

Democracy Qua Economic Development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: A Prolegomenon into the Good Governance Correlate

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Abstract

This article investigates the relationship between democracy and economic growth in Nigeria, particularly in light of worldwide recognition of democratic government as a prerequisite for national prosperity and the good governance challenge. It is intended to evaluate the influence of democracy on economic growth based on popular perception. It is a qualitative research that mainly depends on secondary sources and uses content analysis to analyse the data. In the context of civil rule as practised in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, incompetent political leadership, ill-conceived and poorly executed public policies, a largely reticent following, entrenched corruption, zero-sum political syndrome, weak institutional structures, and a decadent ruling elite have easily impeded good governance, thereby impeding democratic consolidation and economic development. It was determined that democracy is neither isomorphic nor directly proportionate to economic progress, unless it is accompanied by excellent governance. It is recommended that legitimate and resourceful leadership, deliberate fortification of governance-institutions, ethical re-orientation (towards the values of accountability and transparency), etc., can reposition the state for economic prosperity; even more so, as the responsibility of good governance is shared between leaders and followers.

Keywords: Democracy, Economic Development, Correlate, Good Governance, Nigeria's Fourth Republic, Prolegomenon

Introduction

Since the end of the cold war in the late twentieth century between the ideological blocs of the American-led West and the (defunct) Soviet-led East, democracy has emerged as a critical, thriving, and ubiquitous component of contemporary global politics. To Danjibo (2011), despite the complexity and fluidity in understanding democracy in theory and practice, it has the central objective of improving the lives of the people. In a related view, Thesing (1995) accorded such vital elements of democracy like political participation, rule of law, freedom of speech, political accommodation, transparency, accountability, etc., strategic relevance to the welfare of citizens. And as observed in Locke's conjecture (cited in Gauba, 2003, pp.185-186), man jettisoned the state of nature through a social contract, so that his life and social circumstances might be guaranteed, with the latter providing the foundations for democratic governance.

Democracy is also prescriptively associated with good governance because of its roots in populism, constitutionalism, accountability, etc. There is no doubt, therefore, that it is a form of government that can engender the social welfare of the citizens and economic development when properly articulated and firmly entrenched. As a result, today's global appeal for democracy tends to project it as a way of life rather than a mere political ideology, with the betterment of humanity serving as the centrepiece of political action or, at the very least, a milieu goal. And in Nigeria, where for twenty-nine years after her flag independence (in 1960) the country's political space was dominated and straddled by military dictators; during which the tools and values of democracy: constitution, rule of law, popular participation, human rights, accountability, etc., lost currency and were vehemently repudiated; it took an orchestrated (albeit protracted) struggle and vigorous campaign by progressive civil forces to secure military disengagement from politics and to re-introduce democratic governance. Thus, Nigerians in large proportions (both at home and abroad) committed their time, resources, and (in extreme cases) their lives to compel the military to relinquish political power to civilian leadership. The

general expectation amongst the citizenry was that democratic governance would serve the purposes of socio-political and economic transformation of the state. Their optimism was hinged on the global attraction and craving that democracy ignited, and its perceived prospect or capacity to engender evidence-based templates for governments to promote the economic wellbeing and interests of the people.

However, it is arguable that the restoration of democracy in Nigeria since 1999 has significantly impacted on the socio-economic wellbeing of Nigerians, characterised by yawning social inequality, pervasive poverty, monumental insecurity, hunger, gross abuse of public office, culture of impunity, unemployment and several other social maladies. Therefore, the various sections of this paper have been structured to interrogate the connection between democracy and economic development in Nigeria. These include: the theoretical framework; the nature of democratic governance; reflection on economic development; challenges of democracy qua economic development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic; and concluding remarks.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is predicated on the elite theory. Apart from the elitist character of Nigeria's democratic governance, it has been revealed over the years in a couple of studies that arguments advanced by the elite theories can scarcely be completely downgraded in the discussion of democracy, vide Mannheim, Schumpeter; Aaron, Sartori in Gauba, (2003). Although the theory originated in sociological studies, its fecundity in explaining political governance and issues cannot be under-rated. The classical elite theory was developed by Vilfredo Pareto in his pioneering text "The Mind and Society", Gaetano Mosca in his book "The Ruling Class", Robert Michels' "Political Parties: A sociological study of Oligarchic Tendencies of Modern Democracy" and C. Wright Mills' work "The Power Elite" (pp.259–260). The central thesis of the theory suggests that power in any society is exercised by a minority of the people who are members of the ruling class. This category monopolises the decision-making role of society as a result of their control of its authority structures and has been variously described as the "governing elite" by Pareto, "ruling class" by Mosca, "oligarchy" by Michels, and "power elite" by Mills (pp. 259-260).

It is Pareto's view that leadership constitutes a superior social group, whose power is partly derived from force and on consent, with the force component being very strategic. According to him, the governing elite, as against the non-governing elite, uses "bribery, deceit, and cunningness to secure the consent of the subject class" (Mahajan, 2008). Mosca sees the elite (the ruling class) as the powerful and highly esteemed organised minority that performs every role and enjoys the benefits arising from the control of power as opposed to the unorganised majority (the non-ruling class) and is distinguished by its organisational capacity. He contends that society is bifurcated into the upper and lower strata. The dominance of the former is necessary to provide proper organisation for the latter.

The major contribution of Michels to the understanding of the elite theory is rooted in his iron law of oligarchy, which opines that irrespective of the forms and aims of an organization, leadership is the work of a select few or oligarchy, because of the apathetic, slavish, and indolent nature of the majority of human beings. As cited by Anikpo, (1995, p.12) he observed that "the management of government never does belong to the majority, but to the will of the stronger and the vitality of an individual or a conscious group of persons; in sum, of an energetic and compact minority"

He posits that even though an organisation may be established and imbued with democratic ideals, as it grows in size and complexity, the management of its affairs will in due course slide into the hands of a few experts, who will gradually assume the quality of indispensability. Finally, the American sociologist, C. Wright Mills, preferred the term "power elite" to the Marxist ruling class as a way of identifying those who wield power in society. Because they are a source of inputs into the political system, their power is not dependent on the fulfillment of social demands from the environment. According to Gauba (2003, p.261), "they project their

image of high moral character only with a view to commanding respect in society, but they are scarcely sensitive to their moral or social responsibility." Thus, even in the context of elite-plurality or representative government, the fact of a minority making and implementing decisions for the entire society is self-evident, thereby making democracy a mere political postulate.

Understandably, the theory, like others in the social sciences, is not without weaknesses. It has been criticised for being outdated, peripheral, superficial and lacking intellectual sharpness because it fails to capture the complexity of social interactions in society and cannot also account for the dialectical nature of the material existence of mankind in preference to the Marxist theory of the neo-colonial state (Okolie, 2006:). However, given the absence of a pronounced class structure comparable to the advanced capitalist societies of the West, the weak productive forces of the dependent post-colonial state and the comprador character of the Nigerian entrepreneur, the dividing lines between groups seem to be determined significantly by several ascriptive criteria rather than a pure single economic factor. Even the ardent critics of the elite theory easily acknowledge other forces in Nigeria like "social networks, political clout, and cleavages" (p. 169) that shape social interaction and political engagement.

The elite theory is relevant in this discourse because there is compelling evidence that the Nigerian political elite are a prebendal force in society. Richard Joseph (1991) uses the term "prebendal" to connote:

patterns of political behaviour which rest on the justifying principles that offices should be competed for and utilized for the personal benefits of office holders as well as their reference or support group(s). The official public purpose of the office becomes a secondary concern, however much that purpose might have been originally cited in its creation or during the periodic competition to fulfill it. (p 8)

This typifies the political behaviour of Nigerian political leaders, because of their penchant to prioritise personal, parochial, and primordial interests over public ends; exhibits excessive demagogic rather than statesmanlike attitude; and treat national resources as cake to be shared rather than reproduced; all of which tend to undermine the link between democracy as practised in the country and the country's economic development.

Nature of Democratic Governance

The corpus of studies conducted on democracy shows that the concept is a contestable one. It is not surprising, though, that in spite of the popularity of democracy and the axiomatic and succinct (albeit hackneyed) description of the concept, "as government of the people by the people and for the people" (Anikpo, 1995, p.12), there is a divergence of opinion about its trajectory and essence. After all, in recent times, almost every conceivable regime, however regimental, lays claim to democratic identity. According to Kesselman, Krieger, and Joseph (1996, p.10), Chinese leaders frequently exalt their brand of democracy over that of capitalist societies, claiming that it is more effective in representing the interests of the majority of the citizenry.

The various notions of democracy have, however, culminated broadly into liberal and socialist conceptions in reflection of the underpinning economic trajectory, namely, capitalist and state-controlled economies, respectively. Liberal democracy entails government by consent of the people, in which the latter choose their leaders through competitive elections and in which the rule of law, political rights, civil liberties, property rights, public accountability, and civilian control of the military are guaranteed and promoted (see, Bretton & Walle, 1997; Diamond, 1996; Jega, 2007; Martin, 1993; Karl, 1990). Although liberal democracy appears to approximate democracy in a generic sense, it has been contested by scholars of Marxist persuasion. Ake (2000) for instance, has vehemently criticised liberal democracy as restrictive because:

Instead of collectivity (it) 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 sovereignty of the people it offers the sovereignty of law. (p 10).

To him, democracy is explicit in meaning: popular power expressed through the people rather than delegated authority (representative government). Hence, there is a difference between democracy (positive and activist freedom, which empowers the masses) and liberal democracy (passive acceptance of immunity, which restrains the people and protects the elite). This set of scholars believe that the former relates more to socialist than liberal democracy since, in essence, it guarantees mass action, popular participation, and equality in the allocation of societal resources—devoid of individualism and private property.

Yet the popularity of liberal democracy in the contemporary global order can scarcely be ignored. Although it is based on historical capitalist developments in Western Europe after the industrial revolution and was imposed on new states through colonial hegemony and the prescriptions of the Economically Developed Countries (EDCs) as well as international financial institutions (IFIs) – as a prerequisite for development assistance – its recent exponential upsurge can be attributed largely to the sudden collapse of most command political-economic systems. Therefore, the widespread acceptance of liberal democracy is not only significant but also instructive. Its coherence with the market economy and interchangeability with democracy generally suggest that states engaged in the current democratisation process, particularly in the southern hemisphere, aspire to achieve a prototype of western political economy and outlook. But whether it is able to generate similar economic development in Nigeria, for example, is the lingering question in this paper.

Nevertheless, operationally liberal democracy, according to Adejumbi (2004), has institutional, procedural, behavioral, and functional dimensions. Institutionally, it entails a complex structural relationship involving the executive, legislative, and judicial organs of the state. Procedurally, it requires respect for values and norms of democratic engagement, namely: rule of law, due process, constitutionalism, electoral rules, etc. The behavioural component is an admixture of Larry Diamond's social capital of democracy and Arendt Lijphart's spirit of consociationalism—shared norms of political trust, political tolerance, preparedness to accept defeat, show of magnanimity in victory, acceptance of democratic legitimacy, abhorrence of zero-sum syndrome, issue-driven but loyal opposition, etc. Finally, the author citing Linz and Stephen (1997), identified the functional dimension as those operational variables that sustain democracy. This includes a positive state that can regulate public conduct, enforce rules and fortify political institutions; a vibrant bureaucracy that "is able to deliver public good", a robust civil society that can galvanise public interest and a resourceful private sector to engineer productive activities and economic growth (p. 14).

It appears also that once the pressure for democratic participation is ignited (as seen in Eastern and Central Europe, Latin America, and Africa from 1989 upward, and particularly in the 2010s Arab spring in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya, etc.), it is difficult (although not totally impossible) to contend with. This emanates from the diversity in the sources of support for democracy, like historical legacies, desire for human dignity and equality, and the capacity for legitimate competition for power. First, it signifies equilibrium among contending political forces in which no one group is strong enough to unilaterally determine or influence political outcomes (Przeworski, 1991; Rueschemeyer, Stephens & Stephens, 1992). Second, the impetus given to the promotion of human dignity and political equality by global public opinion raises the spectre of international consequences if these values are hindered. For this reason, irrespective of the popularity of dictatorial regimes and their ability to mobilise the populace behind any development ideology/agenda or in providing economic and social dividends associated with good governance, the people might in the long-run demand for full democracy (as seen in Libya under Gaddafi in 2012), more so as dictators rarely make proper and acceptable succession plans. Kesselman et al. (1996) observed inter alia that: "although authoritarian governments can suppress demands for democratic participation for a long period, the domestic costs of doing so are high."(p 10)

Third, since democracy is both the cause and consequence of political action among opposing groups, which renders political life uncertain, democratic ideals are seen to be capable of assuaging the fears of the powerful about threats to their privileged position and increasing the proximity of the under-privileged group to responsive governance; for as further noted by Kesselman et al:

Even in countries with long histories of democratic institution citizens often invoke the democratic idea and demand their government be still more responsive and accountable... Its defining characteristic is that competition is legitimate among those who aspire to gain high political office (p. 11); and, in effect enhance the legitimacy of the state.

However, despite the polemics surrounding the nature of democratic governance, the rough consensus emanating from the studies reveals that the fundamental features and essence of democracy are primarily located in periodic free and fair elections; protection of civic and political rights of the citizenry to pursue their political interests; tolerance of opposition or minority parties; prevalence of the rule of law; due process; majority and political equality; promotion of press freedom; political accountability; and judicial independence; as well as respect for, and guarantee of the sanctity of fundamental human rights of the people. It should be noted that these features can neither be understood nor taken in isolation. This is why Schnnffer and Karl (1991) have criticised scholars who unwittingly limit democracy predominantly to competitive periodic elections as promoting the fallacy of "electoralism." Thus, the mere fact of a change of leadership from one set of civilians to another or (as in the case of most Third World states that relapsed into military dictatorship) from military rulers to civilian leaders or even civilianized military leaders, does not necessarily imply that there is democracy.

Comparative studies of democratic governments have revealed that some civilian governments have deep evidence of political suppression, centralization and accumulation of power, political impunity and silencing of dissenting views and press freedom, flagrant abuse of human rights and disrespect for constitutionalism (Kesselman et al., 1996) Finally, it is apt to enter into certain caveats about the strategic checklist of democratic characterization mentioned above. First, while democracy provides the procedures for decision-making, it cannot guarantee the rationality of the outcome. In fact, economic inequality pervading most societies can easily constrain the requirement of one man, one vote. Second, there is scarcely any historical evidence of any single government that has been steadfast in its democratic ideals. The raging questions surrounding minority, gay, and women's rights are contentious issues even in older democracies. Third, there is no enduring unanimity about the interpretation and application of the norms of democracy amongst the populace. In the USA, for instance, ownership and usage of firearms has created a dilemma between the promotion of public safety and infringement on the constitutional rights of citizens. Fourth, political equality between the rich and poor citizens is tenable only to the extent of voting during an election. In reality, the former tends to influence political outcomes much more profoundly than the latter, due to income disparity, particularly in capitalist societies. Thus, in all essence and trajectory, while democratic values are universal, their applicability is context-specific.

Reflections on Concept of Economic Development

In contemporary times, there is growing concern about the minimization or actual reduction of inequality, unemployment, and poverty as indicators of economic development in any country. In Todaro and Smith (2003), Dudley Seers raised these themes to a topical level by retorting that the obvious questions of development should revolve around these themes in the following order: "what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to inequality? What has been happening to unemployment?"(p 16) and argued that once the answers indicate a downward trend, then it can be concluded that there are strands of economic development. Conversely, if one or two of these problems persist, then development is impaired, irrespective of whether per capita income is rising. In a consonant view, Jhingan (2007) conceptualised the social indicators of economic development as fundamental requirements of man, namely food, shelter, health care, sanitation, education, and water, all of which can affect poverty. This tends to elevate human development and qualitative

life above other measures of economic development and also to reinforce Ollawa's conception (1977) of "economic development as... the qualitative improvement in the overall standard of living of the entire population and the structured transformation in the distributive input and output system of the economy." Akpakpan (in Wilson, 2002) in fact explained the concept broadly to encompass the entire process of promoting improvement in the general welfare of society, which usually culminates in strategic and desirable changes in such key aspects as: reduction in the level of unemployment; pollution and environmental degradation; personal and regional inequalities; absolute poverty; and a rise in actual output of goods and services; technical skills for production; literacy rates; health services; housing conditions; social and political awareness; and government services; as well as greater capacity and willingness to harness local material and human resources to meet local needs.

According to Kindleberger (1977), cited in Oludoyi (2006), economic development includes:

improvements in material welfare, especially for persons with the lowest incomes; the eradication of mass poverty with its correlates of illiteracy, disease and early death; changes in the composition of inputs and outputs that generally include shifts in the underlying structure of production away from agricultural toward industrial activities; the organization of the economy in such a way that productive employment is general among the working-age population rather than the situation of a privileged minority; and the corresponding decisions about the directions, economic and otherwise, in which they should move to improve their welfare. (pp. 17-18).

These show that economic development is not a static reality. It is dynamic and holistic. As society changes, it adapts to meet the requirements and interests of society. It is a product of economic planning—deliberate action of the government to attain certain developmental goals through specified methodologies—and as observed by Todaro (1977), it is:

the conscious governmental effort to influence direct and in some cases even to control change in the principal economic variable – consumption, investment, savings, exports, imports, and so on; of a country or region over the course of time in order to achieve a pre-determined set of objectives. (p, 361)

However, what is evident from the foregoing synopsis are the strategic indices that are germane to the process of economic development, namely: minimization and possible eradication of poverty, income redistribution to increase the purchasing power and improve the standard of living of the people, and accessibility of majority of the population to social indicators-health facilities, potable water, qualitative education and reduction in unemployment and infant mortality, etc, (see Udoms & Ibiamu, 2012). It is therefore instructive that while the importance of these indices cannot be under-estimated in any society that is bifurcated between a large army of impoverished masses and a tiny oligarchic elite (as in most developing areas) a resourceful leadership is imperative to propel economic development reduce inequalities, mobilize the people for intelligible political participation and to inculcate an attitude of self-restraint necessary to avert their vulnerability to appeals from desperate money-trotting demagogues. Whether this is achievable in the context of Nigeria's democratic experiences is the kernel of the next section of this discourse.

Challenges of Democracy Qua Economic Development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

Our goal in this section is to interrogate the nexus between democracy and economic development and ascertain the relevance of good governance in the relationship. The questions that earnestly confront us are manifold, namely: Does economic development flow automatically from democracy? Is good governance an exclusive element of democracy? Is there a proportionate relationship between the degree of democratisation and the extent of economic development? Has democracy engendered high levels of economic development in the Fourth Republic of Nigeria? What is the role of good governance in both the consolidation of democracy and the enhancement of economic development? Oluwole (2003) has argued that democracy theoretically sets the

fundamental premise for good governance to be administered. These include (but are not limited to) justice, freedom, liberty, accountability, openness, and transparency. So, democracy prescribes how political power should be acquired and in what manner it should be exercised. To Parekh (cited in Ogundiya 2010), it determines the legitimacy of government (elected representatives of the people), the source of their authority (free and fair election or choice between parties), and identifies the object or centrepiece of power (the populace). These also make democracy amenable to moral judgment yet provide the philosophical basis for good governance.

It has been asserted that liberal democracy particularly correlates with good governance because both concepts share mutually reinforcing values. Hyden (1992) in Adejumobi (2004) associates liberal democracy with such features like political representativeness, enthronement of civil and political rights, rule of law, political equality and public accountability, which are claimed to complement good governance, as embodied in the element of authority (legitimate use of power by the people to elect and control their leaders); accountability (holding public officials responsible for their actions); and reciprocity (sets of social interaction amongst members of the political community that enable them to associate freely and to defend and promote specific interests).

In Africa, the initial reference to this relationship was rooted in the *realpolitik* of (donor) international financial institutions in the 1980's, which attempted to influence and corner the course of African economic development away from the Lagos Plan of Action (of 1980), which bore the prospect of the economic integration of the continent (under the auspices of a functional African Economic Community) by 2000, and towards a market-driven plan of action christened "Accelerated Development in sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for African Action" (Odion-Akhaine, 2004). The latter dismissed African governments as rent-seekers and advocated the "roll back of the state"; the creation of a kind of soft state, whose role in the economy is merely regulatory, while increasing the latitude for private sector dominance in the economy, in order to promote macro-economic stability. Sogge (in Odion-Akhaine, 2004) is emphatic about the convergence between macro-economic tenets and good governance in the opinion of funding agencies in the Third World, noting that:

Whether it is about Latin America, Eastern Europe or sub-Saharan Africa, funding authorities' talk is dominated by two theories: macro-economic "reform" and "good governance"... the first is chiefly about amassing wealth, preferably under the auspices of world system of large firms, banks and bond traders, with flows of good and finance regulated to minimum. The second is chiefly about gaining legitimacy for rulers and the consent of the ruled, preferably with occasional electoral context, but with a state downsized but strong enough to guarantee, repayment of foreign loan (p.3).

Incidentally, this was also the period when most African states were under or sliding into one form of authoritarianism or the other, especially under the aegis of military rule. Democracy was therefore presented as the political and ideological handmaiden for engineering and actualizing the new measures. It is perceived to be able to eliminate impediments to economic performance and to provide the environment for the interplay of market forces and a fulcrum for "institutional certainties" as against the "arbitrariness of autocratic rule" (Joseph, 1999, p.367). Other aspects of good governance associated with democracy include efficient and rational resource allocation, human rights, accountability to the governed, and the reduction of corruption, which impedes development and discourages investment (Johnson in Odion-Akhaine, 2004).

However, in African countries in general, and Nigeria in particular, where citizens struggled to institute democracy, citizens have high expectations about the "dividends of democracy," which they lay at the doorsteps of the state, namely, the prudent deployment of national resources to guarantee their basic needs of shelter, food, clothing, and security, and the absence or decline in the provision of these needs, despite the practise of democracy, creates illusion and doubt about democracy. Any attempt to synchronise the two concepts without reference to good governance would be tantamount to treating the latter as a residual or procedural and

consequential variable rather than a deterministic mid-way factor between democracy and economic development. It provides the yardstick for measuring the fecundity of democracy on the one hand and the decisiveness of the direction of economic development in the country on the other hand.

Several reasons can be put forward for this. First, since 1999, when democracy was restored in Nigeria, the country's socio-economic performance has not been steadily improving. The absence of any meaningful diversification has deepened its mono-product status (relying heavily on oil), made its economy susceptible to the vagaries of the global price index and rendered it almost prostrate due to the fluctuation in oil prices in the world market. The unsavoury impact of this development is the current cash crunch impeding the implementation of the capital component of the country's annual budget to meet the yearnings of ordinary people, as well as the galloping inflation and twice-slide into economic recession between 2015 and 2020. Both Natufe (2006) and Epelle (2013) adumbrate the frustration of the average Nigerian citizen about the dearth of good governance and economic prosperity in our democracy in their respective submissions on the subject matter. The former questions the usefulness of participatory democracy in Nigeria when he observes that the people "are baffled and overwhelmed by the deteriorating political institutions and devastated by the chronic unemployment rate... high crime rate and the theft of public money by those entrusted with the governance of the county" (P.7).

Similarly the latter noted pungently that the:

Nigeria State has unwittingly encouraged its citizens to each become a government unto himself, because instead of erstwhile public water corporations individuals now sink their own boreholes and even pay rates to government... we are forced to provide our own electricity, secure ourselves from aggressors and even build our own roads (pp. 6-7).

The avalanche of data on Nigeria's economic (performance) indices does not show any sustainable impressive record so far. Although the country's Gross National Product (GDP) rose slightly from \$451 billion in 2012 to \$509.9 billion in 2014, making Nigeria the largest economy in Africa and ranked 26th in the world after a rebasing exercise by the federal government (The Guardian, 2014, May 7) all that is attributed to high commodity prices and "seems low when compared to countries in Asia and Latin America" (Ekpo, 2015, p.11). But the misery and discomfort indexes of Nigerians are startling revelations of their deteriorating economic plight. The misery index was 34.8% in 2006 and rose to 50.8% in 2013. The discomfort index has similarly been increasing, rising from 29.7% in 2006 to 34.8% in 2010 and 37.2% in 2013 (p.19). It is even more worrisome that more than 60% of the country's population (estimated to be above 170 million people) live in extreme poverty; or less than one dollar daily, causing the country to be classified as the global headquarters of extreme poverty in 2018 (see The Guardian, May 7, 2014, p.29) and by 2018 the Washington-based Brookings Institute classified Nigeria as the world's poverty capital, having overtaken India in the number of people living in extreme poverty – 87m to 73m respectively (This Day, June 26, 2018 p.1 & 8). This shows that what has occurred is inclusive growth rather than inclusive development, and it is emblematic of the challenge of converting growth into palpable prosperity.

Secondly, the prevailing socio-economic formation in the democratic dispensation presents a "disjuncture" between political openness and economic enclosure in which the minority elite and their external partners are purchasing state assets, while the majority masses are being systematically disempowered and alienated from state resources. The twin programmes of privatisation and commercialization tend to provide the leeway for this dichotomy. Under President Obasanjo (1999–2007), for instance, major state enterprises and utilities such as NITEL, NEPA, NIPOST, Daily Times, Water Corporation, etc., were either earmarked for or subjected to either of these programmes. According to Adeyemi (2006) it seems like the elevation of profit over social welfare, access, and equity, and the "latest conspiracy of the rich against the poor in Nigeria"(pp 40-51). While there is no doubt about the sordid story of these public utilities as being replete with inefficiency and graft, it was,

however, ironic that the same ruling elite that crippled them were the ones buying and wielding the magical managerial competence and acumen to revive them under the privatisation scheme. The democracy-economic development divergence in Nigeria is akin to Abrahamsen's "exclusionary democracy" cited in (Adeyemi, 2006); a metaphor for a top-bottom approach to democratic decision-making, in which economic reforms are neither subjected to robust and popular national debates, nor are the people engaged and empowered to contribute to their livelihood by choosing better alternatives from competing economic (policy) options, ostensibly to satisfy the requirements of donor agencies.

Third, there is ample historical evidence to show that a country can attain economic development without necessarily practising democracy. The experience of Asian countries (dubbed "Tigers") such as Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, and Indonesia, which shared a similar historical background (as former colonial holdings) and economic profile (due to poverty) with Nigeria and grew under authoritarian regimes, is instructive here. Similarly, the resurgence of Ghana's governance structure and economy, after a deplorable period of decline and atrophy, that caused a mass exodus of its nationals to foreign lands; under the authoritarian Jerry Rawlings' regime in the 1980's, is also a case in point. It is important to note that he was subsequently transmuted into a civilian (democratic) leader, but that was primarily to consolidate the economic gains of the preceding era. Furthermore, even though the India case provides a reverse kind of condition: illiteracy, poverty, extreme social stratification, etc., existing side-by-side with sustainable democracy, in what Huntington (1991) called a "retrograde" (p.135), it still defiles the democracy qua economic development logic, postulated by contemporary political science, (Ojo, 2006).

Notwithstanding the argument as to the accidental nature of the aforementioned developments and the assertion that the benefits were not totally inclusive because of pockets of income disparity and failure to capture all segments of their societies, being canvassed by some analysts (Jega, 2007) it can no longer be taken for granted that democracy is positively (albeit exclusively) related to economic development- which appears to suggest that the greater the (degree of) democratization , the greater the (extent of) economic development. It means therefore that democracy is a necessary but not sufficient condition for economic development, except consciously integrated with good governance. The mere facts of having a civil rule, human rights, rule of law and other paraphernalia of democracy in a state do not automatically translate into good governance and economic development. Evidence abounds of democratic states with civilian dictatorship and/or failed governance, as epitomized by Presidents Obasanjo's and Buhari's governments (who habitually disobeyed court orders) in Nigeria, Paul Biya of Cameroun, Arap Moi of Kenya and Campaore of Burkina Faso. While democracy provides the atmosphere for good governance to thrive, it is not rigidly or stringently repellent or intolerable of inept governance (at least during the intervals between elections); a situation that can only be mitigated either through its internal mechanisms (like recall, impeachment or judicial review) that are rarely invoked or applied due to personal rather than systemic reasons; or otherwise electoral evaluation.

Therefore, good governance, as a strategic variable that deepens democratic consolidation on the one hand, and enhances economic development on the other hand and ipsofacto holds the balance between democracy and economic development, is a carefully, firmly and deliberately cultivated, articulated and executed value and integrated plan, for frugal, prudent, populist and goal-oriented deployment of the country's natural and human resources toward inclusive development, to alleviate poverty, redress socio-economic inequalities, provide social safeguard or safety nets for the vulnerable groups, promote strong and impersonal governance institutions as well as create infrastructural backbone, for a seamless and sustainable transformation of the society. It has also been observed by Mezieobi (1999) that good governance entails leadership which:

must have direction, be visionary and be exemplary. There must be that realization on the part of leadership... that the success or failure of the nation... in terms of good or bad governance... hinges on leadership. Whatever leaders do (as it relates to governance), their ultimate assessment

of their... performance will anchor principally on how well they were able to achieve the pre-determined goals of the nation (and) how satisfied are the led (with governance)? (p.39).

Consonant views about good governance are also held by Babawale, Diamond, UNDP, and Demeke. Babawale (2007) describes it as the exercise of political power to promote the public good; while Diamond (in Udoms, 2012) explains it as (first) the willingness and (then) the action of the government to manage public resources to generate public good for public benefits. According to the UNDP (1996), it involves the commitment and capacity to efficiently allocate and manage resources to redress the collective problems of society. Demeke (2000) gives a more robust description of good governance to encapsulate transparent and equitable utilisation of a country's resources in the process of interaction between the government and the governed. So, the good governance discourse predominantly raises the why (goals) and how (measures/strategies) questions. In this context, it is pertinent to highlight and confront the challenges of good governance in Nigeria as a channel for explicating the failure and/or absence of rapid economic development despite the practise of democracy over the past two decades. These include the following factors: nature and style of political leadership; orgy of corruption; fragility of institutional capacity; external political pressure; decadent and desperate political class; docile and reticent followership; zero-sum political syndrome; etc. In other words, it is the factors inhibiting good governance rather than democracy per se that obstruct economic development.

In fact, in a recent survey to ascertain public perception about the adverse effect of these factors on good governance by Udoms (2012) in Uyo (Nigeria), in a sample of 200 respondents, revealed the following respective affirmation versus objection ratio: 6.8:3.2 (68% and 32%) for the nature and style of political leadership; 10:0 (100% and 0%) for corruption prevalence; 10:0 (100% and 0%) for institutional fragility; 9.9:1.0 (99% and 1%) for political elite decadence; and 9.2:8.0 (92% and 8%) for docile followership. Thus, at the onset of democracy in the Fourth Republic, Nigerians expected so much (perhaps everything) which they popularly called "dividends of democracy", which had also been shown above to be insufficient and inadequate, in spite of the enthusiasm and authoritative postulation of neo-liberalists linking democracy positively with economic development (See Diamond, Lipset, Dahl & Huntington in Ojo, 2006). For Jega (2007) and Ekpo (2015), respectively, democracy and economic development require a long period of nurturing to produce the desired impact on either one. But neither of them showed explicitly the duration and/or intensity, extensity, and proportionality of democracy to economic development, whether by inference or statistical measurement. Rather, they, like others who postulated similar connections, cautiously avoided insulating and treating good governance as deterministic of both democratic consolidation and economic development or ignoring the obvious fact that both concepts depend on good governance to acquire momentum and vitality. It is little wonder that Przeworski and his associates (cited in Sodaro, 2008), have argued, using the cases of China and South Korea, that when it comes to the issue of generating economic growth, the difference between democracy and dictatorship is marginal because regimes do not make much difference to growth. Przeworski (1991) has also warned elsewhere that the new democracies can only last so long on the basis of reasonable economic reforms targeted at alleviating the deteriorating living conditions of the people, rather than ordinary institutional structures and ideologies of the ruling elite.

The foregoing analysis shows that there is a missing link between democracy and economic development, which we have identified as the good governance question. Its import is underlined by the fact that it determines the extent to which democracy can facilitate economic development and vice versa, no matter how hard the neo-liberals attempt (as shown above) to play down or ignore good governance as neither an exclusive feature of democracy nor alien to other forms of government. And as acknowledged by Sen (1999), those who oppose this stance merely hinge their contention on the value or essence of freedom inherent in democracy, which is lacking in dictatorship.

Summary and concluding remarks

We have noted in this paper the preponderating factors undermining good governance, as the elixir for enhancing and actualizing a positive relationship between democracy and economic development in the Fourth Republic (since 1999). These include the incompetent, reckless and lethargic leadership; graft; structural weaknesses; exogenous pressure; a decadent political class and reticent following; each of which threatens any salutary connection between democracy and economic development; as the majority of Nigerians wallow in abject poverty and the country sinks deeper into the economic doldrums, despite more than two decades of democratic experience; and for which such adjectives like "infant democracy" and "nascent democracy" have been used as catch phrases for describing or perhaps defending good governance deficits in Nigeria (See, Danjibo, 2011). But all hope is not lost. There are still bright prospects for a positive relationship between democracy and economic development. First, since democracy promotes an intermeshing or complex web of connections between the leader and the led, the need for effective communication among them cannot be over-emphasized. Before now, most activities of government institutions were not open to public scrutiny. Under the cover of official secrecy, public officers infringe on and commit atrocities against the public interest. All that can change with the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act (in May 2011), which statutorily provides members of the public with access to government records. Nigerians, Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and the media can take advantage of the Act to question government actions or demand accountability from public office holders, with great prospects for the percolation of hard work, tolerance, healthy competition, dialogue, peace-building, service delivery and the reduction of corruption in the polity.

Second, the challenge of economic development demands prudential and resourceful management of public assets by the government. This is where we find value in the core goals of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2007 if properly implemented. The Act is intended to re-orientate public officers from actions that are detrimental to the rapid socio-economic development of Nigeria and to enthrone frugality, efficiency, and responsibility in the usage of public financial resources. It, like the Freedom of Information Act, can generate additional impetus in fiscal accountability, which is no less beneficial to Nigerians' overall economic interests. Third, with Nigeria's economic fortunes dwindling due to the global decline in oil prices, there is now a greater need than ever for the government to carefully formulate and implement economic policies that can improve investment in other sectors of the economy, reduce profligacy, poverty, and unemployment, and improve people's standard of living; and thus, minimize, if not eliminate, the masses' vulnerability to the minority economic interest of the elite.

Fourth, if, as aptly argued by Aremu and Ujah (2008), institutions are the rules of the game and that the manner in which a game is played depends predominantly on the stipulated rules, then the need to strengthen institutions of governance cannot be over-emphasized. Apart from fortifying their capacity to discharge their legitimate duties in accordance with existing statutes and resisting and/or possibly withstanding social pressures from vested political and partisan interests in society, it is worth noting that the trajectory and stability of governance institutions can normally influence the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the country. This can occur primarily when the investor's confidence is unwavering in his rate of returns as well as the suitability and reliability of the existing institutional framework rather than its substitution with, or subordination to, the discretionary behaviour of the leadership; in reference to the drop in FDI portfolios over the past decades. Finally, leaders should rise above paying lip-service to the anti-graft crusade, neither as an instrument of political vendetta nor as a protective tool for political allies, but rather as a deliberate principle of statecraft, to block loopholes for corrupt tendencies and to impose exemplary sanctions on culprits, irrespective of ascriptive affiliations. In this regard, individuals and CSOs should be encouraged to invigorate their whistle-blowing capacity by continually monitoring and checking corruption tendencies and abuse of public office by state officials. Furthermore, by proactively stimulating conversations, debates, and discussions on important and sensitive national issues, CSOs can strategically collaborate with the mass media to serve as the barometer for measuring the effectiveness and efficacy of democratic and allied economic reforms in the country, through widespread publicity, previews, and reviews; and by doing so, make the government accountable and responsive

to the critical needs of the populace. The least expectation of Nigerians in the democratic dispensation of the Fourth Republic is that democracy should be serviceable to their economic well-being.

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