

RESOURCE GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE IN NIGERIA: REFLECTIONS ON IPACEEL THEORY

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Abstract

Quality assurance (QA) obtains in resource governance (RG) where and when resources are well harnessed and managed sustainably. RG issues in Nigeria question QA therein. This study examines the extent of QA in RG in Nigeria, highlighting issues and prospects of QA and GR. Leaning on the Integrity and Public Accountability Criteria of Ethical and Exemplary Leadership (IPACEEL) theory, the study argues that ethical leadership offers appreciable QA and RG to a reasonable extent. The study relies on observation and secondary data. Qualitative method, content analysis and descriptive and interpretive tools were employed. The analysis shows that following bad governance, leadership misdeeds, and politicians' and other elite's misdeeds, quality assurance in resource governance in Nigeria is currently low, while the RG is weak. The study concludes that effective resource governance allows for quality assurance, which has a lot of prospects for the nation having the resources. Among others, it recommends that sustained ethics-based criteria should be instituted and made operational for the attainment of effective and productive resource governance and to guarantee QA.

Keywords: Resource governance, Quality assurance, Harness, leadership misdeeds, IPACEEL theory

Introduction

Resource governance has a link to fragility, conflict over resources and issues of quality assurance (OECD, 2022). That is to say governance plays a significant role in resource exploration, distribution, use and management. It follows that wherever good obtains, quality assurance also obtains in resource governance or management in particular and governance, operations and services in general. The kind of governance style adopted by the government of a given nation or community determines effective or ineffective resource governance in the place (Yiing et al., 2009). Good leadership offers good governance (Peter et al., 2023). This paper argues that good governance is made manifest in resource governance in such ways that quality assurance obtains, while bad governance allows for resource mismanagement and quality assurance (QA) is (almost) absent or obtains insignificantly. As Peter et al. (2023) rightly point out, bad leadership is characterised by bad

governance, inefficiency, resource mismanagement and development and nationhood issues. Corruption is the number one attribute of every bad government.

As Tauli-Corpuz (2016) rightly observes, where major elements of good governance are absent, natural resources are not duly explored and environmental outcomes are negative. Studies indicate that RG remains weak over the years in countries such as Nigeria, where corruption and bad governance commonly obtain unchecked (Tauli-Corpuz, 2016; WRI, 2015). WRI (2015) reports that of the 70 countries surveyed in 2014 for the Environmental Democracy Index, 79% of them were to have fair or poor laws on participation in environmental decision-making. A report by Transparency International (2019) has it that over two-thirds of 180 countries scored below average in the 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index. Given the foregoing, this study seeks to determine the extent of resource governance and quality assurance in Nigeria, making reflections on the Integrity and Public Accountability Criteria of Ethical and Exemplary Leadership (IPACEEL) Models, put forward by Peter et al. (2023).

Concepts of Resource Governance and Quality Assurance

Governance can be defined as a system and an act of controlling people and the non-humans of society. Regarding resources, governance is an exercise that critically determines social equity, effectiveness and sustainability of natural resource use and conservation. Governance is an essential factor behind efforts toward conserving Nature and for attaining effective conservation (Bennett & Dearden, 2014; Bennett et al., 2019). Essential elements of governance needed for good or effective RG include inclusive decision-making and co-ordination and contributing to positive conservation outcomes, which entail engaging all actors' interests and initiatives on managing or relying on natural resources in a given area (de Koning, 2017).

Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI) (2021) defines RG as the rules, disclosures, practices and oversight procedures and enabling environment governing the extractive sectors of different countries. In other words, resource governance revolves around rules, laws, regulations or policies concerning and guiding the entire activities of the extractive sectors of different countries of the world. For Graham et al. (2003), resource governance (RG) refers to norms, values, guidelines, institutions and processes that determine how power and responsibilities over natural resources are exercised; how decisions are taken; and how citizens participate in exploration, control, management, distribution and use of natural resources.

The concept of quality has been described by Ijaiya (2001) as what everybody considers good and desires to have. For this study, quality concerns standard, maximal satisfaction, and what users or those in need of it consider to meet their expectation, need and value or worth. The different definitions of quality have it that quality is all about having, meeting and maintaining standards in different endeavours. Quality assurance refers to sustained maintenance of quality in the dealings of various spheres. Different bodies are constituted and put over different spheres to ensure that quality assurance is attained (Ajayi & Adegbesan, 2007). Quality assurance is a mechanism for building and attaining standards, reputation, functionality and efficiency at both national and international levels.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Integrity and Public Accountability Criteria of Ethical and Exemplary Leadership (IPACEEL) theory (aka IPACEEL Models), which aptly captures resource governance. Herein, the theory shall be referred to as IPACEEL Theory. Fadare (2018, p. 1) says ‘any research that explores the full range of leadership theories and their practical application in societies other than where they were developed would make a significant contribution to existing knowledge available in this area of organisational leadership.’ Proponents of IPACEEL, Naankiel Peter, Abbas Ghulam and Odey Robert, theorise that ethical leadership parameter is the basis of exemplary leadership. For them, ethical leadership is the base of every worthwhile leadership style, while unethical leadership is the bane of every unworthy leadership style (Peter et al., 2023). By implication ethical leadership allows for good resource governance and quality assurance. An ethical leadership or a leadership based on ethical parameter is one that is worthwhile in many regards.

Ethics, as the element of worthy leadership values, is supreme and takes centre stage in all the elements and attributes for effective leadership. Ethical leadership is the leadership practice of a certified ethical leader, who had met and continuously meets the integrity criterion. Integrity and accountability are core features of ethical and exemplary leadership. There can be no ethical leadership without these features, which is why every leadership aspirant must meet these criteria in order to attain the leadership position(s) they vie for (Peter et al., 2023). They argue that any leadership that is ethical is exemplary and vice versa. Ethical leadership is built and rests on ethics, morality and natural as well as common law (Peter et al., 2023). As such, ethical leadership is worthwhile, accountable, productive, responsible, responsive and excellently good. Also, they aver that the possession of high integrity and moral uprightness makes the leadership charisma of an individual to be outstanding. The possession of high integrity and moral uprightness is the driving force of discipline, self-control, contentment, non-covetousness, philanthropy and other virtues.

The theorists charge leaders to base all leadership criteria, styles, measures and deeds on ethical and exemplary leadership practices, styles and parameters. Doing so, they note, begin with the integrity and accountability test stage of pre-leadership evaluation to the public accountability practical stage (Peter et al., 2023). They observe that ‘the problems of governance, mismanagement and inefficacious leadership models and practices in contemporary Africa call for both individual and collective lasting solutions, such as through a scholarly research’ (Peter et al., p. 258). Their observation highlights the imperative of effective resource governance (RG) and quality assurance (QA) in Nigeria as well as the like other nations. Following the tenets of IPACEEL Theory, this study advocates ethical and accountable governance of resources, as doing so would undoubtedly guarantee and bring to place quality assurance that would in turn guarantee sustainable development in various sectors of the Nigerian society. Also, leaning on the adopted theory, this study argues that worthwhile resource governance allows for quality assurance in environmentalism, resource exploration, development, allocation, sharing, management, and control formulas. It also allows for effective operations, dealings and services, and triggers changed perception of and attitude towards the environment– the non-humans of the ecosystem.

Good RG and QA offer huge prospects to society, individuals and groups. Effective resource governance puts off serious environmental issues affecting humans and non-humans alike. Also, given that with its submissions, IPACEEL redefines leadership in generic term

and resource governance (management) in specific term in Africa as well as beyond, it is considered theoretically adequate for this study, as its submissions are practicable in the context of resource governance. The theory offers valuable insights to tackling issues of governance in Nigeria and other parts of Africa and the globe at large. It teaches that true leadership is built on ethical principles, virtues, integrity, public accountability, transparency and other leadership charisma. To attain effective governance of people and resources alike, the postulations of IPACEEL Theory have to be considered, imbibed and sustained. These include setting out criteria and standards for those to take up resource governance and human leadership responsibilities.

Related Studies

Osawe and Uwa (2023) make an analysis of natural resource governance and conflict in Nigeria. They point out Nigeria's abundant natural resources account for over 65% of her total tax revenue, with the country's oil and gas sector being the highest source of export. Different conflicts are traced to these resources in Nigeria. The study gathers that the political economy and the exploration of natural resources in Nigeria fall short of the global standard. It concludes that resource governance should be based on ethical and democratic principles, virtues, competence and leadership skills in order to attain efficiency and quality assurance. Peter et al. (2023) theorise and discuss resource management in Africa, emphasising on the impact of leadership style on the governance of resources in Nigeria and other parts of Africa. They submit that ethical leadership is characterised worthwhile leadership styles and features. They recommend that their proposed theory, regarded as IPACEEL Models, should be imbibed and sustained in resource governance, human resource management and governance in society as a whole.

Elujekwute et al. (2021) discuss how enhancing the quality of education for sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Nigeria. Corruption and examination malpractice are found to be the lead factors hampering efforts made toward achieving enhanced quality education and sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Nigeria. The study concludes that despite being overseen by constituted bodies charged with accreditation, many schools are still found wanting. It recommends that educators, stakeholders and other agents of socialisation should rise to the challenge of combating corruption and examination malpractice. Natural Resource Governance Institute (2021) points out that Nigeria's oil and gas sector is characterised by weak resource governance. It thereby falls short of the key measures of transparency and accountability. As at 2020, the sector was producing 2 million barrels per day. The hydrocarbon sector accounts for over 85% of Nigeria's merchandise exports. The export revenue accounted for \$55 billion in 2019, and about 65% fiscal revenue. Even prior to the coronavirus pandemic and the 2020 oil price shock, the sector was stuck in a cycle of high uncertainty, boom-and-bust spending and diminishing returns. Production has mostly stagnated, foreign direct investment has declined, and oil revenues have come up short of what has been budgeted (Natural Resource Governance Institute, 2021).

Giami and Solomon-Alufohai (2020) explore challenges of managing quality assurance in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The analysis reveals that poor funding and unfavourable working conditions are the top issues of quality assurance confronting Nigerian tertiary institutions. It concludes that government's negligence of issues confronting the education sector is what makes quality assurance to be seemingly a mirage. It charges the

government to pay deserving to issues of educational management and administration and set aside a minimum of 26% of its national budget to the education sector in order to attain quality assurance in the sector. Ikelegbe (2020) examines quality assurance in office technology and management programmes of polytechnics and reveals that quality assurance is currently insignificant because of underfunding, poor management, compromised standards, inadequate facilities, and shortage of competent and skilled manpower, among others. It concludes that to attain quality assurance in polytechnic education, the problems of quality assurance should be got rid of. The regulatory bodies are charged to live up to expectations.

Okechukwu (2020) investigates quality control in manufacturing and educational sectors in Nigeria and reveals that quality control leads to quality assurance, improved services and maintenance of standard operation guidelines and principles, and helps in gets rid of and averts errors. It recommends that organisations should have internal quality assurance monitoring bodies and units, and organisational lapses constraining QA should be got rid of by government and concerned authorities of organisations. The nexus between environment, conflict and security is established by Adam (2018). The study reveals a complex relationship between the local oil servicing contractors and the militant groups. There is strategic destructive alliance between these two actors underpinned by moral hazard. The oil servicing contractors employ the services of the local people to vandalise the oil pipelines in order for the MNCs to award contract to them for repair of the vandalised pipelines. Also, the study reveals that the Presidential Amnesty granted to militants in the Niger Delta seem to have produced unintended outcomes in undermining productive economic activity and exacerbating insecurity in the region. Further research into the issues at stake is recommended.

The study done by Dickson and Asua (2016) interrogates resource control in Nigeria, appraising the politics surrounding it. Relying solely on secondary sources, the study proves that there has been innovation in the agitation for resource control in Nigeria, which ranges from regional cleavages, States, minority/majority ethnic groups to geo-political zones in recent times. The study submits that the unjust act of letting major ethnic groups rather the concerned than minorities to oil and utilise oil resources exclusively remains the bane of the resource governance based conflict in Nigeria. It recommends effective management of resources and rethinking and restructuring as the panacea. Okoli and Uhembe (2015) examine mining issues of natural resources governance in Nigeria. Leaning on the stakeholder theory of corporate governance, they show that failure of governance in Nigeria's extractive industry has led to unwholesome, unregulated and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, which threaten economic growth, sustainable development, and environmental and human security. The paper submits that there are a lot of issues of natural resources governance in Nigeria, as the governance is currently insignificant. It recommends that government should synergise with civil society, community and corporate stakeholders in order to govern the mining sector well.

Akhuemonkhan et al. (2014) examine the impact of quality assurance on technical vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria. The study gathers that the impact of TVET has not been impressive because of ineffective quality assurance at all levels. It concludes that to attain impactful progress in TVET, quality assurance, and access to and participation in vocational and technical programmes required. It recommends that

government and concerned individuals and groups should ensure QA, adequate funding and motivation of participation in TVET and vocational and technical programmes.

Issues of RG and QA in Nigeria

Although a good number of salient development and nationhood issues confronting are traceable to colonialism, Nigerian leaders are to blame for issues of resource governance and quality assurance in Nigeria and the likes (Robert, 2020; Peter et al., 2023). For example, wrong and mindless boundary demarcation by the colonialists has remained a source of inter-conflict in Africa (Meredith 2005; Alao et al., 2010). Alao et al. (2010) emphasise that wherever the government fails to duly address boundary and resource administration issues with lasting solutions, the issues persist and raise different issues that the given society continue to battle with. Post-independence Nigerian as well as other African leaders and elites have continuously failed to effectively manage the affairs of their nations in ways that would afford meaningful development for Nigeria as well as other African nations, as in the case of Singapore.

Fanon (1963) had earlier prophesied the inability of African leaders to govern their nations well. Prah (2009) regrets the inability of African indigenous leaders to lead their nations to the Promised Land is bane of the underdevelopment confronting African nations, such as Nigeria and Ghana, since independence. Fanon (1963) has observed that no meaningful development was evidentially possible in the mission of the new ruling groups that had inherited colonial power. Robert (2020) argues that it is needless to continue blaming the contemporary issues confronting Africa on the colonialists, because if the indigenous African leaders were capable and people-centred, they would have made significant development headways by now, if not erstwhile. Prah (2009) observes that African indigenous leaders have been incapable of making any development headway since the end of colonialism, because their adopted development approaches and paradigms are inefficacious. He enjoined African leaders to go back the 'fundamentals' for lasting solutions. The fundamentals are what Robert et al. (2016) regard as 'our socio-cultural norms and values that we must retrace for a better African society'.

As Gasper (2016) rightly notes, the streams in development practice are from: diverse areas of socio-economic development policy, planning and management, both within countries and in the relations between countries; other partly institutionally separate, partly overlapping, and practice worlds, inclusive of human rights activism and practice; emergency relief, conflict response and humanitarian intervention; migration and refugee issues; and work on business ethics, labour conditions, and corporate social responsibility (p. 3). Changes in the social environment, such as contestable access to new political positions or perceptions of new resources, are noted to be causes of conflicts between and among groups having divergent interests (Otite, 1999). Alozieuwa (2016), Meredith (2005) and Alani (2003), among others, are of the opinion that the misdeeds of the colonialists, such as false and wrong boundary demarcation, promotion of Hausa-Fulani political hegemony, the amalgamation of the North and the South, etc. had caused antagonism among Nigerian ethnic groups. The antagonism is one of the major factors behind the Nigerian Civil War and the recurrent intergroup conflicts among the Nigerian peoples.

Nigerian indigenous political and military leaders have continuously failed to correct the wrongs of their colonial predecessors. High population density in Africa and other like

parts of the world is a major cause of the issues of natural resources management and recurrent conflicts over resources (Bisong & Apologun, 2014). Another issue of resource governance is the mismanagement of resources, which causes conflict. Mismanagement issues include corruption, misuse, reckless exploration and exploitation of the resources, bad leadership and followership, obnoxious policies, incompetence and lack of leadership charisma, negligence, negative attitude, inequitable distribution of assets, and bitter contestation for and conflicts over natural resources (Bisong & Apologun, 2014; Besong, 2017). Other issues of resource governance include humans' misdeeds against the environment; diversion of attention and funds for environmental and human resources management; industrial hazards and pollution; deforestation, forest depletion and the extinction of some mammals and other animal species; reckless mining, causing health challenges and environmental degradation; and issues of biosphere and the threat to the ozone layer (Bisong & Apologun, 2014; Besong, 2018).

Issues of quality in Nigerian tertiary institutions include underfunding, enrolment explosion, compromised standards, inadequate facilities, poor management and inadequate staffing, challenges of autonomy, inadequate human resources, and logistics issues, among others. These identified issues obtain in other sectors. Quality assurance is measured by quality of input, quality of output, quality of content and quality of process. Among others, Peter et al. (2023) and Nwaguru and Sylva (2022) agree with this study, QA is needed as a strategy for control, management, monitoring, competence and performance, standard and ethics, efficient service delivery, adequacy and availability of what has to bring to place quality, betterment and judicious utilisation.

Issues and Prospects of RG in Relation to QA

Issues of environmental degradation and health hazards to human beings are obvious issues of RG and QA in the extractive sectors. Human rights are considered to be the ethical foundations of good natural resource governance, which reflect the close nexus between environmental degradation and the fulfillment or violation of human rights (UNHRC, 2018; Springer & Campese, 2011). The foregoing is why different sets of environmentalists across several formal fields of human endeavours have emerged overtime, environmental ethics taking precedence in the movement for fair, ethical, moral and harmless treatment of and interaction with the environment– Nature. With the emergence of environmentalism, considerable numbers of environmental issues have been addressed, while the advocacies and demands of different movements continue to press on for sustainable solutions to or measures for addressing and preventing environmental issues that adversely affect Nature and humans at varied degrees.

Springer et al. (2021) note that measures to promote effective, inclusive and equitable natural resource governance in the implementation of conservation programmes are hampered by inconsistent or poor understandings of good governance, and limited availability of and skills in using tools to facilitate good governance. Scholars agree that corruption causes a rise in the cost of governance, bad leadership and governance, underdevelopment, recurrent conflicts, insecurity and heinous crimes against the state and its citizenry (Robert & Anura, 2018; Besong, 2017; Odo, 2012). According to Odo (2012), corruption causes incalculable damage to the socio-economic and political development of Nigeria as well as any other nations ridden with corruption in general.

Resource governance involves securing rights and recognising diverse cultural and knowledge systems, which help to ensure the participation of a given indigenous people in the governance of resources in their communities towards attaining harmless or at least less harmful human versus non-human relations, positive and beneficial exploration, environmental and human safety, and sustainable development (Artelle et al., 2019; Springer & Almeida, 2015; Kothari et al., 2012). People and nature benefit from improved and good (natural) resource governance, which includes securing rights and sharing power, responsibilities and resources equitably for collective wellbeing, sustainable national and/or global development (Peter et al., 2023; Springer et al., 2021; Artelle et al., 2019; Bennett et al., 2019; Graham et al., 2003).

Good RG enables nature conservation, natural resource management, and reduction of the risks of social impacts that thereby paves way for positive social outcomes. It is needed to attain environmental safety, biological and cultural diversities, and positive human relations with the environment (Tauli-Corpuz, 2016). Good natural resource governance (NRG) is part and parcel of Sustainable Development Goals, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (Springer et al., 2021). These frameworks, which NRG is incorporated into, had evolved for the sake of or to attain QA. As Peter et al. (2023) rightly observe, chronic leadership issues in contemporary Nigeria include lack of integrity and public accountability, bad governance and mismanagement of resources, which allow for corruption, underdevelopment, impoverishment of African nations and populace, conflicts, insecurity and continuous erosion of indigenous ethics and cultures, and the looting and wiping out of African belongings—resources. They argue that issues of governance transcend to and as well influence issues of resources management across all human societies (Peter et al., 2023).

IPACEEL Theory, a Remedy to RG and QA Issues

The need for theories, research and other intellectual mechanisms to be used for finding solutions to leadership problems in Africa and beyond is affirmed by Fadare (2018) and Javidan et al. (2006), among others. Javidan et al. (2006) state that there is the dire need for more research studies into leadership issues in sub-Saharan Africa in relation to the attributes, traits and skills needed for effective leadership in organisations, as postulated by different leadership theories. If imbibed, the demands of the IPACEEL Theory are gateways to attaining good or effective RG maximal QA in extractive sectors as well as beyond. Peter et al. (2023) emphasise that leadership is crucial to all spheres, including resource management or governance. They note that planning and management are two of the most essentials of development streams, and call for sensitisation, studies, theorisation, exploration, interrogation and analysis of leadership in general and resource governance in particular (Peter et al., 2023).

Applying the adopted theory in practical RG and QA would help address and at the same time avert environmental issues significantly, if not ameliorated. Resources management by leaders, for which good leadership and governance are among the core requisitions, entails as well as begins with planning and management (Peter et al., 2023). It is imperative to have good leaders, who would be capable of governing humans and resources well. For worthwhile planning and management, chronic challenging leadership issues ought to be resolved diplomatically with lasting approaches, paradigms and result-oriented

measures, which undoubtedly include theories or models (Peter et al., 2023; Fadare, 2018). Prospective leaders must be subjected to passing rigorous tests to prove their level of integrity, public accountability capability, character and exemplary leadership dispositions evidenced in their proven charisma, prowess and dexterity, life styles, personality traits, background, and so on. With these criteria, good governance and efficient resources management is possible. Therefore, all the criteria have to be met by a candidate.

According to theorists of IPACEEL Models claim that good governance undoubtedly paves way for efficient management of resources; stressing that the management of non-human resources depends on the management of human resources (Peter et al., 2023). Where and when there is good governance, human resources are bound to be well-managed. And, when human resources are well-managed by the leaders, the human resources, in turn, join force with the leaders to manage the non-human resources well. The reverse is the case where the otherwise obtains. Where and when human resources are not well-managed, bad governance is what is responsible for the backdrop. As such, the IPACEEL Theory offers valuable insights to issues of RG and QA, which have to be addressed by putting in place ethical and principled modalities and criteria for leadership over humans and natural resources.

Effective leadership styles determine leadership performance (Fadare, 2018; Amirul & Daud, 2012). A good government is reputed for good performance and governance. Good governance entails good human leadership and resource governance. Amirul and Daud (2012) reveal that effective leadership and high performance are determined by the leadership styles used by the leaders. The leadership styles considered effective by individuals in organisations may differ on the basis of the set of beliefs the people hold in terms of the attributes, skills, behaviours, and other stereotypes that are accepted as contributing to or impeding outstanding leadership (Javidan et al., 2006).

Conclusion

This study has so far engaged with resource governance (RG) and quality assurance (QA) in Nigeria. In doing so, the study sees and discusses the issues through the lens of the adopted theory of leadership in general and resource governance in particular. Most current studies on QA in Nigeria are on tertiary education. That is, a good number of studies have been devoted to ascertain whether or not QA obtains in Nigerian tertiary institutions and the extent to which it obtains. This present study looks beyond the tertiary institutions enclave to other spheres. Like those on tertiary institutions in Nigeria, this study finds the extent of QA to be low and RG to be weak. The study concludes that effective resource governance allows for quality assurance, which has a lot of prospects for the nation having the resources. On the whole, the study holds that ethical parameters for good leadership are gateways to quality assurance in resource governance. There the dire to improve on RG and QA in Nigerian private and public sectors alike informed this study. The extent to which RG and QA obtain has been proven.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made:

- (i) Sustained ethics-based criteria should be instituted and made operational for the attainment of effective and productive resource governance. Thus, the IPACEEL Theory is

recommended to governments of all levels, corporate organisations and non-governmental institutions in Africa as well as other parts of the globe in general, as viable theoretical and intellectual means of resolving leadership issues.

(ii) Issues of QA can be addressed through: improved funding, infrastructural development, provision of facilities and social amenities, good management, staffing and staff motivation.

(iii) Sustained ethics-based criteria should be instituted and made operational for the attainment of effective and productive resource governance.

(iv) Individuals that found wanting should not be saddled with resource governance positions. Rural dwellers should be granted access to benefits and opportunities arising from (exploration of) resources of their communities rather than middlemen having access to them without equitable distribution of the resources as well as the associated benefits and opportunities to the rural dwellers.

(v) It is also imperative to carry out further studies on these themes.

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