government most especially the traditionally acclaimed organs of government-Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. Given this, the next section to which we now turn, synoptically though, concretely examines these organs as mechanisms put in place to enable the government as the instrument of the state to make and enforce its decisions as well as the catalyst-**(doctrine of separation of powers)**-for their existence and, mechanism- **(doctrine of checks and balances)**-put in place to ensure the success of the existence.

The three horizontal organs of government.

The three organs of government are: the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. The functions assigned to and performed by each of these organs vary from one political system to

another but, then each of them perform certain basic functions within virtually all political systems within the global political community. The specificities of these functions on organ by organ basis are as follows:

The Legislature.

Law making is the primary function of this organ of government. Its other functions include the following:

- **Determination of ways and means of raising and spending public money.**
- **Checking of executive arbitrariness.**
- **Ratification of treaties.**
- **Approval of appointments (e.g., ambassadorial, ministerial and judicial appointments).**
- **Depending on the system of governance in practice, legislature may be unicameral or bicameral.**

The Executive.

The powers of implementation of public policies; enforcement of laws passed by the legislature or the parliament are vested on this organ of government which equally performs the functions of: **appointing government functionaries (e.g., judges, ministers, ambassadors, board members etc.); granting of state pardon and; assenting of bills passed by the legislature before becoming laws.**

The Judiciary.

Interpretation of the laws of the land as passed by the legislature is the principal function of this organ of government. It is equally the function of this organ of government to ensure strict adherence to the principles of rule of law and sanctity of the constitution of the nation. This organ equally performs the following functions:

- **Punishment of offenders.**
- **Adjudication of disputes between individuals and the state, and disputes between and among different tiers of government.**

- Appraisal of the acts of both the legislature and the executive and possible declaration of such acts as null and void in cases of aberration.
- Administration of oaths of office to public officers both elected and appointed.
- Making of laws through judicial precedents.

The catalyst put in place for the independent but expected collaborative existence of these organs of government is the doctrine of separation of powers and its mechanism of checks and balances.

The doctrine of separation of powers.

This doctrine, according to which powers refer to the legislative, executive and judicial powers of the government, happens to be an essential feature of constitutional government. It was first expounded by a French political philosopher, Jean Bodin in the sixteenth century in his book entitled **“The Republic”** (Khan et al, 1972 Akindele et al, 1998, 2000).

A variant of this doctrine was later in the seventeenth century expounded by the first English philosopher, John Locke, who, at that time was concerned with making sure that only one power-**the legislative power be divided between the king and the parliament.** Even, before John Locke, another seventeenth century political theorist, James Harrington in his **“Academia”** (1634) had advocated a more abstract notion of a necessary balance of power.

It was this doctrine of the separation of powers which created the incentive to diverge from the orthodox or conventional method of combining monarchy, aristocracy and democracy which had been the practice or common political thought since the times of Aristotle and Polybius. Moreover, this doctrine was actually and formally propagated and popularized by Montesquieu in his eighteenth century **“Esprit des Lois”** (i.e., The Spirit of Laws) (1748). Montesquieu drew a sharp and logical distinction between and among the legislative, executive and judicial powers, and insisted that they should be handled by distinct and independent bodies of government.

Following his propagation of this doctrine, it was given institutional expression in many constitutions. The precursor in this area at that time was the United States of America. The United States’ constitution of 1787 was a landmark in the practical adoption of the doctrine of separation of powers to governmental institutional arrangement. But, it was most fully elaborated

in the United States by John Adams who, in a refined manner, adopted it through the flexible doctrine of checks and balances in the quest for much desired collaboration among the three organs without any undue erosion of each other's powers or areas of relevance in the governance process. Also the French constitution of the revolutionary era as well as various Monarchical constitutions of Western Europe in post-Napoleonic period gave recognition to the doctrine of separation of powers.

The doctrine of the separation of powers rest on the notion that powers and functions of government may be divided into three-(Legislative, Executive and Judicial)-in order to remove the possibility of a situation whereby any of the organs will be too strong for the other in the execution or performance of their respective governmental functions or duties. The rationale for this separation was predicated on the assumption that if the powers exercised by each of these organs are concentrated in one hand, tyranny would be the result and this would jeopardize the civil rights. Thus, the central core or idea of the doctrine of separation of powers has since being that the same person or body should not make the laws, enforce them and pass judgment on violators.

The need to ensure the effectiveness and/or productive collaboration among these organs for effective public service delivery and, without erosion of each other's relevance in the governance and service delivery processes brought about the political mechanism of the doctrine of checks and balances.

The doctrine of checks and balances.

This doctrine is a complement to the doctrine of separation of powers. How it became a complement of this doctrine is traceable to the idea that each organ should and will be a check on the others. Thus the idea of checks and balances became a provision of the means through which the different organs of government can check the powers of one another and balance them in such a manner that tyranny, despotism, oppression, domination, violation of fundamental human rights and civil liberties are not encouraged.

The doctrine of checks and balances usually exists between the Legislature and the Executive in the areas of legislative control of the Executive namely: budget approval; appointments; declaration of wars; ratification of treaties, amendment of the constitution; impeachment; accountability and transparency; refusal, delay or approval of measures proposed

by the Executive. Even though, the Executive cannot impose its views in most cases, on the Legislature, it has some measures of control over the Legislature in the areas like the passage of bills into laws. In fact, the Executive can always refuse its signature to a bill or any bill it considers to be unconstitutional or too harsh for the citizens.

The Judiciary as the third organ can also check both the Executive and the Legislature if and whenever their actions are deemed illegal. And the Judiciary is also vulnerable to both the executive and the legislative control if not in all respects but, in the areas of appointment and promotions of Judges. The abuse of this control mostly by the Executives in most developing polities, have brought about some further measures serving as inhibitors to some extent to ensure that the Judiciary is clearly allowed to function as the last hope of the common people. An example of such measures was the establishment in Nigeria of the Nation Judicial Commission which, has to some extent, performed creditably to justify the confidence of Nigerians as far as the independence and fairness of the judicial organ are concerned.

Put together, the idea behind the principles of checks and balances is the protection and safeguarding of individual liberty and freedom through its discouragement of and prevention of nepotism, tyranny, despotism and abuses of power. This doctrine was and still not meant for solving personal, ideological and political scores as most dead-wood and free-loading political actors may wish to believe in their quest for illicit and idiosyncratic political ends.

The practical reality or utility of these mechanisms-**(Doctrines of separation of powers and checks and balances)** in ensuring the true workability of the organs-**(Legislative; Executive and Judicial)**-of government in the quest for effective public service delivery and politics of hope for the people varies from one political system to the others depending on the nature and exigencies of each polity's practical politics and understanding of it as a means for improving the lots of the citizenry rather than those of the political actors as it has being in most developing polities Nigeria inclusive due to the dangerous adherence to apolitical understanding of politics or the perception of the latter in the context of what it is not in spite of the need for the opposite.

From the analysis in the immediate foregoing section, it is clear that the legislature forms one of the most important units of the governance process and, that its functionaries – the legislators must not be found wanting in the performance of their legislative functions. Doing so

will definitely wreck the engine of the governance process and stifle peoples aspirations and pursuit of meaningful political existence through the democratic process as theoretically contemplated and practically predicted or envisaged.

CONCLUSION:

This paper has dealt with the theoretical and revisitational discourse of the concepts of democracy and governance. It highlighted the core of both as well as their institutional linkage through the horizontal organs of government. In the process it was contented that the practical and meaningful realization of the raison d'être of the two concepts is clearly predicated on the rational balancing of the values of these institutional mechanisms through productive political behaviours of the relevant functionaries vis-à-vis meeting the needs and aspirations of the people.

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