



Article

Elitism, Organised Labour and Good Governance in Nigeria

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Abstract

Over the years, there has been an "us and them" relationship between Nigerians and their government at all levels, as a consequence of the elitist character of the Nigerian state. Nigerians are thus alienated from the government and the political class from the masses. An effective participant political culture is therefore lacking and the masses are rendered incapable of advancing alternative viewpoints even when policies and actions of government are glaringly anti-people. Against this background of elitism, this study interrogates the efficacy of organised labour as a platform for participation and opposition, to input good governance in the system. Built around the elite theory of politics, the study relied on data generated from a field survey of the leadership of the Nigerian labour movement and analysed with the tools of tables and multiple regression analysis. The study concludes that within this context of elitism and the concomitant hostility in government - labour relations, the potentials of organised labour to contribute to good governance in Nigeria is only partially realised. The study also suggests that the labour leadership needs to always carry along the rank and file members of their unions as well as the popular masses to enhance its capacity to contribute significantly to the evolution of a true, transparent and accountable democracy in the country.

Keywords

Organised labour, elitism, good governance, Political culture, True democracy.

Introduction

Nigerian politicians appear to be one in their ambitions and motivations. The typical politician seems to be interested only in gaining political power. Between the major political parties, past and present, there appear to be no ideological differences. Hence politicians often jump from one party to the other with the intent only of remaining in the mainstream. In this circumstance, there is no effective opposition to the government in power from within the political class. During the colonial days, there was robust opposition against the colonial government from the political class, in active collaboration with the trade unions. As noted by Obono (2007) the Political activism of the labour movement in collaboration with the indigenous political elite led directly to major political developments in the country during the

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colonial era, culminating ultimately in the achievement of Independence in 1960. But this kind of collaboration is no more.

Having inherited a state built by the colonial power with the sole aim of exploiting the country and controlling its people without challenging its bases, this attitude seems to have rubbed off on the indigenous political elite. Hence, in the intra-elite struggle for the control of the state apparatus- the main instrument of political and economic power - concern for the masses which used to be the hub of the nationalist struggle was ignored. This heralded the parting of ways between the new political leadership and organized labour, whose interests coincided with those of the masses. Moreover, the long years of military rule with no other active political institution for popular representation presented the labour movement as the only credible opposition to government misrule. Hence, labour was the only nationally active organization that stood up for the people and, with the aid of political activism and industrial actions, compelled the military authorities to finally give up power in 1999. The situation has remained largely the same under the current democratic dispensation. According to the International Republican Institute (2007), the trade unions have come to be seen as the only real opposition to the government. Their strength was not so much in their size as in the solidarity they enjoyed with the masses. Their mobilization concerns and affects, in one way or the other, the whole of the population which, in its majority, shares similar difficulties and is rather inclined to give them their support (Barchiesi, 1997).

The return to democracy raised high hopes for a much smoother era of political and economic development, but these hopes were soon dashed (Obi, 2004) and the ruling elite have been unable to carry the people along. This is largely owing to such governance issues (which disconnect government with the people) as corruption, nepotism, human rights abuse, lack of equity, lack of transparency and accountability, abuse of the rule of law and lack of popular participation (Onyishi, 2010).

Nigerians appreciate the capacity of labour to resist government misrule and have at various times beckoned on labour to take action to make government live up to its responsibilities (Utomi, 2009). The labour movement has risen up to this challenge and, since the return to democracy; it has been the platform for Nigerians to query government policies, actions and inactions not only for the working class but, the entire Nigerian people (Nwoko, 2009). According to Odah (2007) labour has been pro-active in challenging government to abandon certain courses of action that would translate to increasing hardship for the common man.

Organized labour therefore has the potential to reform the system of participation and opposition (Dahl, 1971). In spite of the enormous potential of organised labour to reform Nigerian politics and its capacity to compel government to be responsive to public opinion and to cater to the aspirations of the common man, the workers organizations and their leadership seem to be fixated on what Walton and Mckersie (1965) called the myth of achievement - an illusion which magnifies fractional changes in wage rates or marginal improvements in employment conditions into resounding successes without sufficient appreciation of the fact that workers economic aspirations could be truly satisfied only through a fundamental transformation of society. A case that easily comes to mind is the January 2012 fuel subsidy strike when government was practically on its knees and labour could secure maximum concessions from it, yet the labour leaders inexplicably settled for a position which the masses perceived as unacceptable. Under the current ARC government with its change mantra, the final removal of subsidy on petroleum products (Alike,2016) with the attendant hyper inflation and excruciating hardships on the Nigerian

masses, labour has failed to respond to the yearning of Nigerians for action on its part. This study seeks to highlight the factors responsible for this limitation.

The study basically sought to answer the question "what is the impact of the elitist character of Nigerian politics on the relationship between government and organised labour and how does this affect the capacity of organised labour to contribute to good governance'?"

Review of Literature and Theoretical Issues

Organized labour as represented by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NIC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) has, in recent times, been subjected to considerable research and commentary in terms of their nature, role, functionality and effectiveness in improving the welfare of the Nigerian worker and the protection of their rights in industrial disputes with the Public and Private Labour Employers (Aiyede, 2004). Organized labour in Nigeria also provides a strategic platform for political activism which has become a meaningful medium for participation in national political life, especially for the increasing number of people disillusioned by conventional politics. Its effort to exert influence on government therefore goes beyond the protection of the material interest of its members to include the promotion of altruistic concerns such as the defence of the common man against the impact of unwholesome government policies, official corruption, impunity, disregard for rule of law and neglect of public opinion. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) provides that every person shall be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons and, in particular, he may form or belong to any association for the protection of his interest. This provision underlines the fact that trade unionism is fundamentally, legal by all standards. But successive governments in Nigeria have pursued policies and actions that are clearly antagonistic to trade unionism. Hence Bingel (1997) suggested that "it is clear that successive governments have tended to see labour as a problem to them in their attempt to implement their programmes. Thus various attempts were made, including legislative actions to ensure that labour is unable to operate with the level of vibrancy it desires, to the dictates of the regime in power"

Political authority in Nigeria in relation with labour, as with every other segment of the public tends to possess and exercise absolute power. This has far reaching implications for the Nigerian industrial relations system (Nwoko, 2009). The position of government as the main source of investible capital and the single largest employer of labour complements its sovereign power and control of industrial relations, both of which enables the state to establish the rules and norms and a wide range of other matters relating to employment relations through its legislative, adjudicative and administrative functions (Fashoyin, 1997). Thus the state established rules and enforces their implementation in accordance with the intendment of its makers, and at the same time adjudicates disputes arising from the implementation process.

Given the prevalence of corruption in all facets of the Nigerian society and, particularly, the alienation and segregation of the Nigerian political elite from the ordinary Nigerian (Popoola 2011), researchers such as Jalingo 2001), Iyayi (2009), Adewumi (2012), etc. have been compelled to examine the nature of the relationship Between political authority and the labour movement in Nigeria and how this relationship impacts on both the consciousness of labour as a class and its ability to seek the welfare of its members and the larger society.

The colonial experience and many years of military rule, which commenced with the early ouster of the first republic both contributed to the alienation of the people from the government, and the political class

from the wider society. The direct consequence is the inculcation of a subject political culture (Almond and Verba, 1963) among the people, whereby citizens are aware of the central government but are only heavily subjected to its decisions with little scope for dissent. The individual is aware of politics, its actions and institutions. He has a good sense of his own preferences regarding policy options and he feels frustrated if government is pursuing policies he considers as wrong. Yet he cannot do anything about it because he either does not have access to -re political input system or he is not informed about how to access the same. He is, therefore, effectively oriented towards politics, yet he is unable to actively participate in the policy process. This culture is congruent, according to Almond and Verba, with a centralized, authoritarian political system.

Labour - government relations in Nigeria is, essentially, reflection of this type of political culture prevalent among Nigerians. Hence there is sustained attempt by governments in Nigeria, both military and civilian to subvert labour activism and subordinate the central labour organization - the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) - to its control. The environment of the Nigerian labour movement with regard to its relationship with government is apparently hostile, owing to a set of subjective and objective barrier conditions (economic, legal/political, social) as well as ideological barrier conditions that are consciously erected and sustained by the (capitalist) state, its agencies or other agents of capital which seek to limit labour's self-conscious and self-liberating understanding and actions (Iyayi, 2009). This is not surprising since in capitalist societies, it is the state that comes to assume overall responsibility for reproducing the subordinated status of labour within the capital - labour relation. The bias of the state against labour may be openly and directly expressed (as when a state orders its troops to charge a picket line, engages in mass arrest and detention of labour leaders, passes repressive labour laws and cuts the wages and salaries of workers while allowing hyperinflation) or indirectly and subtly demonstrated (example through the various instruments of propaganda and the ideological manipulation of workers and their leaders). All of these have happened and continue to happen in Nigeria while the great majority of Nigerians look on as though incapable of effecting a change in the scheme of things. In many cases, unions were banned or proscribed and/or their leadership dissolved or incarcerated. In other cases, government got involved covertly or overtly in the election of union leadership. Hence, the Obasanjo military administration banned some unionists, including Michael Imoudu and Wahab Goodluck, from aspiring to Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) leadership through the Trade Union (Disqualification of certain persons) Decree of 1977 (Adewumi, 2000). This trend has survived from the colonial days through the first republic; became more intense under military rule and continues even under the current democratic dispensation (NLC, 2009).

During the first tenure of the Obasanjo, the Nigerian state attacked the collective bargaining system and outlawed strikes through its no work no pay policy, and in one instance, an Ikeja high court, citing the 1990 Trade Dispute Act, ordered the Nigeria Labour Congress to cancel its 2003 strike while government ordered the police to suppress the strike. In an attempt to quell the strike, the Nigerian police killed nine people and arrested several others across the country (Olly, 2004). But by far the most important attack on the labour movement by the Obasanjo administration was the amendment of the Trade Union Act in 2005 and the establishment of a second labour centre, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) thereby breaking the NLC monopoly as the central labour organization, to make it difficult for the congress to mobilize its membership for social action. In the words of the NLC secretary, Comrade John Odah, government's intervention was to apply the divide and rule tactic by playing one congress against the other, thereby creating conflicting interest and rivalry among them (Abu, 2007).

The two umbrella unions have since come around this and have been working harmoniously together at crucial times. However, the record of their joint successes and failures tends to lend credence to the view that organized labour has been effectively, albeit, subtly emasculated by government as labour quite often inexplicably backs off and budes at times of potentially maximum gains in its negotiations with government. This state of affairs has been attributed to the culture of elitism both among the political class as well as the leadership of the labour movement.

The elite theory of politics is relevant to this study to the extent that it can more completely explain the alienation of the ruling class in Nigerian politics from the aspirations Of the masses. That is why policies of government whether military or democracy never follow public opinion, and such policies as privatisation and rationalisation of public enterprises, public sector job cuts, deregulation of the oil sector and hike in fuel prices, as well as undue hospitality to foreign capital at the expense of labour, among others, are considered anti-people by organized labour. The labour movement in collaboration with other elements in civil society has led the struggle, on the people's side, against such policies as well as the prevalent official corruption and lack of transparency in Nigerian politics.

On the other hand, the elite theory can also help us understand the leadership problems within the labour movement arising from the deficiencies associated with union democracy, and which diminishes the capacity of labour to achieve its full potentials to impact the performance of Nigerian government. Virtually all contributors to the original thesis of the elite theory (Michels 1949, Mill 1956, etc.) commented on the tendency to corruption, enbourgeoisment, co-optation, alienation and the oligarchic tendencies of trade union leadership. Hence an inevitable feature of developed unionism becomes the virtual irremovability of officials, the impossibility of direct rank and file control of policy, the social and ideological separation of leaders from members and the collaboration and growing together of union, management and state in what has come to be known as 'mature collective bargaining'.

Method of Research

The study adopted the cross sectional design. The population of the study consisted of all the labour unions in Nigeria which are organised in industrial categories and affiliated to either of the two labour centers - the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC). As such, the membership of the two labour centers which actually undertake negotiations with government on behalf of their affiliates constituted the population of the study. 42 industrial unions are affiliated to the NLC whereas 29 are affiliated to the TUC.

Altogether, the membership size of these unions and associations is approximately 6.5 million, consisting of 4 million for those in the Nigeria Labour Congress (Wikipedia.org, 2015) and 2.5 million for those in the Trade Union Congress (TUC.org, 2015). The population size of the study is therefore put at 6.5 million.

The national executives and the central working committees of these organizations are constituted in the national delegates conference in which all the industrial unions and branch unions from the states are represented and, in the democratic tradition of the Nigerian system of trade unionism, in addition to all industrial unions and state branches being equally represented, all delegates have equal chances of being elected into the Central Working Committee, the National Executive Committee and/or the National Administrative Council of their peak groups. The Central Working Committee is however the largest representative body from which all executive members of each union at the national level emerged. The

Central Working Committees of the two labour centers are, therefore, considered to be representative of their affiliates.

According to Burnham, et al (2004), in statistical study, a sample size of 300 is large enough for most analytical purposes and it is the sample of important sub - groups or categories in the survey population that is important. In view of the fact that all the industrial unions of Nigerian workers have equal representation in the Central Working Committees of their umbrella bodies - NLC and TUC as the case may be, we adopted the purposive sampling technique to select our sample of the population to be studied. Purposive sampling, according to Kerlinger (1973) and McNabb (2009) aims to include the key characteristics of the categories in the population so as to obtain a representative sample. Hence the sample for this study is the Central Working Committees of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC). The Central Working Committee of the NLC is made up of 162 officials constituted as follows:

- a) Chairmen and Secretaries of all the 41 industrial unions/affiliates,
- b) Chairmen and Secretaries of 36 + 1 state branches, and
- c) Principal Officers of the secretariat.

On the other hand, the Central Working Committee of the TUC is made up of 135 officials constituted as follows:

- a) Chairmen and secretaries of all the 29 industrial unions/affiliates
- b) Chairmen and secretaries of all 36 + 1 state branches, and
- c) Principal Officers of the Secretariat.

The sample for our study therefore consisted of members of the Central Working Committee of both labour centers, amounting to a total of 297.

The main source of data for this study is the questionnaire. The questionnaire administered on our respondents was made up of multiple choice (Likert - type) questions. The instrument contains both factual and opinion questions. The factual questions sought to elicit information on the demographic characteristics of our respondents whereas the opinion questions sought to elicit the views of our respondents on the impact of the elitist character of Nigerian politics on the relationship between government and organised labour and how this affects the capacity of organised labour to contribute to good governance.

Data were collected by administering the questionnaire through research assistants. The questionnaire were administered by our research assistants on the respondents at the national offices of the NIC and TUC. Our respondents subsequently returned the completed questionnaire to the research assistants at the same offices.

The adoption of this method of data collection was informed by the fact that it would otherwise have been difficult to contact our respondents who reside and work in the different states of the federation as well as the federal capital territory. Since they all attend meetings and other official engagements at the national offices, it was considered that a high return rate would be assured if the national offices were used as the point of contact. The responses to the questionnaire are presented in tables and percentages and analysed using the statistical tool of linear multiple regression analysis.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

We have two independent variables - (a) The elitist character of Nigerian politics and (b) Hostility in government-labour relations, and one dependant variable - (a) capacity of labour to contribute to good governance. Our task was to determine how each of the independent variables relates causally to the dependent variable and to further determine which of the independent variables contributes more to the dependent variable. In other words we sought to determine whether the elitist character of Nigerian politics undermines the capacity of labour to contribute to good governance, and how hostility in government - labour relations in Nigeria affects the capacity of labour to contribute to good governance.

To verify this hypothesis, we first of all had to determine whether Nigerian politics actually has an elitist character and whether there is hostility in the relationship between government and organized labour. Thereafter, we attempted to determine the impacts these variable have on the capacity of labour to contribute to good governance. To do this, we posed nine (9) opinion questions to our respondents. Out of these, three questions (questions 1-3) relate to the elitist character of Nigerian politics, three (questions 4 - 6) to hostility in government- labour relations while three questions (questions 7-9) were used to ascertain the impact of these variable on the capacity of labour to contribute to good governance.

Out of a total member of 297 (two hundred and ninety seven) questionnaires distributed, only 243 (two hundred and forty three) were reasonably answered and returned. This means that we are working with 81.8% or 82% response rate.

Presentation of Data

TABLE 1: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND ORGANIZED LABOUR

QUESTIONS		RESPONSES					
		S	A	NS	D	SD	TOTAL
1.	Government is never willing to negotiate employment terms+ with labour unless there is threat of industrial action	-	39	-	204	-	243
	%	-	16	-	84	-	100
2.	Government usually seeks the opinion of labour regarding management of the economy	-	7	-	38	198	243
3.	Organized labour never makes any innut in setting the agenda for government policies	-	130	-	104	9	243
	%	-	53.5	-	42.8	3.7	100
4.	Labour leaders have always suffered punitive consequences for promoting labour demands	2	136	-	105	-	243
	%	1	56	-	43	-	100
5.	Labour always takes uncompromising positions in its engagement with government	-	16	-	227	-	243
	%	-	6.6	-	93.4	-	100
6.	Would you describe the relationship between government and organized labour as hostile?	-	133	13	97	-	243
	%	-	55	5	40	-	100
7.	There is no standard negotiating machinery through which government engages labour in on-going dialogue	-	62	-	181	-	243
	%	-	25.5	-	74.5	-	100
8.	Government has always renegeed on implementation of negotiated agreements with labour	6	163	-	65	9	243
	%	2.	67.1	-	26.7	3.7	100

9.	The nature of the relationship between organized labour and government enhances the capability of labour to contribute to good governance		-	23	-	220	-	243
		%	-	9.5	-	90.5	-	100
Source Field survey by the Researcher								

Key: S A = Strongly Agree.

A = Agree

N S = Not Sure

D = Disagree.

SD = Strongly disagree

This study was built the study around the elite theory of politics. The theory assumes that the policies of the ruling class, even though formulated in its own interest are always covered in a moral and legal garb to satisfy the deeply felt human requirements that man be governed on the basis of some moral principles.

Willingness of government to engage organized labour in ongoing negotiation for the determination of terms of employment is seen as a standard requirement of democracy. Hence we sought to determine whether this standard is approximated in post-military Nigeria. However, this does not necessarily imply complete responsiveness of government to stakeholder preferences in policy determination. Government may thus consult labour in contemplating policies relating to labour matters but such policies may not possess any direct reflection of the preferences of organized labour. Hence policies would reflect the interests of the ruling class, but covered in some moral and legal garb to satisfy the deeply felt human requirement that man be governed on the basis of some moral principles.

The table reveals the extent to which the ruling class would willingly incorporate stakeholder preferences in policy determination. Hence majority of our respondents (204 respondents or 84%) disagreed with the view that it is only when there is threat of industrial action that government would be willing to enter into negotiation with organized labour for the purpose of determination of terms of employment.

The implication of this distribution of opinions is that even though government observes the standard democratic requirement of stakeholder consultation before policies are issued, there is still a spectra of doubt within the labour community regarding governments respect for the opinion of organized labour on matters relating to employment regulation.

With regard to question 2, we recall that Page and Shappiro (2001) once noted that the responsiveness of government policies to citizen preference is a central concern of various normative and empirical theories of democracy. The determination of public opinion is normally based on some conscious effort at public discussion on a national scale. The consultation of labour on the macro-economic management of the economy would be a meaningful attempt at gauging public opinion as labour quite easily represents an important opinion bloc that often reflects the preferences of the popular masses (Obono, 2007)

In response to the question, the overwhelming majority (97%) disagreed, with a subset of this proportion -another large majority (81%) strongly disagreeing. Only mere 3 percent or 7 respondents agreed that government usually seeks the opinion of labour regarding management of the economy.

What this signifies is that government either does not regard labour as representative of the Nigerian masses, or it is not interested to gauge the opinion of the public before the determination of macroeconomic policies.

Hence, the ruling class would continue to make policies in view of its own sectional interest rather than welfare of the popular masses

Question 3 sought to further verify our assumption that the character of Nigerian politics and its leaders is elitist, seeking to exclude organized labour from the policy process. In their responses, a simple majority - 53.5 %, representing 130 respondents were of the opinion that organized labour never makes any input in setting the agenda for government policies, while 46.5% disagreed. Out of this proportion disagreeing, 3.7 % were very emphatic as they strongly disagreed with the view canvassed.

Participation at the level of agenda setting by civil society groups is the basic determinant of what is important for government to do. It is a significant element of democratic inclusiveness and, therefore, the hallmark of good governance. It was therefore assumed that this element would significantly impact on the capacity of labour to contribute to good governance. From the distribution of the responses however, it is not very strongly indicated that labour is altogether excluded from the policy process even though a majority of our labour leaders thought so.

Questions 4,5 and 6 relate to the variable of hostility in government - labour relations. Iyayi (2009) opined that where the environment of trade unionism is hostile, the economy is always in a state of decline. Hence we also assume that where the relationship between government and labour is hostile, organized labour would be hamstrung in its effort to impact positive changes in governance. We therefore suggest that where there is mutual tolerance in government - labour relations, the democratic space would widen and constructive criticism, coming from organized labour, in a society like ours where a large proportion of the population is not actively involved in politics, would impact positively on the governance status of the regime in power.

A slight majority of our respondents (56%) agreed that labour leaders always suffer punitive consequence for promoting labour demands 1% strongly agreed while 43% were of the opinion that they do not suffer punitive consequences for promoting labour demands. Such punitive consequences are expected to be coming from government and in that case, the indication is that government is intolerant to trade unionism and as such does not negotiate with labour in good faith. However, the fact that a reasonable proportion of our respondents (43%) did not agree that labour leaders always suffer punitive consequence for promoting labour demands indicate that the question is at least debatable.

Also, the overwhelming majority of our respondents were of the opinion that labour does not take uncompromising positions in its engagement with government. Even though a small proportion (6.6%) did not agree with this overwhelming majority, the indication is that labour leaders, in negotiation with government, are always open to adjustment, and willing to bargain in good faith. This speaks well of organized labour, as breakdowns in negotiations would not be attributed to their stance at the negotiating table. Any such breakdowns would therefore be attributed to government's uncompromising attitude.

Moreover, 55% or 133 of our respondents described the relationship between government and organized labour generally as hostile. 40% or 97 respondents disagreed with this view while 5% or 13 respondents were not sure how to describe the relationship.

In this circumstance, it would appear that there would be mutual suspicion and mistrust between government and organized labour and this could not augur well for speedy and peaceful resolution of disputes and determination of other labour issues. Labour input to governance in a situation like this would be minimal and whatever effect that would have on governance would be diminished.

The next three questions (Questions 7, 8 and 9) were used to gauge the impacts of our two independent variables on the capacity of labour to contribute to good governance. It is on this critical section that the test of our hypothesis is based.

The 74.5% of negative result we got to the question on whether there is no standard negotiating machinery through which government engages labour on going dialogue indicates that there is union recognition and that both parties, particularly the government which has the duty to accord this recognition appreciates the need for constant dialogue. It also indicates that government recognises the authority of labour representatives to speak for the entire working people of Nigeria at negotiations.

Union recognition is the first step in industrial relations and where this is denied, there is always the tendency towards unilateral (government / employer) determination of employment terms and outcomes. The indication, therefore, is that there is ample scope for organized labour to influence government in the performance of its functions. If labour is unable to influence government that would not be attributed to the non-existence of a platform from which organized labour can contribute to governance.

The distribution of responses to the question of whether government has always reneged on implementation of negotiated agreements suggests that our respondents attach great importance to implementation of negotiated agreements. Everyone had an opinion and opinions were as varied as the options.

However, majority of our respondents (67.1% of 163 respondents) were of the opinion that government always reneged on implementation of negotiated agreements, as reported by Obono (2007) where the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo unilaterally cancelled a 25 percent salary increase that it had agreed with labour in 2002. 2.5% or 6 respondents were emphatic about the non-reliability of government as it always reneged on implementation of negotiated agreements. On the other hand an appreciable proportion (30.4% or 74 respondents) either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Finally, 90.5% of our respondents believe that the nature of the relationship between organized labour and government does not enhance the capability of labour to contribute to good governance.

Following from what we had earlier discovered, particularly from questions 2, 3, 6 and 8, it is logical to expect that the overwhelming majority of our labour leaders would feel this way. If the relationship between labour and government is seen to be hostile, government does not expect or allow labour to make inputs to the policy process and government would always renege on implementation of negotiation agreements with labour, then one would not be surprised to find that the labour leaders feel incapacitated to contribute to good governance.

Interpretation of Data/ Test of Hypothesis 1**MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION FOR HYPOTHESIS **

Variable entered/removed

Model	Variables entered	Variable	Method
1	Hostility Elitist Character		Enter

- All requested variables entered.
- Dependant variable: capacity of labour

Model summary

Model	R	R square	Adjustment R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	.441 ^a	.195	.188	4819

- Predictor: (constant) hostility, elitist character

Model	Sum of	Df	Mean	F	Sig.
1	13.47	2	6.737	29.007	.000 ^a
regression	5	240	232		
residual total	55.743	442			
	69.21				
	8				

- Predictors: (constant), hostility, elitist character
- Dependant variable: capacity of labour

Coefficients a

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	1.027	348	183	2.952	.003
nt)	194	065		2.977	.003
Elitist	550	072	469	7.606	.000
Hostility					.000

- Dependent variable: capacity of labour

It was observed that the elitist character of Nigeria politics and hostility in government labour relations jointly account for 19% variance in the capacity of labour to contribute to good governance:

$$F(2,240) = 29.01 \quad p < .00;$$

$$R = .44, \quad R^2 = .19$$

Individually however, the elitist character of Nigerian politics ($\beta = .18, t = 2.98, p < .003$) had lesser negative impact on the capacity of labour to contribute to good governance than hostility in government labour relations ($\beta = .47, f = 7.61, p < .001$).

Conclusion

We reflect on the problem of the study and the information gathered from existing literature relating to our work as well as the theoretical framework and our field survey to conclude as follows:

- That organised labour has the capacity to reform the system of participation and opposition in Nigerian politics and thereby compel the political elite to deliver good governance to the Nigerian people.
- The elitist character of Nigerian politics and hostility in government - labour relations are the major impediments to the realisation of the potentials of the labour movement to contribute to good governance in Nigeria. These problems continue to affect organised labour in the performance of this role in Nigerian politics.
- The alienation of the leadership of organised labour from the rank and file members makes it possible for government to incorporate and subordinate labour to its control and thereby further incapacitates the labour movement from realising its potential to impact the governance status of Nigerian politics.

We make the following recommendations for making the labour movement more vibrant and active in promoting good governance in Nigerian politics:

- Labour leaders need, at all times, to be able to carry the rank and file members along in their dealings with government. As such, the election of the leaders needs to be based on the highest standards of democracy. Moreover, in developing union policies and bargaining position/demands in all negotiations with government, all members right from the bottom to the top should be involved in determining the issues to be prioritised and canvassed by labour representatives. This can be achieved through grassroots meetings/dialogues from plant level through branch, state and industry levels right up to the umbrella bodies. This will enhance the solidarity of the unions and minimise dissensions which could weaken the unions at negotiations with the powerful state.
- The unions also need the sympathy and support of the popular masses at all times. As such, union leaders should be able and willing to educate the public on their policies and positions and the bases of their positions in all negotiations with government. The unions should also regularly inform them of what they (the unions) know about governmental activity, through the mass media. If such political education programmes are based on honest intentions to contribute to good governance and not to manipulate public opinion and gain public support fraudulently, the popular support they will enjoy would be an invaluable asset to the unions.

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