

DEMOCRACY AND THE CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Democratization implies a process or passage from non-democratic to a democratic situation, this process is often characterized by a lot of challenges and needs to be guided by certain fundamental principles such as representative and participation through political parties, conducting free and fair election, supremacy of the law etc, in the Nigerian context these principles are being misused and abused, this partly explain why Nigerian democracy is unhealthy, weak and generally shaky, conversely, proffering solution capable of shaping and enhancing and sustaining democratic development in Nigeria is the focal point of this paper.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of a good system of government has been the greatest concern in political discourse from Socrates up-to-date, the drive for justice, equity, fairness, enduring polity and political stability runs through the ages, the Hobbesian state of nature that warranted the need for government, the Machiavellian princely King, the search for order and cohesion, all pointed to the need for a good government. This good government to most scholars and society is best presented under democratic regimes

Democratization: Is the process of opening up political space or political environment to allow mass or popular participation. In the same vein, it means moving away from authoritarian rule to pave way for democracy, it is all about the liberalization of the political environment, it encompasses the formation of sound political parties, periodic election, electioneering campaign, freedom of the press, speech, movement, party system, civil culture, political ideology etc.

Democracy: Comes from two Greek words, “demos” meaning the people and “Krates” meaning authority or rule. The integration of the above denote that democracy means a form of government in which the highest authority or power rest in the hand of people.

Democracy simply put is government by the consent of the governed i.e. government in accordance or preponderance to the whims and caprices of the majority.

Democratic consolidation: Is the act of integrating series of parts together for a unity of purpose. This implies, it is a dividend of democracy to perform integration function in any given society. “Is about regime maintenance, preventing political breakdown. In the same vein, it also means regime legitimization and absence of attitudinal and behavioral challenges, capable of ruining the life of the democratic regime”. Diamond (1994:103)

It consists “overlapping behavioral, attitudinal and constitutional dimensions, through which democracy becomes routine and deeply internalized in social, institutional, and even in psychological life, as well as in political calculations for achieving success” (Ibid, Quoting Ilin2 and Stephan, cited in Jega 2006). Democratic consolidation is a term which describes vital political goal for new democracies for country in

transition to democracy from authoritarian rule. It is “a discernable process by which rules, institutions and constraints of democracy come to constitute the only game in town, the only legitimate frame work for seeking and exercising power” Diamond (1 997:xix)

Good Governance: Refers to conscious management of public space based on common goals. These common goals include popular participation, accountability, and transparency. i.e. good governance is all about given back to the people, especially the people of the rural populace the right to express their views and decides without transferring responsibility. (World Bank)

Good governance also means the exercise of political power to manage nation’s affairs through a set of institutional and structural arrangement, decision-making process. Implementation capacity and the relationship between the government and the people or rural populace. In the same vein, it denotes responsibility and responsiveness of public officials elected and appointed to the electorates i.e. the governed, as well as acting in accordance with their dictates.

All these entail transparency, accountability by public officers in discharging their duties, responsibilities and obligations. A democratic political culture, developed over time, creates the basis for sustainable process of good governance in democratic countries. The Nigeria situation suggests the overriding importance of creating a democratic culture, which is the basis of the foundation for sustaining good governance, (Polgreen 2005).

DEMOCRATIZATION

Jega, democratization is the process of attaining democracy. It is a process which “invests power with legitimacy, facilitates the creation of enduring political institutions and natures responsive political pluralism. It also involves the promotion and defense of social justice and human rights (Jega, 1995:4). Never the less, democratization is different from political liberalization which is a mere relaxation of repression and provision of range political freedom. There can be political liberalization without democratization, but there cannot be democratization without political linearization. More so, ways of entrenching democratic ethos, values and practices, institutionally, behaviorally and attitudinally through which governance is constitutionally driven, and which lead to democratic consolidation.

Thus, it is paramount to note that Nigerians have been striving hard for democracy. But the process of democratization has been tortuous and disappointing at different point in time. The issues dominating the travails of democracy today can be linked to the failure of governance to meet fundamental needs and aspirations, and the concern about the sustainability of (lie process. The key challenges are associated with the institutional reform, attitudinal change and leadership. In addition, legacies of military rule have been obstructive of genuine desire and efforts. Thus, democratization in Nigeria is taking place after a prolonged military rule, and in the contest of intuitional decay and decomposition engendered by it. It is also circumscribed by profound corruption, thuggery, malpractice, arbitrary rule, and executive lawlessness, bankruptcy of the leadership; a leadership which is myopic, selfish and parochial, Jega (2006)

S.G Egwu (1998), democratization is a process which leads to the emergence of the mode of government derived from the consent of the governed. He further opined that going back to the origin of democracy in the Greek city-states, the consent always expressed both liberty and equality. And he added that, as Ake (1987) suggested, the ascendance of bourgeois revolution resulted in the deliberate attempts to expunge the notion of equality from its original meaning, precisely because it threatened the property of the bourgeoisie.

In view of the above explanation, Egwu's position is that the kind of democratization process taking place in Nigeria is only meant to practice a government that will perpetuate the imperial dominance of Nigeria by former colonial masters, as well as to create an atmosphere favorable for economic exploitation. And thus, the practice and the process is incompatible with democratic culture, ethos, values and ideologies. The book titled "DEMOCRACY AT BAY" is relevant to the subject matter under study, it exposes its covert rationale behind the introduction of democracy. And it also aid our understanding as to why democratization processes in most African countries, Nigeria in particular were not successful (Egwu, 1998).

Mainwarring (1992:298), democratization refers to movement towards democracy, i.e. towards a different, more qualitative political regime through expansion of political contestation. He stated further that if democracy constitutes a condition arrived at through regime change, place on a continuum, moving away from one extreme end of authoritarian rule in transition to another extreme end of mature democratic governance, then democratization connotes the process through which that transition is made procedurally, institutionally and attitudinally.

On May 29, 1999. Nigeria took a decisive step from authoritarian military rule in transition towards democracy. That phase of transition was to move us from authoritarian rule to civil-democratic rule, and hopefully, through democratization, launch us a 'new' democracy, and gradually move us towards consolidation. Eight years down the line on the continuum Nigeria may not now have been as near to being classified as "a new democracy" as we would have wished, but since it has not reversed/regressed back to where it was, we are still engaged in the democratization process. As far back as 1994, Claude Ake has described the democratization process in Africa, as 'democratization of disempowerment'. Africans are increasingly being alienated from popular participation and control of power by a ravaging band of self interested elite who control political power and the governance processes and disempowered the citizen. Instead of giving effective decision making power to the people, thereby strengthening popular power, the people are disenfranchised, pauperized and marginalized. This aptly describes the Nigeria democratization process since May, 29, 1999.

DEMOCRACY

Jega, is a set of institutions that permit the entire adult population to choose their leading decision makers in competitive free and scheduled elections which are held in the contest of the rule of law, political freedom and limited military prerogative, (Jega 1995:4).

Democracy involves four basic ingredients i.e. contestation over policy and political competition for office, participation of all citizens through partisan associations and other forms for collective actions, accountability of rulers to the ruled through mechanism of representation and the rule of law, civil rule over the military, (Jega, 1995 :5).

Abraham Lincoln (1861) defines democracy as "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people". Lincoln further postulated that democracy is the government by the consent of the governed". He also discussed democracy as "the constitution by which the line does not emulate the enactment of our neighbors, this is an example to others rather than an imitation of them. It is called democracy because power does not rest with the few, but with many and in law, as its estimation in which each man is held in any field.

Democracy is first and foremost about people, it is about the relationship between those who lead and those who are led, those who govern and those who are governed and those who exercise political power and those who are subject of this power.

Austin Ranney, gave the most acceptable definition when he viewed democracy as a "form of government organized in acceptance with the principles of popular sovereignty, popular consultation. Political and economic equality and majority" (Ranney, 1987:10).

Many political analysts have accepted this definition as more embracing than that of Abraham Lincoln's concept of democracy. Thus, a democratic government must rest on the consent of the governed and its policies must be responsive to their needs and desires.

Ozoemenan Mbachi, (1986:207), said that democracy is a way of life that involves freedom to make choice about what one does, where he lives and how he uses his earnings: the operation of institutions the home, the church, local, state and federal government, the right to justify property ownership, social justice and fairness, that absence of social and class barriers, equality of opportunity and the solution of common problems through the exercise of free will of the people. More so, democracy is a political system in which the eligible people (electorates) in any country participate actively not only in determining the kind of people that govern them but also actually participate and actively in shaping the policy output of the government.

Democracy is regarded as being primarily a political system of government by the people in which positions of power in society are open, in principle to everyone, in which there is competition for power and the holders of power, at any time are accountable to the electorate. Joseph Schumpeter presents such a view of democracy, which has since been widely accepted when he defined the democratic method as:

The institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for people's vote (Schumpeter, 1943:11 1). He further opined that this institutional arrangement realized the common good by making the people themselves decide issues through the election of individuals who are assembled in order to carry out their objectives.

The above definition shows that democracy has to do with the principle of constitutionalism and freedom of the common man to decide who to govern them in the state. But as in the case of Nigeria, it is far-fetched.

Nzongola Ntalaja, (2000:14) in the annual lecture in honour of professor Claude Ake on democracy and democratization in Africa, sees democracy as a form of rule of law and political civil rights of individual citizens. He further pointed out some features of democracy. One of the major features of democracy is the rights of the citizens to choose their leaders from among the small elite of leading families' members of the liberal, professor and business executives. Other features of democracy are transparency and accountability among the leadership.

HISTORY OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN NIGERIA

As a neo-colonial state, democratization process in Nigeria first began during the pre-independence period (1922) the constitution then provided for four elective offices to the natives i.e. three to represent Lagos and one to represent Calabar, however, the democratization process transcended down

to the line of post-colonial Nigeria, when the natives took over the baton of leadership in 1960 which eventually led to the emergence of first republic 1960-1966).

However, during the first republic, democratization process political contestations between elites in different political parties were neither free, nor fair as thuggery and hooliganism were the hallmarks of politicking.

The incursion of the military into Nigeria politics in 1966 had further dulled and darkened the democratic institution and values in Nigeria democratization process, the military monopolized power and governance from (1966-1979) and (1983-1999) this is to say the military gave birth to the second republic (1979-1983) which lasted four years and four months, given way to the Buhari-Idiagbon draconian administration and the Babangida's palace coup which introduced the diarchy system of government administration (A type of government comprising military and civilian). Babangida exploited the political class to prolong his tenure with prolong transition programmes, indeed the greatest ills of Babangida's administration was the annulment of June 12, 1993 presidential election, which was considered to be the most freest and fairest election Nigeria has ever conducted. In essence this antidemocratic attitudes depict that Nigeria's so called political elites were not schooled in any effective democratization process consequently, the annulment led to series of political violence particularly in the western part of the country, this situation forced 1BB to "stepped aside" as he called it, and inaugurated an interim National government headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan whose government was overthrown in a palace coup by General Sani Abacha barely three months in office.

General Abacha's government could not settle the hot socioeconomic and political tension that enveloped the country then, he promised to handover the power to a democratically elected civilian government as soon as the political tension within the country calm down this however appeared as a lip service as he made concerted effort to perpetuate himself in office, he violated all the democratic tenets which eventually led him to emerge as the sole candidate of all the five registered political parties. This ambition of his was put to an end by death, following the death of General Sani Abacha, General Abdulsami Ahubakat took over power and shortly initiated another transition program that led to the emergence of democracy on 29th May 1999. With Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the president under the fourth republic, (Oyovbaire 2001).

At the expiration of Obasanjo first regime in 2003, he recon-tested the election and won, the election process was characterized with the use of state power, intimidation, thugery, hooliganism, violence, rigging and assassination, towards the end of his second term he planned a third term agenda which was not successful, he therefore used his power to influence and adopted the former governor of Katsina state, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yaradua as the presidential candidate of the people's democratic party (PDP), conversely, state machineries were mobilized to actualize the plans of Obasanjo and PDP. Presidential target of the party.

Like the earlier ones thugery, hooliganism, violence, rigging featured during the election both within the political party and other parties and on 29 of May 2007 Alhaji Umaru Musa Yaradua was sworn in as the new president of the federal republic of Nigeria, with his accession to office the late president been aware of the flaws and malpractices rigging that characterized the process of his coming to power as the president, he unevenly admitted that the process was full of flaws and needed to be rekindled for the future and for prosperity. This informed his constituting of an electoral reform committee and

proposal to reform and amend constitutional guidelines and electoral acts that will enhance transparent election processes, this was the wish of the late president of Nigeria Alhaji Ummaru Musa Yaradua before his death on 7th May 2010 consequently the vice president Dr. Goodlock Jonathan was sworn in as the president of the federal republic of Nigeria. It is important to acknowledge the fact that the 2003-3007 democratization process served as a turning point in Nigeria democratic history, this is because it was the first time and the only democratization programme in which civilian regime handed over to another civilian regime even though the process still manifested ills of rigging, violence and intimidation, (Ashafa 2001). The question one may ask here is what will be the future of Nigeria democratization process? How do we correct the anomalies in the structure and institution of the democratization process in Nigeria.

TYPES OR VARIANCES OF DEMOCRACY

Direct/Classical democracy: Simply means direct and active participation of all citizens in the affairs of the state/society. This type of democracy enables all the citizens to take part in decision-making process and popular participation in day-to-day governance of the state. It connotes personal rule by the people. The earlier example of a direct democracy is by the Greeks in Athens. The day-to-day governing was carried out by council of 500 citizens. All important issues, even if decided by the council were put before an assembly of all citizens for vote. It was made possible because of the small nature of the ancient Greek city-state.

According to Caude Ake (2000:7) direct democracy is a concept that is uncharacteristically precise. It simply connotes popular power. It is not about delegated authority, or representative governance, but about popular expression of power by the people.

Indirect democracy: In this type of democracy, the citizen through election elects those who will represent and govern them or the state on their behalf. The representative democracy replaced the direct democracy in modern state, as direct, popular participation in day-to-day governance is impossible in modern nation-states all of which consist millions of citizens and not few thousand as was the case in the ancient Greek city-state.

The people elect representative, the representative carry out the day-to-day governing of the country and make or execute laws. They express the will of the people when they perform their functions.

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OR PILLARS OF DEMOCRACY

For democracy to strive, it must be based on some basic principles or pillars such as:

Political Equality: This principle emphasized that all people are equal, and must therefore have equal access and opportunity to participate in decision-making process without discrimination based on gender, race, religion or ethnic origin etc.

Citizen participation: This is one of the key principles of a democracy. Citizens participation may take different forms, including standing for an election, voting in an elections and involvement in political debate, protesting paying taxes, and belonging to voluntary association.

Accountability: In a democracy, elected and appointed officials have to be accountable to the people. Officials must perform their responsibilities according to the will and wishes of the people and not themselves.

Transparency: In a democracy people must be aware of what is happening in government to be accountable it has to be transparent. A transparent government holds public fora and allows citizens to

attend. Regular free and fair elections: Citizens are allowed to express their will in a democracy if they elect their representatives in government, and these representatives are peacefully removed from offices in a free and fair election.

Human Right: There must be respect and protection of human rights of citizens. In a democracy there is a bill of rights to protect the people against abuse of power. These rights are laid down in the constitution. Human right includes freedom of association, expression, movement, assembly, right to education, equality and right to health etc.

Party System: A democratic system will be impossible without political parties, the existence of political parties within a political system bring various forms of relationship between these parties. Most times when we talk about party system, our mind immediately goes to the number of parties in politics. However, even though this may be correct, party system goes beyond the number of parties in politics to include the network of relationship through which parties interact and influence the political process. Just as the football game consists of players between 2 teams, so party system consists of the interaction between competing parties. It is the competitive interplay between political parties that culminated into party system.

Party system refers to a complex web of inter-relationship between political parties of different ideologies and between these parties and the socio-political community in which they exist.

Majority rule and minority right: Government must base its actions and decisions on majority view, whereas the minority have the right of fair hearing.

The rule of law: This makes the law supreme over other considerations. It implies equality before the law and absence of arbitrary rule.

The independent judiciary: The judiciary play the role of an arbiter or umpire. It ensures that the ball is played to the rule of the game.

Free Press: The press is a very important watch dog in the process of democratization, it serves as a link between the people and the government by presenting the view of the people and as well as the programmes of the government.

POLITICAL PARTY: Is an organized group of people who share similar political beliefs, principles, interests, and opinions and who seek to gain political control (power) of the state or part thereof through election. It has a legal status and is registered by the electoral agency of a state. In Nigeria, there is the INEC, which is the authoritative agency to organise and conduct election for the purpose of government.

Political parties “are major vehicle for enhancing participation in governance, Agbaje, provide a graphical postulation on the importance of political party. Political party has a most crucial role to play in any democracy/democratization process. Not to have a properly functioning, party system in a supposed democratic country is worse than tea without sugar; it is like passing ordinary water as tea. There can be no meaningful democracy without a properly functioning party process:: Agbaje cited in Adekunle, A.. (2002).

From the above explanation it is obvious therefore, that political parties constitute the heart of democracy, the more rigorous and healthy they are the better assured is the health of the democratic process itself.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION: Is a body charged with the responsibility of organizing and conducting free and fair elections in a country. The commission is headed by a chairman and is the final arbiter in an

election has legal and constitutional backing to carry out its functions. The commission take different names across different countries of the world, like in Nigeria, it was called (FEDECO) in the second republic, NEC in the third republic and now, forth republic (INEC).

PROBLEMS OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN NIGERIA

Authoritarian Society It must be stressed here that any genuine attempt at democratization in any society begins with the consciousness of the people to have a good government that will rule them and capable of providing their needs (basic needs i.e. food, security, clothing and accommodation), in fact this is the basic reasons for government all over the world and indeed a democratic government for that matter, unfortunately Nigeria has been under authoritarian control from colonial period to military rule. This has seriously affected the ordinary Nigerian mind about issues of governance, the Nigerian politic is characterized by intimidation, oppression and subornation which is in most part, a product of the general culture, which has no value for freedom of association, citizen participation in decision making and arbitrary rule, lack of tolerance of opposing views, respect for law and order, free and fair elections, leadership transparency; all these are lacking in Nigeria due to long years of authoritarian rule. Authoritarianism is “the tendency for individual in positions of power to govern makes decision and policies, without consulting the recipients of those decisions or policies”³. However, the situation in Nigeria is a bit more troubling and terrifying, since 1999 Nigeria has been witnessing an increasing build-up of authoritarian structures and institutions, the control units, particularly the police, EFCC, ICPC, SSS, INEC etc are authoritarian, and thus out of control. Consequently, human rights abuses have worsened in the society over the years and mostly the common people are feeling the pinch. Daily Trust 14th, 2007

Modern democratic society(ies) place high premium on the effectiveness and efficiency of these social units, because they depend largely on them for survival, the trend has been for nations to create “open society” where no single super individual would exercise an usual control over the system, and national interest would supersede personal interest in policy formulation and implementation, but in Nigeria, the interest of the rulers and the leading party supersedes national interests, national policies are conducted in secrecy, arbitrary order replaces social controlled by setting limits, and everyone is expected to accept any decision made by the rulers, there is no genuine dialogue with the people and the society is gradually drifting towards one-party dictatorship.

Lack of political ideology and party system: in any democratization process, as argued by many scholars, political parties remained one of the major instruments through which democracy came into being. This is because (Finn jnr, 1991) observes that they recruit, nominate, and campaign to elect public officials, draw up policies and programmes for government if they are in majority, offer criticisms and alternatives policies if they are in opposition, hence, for political parties to perform these roles effectively and efficiently, it has to be grounded with strong ideologically base, high incidence of mass poverty and corruption: another bottleneck to Nigeria’s democratization process is rising spate of poverty and corruption in the polity. Thus, poverty and democracy are wrong bed fellows. However, on the effect of poverty to the development of Nigeria’s democratization process, Mohammed (2006:6) maintains the view of Diamond and Bande that: It is no longer in doubt, that many are excluded from the political process development due to economic and social constraints. Campaigns and elections, to take an example requires immense financial organizational and propaganda resources, and these can hardly be

afforded by the poor, ignorant and unpropertied masses who are less active politically than the educated and well to do. Thus, from the foregoing it could be deduced that the level of poverty and corruption in Nigeria has a great effect on the democratization process. No discussion of Nigeria can be completed without, at least, a brief mention of the problem of corruption, while the formation of human right violation and investigation commission (HRVIC), ICPC, EFCC were necessary and proper as a step by the Obasanjo administration as a way of fighting the menace of corruption. It was widely recognized that the new democratic arrangement would not succeed unless the government make a meaningful efforts to combat corruption. Consequently, around the same time that he established HRVIS, Obasanjo introduced anticorruption bill to the parliament.

Corruption permit every sector of Nigerian society, “from millions sham of email messages sent each year by people claiming to be Nigerian officers seeking help with transferring large sum of money out of the country, to the police officers who routinely set up a road block, some times every few hundred yards, to extract bribe of N20, about 15 cents from drivers” (Polgreen 2005, A1). However, the most disturbing and damaging forms of corruption is made manifest in the succession of kietocratic governments, which has produced extremely wealthy generals and political leaders. The prevalence of prebendalism (Client Patronage) in Nigeria societies has undermined the process of democratic transition in the country.

Another serious problem threatening democratization process in Nigeria is lack of true independent electoral institution devoid of any influence from any party, whether the ruling or opposition party. It is a well known fact that even though, independent national electoral commission as the name reflects is supposedly independent, its independence is just a mere illusion.(Sunday trust, 2007:62).

Another major problem affecting the health of Nigeria’s democratization process has to do with kleptomania and prebendal nature of leadership. Thus, on the question of leadership, truth must be told, as argued by Jega (2006;10) With very few exceptions, our crop of leaders have essentially been self serving rulers, some even despots, and not leaders in the true sense of the word. They lack (ed) vision, focus, selflessness and even enlighten self interest, our leaders are unimaginably corrupt, they are greedy, they are vindictive, they are reckless in many fundamental respect, senseless. Virtually who ever has access to power abuses it. He further maintained that:

The crisis of leadership is at the root of the failure of the Nigeria’s democratization process. Only descent forth right leadership with the requisite political will is required to accelerate the democratization process. Presently, there is lack of credible leadership, in the Nigerian governance process. This is at the root of our crisis of democratization and we have to find effective ways and means of addressing it.

Ethno Nationalism and National Unity

Perhaps nothing demonstrate the challenges of democratization in' Nigeria better than problem of ethno-nationalism. The issue of ethnic cleavages, manifested in the high incidence of entho-nationalism, has loomed quite large in the affairs of successive Nigerian governments. A major problem arising from the ethnic and religious diversity of Nigeria is that it makes democratic compromise difficult. The different groups clamor for scarce resources and for control of government, this lead to what Daniel Chariot refers to as “democratic paralysis” (197:224). Even in more advanced western democracies, conflicts over what Dan usher call “assignment” (or resource allocation) can be especially troublesome.

THE PROSPECTS OF DEMOCRATIZATION

There is need for concerted effort of organized action, especially by credible, democracy inclined civil society groups to ensure a refocusing of democratization towards the genuine desires and aspirations of the Nigerian people. i.e. Nigeria's needs to discuss how they wish to be governed, and what ideas should inform governance, what social forces should take leadership (sovereign national conference is needed).

There is need for fresh, focus, visionary and credible leadership cadre le competent and capable leaders, ready and willing in fighting the impediments that tends to compromise democratization process in Nigeria and not kleptomania, prebendal and selfish leaders.

There is need for rebuilding of bridges across ethnic, religious and regional divides. By so doing national unity will takes precedence over sub-nationalism and premodialism which posed serious challenges to democratization process in Nigeria.

There is need for critical institutional reform, attitudinal and behavioral changes for building and nurturing democracy especially political parties that are weak and flawed. This is the most evident in the absence of ideology and internal democracy within them as witnessed not only by their disregard of their own constitutions and their conduct of party primaries, but also in the absence of clearly articulated political Party programmes and manifestoes.

There is need to enhance democratic process by de-concentration and decentralization of power and resources from the centre to the periphery: from the federal, government, to states and local governments. For example, one of the major problems confronting democratization in Nigeria is how to devise an equitable and generally acceptable revenue sharing formula for all major stake holders in the federation, especially 36 states, which are the component units of the federation, and some of which are there currently agitating for "resource control".

In order to ensure formidable democratization process in Nigeria, there is need to devise an equitable and generally acceptable revenue sharing formula i.e. the mechanism for sharing the country financial resources among the different tiers of governments with the overall objective of enhancing economic growth and development, minimizing inter-governmental tension and promoting national unity.

Other prospect of democratization process in Nigeria includes: increased constitutionalism which will check executives lawlessness, increased tendency toward good governance would restore confidence in the system and will increase deliverability of services to the people.

CONCLUSION

No doubt, the quest for the consolidation of democracy and good governance in Nigeria is an on-going process, while there are bound to be ups and downs along the paths towards the establishment of democratic good governance. What is important is that the country must learn from its mistakes and fashion out appropriate policy measures that augurs well for sustaining and consolidating democracy. As rightly observed by (Grete.F,1992 Cited in Ake,2000).

There is also the credibility crisis facing the independent National electoral commission (INEC), which largely stems from the perceived lack of its independence, its controversial voters registration exercise, its disqualification of some candidates over allegations of corruption.

Democracy is “the worst form of government. But it is still the best we know, because the alternatives are comparatively worthless” (Churchill Cited iii Jega,2006:)

Democracy must grow from lineal roots it cannot be imported, sold and paid for. It therefore requires and devolves on Nigerians to take their fate or destiny in their own hands and shape the form of government most suited for their national and local aspirations.

Finally, it is pertinent to warn that any search for a “home grown” Nigerians “vision” of democracy where competition, participation and representation are absent amount to an exercise in futility.

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