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Stomach infrastructure or palliative? The effectiveness and long-term implication of temporary relief measures on governance and development in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the effectiveness and long-term implications of temporary relief measures on governance and development in Nigeria. While the administration of temporary relief, such as the distribution of palliatives, plays a crucial role in alleviating the plight of vulnerable populations, it has also emerged as a persistent limitation in the Nigerian context due to overreliance on such measures. Over time, this reliance can have detrimental effects on development, fostering negligence, corruption, and the misappropriation of public funds, thereby undermining good governance. This study utilizes dependency theory alongside clientelism and patronage theory to provide insight into the long-term implications of temporary relief measures on governance and development in Nigeria in order to proffer solutions. A qualitative, descriptive approach grounded in literature review and theoretical analysis was adopted to examine these implications. Ultimately, this paper recommends a rethinking and increased focus on immaterial aspects such as good governance, strengthening the educational structure, promoting economic growth, and implementing sustainable developmental policies rather than relying on the immediate gratification offered by temporary relief measures.

Keywords

Stomach Infrastructure, Palliatives, Temporary Relief, Clientelism, Governance, Development, Nigeria

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Introduction

Nigeria, since its independence in 1960 has been plagued with incessant occurrence of terrorism and natural disasters such as flooding. In response, Nigeria emerges as a distributor of palliative measures; which is a temporary relief measure to the victims of these occurrences. In its original sense, palliatives began as a way to provide immediate and temporary relief measures to address the plight of the masses in Nigeria. However, in contemporary Nigeria the temporary relief measures have increasingly been used to pursue political gains, where palliatives are exchanged for political support; a system known as 'Stomach Infrastructure'. Through this system, political parties use palliatives as tools of clientelism, trading relief for loyalty and thereby undermining democratic processes (Kura, 2014). This study, therefore, aims to analyse the long-term implications of reliance on palliatives for governance and development, using Dependency Theory alongside Clientelism and Patronage Theory. It further evaluates the effectiveness of their administration in Nigeria since independence, providing a comprehensive understanding of how Stomach Infrastructure and palliatives impact governance and development outcomes.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative and descriptive research design based on an extensive review of scholarly literature, policy reports, and credible media sources on palliatives, "stomach infrastructure," and governance in Nigeria. Relevant materials were selected from academic databases and institutional publications, emphasizing peer-reviewed and policy-based evidence. It was guided by the Dependency theory and the Clientelism and Patronage theory to interpret the socio-political implications of temporary relief measures on governance and development in Nigeria. Data was thematically synthesized to highlight both the short- and long-term effects on governance and development.

Historical and political context of temporary relief measures in Nigeria

Palliative distribution and stomach infrastructure in this study signify temporary relief measures used to address the plight of the masses in Nigeria. They are closely intertwined within the nation's political process. The term palliative refers to an action intended to lessen the effects of a problem without necessarily solving it. In essence, palliatives provide short-term relief through the distribution of materials such as food, medicine, and shelter to persons affected by crises such as war, disasters, or insurgency.

The evolution of palliative measures in Nigerian governance has been shaped by historical, economic, and socio-political factors. During the colonial era, welfare policies were minimal and aimed mainly at maintaining order rather than addressing the needs of the populace. After independence, the Nigerian government made efforts to implement welfare programs, but these were inconsistent due to economic mismanagement and corruption. This was evident during the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) under Ibrahim Babangida in the 1980s, which introduced palliatives to cushion the effects of austerity on vulnerable groups (Sulaiman et al., 2014). The democratization process in the late 1990s saw the creation of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) (NBS, 2012). Similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for effective palliative measures, though the interventions faced criticism for poor coordination and reach (Eranga, 2020). Thus, while palliative measures were initially designed to support the vulnerable, they have increasingly assumed a political dimension, becoming tools for political advantage.

Over time, temporary relief measures evolved into a political tool popularly known as stomach infrastructure. That is, the act of sharing money and resources for the immediate satisfaction of the masses (Ayeni et al., 2019). It entered Nigeria's political vocabulary during the 2014 Ekiti governorship election, where food and other items were distributed to influence voting. Simply put, stomach infrastructure is the process by which politicians distribute palliatives such as food and money to electorates to buy votes and secure political positions. It plays a key role in mobilizing voters in Nigeria's electoral politics. However, due to distrust in institutions, insecurity, and apathy, many voters prioritize immediate rewards over long-term governance outcomes (Ekeh, 1975). This tactic undermines informed voting based on policies or competence, as seen in the 2019 Bauchi gubernatorial elections, where food incentives were used to sway voters.

Moreover, stomach infrastructure serves as a campaign strategy to gain popularity among political parties. Nigeria's endemic poverty has produced a culture where vote-buying thrives, and even educated voters gravitate

toward candidates promising material benefits (Omilusi, 2019). While effective for winning elections, it has contributed to underdevelopment, bad governance, and corruption, weakening Nigeria's democratic foundation. Though there have been repeated outcries for reform, the cycle of poverty and dependency persists.

Overall, palliative distribution and stomach infrastructure are intertwined. Both aim to provide relief but are now embedded in political and electoral processes. Palliatives lessen the effects of hardship without solving it, while stomach infrastructure uses gifts and promises of food to gain political support. Together, they influence electoral outcomes, shape voter behavior, and serve as campaign strategies among political elites.

Case studies: notable instances of palliative distribution in Nigerian history

Since gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria has witnessed several notable instances of palliative distribution. These measures have become the go-to response to the hardships experienced in Nigerian society. They have been used as remedies for various challenges, including poverty, insurgency and terrorism, disease outbreaks, and natural disasters such as flooding and desertification. Some notable examples include the distribution of COVID-19 palliatives and relief to victims of the Boko Haram insurgency.

Firstly, the 2020 COVID-19 palliative program stands out as one of the most significant instances of relief distribution in the history of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It emerged in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that engulfed the world, including Nigeria, in 2020. The Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was initially reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019 (CDC, 2019). By January 30, 2020, the WHO had declared the outbreak a global health emergency as it spread rapidly worldwide, causing a sharp increase in death rates. Nigeria became part of the global pandemic in 2020, with the first confirmed case announced on February 27, 2020 (NCDC, 2020). In March 2020, a second case was reported in Ewekoro, Ogun State. In response to these threats, the Nigerian government implemented a sit-at-home policy. Consequently, palliative measures were introduced to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19, particularly in states like Lagos and Enugu, where lockdowns were enforced (Nneoma & Oluchukwu, 2022).

During the pandemic, then-President Muhammadu Buhari approved the release of 70,000 metric tons of grains from Nigeria's National Strategic Grain Reserves for distribution to poor and vulnerable people in COVID-19 frontline states, as well as to those whose livelihoods were affected by the lockdown. The federal government also donated 10 rice trucks, 30 grain trucks, and 2 vegetable oil trucks to the FCT, among others (Olubiya & Omowunmi, 2020). In addition, the federal government approved interest-free loans and increased the number of households benefiting from direct food and cash distribution from 2.6 million to 3.6 million, describing them as the most vulnerable in society. However, the palliative distribution strategy introduced by the Nigerian government in 2020 was not entirely successful, as there were widespread complaints among the masses about unfair distribution. It was alleged that the process was politicized (Eranga, 2020).

Similarly, the distribution of palliatives to victims of the Boko Haram insurgency provides another clear example of relief efforts in Nigeria. Boko Haram is an Islamist insurgent group based in Northeastern Nigeria. The group became prominent in 2009, adopting violent tactics that displaced millions of people across the region. The incessant attacks by Boko Haram have displaced over 2.2 million people in Northeast Nigeria, with more than 1.8 million recorded in Borno State alone (HRW, 2022). This crisis has led to the establishment of several internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, where many victims seek refuge.

In response to the Boko Haram insurgency, the federal government, international bodies, and NGOs have provided various forms of assistance. Notably, Borno State Governor Babagana Zulum distributed palliatives to victims in Gajiram and pledged to ensure the continued supply of food relief to those affected by insurgent attacks (TVC News, 2023). However, efforts to assist displaced victims have faced significant challenges. Despite claims of healthcare provision and palliative distribution by the government and NGOs, many victims report inadequate support, highlighting the need for improved healthcare delivery in IDP camps (Yerima & Singh, 2017).

Governance and development: A brief conceptual exploration

Governance refers to all processes involved in governing. It encompasses the institutions, processes, and practices through which issues of common concern are decided upon and regulated. Governance is defined through multiple lenses; as a structure, process, mechanism, and strategy, emphasizing its multifaceted nature (Acharya, 2024).

The governance framework is essential as it provides an understanding of how institutions interact and influence development agendas, particularly in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Governance and development are closely intertwined. The art or process of governing is integral to ensuring development, as it impacts economic growth, socio-cultural stability, and information and communication technology (ICT) (Saba et al., 2024). However, governance can also hinder development due to corruption, weak policies, unrealistic developmental goals, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and unequal power dynamics among the arms and organs of government. Thus, this exploration reveals the complex relationship between governance and development, providing a foundation for a unified theoretical analysis.

Theoretical perspectives

Several theories from the sociological and psychological schools of thought have examined the adverse effects and implications of temporary relief measures on governance and development. This study employs dependency theory alongside clientelism and patronage theory to analyze the long-term implications of temporary relief measures on governance and development in Nigeria.

Dependency theory is a theoretical framework that holds that “the condition of underdevelopment is caused by the incorporation of Third World economies into the capitalist world system dominated by the West and North America” (Randall & Theobald, 1998). Hence, in development studies, dependency implies a situation in which a particular country, region, or group of people relies on another for support, growth, and sustenance (Emeh, 2013). In the Nigerian context, dependency refers to a situation in which the masses depend on the palliatives and stomach infrastructure offered by the political elite for survival and sustenance. Simply put, temporary relief measures such as stomach infrastructure and palliatives, which are distributed regularly in cash or kind, reinforce continuous dependency rather than promote sustainable development in Nigeria. This has led to an increase in unemployment and reliance on the immediate gratification offered by temporary relief measures. It is evident that the lack of sustainable development in Nigerian society can be viewed through the lens of dependency. This phenomenon has also resulted in the neglect of structural issues, political exploitation, marginalization of non-recipients, and corruption. The relevance of this theory lies in its ability to provide insight into the long-term implications of temporary relief measures on governance and development in Nigeria.

Similarly, through the lenses of clientelism and patronage theory, the long-term implications of temporary relief measures can also be understood. Clientelism refers to a complex social and political phenomenon characterized by reciprocal relationships between patrons and clients, often manifesting in the exchange of goods or services for political support. It centers on personal ties and local networks, where political loyalty is exchanged for material benefits (Fantozzi & Raniolo, 2018). It is based on the view that power is unequal, with patrons wielding more power and resources than clients, who are less privileged (Sayari, 2011). In the Nigerian context, palliatives function as tools of political patronage, enabling parties to exchange relief materials for electoral support or votes. Political actors use such patronage to maintain loyalty among legislators and constituents, often distributing palliatives selectively to reinforce political allegiance (Quaresima & Fiorillo, 2017). This was evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when a lack of transparency in palliative distribution led to corruption and the diversion of relief materials for political gain (Inmpey & Dueze, 2020), reinforcing clientelism and patronage in Nigerian politics. Political patronage has since weakened governance by promoting inefficiency, appointing unqualified individuals, and diverting resources from essential services, thereby deepening underdevelopment. Through the lens of clientelism and patronage theory, the adverse effects of temporary relief measures such as palliatives and stomach infrastructure on governance and development in Nigeria become clear.

Effectiveness of temporary relief measures

Short-term impacts on poverty alleviation

Among the developmental realities of nations, the alleviation of poverty is a major priority, as the phenomenon continues to increase and spread across the world. Nigeria, in particular, has battled with the plague of poverty since independence in 1960. The government of Nigeria has, at several times, made efforts to alleviate poverty and reduce its effects. More often than not, the government’s go-to response has been the implementation of temporary relief measures such as the distribution of palliatives in cash or kind. Palliatives have been effective to some extent in countering the effects of poverty temporarily. Approximately one-third of the poor are temporarily impoverished, indicating that timely interventions, even if short-term, can significantly reduce poverty levels (Streten, 1994). These interventions involve immediate financial support such as cash transfers or food aid, which

provide quick assistance to households or individuals affected by poverty, enabling them to meet their basic needs. Moreover, temporary relief measures provide essential resources that prevent recipients from falling deeper into poverty. They also provide psychological relief to victims of poverty by reducing stress and anxiety, thereby enhancing overall well-being and productivity.

However, temporary relief measures in contemporary Nigeria have faced several criticisms, as they provide short-term relief without addressing the root causes of poverty. Programs like Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) can help families avoid deeper poverty, although they may also impose limitations that hinder long-term self-sufficiency (Monroe, 2006). Such measures have hindered the permanent escape of Nigerian citizens from poverty, as more focus is placed on short-term relief rather than on the provision of employment and the development of sound fiscal policies to ease the financial burden on citizens.

Social stability

Social stability refers to a stable societal state that maintains the legitimacy of institutions while fostering conditions for development (Kaira & Liu, 2023). It involves having a stable social structure, effective governance systems, economic sustainability, and cultural preservation. In this context, temporary relief measures have the potential to promote social stability in contemporary Nigeria. Effective palliative policies can help prevent economic recession, support household stability, and maintain social order. They also promote peace and reduce insecurity by providing immediate relief that discourages crime. For instance, palliatives distributed to victims of Boko Haram and banditry attacks in Internally Displaced Persons camps helped sustain stability and support survival (WHO, 2025). Thus, temporary relief measures remain vital tools for promoting social stability in Nigeria.

However, they have also faced criticisms for their inability to provide permanent solutions and their use for political gains. The palliatives distributed by the Nigerian government during the COVID-19 pandemic were intended to support vulnerable populations and ensure social stability. However, the distribution mechanisms were often criticized for inefficiency, highlighting the need for better accountability and oversight. While temporary relief measures are essential for immediate stability, they must be part of a broader strategy that addresses underlying issues such as political corruption and religious tensions, which can undermine long-term social cohesion (Uzoma, 2004).

Assessing the administrative efficiency of palliative distribution

Nigeria has adopted various measures to address the adverse effects of insurgency, pandemics, and natural disasters, notably through temporary relief initiatives. These measures involve distributing palliatives, either in cash or kind, to vulnerable individuals affected by crises such as terrorism, natural disasters, and disease outbreaks. Given the significant role of these interventions, it is essential to assess the administrative efficiency of palliative distribution in Nigeria to identify existing challenges and limitations in their implementation.

The administration of palliatives in Nigeria has been largely ineffective due to a lack of transparency in their management and distribution. Transparency is essential for equitable relief delivery across diverse populations. However, the absence of transparency in the management and administration of palliatives has been identified as a major barrier, with political interests often overshadowing the needs of the vulnerable population (Inmpey & Dueze, 2020). The main cause of this lack of transparency is corruption and the mismanagement of resources. A notable example can be found in the distribution of COVID-19 palliatives, where there were reports of mismanagement and lack of accountability in the allocation process (Olujobi & Yebisi, 2023). Hence, the lack of transparency in palliative administration in Nigeria has severely undermined fair and equitable distribution. Instead of providing temporary relief, it has worsened the suffering of the vulnerable population.

Furthermore, the complex phenomenon of corruption is also responsible for the inefficient administration of palliatives in Nigeria. Corruption, as defined by Rose-Ackerman (2016), refers to “any dishonest or illegal behaviour that entails the use of public power for private gains.” Since independence, corruption has become a salient feature of the Nigerian state and a routine aspect of official business (Sklar & Whitaker, 1991). It continues to eat deep into the democratic fabric of Nigeria. Public sentiment analysis indicates widespread dissatisfaction and distrust regarding the allocation of palliatives, with many citizens expressing feelings of disgust and fear related to corruption (Adamu et al., 2021). This has led to the continuous embezzlement of funds and diversion of resources meant for palliatives by government officials for personal gain. If left unaddressed, corruption will continue to hinder the effective administration of palliatives in Nigeria. To curb this, local governance structures such as community leaders should be involved to ensure fair distribution and accountability (Nneoma &

Oluchukwu, 2022). Additionally, establishing monitoring mechanisms and adopting blockchain technology can enhance transparency and prevent the diversion of relief materials.

Overall, the administration of palliatives in Nigeria has not been efficient or effective in providing relief to affected citizens. This is due to a lack of transparency in distribution and widespread corruption across all sectors of governance. Addressing these challenges will require critical thinking, the inclusion of grassroots and community leaders to ensure fair distribution, adherence to the rule of law, and strict monitoring of palliative administration to prevent the diversion of resources for personal gain by the political elite.

Long-term implications on governance and development

The entrenchment of political clientelism

Palliatives in contemporary Nigeria have become instruments that entrench political clientelism. Political Clientelism refers to a system where political actors provide material goods or services in exchange for political support. This practice is particularly prevalent in developing democracies. The distribution of palliatives in Nigeria has lasting effects on governance and development because it strengthens political clientelism. Politicians use these relief materials to build loyalty and stay in power, often giving them only to supporters (Quaresima & Fiorillo, 2017). This practice encourages corruption, weakens trust in government, and increases inequality. It also makes leaders focus on short-term election gains instead of long-term development (Isayomi et al., 2023).

The role of palliatives in perpetuating economic dependency

In the same vein, palliatives perpetuate economic dependency in Nigeria. Dependency implies a situation in which a particular country, region, or group of people rely on another for support, growth and sustenance (Emeh, 2013). Therefore, economic dependency refers to a situation where a nation, society, or individual lack the capacity and ability to control the economic system or productive process of a society and relies heavily on external resources, capital, or support for economic development and sustenance (Ogbodo, 2018). However, economic dependency is more common among vulnerable states and the vulnerable population in the society.

Furthermore, the phenomenon of economic dependency continues to increase rapidly in Nigeria. This occurs as a result of poverty, insecurity, terrorism, and the temporary relief offered through the distribution of palliatives. Over 50% of Nigerians live below the poverty line, limiting their access to essential services, including palliative care (Omideyi, 2008). This economic strain forces many to rely on palliatives for survival. Therefore, the distribution of palliatives in Nigeria has played a key role in perpetuating economic dependency on temporary relief offered by the government, political parties, and organizations. Instead of providing temporary support, the continuous distribution of palliatives has created a framework where individuals remain dependent rather than seeking gainful employment. It has encouraged a lackadaisical attitude toward work and created conditions for laziness to thrive within Nigeria's social structure.

Thus, the perpetuation of economic dependency ensured by the distribution of palliatives has long-term implications for good governance and development in Nigeria. Reliance on palliatives without empowering citizens to engage in economic activities fosters a cycle of dependency that undermines sustainable socio-economic development (Ighodalo, 2012). It also reduces workforce participation, limits revenue generation, and increases crime rates as individuals resort to quick and easy means to satisfy their needs rather than through hard work.

Comparative analysis: Nigeria and other African countries

The utilization of temporary relief measures is a fast-moving trend in most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria. These efforts aim to provide relief from the hardships and difficulties that have engulfed contemporary Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa, also called Mediterranean Africa, refers to the regions of the continent that lie south of the Sahara (Ecosostenibile, 2023). It comprises Central Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa, with between 46 and 48 countries. Hence, a special focus is given to Nigeria, with an attempt to provide a comparative analysis between Nigeria and other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is due to notable similarities and differences in the administration of temporary relief measures across the region.

Therefore, the administration of palliatives in Nigeria and other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa has common characteristics and shares several similarities, encompassing attempts to address the vast difficulties experienced in Sub-Saharan Africa and Africa as a whole. In the administration of temporary relief measures in Nigeria and

other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, some notable similarities include an increased focus on the vulnerable. There is a growing emphasis on the most vulnerable in society who are affected by poverty, insecurity, unemployment, and natural disasters. As a result, fiscal policies are adjusted to prioritize social safety nets, ensuring that the most affected populations receive necessary support during crises (Tareq et al., 2009). In the same vein, in the administration of temporary relief measures in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa, there is an integration of relief and development, where all countries aim to reduce hardship and ensure economic and social progress. Developmental relief practices are increasingly adopted, despite challenges in their effectiveness during complex emergencies, as seen in countries like Sudan and Somalia (Bradbury, 1998). In other words, the application of temporary relief measures in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa does not only aim at providing relief but also at ensuring development.

Furthermore, a very notable similarity in the administration of temporary relief measures in Nigeria and other Sub-Saharan African countries is inefficiency. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa struggled with poor leadership, corruption, and inadequate health infrastructure, which affected the effective administration of temporary relief measures meant to cushion the effects of the pandemic. Overall, the application and administration of temporary relief measures are characterized by key similarities such as an increased focus on the vulnerable, integration of relief and development, and inefficiency.

However, in contrast, there are key differences in the administration of palliatives in Sub-Saharan Africa, with some countries transcending these barriers. Countries such as Rwanda, which has transformed from a genocide-ravaged nation into an investment hub; Kenya, with its diversified economy and significant infrastructural development; Botswana, which has grown from a poor to an upper-middle-income country; and Mauritius, with a strong diversified economy and thriving tourism sector (WPR, 2024). These countries were able to achieve growth and development and became distinct in their administration of temporary relief measures through good governance, economic diversification and investment, innovation and entrepreneurship, and strategic partnerships with international organizations and developed states. If emulated by Nigeria and other Sub-Saharan countries, a more stable administration of temporary relief measures and sustainable development free from corruption and underdevelopment can be achieved.

Policy implications and recommendations

The administration of temporary relief measures in Nigeria has been inefficient since time past. This is a result of the lack of transparency, corruption, bad governance, stomach infrastructure, and continuous dependency on temporary relief. Hence, there is a need for rethinking, strategizing, and adequate planning on the utilization of temporary relief measures for sustainable development in Nigeria. Temporary relief measures should be designed to support growth and sustainable development, particularly in disaster-prone areas where past disasters have not been adequately integrated into development planning (Olorunfemi, 2009).

In addition, the culture of addressing the plights of the masses with food and material objects such as blankets needs to be reduced, with more focus placed on immaterial relief such as empowerment through entrepreneurship, job creation to tackle unemployment and poverty, and investment in infrastructural development such as building schools, roads, and hospitals to combat ignorance, illiteracy, stomach infrastructure, and the spread of diseases in Nigeria. There should also be an enhancement of security to combat terrorism and insurgency. If properly harnessed, these measures will ensure all-round sustainable development in Nigeria. They are not just aimed at providing temporary relief but will also help combat poverty, unemployment, ignorance, insecurity, and insurgency, which are the major root causes of stomach infrastructure and the need for temporary relief such as palliatives.

Recommendations

After adequate research, this paper recommends the following policies that can help combat stomach infrastructure and enhance good governance through sustainable interventions.

- Increased involvement of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) in the administration of temporary relief measures and palliatives. This will help ensure free and fair allocation of relief materials and reduce corruption and the use of temporary relief measures for electoral politics.
- Greater investment by the Government of Nigeria in overall infrastructural and sustainable development. This will enhance both governance and development.
- The development of sound fiscal policies and social development goals. These will help bring about meaningful change and ensure overall economic progress to combat crime and poverty.

- Empowerment of the grassroots for sustainability. Grassroots empowerment is essential for combating poverty and ensuring overall development in Nigeria.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the continuous administration and use of temporary relief measures in Nigeria have had long-lasting implications on governance and development in contemporary times. Governance is intertwined with development, as development serves as evidence of good governance. However, the persistent administration of temporary relief measures such as palliatives and stomach infrastructure has continued to hinder Nigeria's path to development. This is due to the lack of transparency, corruption, continuous dependency, and the growth of patron-client relationships established and maintained through these measures.

Therefore, there is a pressing need for the re-evaluation and restructuring of the administration of temporary relief measures to prevent their use by political parties for personal or electoral gains. There should be an increased focus on overall infrastructural and sustainable development, adherence to the rule of law to combat corruption, and the generation of employment to empower the grassroots. Overall, there needs to be renewed thinking and greater emphasis on immaterial aspects such as good governance and economic growth for Nigeria to transcend barriers and achieve true independence, free from continuous reliance on temporary relief.

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