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## **A DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATE IN POST-AUTHORITARIAN NIGERIA? ISSUES AND PROSPECTS**

*This article, deploying data from documentary sources, examines issues in Nigeria's democratization project and the prospect of a Democratic Developmental State (DDS) in post-authoritarian Nigeria. Drawing from the radical theory of the state, it notes that an autonomous state is pivotal to a successful DDS in the global South. In the light of this and based on the review of Nigeria's development and democratization history, the article argues and concludes that, given the non-autonomous character of the Nigerian state and the politics that it engenders, the prospects of a DDS in Nigeria in the nearest future are rather slim.*

**Keywords:** *The State, Democracy, Development, Post-Authoritarian, Nigeria.*

### **Introduction**

The de-legitimization of the authoritarian developmental state in South-East Asia in the late 1990s and the emergence of populist-oriented developmental regimes in Latin America in the first decade of the twenty-first century would seem to have further awakened scholarly interests on the issue of democratic developmental state (DDS) outside the Global North. In November 2006, for instance, scholars from Africa, Asia and Latin America gathered in Kampala, Uganda to discuss no other issue than the feasibility of DDS in the Global South.<sup>1</sup> The Kampala's meeting and others of similar complexion have tended to underscore the increasing popularity of DDS in the development discourse of the global south. But, while studies that emanated from the outcomes of some of these meetings may, no doubt, have added to the burgeoning literature<sup>2</sup> on DDS, there is still a need to further deepen the discourse on the feasibility of DDS in the Global South. It is against this background that this article examines the issues and prospects of DDS in post-authoritarian Nigeria. The article is partitioned into six sections. Following this introductory preamble is section two which clarifies and discusses the concepts that are central to this discourse. The section that follows undertakes a review of extant literature on the genealogy and ontology of DS and DDS. Section four historicizes the Nigerian State's efforts at promoting development. This is followed by the examination of the democratization agenda of the state managers in post-military Nigeria. The sixth section concludes the article.

## **Conceptual Framework: What is democracy? What is development?**

In this article, the two major concepts whose clarifications are pivotal are democracy and development. However, it has to be stressed that the two concepts, to borrow Gallie's<sup>3</sup> elegant phrase, are essentially contested. In other words, they conjure multiple meanings and interpretations depending on the ideological predilection of the individual or institutions defining them. Instructively, this problem is even more pronounced with the concept of democracy. In the words of Przeworski et al:

Almost all normatively desirable aspects of political life, and sometime even of social and economic life, are credited as definition features of democracy: representation, accountability, equality participation, dignity, rationality, security, freedom-the list goes on-Indeed, according to many definitions, the set of true democracy is an empty set.<sup>4</sup>

However, broadly speaking, the definition of what democracy means in literature, would appear to have been framed from three broad theoretical perspectives. The first (Rousseauian) perspective, drawing from the Athenian model, puts citizens' participation at the centre of the definition of democracy.<sup>5</sup> Writing within this school, two neo-Rousseauians, Guttman and Thompson<sup>6</sup> view democracy, "as a form of government in which free and equal citizens (and their representative), justify decisions in a process in which they give one another reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible." The second (Schumpeterian) approach to democracy views democracy in elitist-terms.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, a leading exponent of this school of thought, Schumpeter,<sup>8</sup> once remarks, "democracy does not mean and cannot mean that the people actually rule in any real sense of the term, 'people' and 'rule.' Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule over them." Viewed this way, therefore, elites are the principal actors in the Schumpeterian approach to democracy as they dominate the political process. Thus, in the Schumpeterian sense, the only right the citizens (the mass) have is throwing out the "rascals" periodically in free and fair electoral contest. The third (liberal) perspective conceives democracy in the context of constitutional guaranteeing of freedoms- free elections, free speech, free movement, free press etc.<sup>9</sup> Thus, to the extent that individuals' rights and liberties are constitutionally enshrined and guaranteed, proponents of the liberal approach contend that democracy exists.<sup>10</sup>

At this juncture, it is instructive to stress that, since the end of the Cold War; the hitherto sharp boundary between the foregoing approaches would appear to be non-existent as all now seems to have been subsumed under the hegemony of liberal democracy discourse.<sup>11</sup> In the light of the foregoing

and given the fact that since the end of the Cold War, African states have embraced liberal democracy as a political corollary of economic liberalization, democracy, in this article, refers to liberal democracy. According to Weale,<sup>12</sup>

liberal democracy, on the one hand, provides the means by which the people govern, or at least elect their representatives who govern. On the other hand, it contains constitutional device, like separation of power or a system of checks and balances that limit the scope and application of the principle of majority rule.

Development, like the concept of democracy, also conjures different conceptualizations.<sup>13</sup> Alluding to this, Iyayi<sup>14</sup> contends that “development is conceived usually from the standpoint of specific social groups.” What are therefore obtainable, in literature on the subject, are schools of thought to the definition of what development means.<sup>15</sup> Jhingan,<sup>16</sup> for instance, identifies more than twenty of such approaches to development. To this end, Rodney<sup>17</sup> conceives it as the increasing capacity of a social group to regulate both internal and external relationship. Omoweh<sup>18</sup> sees it as a process of change and accumulation of capital that enables society, the national economy and the people, to reproduce themselves, sustain their basic needs while ensuring an overall increasing socio-cultural, political and economic equality. Goldstein<sup>19</sup> views it “as the combined process of capital accumulation, rising per capita incomes (with consequent falling birthrates), the increasing of skills in the population, the adoption of new technological styles, and other related social and economic changes.” Instructively, what seems to be common to these exponents of development as transformation is that development depicts the independent capacity of a group (in the context of this article, a nation) to use its potentials to the maximum without hindrance from an outsider. These capacities according to Iyayi<sup>20</sup> include: capacity to regulate relationships among members and with outsiders; independent of both nature and other social groups and the ability to provide for the material, social and psychological needs of members of the social group. Framed this way, development, for the purpose of this article, would suggest an outcome of sustained process of transformation of the material and human resources of Africa/Nigeria brought about by the increasing capacities of the people to shape and determine their destiny.

### **Literature Review: Unbundling Developmental State/ Democratic Developmental State**

In this section, two tasks are undertaken. Firstly, an attempt is made to trace the origin of the concept of DS and DDS and secondly, the literature is explored in order to dissect the ontology of DS and DDS. However, it has to be stressed that

in the new political economy literature, it is common to trace the origin of the concept of DS to Johnson<sup>21</sup> who first introduced it in his path-breaking book, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*. In this book, Johnson explains the miraculous recovery and growth of Japan following the devastating second world war. However, this article, in a radical departure, contends that the paradigm of DS arose in the 1960s, during the post-colonial countries' search for a model of development, that was expected to lift them out of underdevelopment. Indeed, it was at this historical juncture that the modernization theory emerged as the leading paradigm for explaining the development conundrum of the countries that transited from colonialism.

Framed within the context of evolution, modernization theory contends that development is synonymous with growth.<sup>22</sup> Drawing from the post-war experience of West Germany, the proponents of the theory argue that growth emanating from modernization (mechanization, industrialization etc) would in the long run promote democracy. Therefore, what the new states needed was capitalist-driven democratization projects.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, according to a leading proponent of this view, Lipset,<sup>24</sup> "the more well-to-do a nation is, the greater the chances that it will become and sustain democracy." Based on cross-national quantitative comparative research, he found a positive linear relationship between levels of socioeconomic development and democratic development. As he puts it: "economic development involving industrialization, urbanization, high educational standards, and a steady increase in the overall wealth of the society, is a basic condition sustaining democracy, and it is a mark of efficiency of the total system."<sup>25</sup> In a similar vein, Rueschmeyer<sup>26</sup> et al also submit that capitalist development in general helps the rise of democracy by transforming the class structure. Putting their thesis further, they identify three classes of power vis: class power; state power; and transnational structures of power.<sup>27</sup> These three sectors according to them combined and interacted in varying ways and varying sequences to determine political developments. Put differently, the changes in the class and social structure caused by industrialization and urbanization are most consequential for democracy. However, as elegant as the Lipsetian framework and assumptions were, they could not anticipate the 'new authoritarianism' that swept through the relatively industrialized Latin American countries, as well as explaining successful authoritarian capitalism that persisted for a long period in East Asia. It was against this background that the debates on the DS emerged in literature.<sup>28</sup>

Specifically, Johnson<sup>29</sup> argues that Japanese 'developmental state' was a central element in explaining the country's post-World War II 'economic miracle' In another work,<sup>30</sup> Johnson provides four reasons why DS is a necessary condition for economic development, at least at a relatively early stage. One, an authoritarian regime is better able to regiment a population for the massive sacrifices necessary for early industrialization. Two, an authoritarian regime can be more efficient in achieving the goals of the initial stages of

industrialization, such as development of a solid infrastructure, large amounts of capital, great volumes of imported technology, and selection and expansion of the industrial base producing relatively simple manufactures at low prices. Three, an authoritarian regime can reduce policy fluctuations by insulating itself from pressures of various interests groups and avoid critical influence of an electoral cycle. Four, an authoritarian regime can forge or impose a national ideology for hard work and sacrifice for economic development. Such a regime may stress the moral claims of the state: national discipline, national unity, the importance of stability for national development and the mischievousness and decisiveness of politics.

Based on the foregoing parameters, Johnson<sup>31</sup> defines a developmental or plan-rational state “as one that is determined to influence the direction and pace of economic development by directly intervening in the development process, rather than relying on the uncoordinated influence of market forces to allocate economic resources.” What can be deduced from Johnson’s position is that growth is better fast track under the atmosphere of authoritarianism and state centralization. Put differently, a new state that desires economic development like Japan does not need democracy. Piecing this argument together, he posits:

What is required then is not necessarily a democratic state, but a developmental state. Without a developmental state, democratic or not, no contemporary developing society is likely to achieve developmental breakthrough. Successful developmental outcomes, both historically and in modern era, seem to have depended less on whether regimes have been democratic or not, and more on such factors as internal stability; on acceptability in international economic and political markets; on positive relations with dominant economies; on the relative autonomy of the state in both democratic and non-democratic politics; on sound infrastructure and competent administration; and on low levels of corruption.<sup>32</sup>

During the same era, other scholars pointed out the in-built weakness in Johnson’s strong state thesis.<sup>33</sup> For instance, Zysman<sup>34</sup> claims that the strong state-weak state continuum refers to an abstract capacity, and as such, it is not issue-oriented. He rather prefers to employ two characteristics of a strong state. Firstly, the state’s capacity to deny political access to unwanted groups; and secondly, the ability to select among market operation, and hence the ability to guide the economy.<sup>35</sup> Evans,<sup>36</sup> in his contribution to DS literature, introduces the concept of “embedded autonomy.” According to him, state autonomy is embedded in a concrete set of social ties that bind it to society. Embedded autonomy thus provides institutionalized channels for the continual negotiation and re-negotiation of goals and policies.<sup>37</sup> Through this channel,

he submits that it is possible to link the state to particular social groups with whom it shares a joint project of transformation.<sup>38</sup>

African scholars also join the debate at a point in time. Mkandawire,<sup>39</sup> in his contribution like Evans does not see DS in institutional terms but rather in ideological terms. To him, “a developmental state is one whose ideology is developmentalist.”<sup>40</sup> This kind of state, according to him, conceives its mission as one of ensuring economic development and its elite has the capacity to establish an ‘ideological hegemony’ and implement economic policies effectively.<sup>41</sup> Joining issues with Mkandawire is Edigheji<sup>42</sup> who adds other elements to the definition of DS. According to him, DS is “the promotion by the state of market-enhancing rather than market-repressing economic policies and a clear division of labour between the state and the private sector under the overall guidance of a super-ministry or state agency”.<sup>43</sup>

However, following the end of the Cold War, the erstwhile successful developmental states in Asia, in line with the prescriptions of the Breton wood institutions (BWIs), began to liberalize their politics in order to broaden the dividends of development.<sup>44</sup> What therefore emerged in these countries was a discourse on DDS. Instructively, the discourse soon moved to other areas in the Global South. In Africa, the debate was promoted by the BWIs within the agenda of bringing “governance back in” into Africa’s development discourse. Perhaps, it is in this wise that Mkandawire<sup>45</sup> contends that discourses on DS after the Cold War, have revolved around two ideological orbits vis: the neoliberal state ‘roll back’ and the radical state ‘transformation’. The former, according to him, favours a technicist approach to development policy in which citizen democracy is replaced by consumer democracy. In other words, the neoliberal approach to DDS views citizens as consumers, clients and users whose access to government services is based on the ability to pay. Putting this in perspective, Boyte<sup>46</sup> avers:

When politics becomes the property of professional elites, bureaucrats and consultants, most people are marginalized in the serious work of public affairs. Citizens are reduced to, at most, secondary roles as demanding consumers or altruistic volunteers. Moreover, with the transformation of mediating institutions..., such as civil society think-tanks, [which] became technical service providers - citizens lost all stake and standing in the public world. Consequently, the question of democracy has largely neglected issues of economic justice - basic needs such as access to food, shelter, medical care and housing. In the absence of equal opportunity for all citizens to these essentials for human existence, the equality being stressed in liberal democracy is defeated.

In contradistinction, the radical version of DDS, advocated by African radical scholars, in spite of the predatory character of the African state, supports a leading role for the state in the development process.<sup>47</sup> Specifically, Mkandawire<sup>48</sup> (2001:291) favours an autochthonous developmental state instituted via popular struggle rather than a model that is at variance with African experience. In this wise, therefore, a DDS refers to the political leadership and its institutional groups which enjoys a reasonable measure of autonomy from the society, but aligns with groups, classes and institutions that will facilitate the delivery of its set development objectives. Viewed this way, therefore, is Nigeria a DDS? Before examining this issue, it is imperative to put the country's development trajectory in perspective.

### **Nigeria's Efforts at Development: A Pre-1999 Survey**

Colonial rule in Nigeria, like in other areas, while it lasted, failed woefully in two critical areas. Firstly, it failed in the area of nation building and secondly, in the area of people's empowerment.<sup>49</sup> The successor state elites, conscious of this gap, promised to reverse the colonial order by reforming society. To be sure, the immediate post-independent ruling elites, perhaps, driven by the logic of modernization promised to reform the post-colonial economy for the purpose economic growth and development.<sup>50</sup> Umezurike<sup>51</sup> has categorized these agenda into two, vis: those that inadvertently aimed at promoting economic nationalism of the Nigerian state and those that were directly structured and oriented towards advancing market liberalization and state divestiture. In the first category, according to him, are: indigenization and Nigerianisation; land use reform; poverty alleviation etc. The author listed in the second category: austerity measures, economic stabilization programme, privatization and commercialization, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, Seven-Point Agenda and the Transformation Agenda.

To be sure, in the first phase of the development agenda (1960-66), it is remarkable to note that the global ideological horse trading set the context for the choice of policy available to political leaders. It was, perhaps, realized that unhindered reliance on the great powers involved in ideological rivalry entailed some political risks for a weak nation.<sup>52</sup> In fact, Nigerian first Prime Minister, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa put the then scenario this way:

At present, we lack the necessary capital and technical skill to develop our own resources by ourselves alone.... How are we to obtain help from outside and still keep free from being under the influence of one power bloc or another conscious of the dependent nature of the nation's economy and the global ideological horse trading, weighed carefully the options available to the country.<sup>53</sup>



Given this conundrum, he believed that the best strategy for the furtherance of Nigeria's economic growth at the time was import-substitution-industrialization.<sup>54</sup> Specifically, it was a policy directed primarily at attracting foreign investment, external public loans and grants without putting in jeopardy the country's internal security and political independence. In the second phase (1966-80), the governing regimes adopted the strategy of state intervention in the economy. The principal objectives of the state at this stage were two folds, namely to provide basic infrastructure to accelerate growth, and moderate economic transactions in order to ensure social equity in the distribution of the fruits of development.<sup>55</sup> It is instructive to note that during this phase, it appeared the country's economy like those of its peers in Africa experienced marginal gain.<sup>56</sup>

However, by 1981, the second phase of the post-colonial economic reform ran out its full course as the country and its leadership lost the sovereignty to direct the economy to the BWIs.<sup>57</sup> Since then, the political leadership has been pursuing a neo-liberal developmental state. It is instructive to note that by accepting the terms of the BWIs, the ruling elites in 1986 first launched the country into the era of neo-liberalism, where the Federal Government disinvests from the public sector.<sup>58</sup> In the first phase of structural adjustment, the state redirected spending away from public-owned enterprises into debt servicing. By adopting policies of currency devaluation, trade liberalization, subsidy removal and privatization of private enterprises, the regime of General Babangida embraced the logic of a minimal state.<sup>59</sup>

Unfortunately, the reform soon generated its own contradictions and ultimately failed in delivery welfare to the people. For instance, the real per capital consumption deteriorated from 1,250 naira in 1987 to 1,150 naira in 1995.<sup>60</sup> In fact, the data in the NEEDS document indicate that the poverty level of the population increased from 27% in 1980 to about 70% in 1996 and by 1999 to over 70%.<sup>61</sup> Instructively, despite these obvious facts about the failure of SAP, the BWIs held on to the belief that the reform could not fail and if it did, it must have been as result of bad governance, neopatrimonialism and corruption.<sup>62</sup> The solution thus lies in the enthronement of good governance and accountability. By accepting this position, the regime of General Abubakar, who succeeded General Abacha, launched the country into the post-adjustment phase. However, the regime, being a transitory one, though accepted the new agenda, believed that it would be better implemented in a democracy. Really, democracy did berth on the 29<sup>th</sup> May, 1999.

## **Post-Military Nigeria: The State, Politics, Democracy and Development**

As noted earlier in this article, central to the construction of DDS in any jurisdiction is the state.<sup>63</sup> According to Skocpol,<sup>64</sup> impetus to change comes from within the state structure. The import of Skocpol's thesis here is that the



state is the locus of change in any society. However, it has to be stressed that the state being an abstract construct does not itself effect social change. To be sure, social change is activated by officials who are insulated from dominant social and economic interests in the society. These officials, according to Trimberger<sup>65</sup> could be top government officials, the captains of industry, the high brass in the military and the leaders of political parties whose actions may not be driven by personal interests but by certain ideologies or nationalism. What could be inferred from the foregoing is that is state autonomy is a precondition for constructing a DDS.<sup>66</sup>

Unfortunately, the states in Africa unlike some of be regarded as autonomous entities that are independent of powerful social forces This may be related to the manner in which the post-colonial state in Africa emerged under colonialism. Colonial rule in Africa had created a state form that was coercive but yet lacked legitimizing credential to act as a hegemonic force over society.<sup>67</sup> Putting this in perspective, Nnoli<sup>68</sup> avers, “unlike the capitalist countries of Europe and America where the capitalist state emerged essentially to mediate the conflicts among the various classes, the African colonial state had the additional functions of establishing capitalism and holding down conquered people.” This, perhaps, explains why Ake<sup>69</sup> refrains from referring to social formations in post-colonial Africa as independent states. According to him, “in Africa, there are few social formations that are capitalistenough or socialist enough to be identifiable as clearly boasting the state form of domination.”<sup>70</sup> Perhaps, it is in this context that he theorizes that, “‘limited autonomy’ is the unique feature of the state in Africa.” Specifically, Ake posits that the limited autonomy of the post-colonial state in Africa from the contending social classes makes it vulnerable to be captured the non-state captors for the purpose of primitive accumulation. Putting the context that led to state capture in Africa in perspective, Adisa avers,

independence came with the full adoption of colonial legacy. Most African countries created and recreated a political class whose narrow interest in development was not to transform their society but to build economic empires for themselves rather than improve the standards of living of their citizenry. The implications of this is that the ruling elite had to depend on state capture as a veritable means of accumulating capital.<sup>71</sup>

For instance, during Nigeria’s First Republic, the state laid prostrate to be captured by the politicians for building their precarious material bases. This provoked serious intra-elite conflict in which politics assumed the character of warfare. This development later paved the way for the specialists in violence, the military, to intervene in the country’s political process.<sup>72</sup> Precisely, on 15 January 1966, the Nigerian military abandoned their liberal constitutional

role of defending the sovereignty of the nation to fill the vacuum created by the warring politicians. By their entrance into politics, they became the new overseers of wealth accumulation.<sup>73</sup> Remarkably, the military class, even though, unlike its political counterpart, enjoyed relative autonomy, in terms of taking major decisions on national economy,<sup>74</sup> but nevertheless equally deployed state power at its disposal to feather the nest of its members on the one hand and those of the indigenous capitalists as well as foreign capitalist on the other hand.<sup>75</sup>

Indeed, for twenty-nine years (1966-79) and (1984-99) that the military and their civilian collaborators held sway; they did not only deprive the people of their democratic rights but also deny them the right to choose the development path that suits them. One example suffices here. In 1985, when General Ibrahim Babangida, the country's sixth military ruler at the height of the country debt crisis, threw the IMF debate open to the citizen, people were happy that the era of development dictatorship was over. Sadly, their happiness later paved way for despair as the regime surreptitiously went ahead to accept the IMF package despite the rejection of the proposal by the citizens.<sup>76</sup>

Following the end of military rule on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1999,<sup>77</sup> the politicians who had been guillotined for fifteen years moved into the saddle with the expectation that development dictatorship would pave way for participatory, citizen-oriented development. Has this happened? We will come to this soon. At this juncture, it is instructive to note that in the post-authoritarian order, political parties became the central locus of politics. On May 29, 1999, the People Democratic Party (PDP), one of the three registered parties produced the president, having won the presidential election in February of the same year. The party also won majority of seats in the national parliament. By this development, the president, Olusegun Obasanjo, and his party became the custodians of state power and were thus expected to be driving policies that would engender development in the country. In his New Year message to his countrymen on January 1, 2000, Obasanjo remarks:

In answering the call of service, we see it as our duty not to let you down. Your expectations have been our goal. And it will continue to be so for as long as we continue to enjoy your trust and confidence.<sup>78</sup>

Unfortunately, the party and the state were soon hijacked by powerful interests within and outside the country.<sup>79</sup> One area in which this scenario has been pervasive is in the area of development agenda setting. At the inception of the new order, the regime and the party rather than nurturing the culture of participatory development reverted back to the old way of deciding the development needs for the people. As a matter of fact, the regime became the architect of the neo-liberal agenda under the guise of globalization.<sup>80</sup> To be specific, during his first term in office, his shuttle diplomacy across the

world was motivated by the resolve to attract foreign investment.<sup>81</sup> At home, he supervised numerous reforms. Indeed, under his watch, the telecommunication sector was deregulated; he also fast tracked the privatization and sales of many ‘moribund’ public companies (NITEL, NiconNoga Hilton Hotel etc). In the oil sector, he saw to the deregulation of the downstream sector. In all of these, accusations were brandied against the president for supervising the sales of the national assets. To be sure, it was generally alleged that the privatization agenda was nothing but avenue for the party stalwarts and their backers in the private sector to further plunder the nation of its commonwealth.<sup>82</sup> Perhaps, this accounted for the fierce struggle among the key gladiators in PDP to get the party’s presidential tickets in rounds of elections since 2003.<sup>83</sup> One example suffices here. As the 2007 presidential approached, the then outgoing president, Olusegun Obasanjo, was widely reported in the media to have said that the approaching election would be do or die.<sup>84</sup> Tragically, in such high-wired politics, all means are legitimate. Party rules are hardly respected as the combatants deployed all sorts of missiles to secure victory in the race to controlling the state treasury. In the ruling party, the zoning principle that was conventionally agreed upon by the major stakeholders in 1998 was jettisoned towards the 2011 presidential election on the platter of high-wire politics.<sup>85</sup> At the inter-party level, the struggle is even more intense. In fact, it has almost become a grund norm for the sitting president to deploy all manner of weapons to ensure that the opposition is stifled or sent into extinction. Most times, he does this through the manipulation of the electoral body. Indeed, if there is one area where Nigeria has faltered in the fourth republic, it is in the conduct of credible elections. To be specific, the 2007 elections, in Nigeria did not only weaken the integrity of the Nigerian nation but further dimmed her image in the comity of civilized nations.<sup>86</sup>

From the foregoing, it is clear that democratic practice since the advent of democracy on May 29, 1999 in Nigeria has not really conformed to liberal values and ethos. Indeed, the country would seem to have been experiencing what Momoh<sup>87</sup> describes as “de-democratization.” To be sure, the liberal agenda embraced by the ruling party, PDP, until its defeat at the national level in 2015, has not promoted values that could nurture development in the country.<sup>88</sup> Indeed, if objective parameters for evaluating democratic growth of a country are deployed to assess Nigeria’s democratic journey since 1999, it can hardly be described as a liberal democracy. Observably, liberal democracy has not really translated into concrete dividends for the people.<sup>89</sup> Putting this in perspective, Adebajo submits:

Over its nearly fifty years on independence Nigeria has been reduced to a giant collection of impoverished masses, a crumbling tower of Babel built on the rickety foundation of oil rents collected and squandered by its leaders. In spite of its enormous oil wealth, Nigeria

remains a largely poor country. Over 70% of its population still lives on less than \$1 dollar a day, life expectancy is at an abysmal 47 years and the country ranked 159 out of 177 states on the UN Human Development index in 200.<sup>90</sup>

### **Concluding Notes: Any Prospect for the DDS in Nigeria?**

This article set out to examine issues in Nigeria's democratization cum development project and the prospect of a DDS in post-authoritarian Nigeria. In furtherance of this objective, it presented the conceptual and theoretical frameworks for the discourse, reviewed extant literature on DS/DDS in the Global South and most importantly, historicized Nigeria's developmental cum democratization trajectories. From these reviews and analyses, it found out that a state that is autonomous of the powerful interests has the potential for promoting inclusive development in the society. It noted that in the case of Japan and the Asian Tigers, such a state was totalistic but at the same time, it was embedded in society.<sup>91</sup> Although, Japan's post-second world war authoritarian developmental state model, as noted, achieved miraculous growth for the country, yet it deprived the *demos* of their inalienable rights to participate in shaping the contour of development policies in Japan. This democratic gap, it was found out, is now filled by the DDS in which the autonomous state and its officials do not only serve popular interests but also have democratic and developmental orientations. In the Nigerian case, however, it was found out that neither the Nigerian state nor its political elites, even in the post-authoritarian era, beyond rhetoric, have developmental and democratic orientations. In the light of this finding coupled with the reality of the non-autonomous character of the Nigerian state and the politics that it engenders, the prospects of a DDS in Nigeria in the nearest future are rather slim. This may be due to the fact that civil society organizations that ought to be the vanguards for checking the excesses of the political elites and re-orientating them towards becoming real 'democrats' and 'development enthusiasts' are either weak or have been co-opted into the state's neo-patrimonial machine.

### **Endnotes**

1. The Ugandan conference was organized by three notable research think tanks in the Global South. These were the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA), the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO) and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA).
2. See Daniel Omoweh ed., *The Feasibility of the Democratic Developmental State in the South*, Dakar: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 2012.

- 3 W.B Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts" in M. Black (ed) *The Importance of Language*, 1962, p.42.
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6. Amy Guttmann and Dennis Thompson, *Why deliberative democracy?* Princeton, Princeton University, 2004, p.7.
7. See P. Schmitter and T. Karl, "What liberal democracy is and not?" *Journal of Democracy*, No.2, 1986, pp.75-88.
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