

The Exploration of Democracy and Development in Africa: Analysis of the Nigeria's Scenario

Ebele Angela Udeoji

Department of Political Science, National Open University of Nigeria

*Corresponding author: ebeleudeoji@yahoo.com; uebele@noun.edu.ng

Abstract

The synergy between democracy and development remains a valid linkage beyond conceptualizations. This makes it imperative in this study to examine the impact of the former on the latter by emphasizing the dynamics of exploring the two contending concepts toward societal sustainable development. With the application of Liberal Democratic Theory, it is argued that democracy is fundamental to achieving socio-economic and political development. The study adopts qualitative method with more emphasis on secondary source of data gathering and analysis. This study infers that the absence of democratic paraphernalia such as free and fair election, rule of law, constitutionalism among others, have constituted series of threats to developmental utility of democracy in Nigeria. Though, it is established in the study that Nigeria's democratization hurdles are attributed to poor state of economy, high level of unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance, ethnicity, tribalism, ethno-religious crises, and poverty which have constituted impediments to the smooth and effective governance in the country, all relevant stakeholders are expected to comply to democratic rules in order to achieve developmental strides across sectors. The study however recommends systemic reforms as a panacea for sustainable development.

Keywords: Democracy, democratisation, development, constitutionalism, sustainability

Introduction

The global trend of accepting democracy as the preferred form of government prompts African continent to embrace the paradigm shift from authoritarian regimes to civil rules. Although there are still cases of authoritarianism in some states within the continent, the wider acceptability of democracy cannot be undermined. This positive signal resulted to dismantling of de facto one-party regimes, ending of military regimes lifting embargoes on electioneering politics among others. With this, massive political participations became pronounced and several countries within the region convened sovereign national conferences (Nigeria, Benin Republic), instituted political reforms and re-engineering constitutional framework towards widening the political space for party politics in a democratic polity. In addition, these countries conducted elections participated by multi-parties and which invariably improved the electoral contests within the region.

Meanwhile, the popular pressures for entrenchment of democracy in Africa necessitated Nigeria's move to embrace civilian government devoid of military autocracy. Since Nigeria's political independence in 1960, the political transition has always been

truncated via military incursion in the country's politics. However, the return to democratic system in 1999 after series of military rule ushered Nigeria to the current fourth republic which has been sustained for over two decades. Since Nigeria's realignment to democratic rule, elections have been regularly conducted and which invariably reflect in peaceful transition of power from one democratic elected government to another.

Inarguably, democracy is expected to result to development as the key tenets of good governance remain the heartbeat of democratic societies. As rightly noted by Kalu (2004), good governance has some basic components ranging from protection of lives and properties, free flow of information, transparency and accountability which are basically alluded to be entrenched in a democracy. In view of this, the thrust of this study is to explore the impact of democracy on Nigeria's development.

Perspectives on Democracy and Development

The contention about the prospective of democracy in one party system led to Julius Nyerere submission that Africa was not ready for western democracy (Nyerere, 1997). However, the wave of democratization could not be undermined. This makes democracy to become notable and which Africa could not be cut off. The argument against Nyerere's perception on one party system was criticized to be anti-democratic and favourable to authoritarianism. However, whether one-party system or benign authoritarianism, it is an indisputable fact that many decades after self-rule, a number of African countries are mired in a vicious circle of development crisis, characterized by poverty, stagnation, misery, violence and disruption, and this is often blamed on lack of resources. Unfortunately, the lack-of-resources thesis fails to explain why some natural resources-rich African countries such as Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola, among others, are shining examples of dysfunctional developmental failures. The fact that Africa nations have received no fewer than \$600 billion in foreign aid since 1960 and yet are poorer today than they were before is an indication of developmental failure (Boko, 2007). Oil and foreign aid, which account for half or more of the total government budget and a significant share of the total national economy, appear to escalate the crisis of development in Africa. This is so because both cause the inflow of foreign exchange into Africa, which members of the ruling elite primitively accumulate for themselves, their families and loyalists. It therefore implies that oil wealth and revenue from aid reinforce economic irrationality and waste. They also fund the patronage system and repressive apparatuses of the state that sustain unpopular governments. Above all, they not only sever the bonds of accountability between rulers and ruled, but also encourage corruption, lawlessness and personal rule, which are the monster of African politics (Boko, 2007).

Meanwhile, the synergy between democracy and good governance has been explored. Classical thinkers such as de Tocqueville (1961) viewed liberal democracies as the embodiment of reason and advancement that would greatly empower the labouring and disadvantaged sectors of society to press successfully to redress the gross socio-economic and political disparities. Their immense value to knowledge in this field notwithstanding, classical thinkers have failed to realize that liberal democracy is a

product of western culture and civilization, and may not be easily adaptable to other societies that do not have the same cultural orientation and values. In the same vein, Schedler (2001) opined that a democratic regime is consolidated when leaders behave democratically, when major political actors acquire democratic attitudes, and when the socioeconomic and institutional foundations for democracy are in place. Although this viewpoint is outstanding, it however glosses over issues related to challenges associated with good governance. Actually, development is not about forms of government, but the result of governance.

Conversely, scholars like Friedman (1962), Prezworski *et al* (1997) and Sylvia (2002) posit that durable democracy is strongly correlated with economic development, implying that political freedom is a function of economic freedom. Sharing the same view are the purveyors of neoliberalism and its political correlate such as: the donor nations; the International Monetary Fund (I.M.F), the World Bank; the African Development Bank (ADB); and the international organizations like the Commonwealth of nations, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), among others. These agents of 'casanova capitalism' are in unison that there is no substitute to a free-market economy and liberal democracy; and that both must go *pari passu*. They also equate development with economic growth. For instance, The United Nations Millennium Project (2005), the United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Reports* (2005), and the World Bank's annual *World Development Reports* (2003), each list over one hundred "must do" items for countries to achieve development. The reports general emphasizes "capacity development," which includes both the building of effective states and empowerment society to be able to hold states accountable for their actions. The reports also observe that poor governance may not always be the result of rapacious political leadership, but weak formal political institutions arising from insufficient resources and lack of capacity for effective and efficient public administration.

Despite the foregoing explication, attempt to equate liberal democracy with development is problematic because it deliberately emphasizes the private sector. The essence is to reify, promote and reinforce a market economy. More fundamentally, the rural population that constitutes the bulk of Nigerian population is gratuitously excluded, while the private sector that is small, inchoate and limited is prioritized. Finally, it tends to exaggerate the importance of development reforms.

At this point, it is pertinent to emphasize that development reforms without concomitant economic reforms are doomed to failure. Extant inquiries indicate that politico-institutional reforms succeed more in settings where economic development has started to take place (Acuña, & Tommasi, 1999; Tommasi, 2004). However, this is not to suggest that political development is simply a consequence of economic development, but to underscore that institution building and consolidation are more likely to succeed where development has already taken place or is taking place. What this implies is that commitment to economic development is a *sine qua non* for profound institution building and promotion of good governance.

Again, although the contention that institution building, democracy, and politico-economic decentralization are essential for economic development is intuitively appealing, it glosses over the pertinent question of how each can contribute to democratic institutionalization and economic development; how the society can devise an institutional framework that nurtures both democracy and market economies; how the society can prevent the devolution and decentralization of political-economic authority from exacerbating regional or particularistic divisions? Although the extant literature provides useful insights into these important issues, the next section draws on scholarly analyses to further elaborate these concerns.

Democracy and Development: Exploring the Nexus

The modern trend of scholarly and practitioners' contention revolves around the usefulness of democracy to development. Basically, the paradigm is being shifted towards developmental indices as justification for the functionality of democracy as a system of government. This dimension reflects in Osagahae (2001) submission that democracy is contested across different regions within the global community. The point of Osagahae is that what is democratic in western societies might not be accepted to be democratic virtues in Asian region. To him, the Arab world understanding of democracy differs from the European analysis of the concept. Be that as it may, the best mechanism to measure democracy is development.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that democracy if properly entrenched facilitates peaceful and periodic transition of power from one regime to another. The peaceful political transition Nigeria has enjoyed since 1999 could be easily attributed to the country's readiness to embrace democracy. The regular and periodic elections have allowed the electorates to change political powers from one government to another. In fact, the electoral turnover of 2015 in Nigeria was a plus to the country's quest for democratic consolidation. By implication, democracy has paved way for Nigerians to change government without coercive mechanism experienced under military regimes. In a nutshell, democracy provides opportunity for people to periodically hold government officials accountable. On the other hand, authoritarian regimes may randomly provide high-quality development, but if they do not, they can only be removed from office by force, which may take years or decades unlike democratic system of government. Sen (2000) summarizes the unique feature of democracy relative to authoritarian regime:

we have to consider the political incentives that operate on governments and on the persons and groups that are in office. The rulers have the incentive to listen to what people want if they have to face their criticism and seek their support in elections (p.152).

In addition, a number of authors have noted that the proliferation of interest groups lobbying for power or for rents in a democracy may hinder the implementation of major decisions of the government designed to kick start sustainable development. In this regard, the experiences of the East Asian states of Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan indicate that efficacious state capacity and development can be achieved in developmental authoritarian regimes-albeit, not in predatory authoritarian systems. It is also known that authoritarian regimes that are developmental are an exception rather

than the rule; as authoritarian regimes are more conterminous with pathologies such as predation and expropriation. A major issue, however, is the challenge which electoral democracies grapple with in promoting popular and participatory decision-making. The fact that electoral votes can be purchased may allow wealthy individuals or parties to control the electoral process in much the same way that an openly authoritarian regime would. As such, the outside box is labelled a democracy, but inside it is an authoritarian system (Riviera-Batiz, 1999). In effect, the provision of democratic institutions in the form of more ample political rights, civil rights, and freedom of the press, among others, may or may not be associated with improved development.

Explicating the foregoing analysis, the USAID's report (2012) posits that democracy is not strictly essential for development just as bad governance is possible under formal democratic structures. It however concedes that free, fair, and competitive elections do make it possible to remove bad or corrupt political leaders. That is, credible elections may not necessarily produce credible leaders. In lieu of this, democracy gives citizens, group, interest associations, movements, the media - to monitor officials and participate in policy making. In addition, leaders in democracies have stronger incentives and more institutional means and obligations to explain and justify their decisions and to consult a broad range of constituencies before making decisions. Such participation and debate give the public a stronger sense of policy ownership. As a result, policies are more sustainable and government is more legitimate.

Democracy and development are mutually reinforcing. When they develop together, resources are used to advance public goods, and public institutions perform their designated roles. In addition, social consensus supports and stabilizes the system of government and disputes are settled peacefully. Finally, investment flows into the country, attracted by low transaction costs associated with low risk under stable governments, government transparency and legitimacy and the rule of law. In these circumstances, economies grow, human welfare improves, trade expands, political stability and capacity deepen, and countries become more responsible and resourceful members of the international community. On the contrary, when governance is bad and undemocratic or only superficially democratic, the pathologies of development inevitably have regional and global consequences. Poverty becomes entrenched, reflecting the resources wasted by corruption and distorted investment. Chronic fiscal deficits drain and ultimately drive away international resources (USAID, 2012).

Theoretical Framework: Liberal Democratic Theory

The study is anchored on the liberal theory of democracy. Liberal Democratic Theory evolved from the ideas of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) whom placed emphasis on the principle of social institutions for the betterment of man as an individual. In liberal political theory, the state exists to promote the welfare of its citizens and to protect their lives and property. It is only in doing these things that it earns the loyalty of its citizens and extract compliance without recourse to force. In democracy, the role of the state is either as a direct agent or mediator, and how this is associated with success or failure is a matter of conjecture. Public policy emanates from the ability of the state to nurture and protect the aspirations and needs of citizens. However, the extent in which governments in Africa, particularly

Nigeria has fared in ensuring better economic and political governance remain a big puzzle

Pursuant to these, we can isolate three objectives of administrative designs in liberal political theory: Accountability of performance, Efficiency of management, and Effectiveness in mobilizing and managing resources. This framework of analysis assumes that good governance is the most objective and that efficient management and effective resource mobilization stem from good governance. A healthy and sustainable state can only be realized through good governance and development. This entails the capacity of the state to provide goods and services to its citizens in an effective, efficient, transparent and accountable manner under the rule of law and individual liberty (Ake, 1993). Thus, the challenge that confronts the Nigerian is good governance.

Meanwhile, the terms democracy and development are used universally to describe the trends of current political progress. Whereas the concept of democracy has been largely portrayed in the literature as a synonym concept for liberal democracy, the latter is not the only form of democracy; neither does it approximate the concept of democracy in its classical sense. Democracy in its classical sense, as Ake (2000) argues, is a concept that is uncharacteristically precise. It is not about delegated authority, or representative governance, but popular expression of power by the people. Liberal democracy on the other hand is about government with the consent of the people. From the forgoing, it is evident that though liberal democracy shares some affinities with classical democracy such as the notion of formal political equality, inalienable human rights, right of political participation, accountability to the governed, and the rule of law, nevertheless they are markedly different. According to Ake (2000):

Instead of collectivity, liberal democracy focuses on the individual whose claims are ultimately placed above those of the collectivity. It replaces government by the people with the government by the consent of the people. Instead of the sovereignty of people, it offers the sovereignty of law. In the final analysis liberal democracy repudiates popular power. (p. 10)

From Ake's view point, popular power is the essence of democracy. Equating liberal democracy with classical democracy is to devalue and trivialize the concept of democracy. While democracy in its traditional sense seeks the realization of human potentialities through active participation in leadership, liberal democracy offers only protection. In the former, freedom is positive and activist, in the latter; it is a passive acceptance of immunity. The former enables and empowers; the latter prevents and protects (Ake, 2000, p. 14).

Equating liberal democracy with classical democracy is a logical outgrowth of the nature of the historical developments in western societies in which private property and market society were created and accentuated by the dynamics of industrial and technological revolution. The challenge for a fledging market economy and society is to engineer a political infrastructure and mode of policy that service and protect the base of society, nay the economy. As such, most of the literature on democratic theory espouses the compatibility of liberal democracy, with a market economy. Ake (2000) further observes that the values of the market are the same core values of liberal democracy. These include: egotism, property, formal freedom, and equality. Both also share faith and

commitment to limited government. In fact, democracy essentially is a class project that reflects dominant power interests in the capitalist societies. Although the process of its evolution is embedded in complex social struggles, but its crafting and the hegemonic interest that it represents is largely that of capital and the bourgeois class. This explains why issues of private property and accumulation are stressed and well protected in the constitutional order of western liberal democracies, whereas the notions of equality and socio-economic rights are more abstract than real for the majority of the people. This partly explains why social tensions and contradictions reflected in aggression, violence, police brutality, murder, and arson are part of the social culture of liberal democracies. More often than not these contradictions are forms of resistance by marginalized groups and individuals in a capitalist social order. This is often referred to as 'resistance from below.'

Regarding the functional elements of liberal democracy, these include those operational variables through which democracy subsists. These are: a functional state that is able to regulate conduct, set rules and create strong institutions; a political society that is well organized to conduct the business of political power; a civil society with a mosaic network of interests and political pressure groups; a usable bureaucracy capable of delivering public goods, and an economic society with a vibrant private sector that can facilitate capitalist accumulation, increased production and economic growth (Linz & Stephan, 1997).

In the final analysis, the relevance of liberal democratic theory has reflected in all the attributes of liberalism as a channel that guarantees development. Although there is a contention on Nigeria's practicability of liberal democracy, Sakariyau (2020) categorises the country's electoral democracy to be hybrid in nature. This indicates that mixture of liberalism and authoritarianism can be found within the Nigeria's democratic system. This is justified via certain hurdles of Nigeria's electoral democracy ranging from abuse of human rights, state abuse of power during electioneering and rotational elitist circle among the political stakeholders. Despite the challenges highlighted, Nigeria claims to liberal democracy is situated in her template to adopt western democratization mechanism though with exceptions.

Democracy and Development in Nigeria: An Analysis

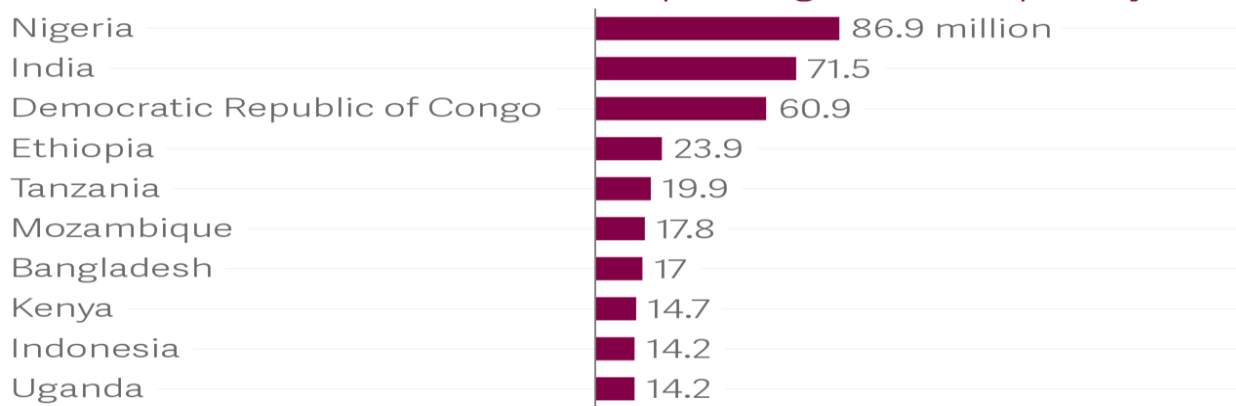
Challenges to a viable democracy and development in Nigeria are similar to those of other African countries. These challenges include lack of civil society involvement, absence of political will, institutional weakness and corruption among others. From our findings in the course of this paper the factors hampering a successful democratization in Nigeria are mainly corruption, malpractices and inadequate professionalism in the Press, weakness of state institutions, electoral malpractices and political intimidations, and weakness of the civil society.

There is a definite correlation between the lack of democratic practices, development in African politics and the deteriorating socio-economic conditions. If governments are not accountable to the people, then they are less likely to pursue socio-economic development. The linkage that exists between democracy and economy is therefore two-dimensional. While democracy has a tendency to lead to economic development, it can

also be argued that without a sound economic base democracy can hardly survive in any social formation. This is so because of the financial cost of supporting the democratic structures like the local government councils, states' executives and states' legislatures and the federal executive and federal legislature. In a federal set-up like Nigeria where there are three tiers of government with both executive and legislative branches, the cost is even higher. There are also very many committees and special advisers. This therefore is the dilemma that confronts the present democratic dispensation in the country.

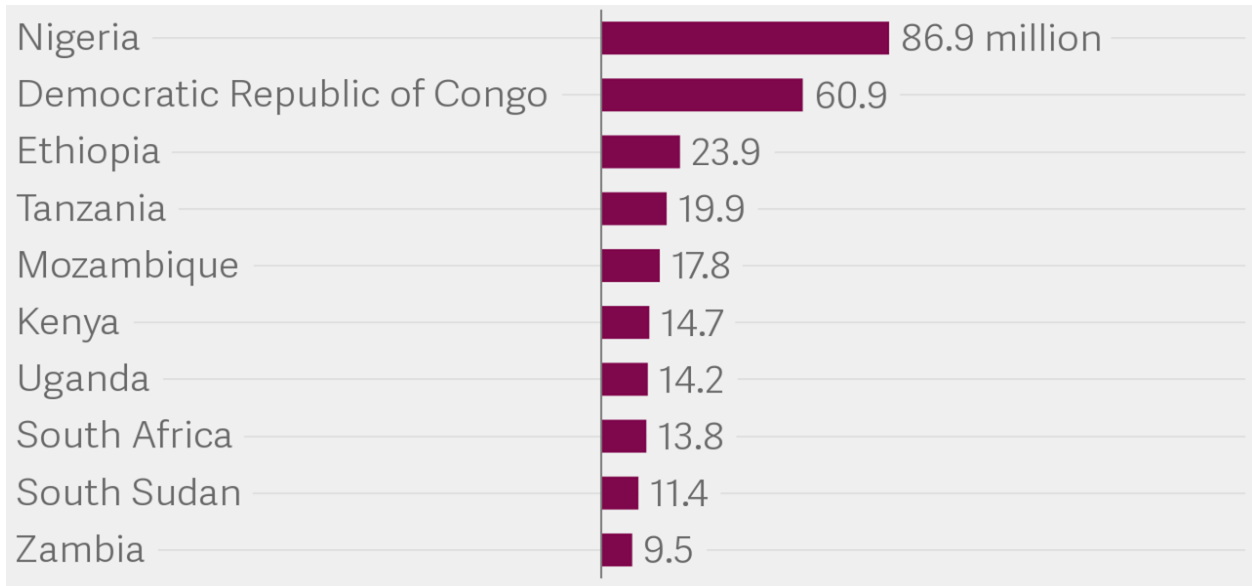
Beginning from the early 1980s, the Nigerian economy has been witnessing an astonishing decline due in part to the collapse of the global oil market, wrong policies and serious economic leakages. The absolute poverty characterizing the deepening economic crisis in Nigeria is common knowledge. A recent report by the World Poverty Clock (2018) indicates that Nigeria has not only “overtaken India as the country with the most extreme poor people in the world”, but has remained the top most country with extreme poverty in Africa (**See Figures 1 and 2**). Thus, no fewer than 86.9 million Nigerians, representing nearly 50% of its estimated 180 million population now wallows in extreme poverty. The current efforts to lift more Nigerians out of extreme poverty is clearly indication that the successive Nigerian governments mismanaged the country’s vast oil riches via incompetence and corruption, though the present regime is yet to actualize its mission on poverty reduction.

Figure 1: Nigeria has the largest extreme poverty population (June 2018)



Source: Data from World Poverty Clock (2018) retrieved from https://worldpoverty.io/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=search&utm_cam

Figure 2: Top 10 African Countries with extreme poverty (June 2018)



Source: Data from World Poverty Clock (2018) retrieved from https://worldpoverty.io/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=search&utm_cam

Apart from the above, The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NMEC) puts Nigeria's literacy rate at 69.1 per cent. This compares poorly with literacy rates in countries like Cuba, Poland, and Estonia put at 99.8 per cent, and Barbados, Latvia and Slovenia that have attained 99.7 per cent (cited in *This Day* Editorials, April 12, 2019). This explains the low level of development in Nigeria. This is true since the growth and development of any nation is primarily dependent on the quantity and quality of its population.

Aside extreme poverty, Nigeria is home to more than 10 million out-of-school children, majority of whom are girls (British Council, 2014). Two-thirds of this population are found in north west and north-eastern regions of Nigeria. The two regions have been severely attacked by the terror group, Boko Haram, resulting in livelihood disruptions, population displacements, humanitarian crisis, educational emergency affecting about 2.8 million children, among others.

Also, transport facilities have been reported to be deteriorating and the quality of transport services falling. Road conditions, bus fleets, rail services and river transport are terribly in bad shape. The infrastructural dilapidation and decay have inhibited the flow of local products to domestic and international markets, increased final products costs and thus reduced the competitiveness of Nigerian non-oil export. High transport costs equally increased the costs of inputs such as fertilizer and pesticides. Public safety has also been put at risk, particularly in the case of road transport, due to lack of proper maintenance, over reliance on public provision services and low maintenance (World Poverty Clock, 2018).

Before now, Nigeria's pathetic and disturbing economic realities had provoked a very serious lamentation by the *Vision 2010 Committee Report*. In fact, one of the attractive

recommendations of the committee is the diversification of the country's economy from its present oil-dominated posture. Definitely, the present civilian administration since the rebirth on constitutional rule in 1999 has a very serious assignment to protect the present democratic experiment. One of the surest ways of doing this is adopting the right economic policies, as enunciated in the *Vision 2010 Committee Report*, and preventing economic leakages that have compounded the country's economic problems for years.

In analyzing why democracy has been faced with hurdles in Nigeria, the country's politicians have been subject to serious censure and rebuke (Dare, 1991; Diya, 1994). This critical view of politicians is predicated on the crucial position they occupy in the success or otherwise of any democratic experiment. In fact, politicians are the foundation on which any democratic experiment is constructed. They are the moving force in the polity. Hence, the vitriolic attack on Nigerian politicians, especially in the light of their previous poor showing in upholding the success of democracy in the country, should not be unexpected.

The foregoing is in tandem with the general view of the politician in the literature. The massive electoral fraud and the distortion of the peoples wish in most of the country's past elections by the politicians have been the bane of the survival of democracy in Nigeria. Their erroneous belief that elections must be won at all cost and that their parties must control the reins of government with the attendant benefits, have been the propelling forces behind most of the electoral fraud in the country.

To be sure, the disappointing reputation of the Nigerian politician is a luxury that the Fourth Republic can ill afford if the history of national democratic failure is not to repeat itself. Nigeria's current democratic enterprise obviously hangs on the balance and whichever direction it will tilt will be largely determined by the politician. Transparency, honesty, service, industry and patriotism are virtues that the politicians must irrevocably be committed to. The era of fraud and mismanagement of government's funds is gone for good. In fact, the Nigerian economy is currently in the doldrums and that is why it was unable to stand the mindless profligacy and squandermania of the Fourth Republic before it came crashing.

That the international community is keenly interested in Nigeria's current democratic dispensation is beyond debate. Apart from a history of prolonged military rule and its attendant political underdevelopment, the direction and forms the current democratic wave in the African continent will take will be largely determined by the success or otherwise of tin-project in Nigeria. The outcome of the contemporary democratic experiment in the continent is intimately related to what happens in Nigeria. For instance, a Nigeria that upholds democracy at home and promotes human rights enforcement and democratic principle abroad cannot but send a strong signal to would-be dictators and petty messianic military coupists across the African continent that their adventurism would hardly succeed.

In Nigeria, the National Assembly lacks the capacity to provide effective checks and balances on the executive. Most opposition parties represented in the Parliament are ineffective because they are only lucrative alliances always seeking for their personal interests, thus the legislators have abandoned their duties to the detriment of democracy, development and the population that they represent. Thus, the US State Department

noted in 2011 human rights report that, the Nigeria judiciary was inefficient and susceptible to corruption at all levels. For democracy to survive and function properly, the principle of separation of powers must be adhered to in order for each arm of government must act as a check on the other.

Democracy requires acknowledging a range of values that are designed to give people voice in their political governance and ensuring Liberty and equity. However, in Nigeria, elections are riddled with malpractices, to the point where it is fair to question whether the country is democratic in any sense. There is also the challenge of developing good governance that allows political opponents a fair chance to contest for public offices. In Nigeria, democracy is severely affected by dominance of the majoritarian party or alliance or parties. This occurs within a context of significant freedom and relatively effective governance. Governments should therefore display good governance by organising free and fair elections that express the will of the people. Elected officials must effectively represent their constituents. Political participation must be promoted on a variety of levels.

The role played by Civil Society in democratisation and development cannot be dismissed or underrated. Tocqueville (1961) argued that a vibrant and robust civil society was the foundation of early nineteenth-century America's democratic success. In Tocqueville's view, American democracy was sustained by the richness and diversity of its voluntary associations-from religious groupings to business and commercial associations. These independent and active civic associations served as an important bulwark against the negative effects of centralization by keeping in check the dictatorial tendencies of the state.

Clearly, democracy is strengthened when its formal representative institutions are supplemented by vibrant and participatory civic associations (Bratton, 1997). Civil society groups, for example, are in the best position to understand and articulate their own needs. Their voices should be heard within government. Their actions positively promote and strengthen democratic culture. Civil society is helpful in election monitoring to ensure a free and fair election, poverty alleviation and promotion of social dialogue (Onuh & Ike, 2021). Insufficient involvement of civil society groups has adversely affected the implementation of democracy and development in Nigeria and it has to be addressed.

The trend toward democratization and development in Nigeria kindles hopes that political reform could lead to economic regeneration. If governments could become more accountable, transparent, and rule-driven, they would be inclined to perform better and to produce broad economic gains as a basis for support. The presumed link between democratic rule, development and economic growth has several foundations. At the most general level, there is an elective affinity between democracy and development. Both systems rely on open information, choice, and decentralized outlets for decision-making. Authoritarian regimes find it impossible to manage the flows of information and pragmatic decisions needed for a viable economy. Conversely; democracy systems give rise to information demands and assertive social groups that impel governments to relax control. The fact that all the world's mature democracies are also market systems affirms this relationship.

By and large, democracy and development in Nigeria is seen to have reflected limited progress in revitalizing economies or alleviating poverty in the country. This should not be taken to mean that regimes are irrelevant to economic outcomes, or that the country's economic problems are intractable. Democracy and development clearly provide stronger counterweights to predatory rule, blatant neglect, and purely self-regarding behaviour by leaders. Democracy fosters offsetting institutions to reign in the arbitrary power of the executive. More stable and transparent legal settings (even where they are flawed) strengthen the potential for investment and exchange. Democratic institutions and civil society will have to work better to control corruption and constrain the exercise of power, so that the chief business of government becomes the delivery of public goods or amenities, and not for spending public funds on public office holders for personal aggrandizement. Democratic systems and good governance rest on accountability to voters and civic constituencies; which is likely to reinforce pressures on leaders to improve the economy and to provide gains in popular welfare. In a system characterized by periodic elections, political competition, activism among civil groups, and an independent media, politicians usually find strong incentives to furnish public goods, expand the economy, and enhance livelihoods for citizens.

It is worthy to note that political liberalization affords space for civic mobilization, public interest lobbying, and independent media outlets that disseminate information and hold leaders to account. Electoral democracy may not be sufficient to transform Nigerian economies, but it appears necessary for economic advancement. In this regard, despite the relentless creep of corruption, conflicts of interest, and generous patronage, Nigeria has fared well in its practice of electoral democracy, as evident in the conduct of the 2015 general elections. However, there is still room for improvement. The fundamental step towards surmounting the challenges of deepening democracy and development is the firm resolution of political leadership to impose sanctions on any culpable political actor. However, lack of transparency in elections, party pressures and weak economies are serious impediments to the exercise of political will (Graham, 2011).

Democratic structures such as parliaments and legislatures must represent the interests of all citizens and provide a system of checks and balances to be able to oversee and impose clear constitutional limits on executive authority. Such limits are necessary against the corrupting effects of power. Also, the judicial and legal institutions must be independent of special influences, and protect the political and civil rights of all citizens. They must provide equal protection to women, minorities, and other subordinate groups and fair access to judicial and administrative systems, and be accountable to the public, including allowing citizens to seek protection of their rights and redress against government actions. The executive branch must also involve the civil society groups in the implementation of the democracy and development. NGO's, Labour/Trade Union Congresses, Students Unions and others should be partners in election monitoring, human rights and rule of law advocacy. The actual anti-corruption department needs to more independent to identify in liaison with civil society groups, any case of national resource mismanagement and prosecute the culpable with disregard to his political or economic influence. This is to ensure that civil societies are abreast of events within the country for better understanding of national political and economic issues.

Ineffective state administration can hinder development. For democracy and development to thrive, government institutions must be held accountable. This requires an Independent Electoral Commission, Independent Human Rights Commission and Freedom of Information Commission. It is imperative therefore that the public accounts system be transparent, responsible before an independent Auditor-General answerable to the Parliament. Accountability requires transparency of government through the elimination of corruption.

Conclusion

The transition toward democracy that has swept across Africa states over the past few decades implies that these states must simultaneously cope with the demands of economic development, political and social integration, and greater public demand for a more equitable distribution of the fruits of democracy and development. The ability to respond effectively to these challenges depends much more on each state's institutional endowment. Building and strengthening these institutional endowments is a precondition for development, because sustained economic development is impossible without good governance.

Good governance is not only the key to the promotion of human rights and protection of civil liberties, but also good governance is highly correlated with economic development and the potential to deliver significant improvements in living standards. Although Nigeria has improved the quality of her governance, much still needs to be done. As our finding has revealed, although it is the responsibility of Nigeria to improve governance, advanced nations have a large stake in promoting development.

Finally, the paper noted that democracy as a process has no shortcuts. Hence, the need for a long-term perspective on the achievement of strong democracy. Democracy and development must be seen to have an instrumentalist value and relevance to improving human development. Also, while the core tenets of democratic governance have universal validity, the form of democracy a nation chooses to operate should depend on its history and circumstances. In order to promote good governance as well as effective, efficient and long-lasting democracy in Nigeria, it is recommended that government at all levels should muster the political will to establish and support an independent audit system in order to contribute to transparency, accountability and good governance. Also, the media and NGOs should educate the citizens and politicians on issues of accountability and good governance. Similarly, the international community should increase its support and leverage to the country for institutional strengthening in the near, medium and longer term.

References

- Acuña, C.H. & Tommasi, M. (1999). Some Reflections on the Institutional Reforms Required for Latin America). Working Paper 20, Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Institucional & Proceedings for the Conference on Institutional Reforms, Growth and Human Development in Latin America, Yale Center for International Studies and Council of Latin American Studies, Yale University.
- Ade, A.D. (2002), *Media and society*, (Edition Galliard, Paris)

- Adejumobi, S. (2000). Elections in Africa: A fading shadow of democracy? *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 21 (1) p 59-73. www.jstor.org/stable/1601429
- Ake, C. (1996), *Is Africa Democratizing?* Lagos: Malthouse Press.
- Ake, C. (2000), *The feasibility of democracy in Africa*. Dakar: CQDESRIA.
- Alcantara, C. (1998), Uses and abuses of the concept of governance. *International Social Science Journal*, 155, 105-113.
- Balogun, M.J. (1998), The role of governance and civil society in Africa's development: A critical review. *Regional Development Dialogue*, 19(2). p32-47
- Boko, D. (2007), Good governance, security and development in West Africa. Paper presented at a Conference on Democracy and Development, Cotonou 20-31 May, 2007.
- Bratton, M. and Nicolas V.W. (1997), *Democratic experiments in Africa: Regime transitions in comparative perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- British Council (2014). *Girls' Education in Nigeria Report 2014: Issues, influencers and actions*. www.britishcouncil.org.ng. Retrieved 23/08/19.
- ECOWAS (2001). *Democracy and good governance*. Dakar: ECOWAS.
- Gitonga, A. (1988). *Democratic theory and practice in Africa*. London: James Currey.
- Huntington, S. (1997). Democracy for the long Haul. In L. Diamond, M. Plattner, Y. Chu & H. Tien (Eds.). *Consolidating the third wave democracies: Themes and perspectives*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) (2000). *Democracy in Nigeria*
- Joseph, R. (1987). *Democracy and prebendal politics in Nigeria: The rise and fall of the Second Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Joseph, R. (1990). *Political renewal in sub-Saharan Africa: The challenges of the 1990s*. In African Governance in the 1990s: Objectives, Resources and Constraints Atlanta, Georgia: Carter Centre.
- Lijphart, A. (1984). *Democracies: Patterns of majoritarian and consensus government in twenty-one countries*. London: Yale University Press.
- Mohidden, A. (1997). Taking and assessment of democracy and good governance. Proceedings of the Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF), Conference on "Democracy, Civil Society and Governance in Africa", December 1-4, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Ndulo, M. (2008). Sustainable democracy and institutions building in Africa. *Africa Notes*. New York: Institute for African Development.
- Olagunju, T. Jinadu, A. and Oyobaire, S. (1993). *Transition to democracy in Nigeria, 1985-1993*. Ibadan: Safari Books
- Onuh, Paul A. & Ike, Chinedu C. (2021). Civil Society Organizations and electoral credibility in Nigeria. *Africa Review*, Vol. 13 (02), pp. 233 – 250. DOI: 10.1080/09744053.2021.1941694
- Sakariyau, R. (2020). The Theory of 'Electoral Authoritarianism' and Nigeria's Hybrid Democracy: Analysing the 2019 General Election. In A. Adeolu; A. Babatunde A. and Adekunle (eds), *Issues in the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria*. Ibadan John Archers

- Schedler, A. (2001). Measuring Democratic Consolidation. *Studies in Comparative International Development (Springer-Verlag)* 36 (1) p66-92.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/31-02687585>
- Schumpeter, J. A. (1942). *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Sen, A. (2000). *Development as freedom*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Shafritz J. M (1988). *The Dorsey Dictionary of American Government and Politics*, Chicago, Illinois: The Dorsey Press.
- Tocqueville, A. (1961). *Democracy in America*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Tommasi, M. (2004). Crisis, political institutions and economic reforms. The good, the bad, and the ugly. In B. Tungodden, N. Stern & I. Kolstad (Eds.), *Toward pro-poor policies - Aid, institutions and globalization*. Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics – Europe. World Bank/Oxford University Press.
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)(2002). *Foreign aid in the national interest: Promoting freedom, security, and opportunity*.
<http://www.ijsaid.gov/fani/20/09/2019>. 10:50 am
- World Bank (2011). *Report of the World Bank Expert Group on Development and Democracy*. Washington D.C: The World Bank.