

5. Aiding Corruption through Governance Structures in sub-Saharan Africa: *What Role for E-Government?*

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Abstract:

In spite of the fact that sub-Saharan African countries have undergone political transitions and experience new form of governance, the region is still battling with socio-economic challenges. The persistent socio-economic problem is attributable to the governance styles of electoral democracies that are not guided by democratic values and principles of accountability. The perspective in this paper is that the emergence of democratic governments in this region occurred through lopsided process which impacts on their governance structures. Consequently, the institutionalization of liberal democracy has been omitted; the absence of which creates gaps between aspiration for and struggle by African people for democracy on the one hand, and the actual performance of democratic governments on the other hand. The paper identifies structural deficiencies in the current pattern of governance as the political missing link in the value chain between democracy and development in the region. The paper recommends e-governance; an administrative process that guarantees good governance through accountability and transparency, as the necessary connecting link and panacea to bridging the observable existing gaps.

Key words:

Corruption, Democracy, E-Government, Governance, sub-Saharan Africa.

Special issue on E-Government:

'Future of E-government: learning from the Past'

Vol. 4 No. 3 (2016) Issue- September

ISSN 2347-6869 (E) & ISSN 2347-2146 (P)

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Introduction:

For the past twenty years democratic government has replaced nondemocratic regimes in Africa; as a result of the political transitions that took place in the region, orchestrated by the 'third wave' of democratization¹. The transition, subsequent emergence of democratic governments were not ordinary but represents the imperative to put in place a particular political system through which certain socio-economic development could be achieved. The aspiration and struggle by African peoples for democracy were aimed at achieving two important political and economic ends: first, to replace authoritarian regimes with democratic government. Second and flowing from this political objective is the achievement of socio-economic development within the framework of democratic governance. Since the end of cold war, there has been a renewed interest and preference for democratic governments over and above non-democratic regimes because of the broad values of democracy. Considering the participative credentials of democracy, it is a form of governance that is based on some degree of popular sovereignty and collective decision-making process² and its advantage of promoting peace and prosperity³. Since the emergence of democratic governments in sub-Saharan African region, how to resolve the myriad of socio-economic problems, orchestrated by bad governance of previous authoritarian regimes, became the enduring expectations of African people. The peoples' expectation also coincided with the growing academic and policy perspectives that democracy not only facilitates a strong developmental state, but that it also strengthens the capacity of state to confront social and economic challenges⁴.

¹ Huntington, Samuel (1991) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

² Landman, Todd (2006) "Democracy and Human Security: Essential Linkages" *Democracy, Conflict and Human Security*. Stockholm: IDEA, pp. 13-24

³ Halperin M.H, Siegle J.T and Weinstein, M.M) (2004) *The Democracy Advantage: How Democracies Promote Prosperity and Peace*. New York Routledge; Donnelly, J (1999) 'Democracy, Development and Human Rights' *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 21, no 3, pp. 608-632

⁴ (Ake, C. (1996) *Democracy and Development in Africa*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution; Diamond, Larry (2005) "Democracy, Development and Good governance: the inseparable links", Annual Democracy and Governance Lecture. Accra: Center for Democracy and Development; Przeworski A, Alvarez M.E, Cheibub J.A. & Limongi F. (2000) *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World 1950-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge

Special issue on E-Government:

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Vol. 4 No. 3 (2016) Issue- September

ISSN 2347-6869 (E) & ISSN 2347-2146 (P)

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Stemming from the foregoing, this paper analyzes the issue of democratic governance in sub-Saharan African countries as it provides a framework for understanding and explaining the persistent socio-economic challenges despite political transitions in the region. Extant literature portrays the relationship between democracy and development as mutually reinforcing, thereby giving the impression that once the two occurrences exist, development is guaranteed⁵. But, the failure of democratic governments, in most of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, to initiate and sustain sufficient socio-economic development cast serious doubts not only on the democracy-development thesis, but also to democratic consolidation in the region in more profound ways than one extant literature on governance is yet to capture. This assertion raises some important questions that are examined in this paper. What is the missing link, for instance, in the value chain of democracy-development framework? What are the real and potential dangers of governance challenges to democratic consolidation in sub-Saharan Africa? Finally, what are the alternatives for addressing governance challenges in the region, especially at a time like now when governance challenges is generating academic and policy debates in sub-Saharan African countries?

The argument in this paper is that the obstacles to the consolidation of democratic governments that are capable of initiating and sustaining socio-economic development are the offshoot of electoral democracies as well as governance styles of political regimes in Africa. The author identifies the issue of illiberal character of these unique political regimes; manifesting in governance recklessness, as the problem in tackling the raging menace of governance challenges generally, and socio-economic problem in particular. The conclusion in this paper is that, the adoption of e-governance mechanisms capable of checkmating analogue governance recklessness, which impacts negatively on the performance of democratic government, is one important policy proposal current governments in sub-Saharan African countries should adopt.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework of Analysis:

The connection between democratic governance and achieving the objectives of social contract has emerged as a topical issue in politics and society in sub-Saharan Africa, as elsewhere since the beginning of the current wave of democratization⁶. There are a number of reasons for this debate, not the least that the period coincided with the festering and incubation of aspirations for democracy as a

University Press; Edigheji, Onamo ed. (2010) *Constructing a Democratic Developmental State in South Africa: potentials and challenges* Cape Town: HSRC Press)

⁵ (Ojo O. Patrick (2015) "From Rhetoric to Reality: Bridging the gap between Aspiration for Democracy and Governance Performance in Nigeria and South Africa", in N. Andrews et al. (eds) *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Retrospect: Africa's development beyond 2015*. Switzerland: Springer, p. 281)

⁶ Huntington 1991, op cit.

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'universal value'⁷ and the growing centrality of democratic government becoming the 'only game in town'⁸ as well as the assumption that democratic governance impacts positively on the development agenda of states⁹. The late Twenty century and the early Twenty-first century therefore did not only present Africans with the opportunity to put pressures on, and protested against undemocratic regimes that eventually led to political transitions, but also the coordinated transfer of power from authoritarian regimes to democratic administrations across the region¹⁰. The impact of governance on socio-economic development is often placed within the context of a supposed public participation in government decision making process, especially as it concerns sub-Saharan African where authoritarian rule has impacted negatively on political and economic development¹¹. It is assumed that since government is the mechanism used to make communal decisions, peoples' participation through democratic governance would enable organized people to provide services that will benefit the citizenry¹². Public administration scholars and practitioners attribute an important role to citizen participation in the decision making process of states¹³. Yet, meaningful participation is rarely found in electoral democracies where public officials, for reasons of corrupt practices, are reluctant to subject their activities to public verification how much more allowing the citizens in decision making process. In most cases if they subject public policy to citizens' scrutiny, they typically involve citizens

⁷ Sen, Amartya (1999) "Democracy as universal value", *Journal of democracy*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 3-17, McFaul, Michael (2004) democracy promotion as world value" *The Washington quarterly*, vol. 28, No 1, pp. 147 -163, Gershman, Carl (2005) "Democracy as policy goal and universal value" *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and Interactional Relations* (Winter/Spring), pp. 19-38

⁸ Linz J. Judan and Stepan A. (1996) *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South American and post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore, the Johns Hopkins university press, p. 5

⁹ Chan, Sylvia (2002) *Liberalism, Democracy and Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Gerring, John, Philip Bond, William T. Barndt, and Carola Moreno (2005) "Democracy and Economic Growth: A Historical Perspective", *World Politics*, 57 (April), pp. 323-364; Masaki, Takaaki and Nicolas van de Walle (2014) "The impact of democracy on economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa, 1982-2012" *WIDER Working Paper* 2014/057.

¹⁰ Bratton, Michael and Nicolas van de Walle (1997) *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime transitions in comparative perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press

¹¹ Olson, Mancur (1996) "Dictatorship, Democracy and Development" *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 87, no. 3, (September), pp. 567-576

¹² Kaifeg, Yaug and Kathe Callalian (2007) "Citizen Involvement Efforts and Bureaucratic Responsiveness: Participatory values, Stakeholders Pressures and Administrative Practicality", *Public Administration Review*, vol. 67, issue 2 (March/April), pp. 249-264

¹³ Denhardt, Robert and Janet Denhardt, (2000) "The New Public Service: Serving rather than Steering" *Public Administration Review* vol. 60, no. 6, pp. 549-559; King, Cheryl S., Kathryn M. Feltey and Bridget Susel (1998) "The Question of Participation: Toward Authentic Public Participation in Public Administration", *Public Administration Review*, vol. 58, no. 4, pp. 317-326; Schachter, Hindy (1995) "Reinventing Government or Reinventing Ourselves: Two Models for Improving Government Performance", *Public Administration Review*, vol. 55, no. 6, pp. 530-537; Thomas, John (1995) *Public Participation in Public Decision*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

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ISSN 2347-6869 (E) & ISSN 2347-2146 (P)

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after issues have been framed and decisions have been made¹⁴ Consequently, citizens are often frustrated by shallow participation as a result of the hidden agenda of suspected governments, and this situation create anger toward government and distrust in the ability of government to fulfill its pre-election promises.

Citizens' involvement in decision making process is therefore important because by it, government does not only encourage citizens' participation in public and administrative outcomes of its decisions, but also builds confidence in citizen-government relationship¹⁵. In other words, participation at the periphery and with hidden information would not prevent transparency, but also encourage unaccountable governance. Rhodes (1996) argues that governance is incomplete with authority without responsibility to account for its three important and inseparable functions: authoritatively allocating resources, exercising control and coordination of government activities¹⁶. Formal and informal mechanisms of transparency and accountability encourage officials to act in the public interest, or in the case of companies, in the interest of their shareholders. Without public access to records of government and other information, scarce resources may be squandered or mismanaged¹⁷

The increasing worldwide revolution in information and communications technologies; in terms of the internet, personal computer, and the mobile phones are fundamentally changing peoples' lives; affecting the way they work, learn and interact. The word government etymologically originates from the word 'govern' which itself originates from Old French word 'governer'¹⁸. In a more simple form, government is a set of institutions and concerns a body of actors, which define how and to what extent the public affairs within society are shaped and directed¹⁹. The concept of government is considered in this paper as the institutionalized process through which the public order is maintained and collective action is organized in a given society. This definition is in tandem with Francis Fukuyama's definition of governance 'as a government's ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services'²⁰. This definition does not only concern itself with the 'infrastructural' aspect

¹⁴ Kaifeng and Callahan, 2007 op cit., p2

¹⁵ Kaifeng and Callahan, 2007 op cit.: differentiates four categories of participation: citizen action, citizen involvement, electoral participation and obligatory participation. This paper is interested in the second category

¹⁶ (Rhodes, R.A.W. (1996) "The New Government: Governing without government" political studies, XLIV, pp. 652.

¹⁷ USAID (2013)'Transparency and accountability: regional agricultural trade environment' (RATE) Summary.

Washington DC, USAID, p. 4

¹⁸Riley, Thomas (2012) "ICT and Governance: E-Governance vs E-Government", available at http://www.cips.org.in/public-sector-systems-governments-nnovations/documents/E_Governance_vs_E_Government.pdf.

¹⁹ Fasenfest, David (2010) 'Government, Governing and Governance' *Critical Sociology*, vol. 36, no. 6, pp. 771-774

²⁰ Fukuyama, Francis (2013) "What is Governance" *Working Paper 314*, Washington, D.C: Center for Global

Development, p. 3.

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power of government²¹ but also analyzes government from a functional perspective²². Osborne and Gaebler (1992) state that 'government is the mechanism used to make communal decision; the way organized people provide services that benefit the people. Such services include national defense, environmental protection, and police protection²³. In a nutshell, government is set up for the purpose of solving the collective problems of the people in a society.

The World Bank (2012) defines e-government as: "the use by government agencies of information technologies (such as wide area networks; the internet, and mobile computing) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses and other aims of government²⁴. The organization further stressed that these technologies can serve a variety of different ends; better delivery of government services to citizens, improve interactions with business and industry, citizen's empowerment through access to information or more efficient government management.²⁵ By the end of 2012, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was supporting 217 active e-governance projects in 89 countries²⁶. This effort was aimed at promoting democratic governance as it is perceived as central to achieving sustainable human development. The estimated overall expenditure for these projects, including regional and global programmes, amounted to US\$216.45 million²⁷. The significance of this support is inherent in the conscious policies that address governance challenges and advance governance that is epitomized by inclusive participation. UNDP asserts that:

*"the rapid diffusion of ICTs has transformed governance for good. Government's ability to execute and deliver on its roles and functions has certainly been enhanced significantly by the digital revolution; and people are now more able to participate in public decision making processes to connect and mobilize to influence government and to hold government to account"*²⁸.

It should be stated that the quest for democracy in sub-Saharan African countries emanated from the popular perspective and believe that the region cannot develop without democracy, and that

²¹ Ibid., p. 3

²² Finer, S (1970) *Comparative Government* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books; Osborne and Gaebler (1992)"

²³ Osborne, David and Ted Gaebler (1992) *Reinventing Government*. Reading MA: Addison Wesley, p. 283)

²⁴ World Bank (2012) "E-Governance", available at: www.worldbank.org

²⁵ World Bank, 2012, op cit.

²⁶ World Bank (2016) World Development Report 2016: Internet for Development Framework for e-governance in UNDP. Washington, D.C: World Bank, available www.worldbank.org/publications/world-development-report/2016.pdf

²⁷ ibid, p.1

²⁸ (ibid, p.1

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democracy in Africa ultimately cannot be sustained without development²⁹. Therefore, once democratic governments were established in the continent beginning from 1990s, many observers in and out of the region were optimistic about socio-economic development in the countries within sub-Saharan Africa. This optimism was understandable; especially after about thirty years of failure of authoritarian rule in many of these countries to establish and guarantee developmental states³⁰, abuse of political power by corrupt elites³¹ and a general state of economic decline and mismanagement³². The persistent governance challenges, in spite of political transitions from undemocratic regimes rule to democratic administrations has become one of the enduring development as well as governance discourse in the last twenty years or thereabout. The observable trends in democratic governance which contradict the purpose as well as potential value of democracy, which in turn, works against the social contractual objectives of peoples aspiration for democracy is generating debates and causing concerns even from Cairo to the Cape³³. Indeed, this tend exposes in substantial ways, the quality of governance as well as the substantive issue of corruption embedded in analogue institutionalization of governance in most of the sub-Saharan African countries. The analysis of governance recklessness, in terms of corrupt practices as well as how to resolve this governance challenge, constitute the preoccupation of the next section.

Theorizing the Nexus between Governance, Corruption and E-Government in sub-Saharan African Countries:

The glee and enthusiasm about democratic government is not misplaced; given the recognition that democracy represents a political value in the important governance-development chain, with emphasis on peoples' participation in government to ensure transparency and accountability. E-government is an effective tool to reduce corruption by promoting good governance and strengthening reform-oriented institutions and actors³⁴. Because of the level of poverty and

²⁹ Ake, 1996, op cit.; Diamond, 2005, op cit.; Hadenies, A (1992) *Democracy and Development*. Cambridge Cambridge University Press

³⁰ (Awuwo A (2008) *Constructing the democratic developmental state in Africa: a Case Study of Nigeria, 1960-2007*. Johannesburg: Institute for Global dialogue)

³¹ Diamond, Larry (2008) *The Spirit of democracy: the struggle to build free societies throughout the world*. New York; Henry Holt Books; Lewis, Peter (2008) "Growth without prosperity in Africa" *Journal of Democracy*, vol 19, no 4, pp. 95-109

³² World Bank (1989) *From crisis to sustainable growth in sub-Saharan Africa: A long term perspective study* Washington, DC: The World Bank)

³³ Ojo, 2015, op cit.

³⁴ Shim, Dong Chul. and Tae Ho Eom (2008) "E-Government and Anti-Corruption: Empirical Analysis of International Data", *International Journal of Public Administration*, vol. 31, no. 3, (February), pp. 298-316

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underdevelopment in sub-Sahara African³⁵ observers who perceive economic progress as logically and chronologically super ordinate to political pluralism perceive persistent socio-economic problems despite political transition process in the region as anomalous. This scenario even supports Mathew Petithomme's critique of the conventional development argument; demonstrating that even though SSA experienced rapid democratization changes in the early 1990s, but democratic governance has stagnated economic growth and development³⁶. But, Osghae (2005) argues that democracy portends better future for African countries³⁷ Olson (1993), Simbine (2000) and Zack-Williams (2001) have also emphasized the development potentials of democracy. Olson (1993) argues that the bundle of developmental promises of democracy is inherent in the political, cooperative and regulatory incentives of democracy³⁸. For these scholars, 'good governance' is the important connecting link between democracy and development; especially in achieving socio-economic development. This view is synonymous with World Bank's 'sound development management'³⁹. The reasoning from all the above stated explanations seems straightforward and logical: all are suggesting that without good governance being institutionalized through transparency and accountability, neither democratic governance nor achieving the purpose of democracy could be expected to take firm roots and possible respectively.

The issue of corruption in governance is not a new phenomenon in African politics. Most analysts however believe that the end of the Cold War ignited academic and policy concerns about good governance and the period therefore marks the beginning of a shift of limited interest in the issue of corruption⁴⁰ Mitchell Seligson argues that during the Cold War, superpowers and their allies tolerated corrupt regimes in the Third World, including Africa, so long as those regimes took their side in the ideological struggle for prominence⁴¹. With the end of the Cold War and emergence of democracies however, the academic and policy worlds have begun to view corruption quite

³⁵ (Mcferson, Hazel M (1992) "Democracy and Development in Africa" *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 29, no. 3, (August), p. 24

³⁶ Petithomme, Mathiew (2010) "The effects of leadership strategies on underdevelopment in sub-Saharan Africa: A comparative perspective", *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, vol. 3, no. 4, (March), pp. 083-095.

³⁷ Osaghae, Eghosa E. (2005) "The State of Africa's Post Liberation" *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol.7, no. 1, pp. 1-20

³⁸ (Olson Mancur (1993) "Dictatorship, Democracy and Development" *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 87, no. 3, (September), pp. 567-576; Simbine, A.T (2000) "Citizen's disposition towards governance and democratic rule in Nigeria" NISER Monograph series no 15; Zack-Williams, A.B (2001) "No democracy, No Development: Reflections on Democracy and Development in Africa", *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 28, no. 88, (June), pp. 213-223

³⁹ (World Bank (1992) *Governance and Development*. Washington D.C; Word Bank

⁴⁰ see Williams, Robert (1999) "The New Politics of corruption" *Third World Quarterly* vol. 20 no 3, pp. 487-489

⁴¹ (Seligson, Mitchell A (2002) "the impact of corruption on regime legitimacy; A Comparative study of four Latin American countries" *The Journal of Politics*, vol. 64, no 2 (May), pp. 408-433)

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differently; as a threat to democratic consolidation⁴². In order for democratic political systems to consolidate and perform their expected social contract responsibilities, actions as well as activities of democratic governance must be transparent to consciously build the attributes of good governance into the system. Weyland (1998)⁴³ argues that corruption increased tremendously in Latin America under electoral democracies as a result of their weak institutions of governance. Likewise, there has been increase in governance recklessness in sub-Saharan African countries in recent times⁴⁴. Several factors are responsible for this increase. First, political transitions in this region merely occurred within the transfer of power into the hands of many, who were either the perpetrators or beneficiaries of previous dictatorial and corrupt regimes, now administering under the guise of democracies. The experience garnered by these 'new' democrats during autocratic rule now widens the opportunity for corrupt practices under the current democratic dispensation. Second, the neoliberal reforms necessary for states to be incorporated into growing globalized world have opened many areas of African national economics to corruption especially those involving sales of public corporations⁴⁵. Third, and perhaps very instructive for the analysis in this paper, is the problem of what Larry Diamond categorizes as 'hybrid regimes'⁴⁶; the form of democracy with regular, competitive, multiparty elections, but many of which have not initiated and consolidate substantial values of democracy and institutions of democratic governance. The sharp rise in the number of "elections only" democracies in sub-Saharan Africa; which are neither fully democratic nor conventionally autocratic has exposed the need for transparency and accountability in democratic governance in a region that is replete with unique political regimes or what Fareed Zakaria (1997) describes as "illiberal democracy"⁴⁷.

The minimalist composition and manifestation of democratic governments are deficient in terms of lack of the most essential attributes of liberal democracy which encompasses not only elections⁴⁸ but

⁴² *ibid*, p. 409; Rose-Ackerman, S. (1999) *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences and Reform*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

⁴³ Weyland, Kurt (1998) "The politics of corruption in Latin America" *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 9, no 2, pp. 108-121

⁴⁴ Ndikumana, Leonce and James K. Boyce (2003) "Public Debts and Private Assets: Explaining Capital Flight from Sub-Saharan African Countries", *World Development*, vol. 31, no. 1, (January), pp. 107-130; Schuppan, Tino (2009) "E-Government in developing countries: Experiences from sub-Saharan Africa" *Government Information Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 1, (January), pp. 118-127

⁴⁵ Ekanade, O. Victor (2014) "The Dynamics of Forced Neoliberalism in Nigeria since the 1980s", *Journal of Retracing Africa*, vol. 1, no. 1, (February), pp. 1-24.

⁴⁶ (Diamond Larry Jay (2002) "Thinking about Hybrid Regimes" *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 13, no2, (April) pp. 21-35)

⁴⁷ (Zakaria Fareed (1997) "the Rise of Illiberal Democracy" *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 76, no 6 (November / December) pp. 22-43)

⁴⁸ Clark, Spiro Elizabeth (2000) "Why Elections Matter" *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 23, no. 3, (Summer), pp. 27-40.

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also solid protection of the three branches of government under the rule of law⁴⁹ and the existence of regulatory institutions of governance⁵⁰. In other words, democracy is a necessary but insufficient barometer through which the level of governance performance can be measured; other indices of democracy must be part of the whole organizational and administrative structures of democratic government. In view of evident gaps in the substantive components of democratic government, not the least merely stopping at the point of meeting the rituals of elections only, many countries in Africa face dangers of governance challenges as witnessed by widespread corruption associated with constitutionally powerful as well as politically influential executives and weak legislative and other institutions of governance. In an environment like this, the other two equally important organs of government, namely, the legislature and judiciary functions at the discretion of their politically powerful executive organ. Such situation has important consequences not only for institutional development, but also for the structure and operations of these organs of government. For instance, widespread executive discretion over these organs of government would negatively shape how appointments are made, resources are allocated and institutions operate, as well as why, when and how those institutions of governance change.

Indeed, patterns of democratic governance in much of sub-Saharan Africa do not easily fit into established theory of democracy. Many analyses of democracy development paradigms are based on “a feasible simultaneity of the process of democracy and development”⁵¹. But, democratic governments in these countries lacks the necessary regulatory as well as democratic value systems of governance and this situation allows the few powerful people in government to either personally or in collaboration with the civil servants in some cases, to prioritize personal gains over societal growth and development. The theory of democracy as the dominant organizing political system for development has thus become questionable as the best form of human governance in Africa. It should be stated, however, that theoretically, democracy is a political system so far devised to enable people to make well-informed and accountable decisions, and to arrive at agreement through accommodations among competing values and ideas⁵². But the emerging structures of the unique political regimes in sub-Saharan Africa appears to center on ‘analogue governance’; that is, in spite of explosions in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), old fashioned administrative procedures of keeping records (which allows manipulation and through which records could be

⁴⁹ (Diamond, 2002, op .cot, p. 25)

⁵⁰ (Ojo O, Patrick, Friday Aworawo and Ifedayo Elizabeth (2014) “Governance and the challenge of socio-economic development in Nigeria” *Journal of Sustainable Development, Law and Policy*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 132-148).

⁵¹ (Sachikonye, Lloyd M (2002) Democracy Sustainable development and poverty; are they compatible? Development policy management forum (DPMF) *Occasional Paper* no 2 p 4 available at <http://www.dpmf.org/occasionalpaper2>

⁵² (Mangesh, Anjah (2014) “Democracy and Sustainable Development” *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 19, no 11 (November) pp. 40

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hidden) are still in vogue. Scholars and policy analysts have identified the prospects and challenges of e-government in African⁵³. Mutula (2005)⁵⁴, Layton (2007)⁵⁵, Monga (2008)⁵⁶, Mutula and Mostert (2010)⁵⁷ and Bwalya (2009)⁵⁸ have identified several challenges of operating e-governance. These includes low level of the internet penetration, telecommunication infrastructure constraints, lack of institutional framework supporting e-government, lack of allocated budget for e-government deployment (UNDP 2006)⁵⁹, digital divide between rich and poor countries (Fink and Kenny 2003)⁶⁰ privacy and security concerns (Layton, 2007)⁶¹ limited IT skills and training, culture and lack of citizen's awareness and participation

E- Governance, corruption and socio – economic development analytical framework:

Sub-Saharan African benefited largely from the wave of democratic transformation; including the rapid transition from authoritarian rule to democratic administration. The autocratic regimes that dominated the greater part of the region's political space in the post independent period gave in to the popular demand for democratic government in the 1990s. What has been the impact of democratic governance on social and economic development in the region? Also, what are the implications of the persistence of governance challenges for the deepening of democracy in sub-Saharan Africa? Analyzing the interface of governance, corruption and socio-economic development in SSA is important for at least five reasons. First, without a long – term, holistic understanding of the

⁵³ (Nkwe, Nugi (2012)" E-Government: Challenges and Opportunities in Botswana" *International journal of Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 2, no 17 (September), pp. 39-48; Coleman, S. (2006) *African e-governance: opportunities and challenges*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Bwalya, K.J (2009) Factors affecting adoption of e-government in Zambia", *Electronic Journal of Information System in Developing Countries*, vol. 38, no 4, pp. 1-13; Mutula, S. (2012)"E-Government's role in poverty alleviation: case study of South Africa" in R. Lekoko & L.Semali eds., *Cases on Developing Countries and ICT Integration: Rural Community Development*, pp. 104-122

⁵⁴ Wamukoya, J. and S. M. Mutula (2005)"E-records management and governance in east and southern Africa", *Malaysian Journal of Library and Information Science*, vol. 10, no. 2, (December), pp. 67-83

⁵⁵ Layton, T. (2007) *Information Security: Design, Implementation, Measurement and Compliance*. Boca Raton, FL: Auerbach Publications.

⁵⁶ Monga, A. (2008)"E-Government in India: opportunities and challenges", *Journal of Administration and Governance*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 16-26

⁵⁷ Mutula, S. and J. Mostert (2010)'Challenges and opportunities of e-government in South Africa", *The Electronic Library*, vol. 28, no. 1, (February), pp. 38-53

⁵⁸ Bwalya, K. Joseph (2009) "Factors Affecting Adoption of e-Government in Zambia", *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp. 1-13

⁵⁹ United Nations Development Programme (2006) *The 2006 Human Development Report—Beyond scarcity: power, poverty and the global water crisis*. New York: UNDP

⁶⁰ Fink, C. and C. J. Kenny (2003) "W(h)ither the Digital Divide" *Info*, vol. 5, no. 6, pp. 15-24

⁶¹ Layton, op cit.

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causes of governance challenges, the likelihood that this menace to development will be tackled is slim. Second, the simultaneity of democracy, good governance and socio-economic development in SSA is conditioned not only by democratic consolidation, but also, by commitment to providing the public goods in which e-governance should play decisive roles. Third, it is important to understand the content and context of continuity and change associated with governance styles and practices in SSA, not the least in order to avoid the vicious cycle of academically sound but inadequate explanation of governance challenges in the region. Fourth, and at the empirical level, the presentation of the analysis in this paper is an important contribution to ongoing debate on corruption as well as how best to transform democracy's potentials into the reality of socio-economic development in SSA, especially after the grim failures of governance occasioned by authoritarian rule. Fifth, and finally, granted that corruption is a peculiar phenomenon in new democracies⁶², it is important all the same to devise appropriate mechanisms to forestall escalation of corrupt acts. Resolving governance challenge and checkmating its impacts in SSA's political space, therefore, requires an examination and critical analysis in order to gain insights into how democratic governments could overcome their governance challenges so that they could achieve the purpose of democracy.

The governance discourse in Africa has almost surrendered to the popular and dominating perspective of its impacts on growth, development and promoting of violent conflicts. Concerns about and identification of governance challenges to development actually exposes an aspect of a problem without proffering solutions to it. This academic exercise seems not adequate in overall consideration of governance challenges in SSA, especially on how to overcome the problems associated with them. Political transitions, establishment of democratic political order as well as hues and cries about the dangers of democratic challenges are at best yielding modest successes. Even those successes typically provide remedy in the short run but hardly lay foundations for the reconstitution of governance order and the attainment of sustainable democratic governance. Since part of the governance problem is the failure to introduce regulatory institutions into the system, then, part of the solution should be the introduction and sustenance of e-governance with a view to consolidating it for sustainable democratic order. I argue that sustained governance failures characterized by analogue, restrictive, corrupt governance styles and the vicissitudes of fragile government have produced a system of persistent socio-economic development challenges in sub-Saharan Africa. This situation and the attendant socio-economic underdevelopment could be largely addressed through improvement in governance styles that have failed to foster long-term remedies. The introduction of e-governance in the multiple level institutional governance approaches that can address the challenges associated with lack of transparency and accountability and the reconstitution

⁶² (United States Institute of Peace (USIP) (2010) "Governance Corruption and Conflict' Washington D.C USIP)

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of e-government order poised to addressing the complex manner in which governance recklessness has unfolded is the necessary panacea to governance challenges in Africa.

Corrupt practices in Africa⁶³ and its attendant consequences are weighing preponderantly against state building capacity that could ignite, generate propel as well as sustain broad development in SSA. For instance Agara (2006)⁶⁴ argues that the collaboration between corrupt political leaders and the corrupt-laden bureaucratic process in all Third World countries, especially SSA has contributed immensely to governance challenges in the regions. Significantly corruption poses danger to proper management of state resources for socio-economic development, in terms of indices that could improve the living standards of the citizenry⁶⁵ furthermore, the concern that governance challenges could ignite distrust in and peoples support for democracy⁶⁶ continues to create concern across Africa. Beyond this concern is the potential threat that corruption poses to democratic order in Africa; in terms of growing and unchecked consequences for human security which in turn could tilt the balance in national security and political stability. To sum it up, the apparent insecurity from *fear* and *want* coming upon the citizens could make them perpetrators as well as victims of violent crimes, such as domestic insurgency, kidnapping and other self-help (but illegal) methods is becoming real.

Furthermore, another observable trend in democratic governance challenges in extant literature is the tendency to either underestimate or relegate to the background, issues connected to analogue and sinister administrative procedures, notably its potential opportunities for and inherent accommodation of corrupt practices even when it is realized that the new range of political regimes in African are essentially concerned about personalization of power and state resources by every available means⁶⁷. This trend is in addition to the stated historical experience, autocratic rule, political instability, and the monoculture nature of African national economies as well as the persistent lack of commitment to focused development strategies on the part of African Leader/rulers as the factors responsible for the current status of underdevelopment in sub-Saharan

⁶³Sebudubudu, David (2010)'Issues and Challenges in Democratic Governance in Africa: The case of Botswana' Paper presented at the conference on *Governance Reform: What is the Record? Perspectives from the South and North on Governance, Policy Space and Democratic Processes*, The University of Quebec, Montreal, Canada. March 24-28

⁶⁴ (Agara Babatunde (2006) "Bureaucratic Corruption and corruption of Bureaucratic process" in Hassan A. Saliu, Jacob F. Olorunfemi and Samuel B. Oludoyi eds, *Democracy and Development in Nigeria: Conceptual issues and democratic practice*. Lagos: Concept Publications, pp. 231-257

⁶⁵ Ojo et al, 2014, p. 142

⁶⁶ Bratton, Michael (2002) "Wide but Shallow: popular support for democracy in Africa" *Afrobarometer Paper* no 19 (August) pp 1-25; Bratton Michael and Robert Mattes (1999) "support for democracy in Africa: intrinsic or instrumental?" *Afrobarometer Paper* no. 1 (April), pp. 1-44; Gay, John and Thuso Green (2001) "Citizen perception of democracy, governance and political crisis in Lesotho" afro barometer paper no 13, (October) PP 1-32

⁶⁷ Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A. Way (2010) *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

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African countries. The radical disconnection of African economies from neoliberal international economic and political structures among others is prescribed as the routes to rescuing the region from its seemingly vicious cycle of socio-economic challenges. Although the laudable academic and policy prescriptions based on international factors responsible for socio-economic challenges in Africa are important to achieving the goals of democratic governance in the region, they however represents one aspect of the solution; as it demonstrate a narrow perspective as well as neglects the domestic dimension of the problem in terms of governance.

Empirically, e-government based on e-governance represents a rare window of opportunity to rebuild failing analogue institutions of governance that negatively impacts on state-building capacity as well as to proffer remedy to the monumental failures of governance in Africa⁶⁸. E-governance would present a platform to introduce good governance values or regulatory mechanisms capable of checkmating governance recklessness and to minimize the personal excesses of governance officials. The existence of structurally weak regulatory institutions that lack political will and susceptible to the whims and manipulations of the executive branch of government in most of the SSA countries, raises more troubling question over the subjection of political elites to rule of law and accountability procedures that could constantly ensure good governance. For instance, it is important to ask why democratic governments in the region have not been able to produce the expected political goods; given the popular perspective that there is a complementary relationship between democracy and development. The inability of these governments to perform adequately emanates from the apparent procedural deficiencies in governance that fails to guarantee transparency and ensure accountability. The failure of the existing governance procedure to either prevent corrupt practices or hinder secret financial and economic graft activities⁶⁹ alludes to the deplorable conditions of analogue governance in sub-Saharan Africa. These structurally deficient governance institutions and procedures have seriously inhibited good governance in SSA. The region's complex corrupt practices are a contributing factor to the rise of political instability and distrust which has also damaged the legitimacy and ethos of democratic values and principles⁷⁰.

Although the establishment of democratic government has been instrumental in systems required to initiate development programmers and to fight the evils of corruption, yet practical problems have

⁶⁸ (Heeks, Richard (2001) 'Understanding e-governance for development' *I-government Working Paper Series* no. 11, Manchester Institute for Development Policy and Management; Nikita Yadav and V.B Singh (2012)" E-Governance Past, present and future in India" *International Journal of Computer Application*, vol. 53, no 7 (September) pp. 36-48

⁶⁹ Ribadu, Nuhie (2007) "Nigeria's struggle with corruption" Paper presented to the Congressional House Committee on International Development. Washington DC: Congressional Briefing; Pillay, Soma (2004) "corruption- the challenge to good governance: a South African perspective" *International Journal of Public Sector Management* vol. 17, issue 7 (December) pp. 586-605

⁷⁰ Pillay, 2004, op cit., p. 586.

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increasingly emerged, over the years from the insufficient coordination of anti-corruption devices of the present governance structures. The introduction of e-governance to correct the anomalies inherent in the present governance structures has therefore become an important area in the development and governance discourse in SSA against the background that good governance is the key link between democratic governance and the achievement of socio-economic development . This is because, the evident gaps between the fulfilment of peoples' desire for democracy and the failure of democratic governments to deliver on their pre-election promises could be located fundamentally in deficiencies of governance practices. The initial momentum and modest achievements recorded following political transitions created enthusiasm that is gradually giving way to African peoples' apathy and partial support for democracy which might eventually lead to loss of the model achievement in democratization in Africa. This situation is causing concerns; notably because of the unacceptable dwindling trend in improving governance mechanisms. The declining trends and the apparent loopholes created by the ineffectiveness of the current governance structures mentioned above are evident in the prevailing proportion of misappropriation of state resources; noting with nostalgia how huge sums of money are carted away through governance misconducts. This trend does not only encourage future personal appropriation of state resources but also fail to put barriers against corruption. The renewed vision of commitment to good governance through e-government⁷¹ capable of ensuring better delivery of government services to citizens and empowering them through access to information or participation in governance process in one urgent policy needed to compliment democratic governance in achieving its stated objectives. E-governance will also radically break down the complexity of and redesign analogue governance in ways that would provide wider public participation in the administration of public policy and decision-making. Citizens' involvement in the decision-making process would make governance transparent start to build their confidence in government administrative procedure as well as modernize the existing rigid structures of governance process to broad participation; thereby reconnect the people with the government.

The disconnection between democracy and development is evident in the existing analogue governance, where the necessary link is missing. Reconnecting this important missing link remains one credible transition from good governance to better governance in order to guarantee the achievement of workable democracy. In summary there is a dialectical link between governance and development, but the link can only be connected through e-governance that accommodates the peoples' participation in governance process that ensures transparency as well as makes accountability easy and possible. The impact of democracy on development is dependent on content

⁷¹ Pathak, R.D., Gurmeet Singh, Rakesh Belwal, Rafia Naz and R.F.I. Smith (2008) "E-governance, corruption and public service delivery: A comparative study of Fiji and Ethiopia", *JOAAG*, vol. 3, no. 1 (January), pp. 65-79

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and context of the institutions of governance; that either strengthens or weakens state capacity to realizing its mission and vision of the people.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations:

In this paper, I have attempted to explore the concepts of democracy, governance and development with a view to unravelling the missing link in the political-economy value chain, particularly as regards to the importance of e-governance. In doing so I have attempted to theorize the discussion and analyze empirical imperative of democratic governments; within the broader context of African democratization. Specifically, I have argued that democracy may very well be a real harbinger of development, but transforming the potential of democratic governance to the reality of achieving developmental aspirations of democracy would however depends on the style of governance. It has also been stressed that unaccountable and reckless governance could also engender consolidation of democracy; given the fact that the consequence of bad governance is multidimensional. Part of this dimension is the complex relationship between state and human security. The consequences of governance challenge on socioeconomic development within nation-states could create human insecurity, in terms of *want* and *fear*. In the long run, the citizens might become both the perpetrators and victims of insecurity. As a panacea to checkmating these challenges, initiating and sustaining e-governance; with necessary mechanisms of good governance, such as transparency, accountability and broad participation is recommended.

Be that as it may, it should be stated that the current state of e-governance in Africa gives cause for concern. Issues such as energy resources, popular participation and democratic consolidation were critically discussed leading to the basic question of whether democratic governments in sub-Sahara African countries are really ready to subject their governance structures to public perusal, participation and scrutiny. The answer is that, though fraught with many inadequacies, e-government has been on course in many African countries, what should be done is to consolidate on the process by tackling the challenges of this important dimension of governance. The faltering of the process is the manifestation of weak regulatory institutions of governance; which is the product of African governments' reluctance to subject their activities to procedural and constitutional scrutiny. The effective operations of e-governance milieu would not only subject government activities to open check, but also promote the political-economy approach in sub-Saharan African countries. Once e-governance is allowed to take firm roots and the benefits of e-government begin to manifest, governance challenges would not only disappear, but what seems to be the rhetoric potentials of democracy would also transform to realities of improving the living standards of the citizenry.

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Stemming from the foregoing, there is an urgent need for a reversal of the faltering trend of governance in sub-Saharan African countries if democracy must be genuinely nurtured and sustained to achieve its social contractual responsibilities. Accordingly, I consider and recommend regional mobilization to explain the ramifications of the current governance styles of African democratic government as well as re-emphasize the need to re-orientate the development strategies of African states. In other words such sensitization should emphasize that the introduction and sustenance of e-governance is not a pivotal option but a necessity for governance that would serve as a useful framework to achieving all the desired development projects in the region.

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Cite this article:

Aiding Corruption through Governance Structures in sub-Saharan Africa: What Role for E-Government?

Citation Format: APA

Patrick, O. (2016). Aiding Corruption through Governance Structures in sub-Saharan Africa: What Role for E-Government?. *S O C R A T E S*, 4(3), 58-78. Retrieved from <http://socratesjournal.com/index.php/socrates/article/view/212>

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Special issue on E-Government:

'Future of E-government: learning from the Past'

Vol. 4 No. 3 (2016) Issue- September

ISSN 2347-6869 (E) & ISSN 2347-2146 (P)

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