

Democracy, Development and Livelihoods in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects

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Abstract

Nigeria is the fourth largest democracy in the world with a population of over 180 million, as well as the sixth largest supplier of oil and therefore possesses enormous economic and development potentials. However, the majority of Nigerians remain extremely poor due largely to bad governance. The expectation was that return to democratic rule in Nigeria after several years of military dictatorship would accelerate development. On the contrary, Nigeria still lags behind in development indices such as poverty reduction, employment generation, effective healthcare delivery and level of corruption. This paper which is anchored on structuration theoretical approach analyzed the relationship between democracy and development in Nigeria and posited that democracy has not been able to bring about the much anticipated positive social change. Relying on four structural indices for measuring development, the paper contended that Nigeria has performed poorly and although she has now experienced sixteen years of uninterrupted democratic rule, there is still no clear direct relationship between democracy and development in the country. The paper therefore recommended that Nigerian political leaders should, articulate and conscientiously pursue democratic ideals that will positively stimulate development at all levels. Specifically, the paper strongly advocated that Nigerian leaders and followers should adhere to the principle of accountability, transparency and also ensure that the public is adequately informed during formulation of budgets and other vital public policies.

Keywords: accountability, democracy, development, livelihood and participation

Introduction

Democracy and development are two inter-linked concepts in social and political discourse. There are different perspectives on the concepts influenced by history, ideology, discipline and experience (Igwe, 2010). Democracy is a system of government in which all the people of a state or polity are involved in making decisions about its affairs, typically by voting to elect representatives to a parliament or similar assembly. The world over, democracy is fast spreading due to its ability to provide basic requirements for good governance and development (Ardo, 2000). Since the end of the Cold War and subsequent re-emergence of the New World Order, there has been a

significant focus on democracy as the best system of government. This development has brought an end to the struggle for supremacy between systems of governance that constituted the background for the cold war era (Jamo, 2013). Nigeria's preference for democracy rather than military rule was largely predicated on the fact that democracy would enhance national development (Omotola, 2007). Such optimism was also founded on the assumption that democracy by its nature stimulates development (Pel, 1999; Somolakae, 2007; Jamo, 2013). Moreover, democracy has become most acceptable due to the fame it enjoys among most international organizations. As was observed by Saliu (2010), a democratic country has the opportunity to get more assistance as there are resources reserved for countries that have parted ways with dictatorship and have embraced multi-partisan political structure. Furthermore, a democratic nation can easily reach out to other countries for assistance to enhance her development.

It is against this background that Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999 after several years of military dictatorship was massively celebrated. The country had also experienced transfer of political power from a ruling party, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to the opposition All Progressive Congress (APC). Right from the inception of the present democratic dispensation citizens of the country looked forward to meaningful development, accountability and transparent leadership, protection of human rights, economic growth and general reduction of poverty among other benefits. Unfortunately, rather than gains, there is insecurity, high rate of unemployment, poor medical facilities, corruption and wide spread poverty. The situation has generated immense doubts as to whether development is achievable under the present democratic dispensation.

This review paper examined the subject of development, democracy and livelihoods in Nigeria with emphasis on the linkage between development and livelihoods as they impact the country. The paper first conceptualized democracy, development, governance, and livelihood. This was followed by the elaboration of theoretical frame work; and discussion on the nexus between democracy and development. The limitations of democracy in stimulating development in Nigeria were also fully discussed. Conclusions and recommendations were drawn to enhance better understanding and performance of Nigeria's democratic experience towards development and improved livelihoods for Nigerians in the years ahead.

Conceptual Clarifications

Development

Development is an important concept and one of the most indispensable ingredients for sustenance of human society. The concept has many facets. Development was popularized during expansion of colonization, and underwent various transformations as the socio-political structure of the world changed over time (Isham, 2009). During the era of colonization, development was understood as having colonies, organizing the European societies and its

labour and market forces by disorganizing the non-European colonies (Hoogvelt, 2001).

At the end of World War II, a new phase of development emerged, as newly independent countries, for the sake of political legitimacy, adopted the Western notion and model of development. They had to depend on the technologies of the former colonial masters. The adoption of European model across the former colonial world in the post-World War II era was the underpinnings of what McMichael (2000) cited in Hoogvelt (2001), called the 'development project' which to him ought to incorporate 'democratic fair dealing'. The United States of America (USA) was a powerful reality at that time. Asian and African decolonization started at the time when USA was at the height of its power and prosperity. She was eager to reconstruct the post-war world to expand markets and the flow of raw materials. Reconstructing a war-torn world was an international project, inspired by a vision of development as a national enterprise to be repeated across the world of newly independent states (Hoogvelt, 2001).

Development can equally be seen as economic advancement. Hence, Sen (1983) sees economic development as the sustained, concerted actions of policy makers and communities that promote the standard of living and economic health of a specific area. Furthermore, development can also be viewed as a process of positive social change. Social change may refer to the notion of social progress or socio-cultural evolution; including the philosophical idea that society moves forward by dialectical or evolutionary means. It could also refer to a paradigmatic change in the socio-economic structure; a shift away from feudalism towards capitalism or refer to social revolution, such as the socialist revolution (Marxism), or to other social movements, such as women's suffrage or the civil rights movement. According to Bjornholt (2014), such social changes may be driven by cultural, religious, economic, scientific or technological forces.

Economic development, an aspect of development, refers to the quantitative and qualitative changes in the economy. Such changes may involve multiple areas including development of human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety, literacy, and other initiatives (Sheffrin, 2003). According to Rostow (1952) economic development and growth result from structural changes, savings and investments in an economy. However, the failure of economic growth in most developing countries of Latin America and Africa to deliver corresponding social goods and solve problems of unemployment, poverty, disease, hunger, illiteracy and ever increasing crimes and wars, necessitated the new thinking, and redefinition of development from narrow economic growth centered perspective to broad human centered approach (Nwanegbo and Odigbo, 2013).

In this light, Chandler (2007) sees development as a broader concept that recognizes psychological and material factors for measurement of human well-being. Development must be man centered, and involve the process of

empowering people to maximize their potentials, and develop the knowledge capacity to exploit nature to meet daily human needs (Rodney, 1972; Nnoli, 1981; Ake, 2001). The transformation of the society and the emergence of new social and economic organizations are critical indicators of development (Stiglitz cited in Nwanegbo and Odigbo, 2013). Development can succinctly be defined as the noticeable points in the advancement of human capital, economic and social upliftments which are capable of increasing access to indicators of improved living condition. Such indicators include increased manpower level, decent housing, easy transportation, efficient and effective healthcare system, a high level of social cohesion and above all, unhindered access to wealth generation activities (Saliu, 2010). Development aims at creating better living conditions for the entire society.

Democracy and Its Variants

According to Diamond (2004), democracy can be defined based on four principles which are a political system for choosing and replacing government through free and fair elections; the active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life; protection of the human rights of all citizens and rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens. Compared to dictatorships, oligarchies, monarchies and aristocracies, in which the people have little or no say in who is elected and how the government is run, a democracy is the most inclusive form of government, as input from those representing citizens determines the direction of the country (Kolar, 2005).

Essentially, however, democracy is a form of government distinguishable from other forms. One way of distinguishing it is the level of people's participation, especially in discharging their civic duties such as following political campaigns, voting in an election, holding leaders accountable, among others. Without public participation, there would be no democracy. It can also be distinguished in terms of the elaborate institutions put in place for its operations. These are the political parties, legislature, executive and judicial arms and its subscription to the principle of separation of powers (Saliu, 2010).

According to Musa (2011), democracy is built on the equality of citizens; the freedom of these citizens to associate with one another towards the realization of their ideals; the defense and promotion of their interests; the freedom of these citizens to choose between the different political platforms and candidates, and see to the actualization of the platforms they have voted for, if their choices win. It repudiates arbitrariness and authoritarianism. Democracy extols the consent of the governed and it protects human personality and values (Ake, 2001). Democracy whether liberal or its socialist nature includes fundamental recognition of popular sovereignty, equal opportunity for all, majority rule, representativeness, minority rights, right of choice between alternative programmes, popular consultation, consensus on fundamental issues and more essentially periodic elections (Oke, 2005).

A liberal democracy is a representative democracy in which the ability of the elected representatives to exercise decision-making power is subject to the

rule of law, and moderated by a constitution or laws that emphasize the protection of the rights and freedoms of individuals, and which places constraints on the leaders and on the extent to which the will of the majority can be exercised against the rights of minorities (Doomen, 2014). On the other hand, totalitarian democracy refers to a system of government in which lawfully elected representatives maintain the integrity of a nation state whose citizens, while granted the right to vote, have little or no participation in the decision-making process of the government (Talmon, 1960).

The concept of democracy confers the opportunity to participate in decision making by all adult citizens. The principle of adult suffrage is a major feature which is now being emphasized by modern democracy. Democracy provides a veritable platform for the entrenchment and consolidation of good governance through institutional arrangements and citizen's participation (Apter, 1991: 463; Held, 1993: 24; Clapham, 1994: 423; Ghali, 1995: 6, Touraine, 1999: 268 ;) cited in (Oke, 2005). Democratization does not solely depend on the creation of basic institutions of democracy such as legislature, executive and the judiciary but also requires the creation of the right environment for the institutions to function.

Democracy and development when properly applied are mutually exclusive; hence, inactivity of the former inhibits the later and vice versa. This paper conceives democracy from the liberal perspective which has obvious advantages over the totalitarian forms. Nigeria's democracy is also modeled alongside liberal formats despite her inability to fully manifest most of the advantages of the model.

Governance

The term governance grew out of the Greek word 'Kubemao' meaning to steer; propel. According to Bevir (2013), governance refers to all processes of governing, whether undertaken by a government, market or network, which may be over a family, tribe, formal or informal organization or territory and whether through laws, norms, power or language. It relates to the process of interaction and decision-making among actors involved in a collective association that leads to the creation, reinforcement, or reproduction of social norms and institutions (Hufty, 2011).

From the Greek viewpoint, government is related to the state. Hence Saliu (2010) had argued that it should be clear why people hold governance responsible for the apparent breakdown of the state system. Hardly can one talk about governance without talking about the state, even though governance goes beyond the state. Nothing can be steered or propelled in a country without the institution and authority to bring it about (Said, 2000, cited in Jamo, 2013).

According to the World Bank (2002) governance is the exercise of political authority and the use of institutional resources to manage society's problems and affairs. From this definition, the pivotal role of governance is signified. The definition also emphasizes the issue of legitimacy and deployment of the resources of a country to solve her problems. According to Saliu (2010) no

other organ shares the attributes of legitimacy and power to act on behalf of the people like the political authority. In addition, governance can also be seen as the existence of a network of institutions of government coupled with laws and regulations that together create and maintain a social environment in which human development takes place. Good governance is thus, a subset of governance, wherein public resources and problems are managed effectively, efficiently, and in response to needs of society (UNDP, 2014). These highlighted conceptual frameworks of governance, although not be fully manifest in Nigeria's circumstances are relevant to this paper.

Livelihood

A person's livelihood refers to their means of securing the basic necessities such as food, water, shelter and clothing for survival. It also involves the capacity to acquire above necessities working either individually or as a group by using endowments (both human and material) for meeting the requirements of self and other household needs on a sustainable basis with dignity. The activities are usually carried out repeatedly. For instance, a fisherman's livelihood depends on the availability and accessibility of fish.

The concept of livelihood extends to include social and cultural means. According to Blaikie, Cannon, Davis & Wisner (2004) it refers to the command an individual, family, or other social group has over an income and/or bundles of resources that can be used or exchanged to satisfy its needs. This may involve information, cultural knowledge, social networks and legal rights as well as tools, land and other physical resources. A livelihood is a means of making a living. It encompasses people's capabilities, assets, income and activities required to secure the necessities of life. A livelihood is sustainable when it enables people to cope with and recover from shocks and stresses (such as natural disasters and economic or social upheavals) and enhance their well-being and that of future generations without undermining the natural environment or resource base (IFRC, 2013).

In Nigeria, the state of livelihoods has generally remained unimpressive. Poverty is extensive as many people cannot afford basic necessities of life on a sustainable basis. Also, the social support structure such as health insurance and poverty alleviation programmes of government which could cushion harsh economic realities of livelihoods on the people are yet to make the desired impact.

Democracy, Development and Livelihoods: The Nexus

There are vital principles which any state that chooses democracy as its system of governance must adhere to. Without these principles, democracy may not be efficient and effective. This section first focused on those prerequisites of a functional democracy and thereafter examined the nexus or interrelationships between democracy, development and livelihoods.

Public Participation

One of the foremost principles of democracy is popular participation. Participatory democracy is a process emphasizing the broad participation of constituents in the direction and operation of political systems. Etymologically democracy in Greek means (Demos) the people and (Kratos) power meaning that the people are in power and thus that all democracies are participatory. However, participatory democracy tends to advocate more involved forms of citizens' participation than traditional representative democracy (Abayomi, 2010). Participatory democracy strives to create opportunities for all members of a political group to make meaningful contributions to decision – making, and seeks to broaden the range of people who have access to such opportunities (Adegboye, 2005). One of the methods by which participatory democracy can be achieved in the 21st century is through periodic elections. This is a process whereby non state actors and other agencies are giving free access to information concerning elections, and on the other hand eligible electorates are allowed to cast their votes without chaos. Such agencies are also allowed without any form of inhibition to monitor the behavior of politicians and political parties, the conduct of law enforcement agencies and electoral officials, before during and after elections. This process is geared towards ensuring free and fair elections. Good elections are about effective partnerships and cooperation between the electoral body and the entire citizens. For instance, Jega (2013) stated that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) during the course of the 2011 general election were able within weeks, to assemble and manage over 360,000 poll officials, mainly Youth Corps members, and another 240,000 security officials to work at the polling unit level. Thousands of other security personnel were on patrol; while over 20,000 university staff, including vice chancellors, were enlisted to serve as collation and returning officers; besides thousands of local and foreign observers who witnessed the elections, this he stated was part of the reasons for the success of the 2011 general election in Nigeria. More so, public participation can equally be enhanced through e – participation which is the general accepted term referring to ICT supported participation in processes involved in government and governance. Such processes may concern administration, service delivery, decision making and policy making.

Electronic participation is the use of information and communication technologies to broaden and deepen political participation by enabling citizens to connect with one another and with their elected representatives (Macintosh, 2004). However, this mode of participation is still relatively low in Nigeria due to low literacy level, poor ICT use especially in the rural areas, and the challenges of electricity supply and internet access.

Public Accountability and Transparency

Accountability is one of the golden concepts that no one can be against. It is increasingly used in political discourse and policy documents because it conveys an image of transparency and trustworthiness (Ferlie, Lynne & Pollitt,

2005). Historically and semantically, it is closely related to accounting and bookkeeping. According to Dubnick (2002), the roots of the contemporary concept can be traced to the reign of William I, in the decades after the 1066 Norman conquest of England. In 1085 William required all the property holders in his realm to render *a count* of what they possessed. These possessions were assessed and listed by royal agents in the Domesday Books. Accountability means ensuring that officials in public, private and voluntary sector organizations are answerable for their actions and that there is redress when duties and commitments are not met (TAI, 2015). Furthermore, accountability is an institutionalized (i.e. regular, established, accepted) relationship between different actors. One set of people/organizations are held to account ('accountees'), and another set do the holding ('accounters') (DFID, 2010). Authorities such as governments, their agencies and large corporations affect citizens in important ways. It means that if citizens know the underlying intentions and reasoning of decision-makers in authority, their decisions on the authority will likely be different from what they would otherwise think (Igwe 2010). The level of citizen trust in the ability and motivation of decision-makers in authority determines how well society works. If decision-makers are required to explain their intentions, reasons and performance standards publicly, fully and fairly before they act, citizens can act fairly and sensibly to commend, alter or halt the intentions.

Public accountability means the obligation of authorities to explain publicly, fully and fairly, before and after they have acted, explaining how they are carrying out responsibilities that affect the public in important ways. It means that decision-makers will publicly explain what outcomes they intend to bring about, for whom, and why (CPA, 2015). As a principle, public officials, civil servants, managers, directors of companies and organizations and board trustees have a duty to act visibly, predictably and understandably to promote participation and accountability – transparency (TAI, 2015).

Simply making information available is not sufficient to achieve transparency. Large amounts of raw information in the public domain may breed opacity rather than transparency. In Nigeria, public accountability and transparency is yet to attain the recognition and level of adherence/compliance expected in order to stimulate development.

Transparency requires that information should be managed and published so that it is:

- Relevant and accessible: Information should be presented in plain and readily comprehensible language and formats appropriate for different stakeholders. It should retain the detail and disaggregation necessary for analysis, evaluation and participation. Information should be made available in ways appropriate to different audiences.
- Timely and accurate: Information should be made available in sufficient time to permit analysis, evaluation and engagement by relevant stakeholders. This means that information needs to be provided while planning as well as during and after the implementation of policies and

programs. Information should be managed so that it is up-to-date, accurate, and complete.

Transparency and accountability need each other and can be mutually reinforcing. Together they enable citizens to have a say about issues that matter to them and a chance to influence decision-making and hold those making decisions to account. Each concept is part of a strategy used for and by citizens to have the means, resources and opportunities to influence decision-making and affect development outcomes. The most concise description of accountability would be: 'the obligation to explain and justify conduct'. This implies a relationship between an actor, the accountant, and a forum, the account-holder, or accountee (Pollitt, 2003).

The Nexus

Among the debated issues in recent years is whether link exists between a particular democratic system and development. Considerable number of scholars including, Pel (1999) cited in Jamo (2013) maintain the view that, there is causal link between the presidential democracy and development, while others including Sirowy and Linkels (1991); Bardhan (2002); Przeworski and Lamongi (2007) cited in Jamo (2013) on the contrary maintained the opposite view; they argued that totalitarian democracy has a link to development.

Two approaches according to Somolakae (2007) were observed, the first approach utilized by the scholars is the normative approach by exploring the possible link on the basis of what they know about democracy and development, and try to establish possible linkages between them. While the other approach is the use of case studies to operationalise the concept of democracy and development, and examining the rate and character of development within the area under study and try to establish conclusion whether relationship or linear association exist between the two variables.

Duncan (2009) as cited in Olarimoye (2010) maintained that there is a clear relationship between political system and economic change. However, there is limited evidence on the direction of causality, and the basic mechanisms through which politics affects growth and vice versa. Chan (2009) cited in Jamo (2013) in her study on democracy and development in Japan and some Asian newly industrialized countries, examined whether developing countries need to adopt Western democratic model to achieve economic success. The study argues that, economic and social freedoms are necessary, but not western style institution or culture. The study is of the view that, liberal democracy is not a prerequisite to development, what is important for development is social and economic rights rather than the western ideology. To her, development can be achieved irrespective of the type of democracy, so far social and economic freedoms are available. This view is also consistent with that of Bardhan (2002) that there is negative relationship between liberal

democracy and development. He further opined that, regimes do not differ in their impact on the growth of per capita income.

On the contrary, Barrow as cited in Pel (1999) suggests that, the relationship between democracy and growth is likely to be slowest in the most politically repressed societies where totalitarian democracy is practiced. But improvement in political rights and civil liberties in such societies tend to produce higher growth. Furthermore, Jamo (2013) opined that growth tends to peak when the level of democracy is in the middle-range and gradually tapers off as the level of democracy rises. The study also supported the notion that, positive linkages exist between liberal democracy and development depending on the level of political and civil rights available, therefore the study maintained that, the higher the level of political and civil rights the higher the development, vice versa.

Similarly, Pel (1999) argued that, the question whether liberal democracy promotes development rests on the central idea that, political institutions critical to economic development are more likely to exist and function effectively under liberal democratic rule. In addition, Saliu (2010) maintained that there is a strong connection between such democracy and development. Both concepts aim at advancing the interest of the people's livelihood. A liberal democratic environment he stated has the best chance of improving the society as all hands are supposed to be on deck. Since democracy subscribes to some rules which should be known to the people, the creative energies of the people are expected to be released for developmental activities. Given the easy choices which liberal democracy assists the citizens to make, they will ultimately lead to development. Healthy rivalry which it also promotes and nurtures among political actors has the potential to increase the material existence of a polity.

However, scholars opposing this view contended that, strong authoritarian or totalitarian democratic states are essential for successful process of development. They argued that, only strong totalitarian democratic state can discipline groups bent on making too many demands and hence undermining the development agenda. Others asserted that liberal democracy opens political contexts that may take the form of ethnic and religious mobilization and thereby undermine the emergence of a social contract or the creation of political communities (Jamo, 2013). This conception made that, many parts of the world such as in Latin America 'there is evidence of declining support for such democracy due to the perception that it has failed to improve people's lives (Somolake, 2007). Bardhan (2012) similarly opined that, there is no significant relationship between liberal democracy and development when he reported that: even in some of the richest democracies of the world, while the enforcement of laws may be better and subject to less corruption and arbitrariness than in developing countries, the process of enactment of those laws is subject to an enormous amount of influence peddling for contribution to campaign finance and other prerequisites for legislators. Over time this problem has gotten worse in most democracies, as elections have become

frightfully expensive. When policies to be legislated are up for sale to the highest contributor to the campaign fund, development projects may not win out (the policy decision in the budget may go in favor of buying one more military air craft rather than 100 rural clinics), and it will not be much consolation to be told that the policies thus legislated will be implemented well by the bureaucracy and the court system under a democracy.

The above submission revealed that, there is problem of linkage between democratic regimes and provision of social welfare services to the people, In essence liberal democracy does not always reflect the wishes of the voters, and does not always bring development. More so, Nye and Welch (2011) maintained that the link between liberal democracy and development may be less true in the early stages of transition to democracy, and may not fit states whose democratic transition is unfinished. They further stated that democracy is more than 'electocracy'.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on structuration theory propounded by Anthony Giddens in 1984. According to Ritzer (2008), the theory is one of the most articulated efforts to integrate agency and structure. Giddens (1984) cited in Ritzer (2008) stated that every research in social sciences or history is involved in relating action (often used synonymously with agency) to structure. Although Giddens is not a Marxist, there is a powerful Marxian influence in his work, and he even sees the constitution of the society as an extended reflection on Marx's inherently integrative dictum: men makes history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past. Giddens argued that the basic domain of the study of the social sciences, according to the theory of stucturation, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but social practices ordered across time and space.

The very heart of the theory of structuration is intended to illuminate the duality and dialectical interplay of agency and structure. Thus, agency and structure cannot be conceived as apart from one another. Rather, they are two sides of the same coin. They are duality. Democracy and development could as well be perceived as a duality; democracy as a particular instrument of governing a state with its principles could be likened to the agency while development represents a set of social practice that exist across time in different facet of human society, as the structure. As was argued by Giddens the human practice which in this case is democracy (agency) must be continually recreated. In and through their activities agents produce the condition that makes the structure possible (development and sustain livelihood).

Furthermore, if the individuals who are entrusted with the responsibility of administering the state through democratic means (agency) strive to rationalize and implement democratic principles through practical consciousness, reflecting a primary interest in what is done rather than what is said, the outcome in the social (structure) will be development and improved livelihood. However, on the contrary structures can be constrained by actors (agency) if the actor's neglects true democratic principles such as imbining and operating the principles of rule of law, accountability and transparency. The outcome of such scenario will undoubtedly be under development and destitute livelihood. Unfortunately, the Nigerian situation has reflected the second circumstance. For instances most Nigerians are not aware of what constitutes the national budget: such as the anticipated sources of revenue, recurrent and capital expenditures and other detailed explanations: which could enable them hold the leaders accountable. The political class in Nigeria (agency) formulates such crucial policies without consulting the stakeholders extensively and consequently the outcome has always been impaired livelihood and under development. In addition, political participation in Nigeria had consistently been limited to party members and patrons' who could spend their finances in support of party objectives with the assurance of recouping their investment, or those expendable youths who could readily be deployed to intimidate non party supporters. The combination of these and other factors has negatively affected Nigerian democracy thereby limiting the possibility of it achieving sustained development and meaningful livelihood. Craib (1992), cited in Ritzer (2008), offered the most systematic criticism of Giddens's structuration theory. Craib argued that because Giddens focused on social practices, his work lacks 'ontological depth'. That is, Giddens fails to get at the social structures that underlie the social world. The theory can also be criticized for not taking into consideration the Nigerian colonial experience, the nature of democracy being practiced in Nigeria and also the fact that Nigeria is a multi ethnic nation rather than the assumption that (agency) democracy enhances (structure) development and sustained livelihood.

Reflections on Democracy for Development in Nigeria

Looking at development from a broad perspective, one will recall that at the international conference on Human Rights held in Teheran, Iran in 1968, very important decisions were reached. The UNO (1980) cited in Igwe (2010) pointed out that, the enjoyment of economic and social rights is inherently linked with any meaningful enjoyment of civil and political rights and that there is a profound inter-connection between the realization of human rights and economic development. The conference noted that "the vast majority of mankind continues to live in poverty, suffer from squalor, disease and illiteracy and this leads to subhuman existence, constituting in itself a denial of human dignity and impaired means of livelihood. The Teheran conference resolution also recognized that there was "an ever widening gap between the standards of living in the economically developed and developing countries" and that

universal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms would remain a pious hope unless the international community succeeds in narrowing this gap.

Let us reflect for a moment on the state of Nigeria at the time of the Teheran conference in 1968. Firstly, the country was just eight years old as independent state. Secondly, it was completely immersed in fratricidal civil war and thirdly, it was groaning under the beginnings of military dictatorship. In effect, its democratization was put on as it were, while the structures for social and economic development were wasted away by the destructions of the war which broke out in 1967. It is, indeed, a matter for deep regret that after forty-five years, following the end of the Nigerian civil war and the restoration of democratic civil rule in 1999, the country is still ranked among the poorest states in the World and its democratic institutions still ranked very low in international circles (Igwe, 2010).

Indeed, the former president Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (1999) cited in Igwe (2010) proclaims that Nigeria at the threshold of the third millennium had relapsed into the Hobbesian state of nature where life is brutish, nasty and short. Obasanjo (1999) cited in Igwe (2010) further lamented thus: 'As I surveyed the canvas of our national life, I saw little more than confusion, greed, corruption in high and low places, selfishness, pervasive lawlessness and cynicism. The very state itself to which we are all required to be loyal, had become a state full of malice and meanness. Public officials appeared to have forgotten what selfless service meant.

In another international dimension, UNO (1980), the General Assembly adopted International Development Strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade which it noted that "the stark reality confronting mankind today is that close to 850 million people in the developing world are living at the margin of existence enduring hunger, sickness, homelessness and absence of meaningful employment" and expressed the view that: The development process must promote dignity. The ultimate aim of development is the constant improvement of the well being of the entire population on the basis of its full participation in the process of development and fair distribution of the benefits there from.

With the benefits of these international guidelines to democracy, human rights and development, it is evident that Nigeria has not done well. Indeed, Nigeria has done very badly over the past forty-nine years. Her democracy is characterized by avoidable shortcomings and has given impetus to wide-spread poverty, increased crime, sectarian violence are very visible. Nigeria is a dismal state, trapped in poverty and underdevelopment. She is ranked as 148 out of 173 countries surveyed for the yearly Human Development Index (UNDP, 2002). It now behooves all lovers of our common heritage, Nigeria, based on the above factual situation requires all round self-appraisal, collective re-examination and national re-awakening of her citizens toward development efforts.

Rate of Unemployment and Development in Nigeria

Employment and unemployment are among the indicators for measuring development and improved livelihood of a particular country. A country is said to be developing if the rate of unemployment is declining. Again, if the rate of employment increases, the rate of purchasing power, security and saving will increase and lead to enhancement of economic activities and vice versa. However, for Nigeria, the rate of unemployment continues to increase since the return of the country to democratic rule, for instance, the rate of unemployment in 2002 was 3.8 and dropped to 3.3 in 2004. The figure remained at 3.3 in 2005 and appreciated to 5.8 and 11.8 in 2008 and 2009 respectively. The figure also increased to 19.7 in 2010 and to 21.1 in 2011 and finally reached 23.3 in 2012 (NBS, 2013). This ought not to have been the situation if democracy is functioning as expected, stimulating development and transforming livelihoods. Rise in unemployment figures is certainly a manifestation of weak and insensitive democracy.

Transparency and the Rate of Corruption in Nigeria

Transparency is one of the prerequisites for development as was stated earlier, where it is lacking development is hardly achieved and the resources for sustained livelihood are usually misappropriated. Corruption is among the indices for measuring development of a particular state. Nigeria continued to maintain its leading position in terms of corruption since the return of the country to democratic rule in 1999. The country in 2001 to 2004 ranked as the second most corrupt country in the world. In 2005, 2006 and 2007 the country was ranked 6th, 21st and 32nd most corrupt country in the world, while in 2008 and 2009 the country ranked as 59th and 50th and finally pushed to 44th position in 2010 (Transparency international corruption perception index, 2001-2010). Though there are quite improvements over the years however, Nigeria is still among the most corrupt country in the world.

Poverty and Development in Nigeria

Poverty incidence is among the indicators for measuring presence or absence of development of nation states. Due to high incidence of poverty, Nigeria has consistently been classified among the poorest countries of the world by (UNDP). The incidence of poverty has continued to increase since return of the country to democratic rule in 1999. Nigeria is the sixth largest exporter of oil and at the same time host to one of the world's largest population after China and India. Majority of her population encounter impaired means of livelihood (Igbuzor, 2008). The incidences of poverty in 1999 fell to 42.7% and increased again to 65.6% in 2000. This trend continued to 2003. In 2004 the incidence of poverty in the country decreased to 54.4% and maintained this position till 2006 and jumped to 54.5% in 2007 and increased again to 63.6% in 2008 (MDGs Mid -point report 2008). Again, the 2010 report of the Federal Bureau of Statistics revealed that, 112.5 million Nigerians out of 163 million populations live in poverty. However, the report further revealed that, apart

from the relative poverty which puts the country's poverty rate at 99.248 million or 60.9 per cent, the dollar per day measure, puts the poverty rate at 61.2 per cent; and subjective poverty measure puts it at 93.9 per cent (NBS, 2010). The reality is that, among every ten Nigerians, five still live in poverty. Growth has not been sufficiently equitable or generated employment. Again, the United Nation Human Development report put Nigeria Human Development Index at 0.423. Nigeria therefore is among the lowest ranked nations in terms of development. Nigeria is in the low development category, occupying the 27th position, counting from the rump (The Nation, 2011). Poverty has far reaching implications for development in Nigeria such as selling of votes, youths becoming political thugs, allegations of bribery of electoral umpires and the judiciary among others.

Performance of Nigerian Healthcare Service under the Democratic Dispensation

Healthcare service delivery is among the major indicators for measuring development and standard of livelihood in a country; for the reason that "a healthy nation is a wealthy nation." However, despite the importance of health to the development of a nation, National health indicators in Nigeria are possibly among the lowest in the world to almost all measurable indices (WHO, 2012, cited in Jamo, 2013). Life expectancy in Nigeria as at 2012 was 48 years compared to 73 years in China and 83 years in Japan, while maternal mortality rate was 1,100 deaths per 100,000 in contrast to 45 and 6 deaths per 100,000 in China and Japan respectively (WHO, 2012 cited in Jamo, 2013). Jamo further stated that one third of the world maternal death occurs in India with 20% and Nigeria with 14% respectively. In Nigeria 52000 Nigerian women die every year, and daily 150 pregnancy related cases with an average of death in every 10 minutes (UNICEF, 2012). Nigeria is also among the countries in the world with the large number of infant mortality rate (70.49%, 33rd of 179), maternal mortality, malnutrition, poor drug access (0%, 141st of 163), poor birth rate, crude > 1000 people (40.51/1000, 20th per 1000), with 0.28 physician per 1000 (48 of 148), poor expenditure on health as % of GDP of 4.7% (13th of 185) and general low health performance records in the world (Jamo, 2013). The rate of neo-natal mortality in north western Nigeria (the case study) as at 2008 was 55 per 1000, while infant mortality rate was 114 per 1000, whereas under five mortality rate was 269 per 1000 (Jamo, 2013).

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion on democracy and development in Nigeria, evidence abounds to show that there is a link between the two concepts. However, in Nigeria different indicators revealed that democracy has not brought about any meaningful development. Democracy is among the most popular system of government globally because of the expectation that it facilitate development due to the possession of instruments that support development. However, democracy has not impacted Nigeria's development in

the absence of virile political parties or movements that are committed to change neither is there a vanguard revolutionary organization to guide that change. Although, there are individuals, and NGO's committed to and are driving change, the organizational support required for sustainability and great impact is lacking. The challenge is to build robust organizations with dynamic and visionary leadership as well as a committed followership that is dedicated to change. That stage is what is desirable in Nigeria today to enable her attain political, democratic and economic development.

This paper therefore subscribes to the assertion by Claude Ake cited in Saliu (2010) that democracy must not be seen as a bottle of Coca-Cola that has a universal definition. More importantly, democracy can only translate to development when Nigerian leaders implement the social contract order and adhere to the principles of accountability and transparency. They should also ensure that the public is adequately informed during formulation of budgets and other vital public policies. The political elite's or leaders should always ensure that the democratic dispensation guarantees protection of human rights, public participation in periodic free and fair election and abidance to rule of law in all state transactions.

Recommendations

Based on the above discussion this paper recommends the followings:

1. The political leaders should demonstrate resolute interest in good governance by adhering to the principle of accountability and transparency. They should ensure that the public are adequately informed during formulation of budgets and other vital public policies.
2. For meaningful development to be achieved, strong authoritarian or totalitarian democratic system is therefore necessary. This is essential for a multi ethnic nation like Nigeria given diverse ethnic interest and selfish leaders. Liberal or presidential democracy is not only expensive to maintain but also makes enactment of progressive laws cumbersome.
3. The Nigerian political class must be made to understand that democratic power belongs to the citizens; this could be achieved through popular participation in elections and other political processes. Effort must be committed through sustenance of sound democratic principles to douse forms of political apathy and ensure that people's participation remain the rule rather than the exception
4. For Nigeria to improve its means of livelihood and achieve sustained development, democratic institutions must be equipped and made independent, supreme/superior to political office holders so as to checkmate corruption and abuse of office

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