



## DEMOCRATIZATION AND THE PARADOX OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: A COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF SELECTED COUNTRIES

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More than ever before in the history of political philosophy the validity of democratic hypothesis has been called into question. While some scholars are of the view that democratization is the only panacea for the achievement of sustainable national development, others fervently contend that it is national development that herald democratization and not the other way round. Still others emphasizes the important of authoritarian regime as a *conditio sena qua non* for national development. This study attempts to address this lacuna or perception controversy, with data empirically generated from the secondary source, to comparatively analyze the nature and relationship between democratization and national development in Nigeria and Indonesia. Specifically, it examined whether the process of democratization in both countries enhances their national development. This study, however, revealed that national development is neither exclusively related to democratic political system nor authoritarian political regimes, but a direct function of the people's commitments to the development project irrespective of the type of political system under which they found themselves.

**Key word:** Democratization, the state, national development, economic growth, unemployment, GNI per capita and literacy rate.

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of democratization is seen by political economy scholars as a process of institutionalization of the major democratic principles, as part of everyday socio-cultural activities in a given society. Historically, democratization seemed a delicate and unattainable process in Africa, Latin America and Asia. But this attitude took a drastic turn in the early 1990s when the wind of democratization powered by the development of capitalism swept through Africa and Asia among other continents to bring and, or stimulate greater optimism. For instance, the American democratic aid community quickly embraced a model of Smith democratic transition. This model of transition assumed that a country's chance of democratizing successfully is dependent preliminarily on the political intention and, or the actions of its political elites [Carothers \(1999\)](#). However, the idea of smooth global transition to a democratic world assumed a turbulent situation considering the fact that events in Africa and Asia show more than ever before, the dependency of democratic progress on economic social and other political factors and the fragility and non-linearity of democratic progress ([Linder and Bächtiger, 2005](#)). Yet scholars are still reluctant to get the grips with these factors.

The contention that democracy promotes national development rests on some of its major key institutional features, such as, its accountability mechanisms and checks and balances provisions. The above key features of democracy play an important role in limiting the abuse of the executive and state power substantially, and from election and other democratic processes they also provide a predictable transparent, periodic and reliable system of reward and

punishment. [Dreze and Sen \(1999\)](#) argued that, it is these institutional characteristics of a functional democracy that explain why famines have never occurred in a democratic environment, however the validity of the above assertion as offered by [Dreze and Sen \(1999\)](#) would be a matter for another day. Also in a comparative study of policy refinement in central Europe after their transition to democratic system of government in 1989, [David and Bruz \(2009\)](#) contends that "executive that are held accountable by other state institutions such as through Checks and Balances and monitored by organized societal actors, are likely to produce more effective development policies". However, the motion of democratic expectation that ushered in the historic transformation towards democratic system in Africa and Asia countries may itself have placed unexpectedly high expectation on what these newly emerging democratic principles seek and intend to accomplish. Though a new orthodoxy that came into limelight within the international community, especially among donor agencies, beginning in the 1990s are of the view that "democracy is not just an outcome or consequences of development, but a necessary and unmitigated ingredient that bring about national development ([Leftwich, 2005](#)). Even though, democratic regime is not always explicitly promoted as an element of internationally supported good governance effort, there is a normative commitment to democratic politics that encapsulate in the governance agenda. Good governance, among other things highlights the importance of transparency and accountability, and also encouraging a wider inclusion and participatory decision-making process as inescapable condition to the effective promotion of national development

in any society.

It is however this inclusive nature of liberal democracy especially in the decision-making process that has exposed it for scholarly attack in recent times, many academic analysts and policy makers have argued that in the developing world authoritarian regimes seems better suited than democratic system to promote national development. As [Halperin et al. \(2009\)](#), in his classic work "The democracy Advantage: How Democracy promotes prosperity and peace" has already noted, "the appeal of the authoritarian-led approach has ... at least something to do with its expediency, in comparison to the time consuming messy procedures which is typical of democratic process." The point being made here is that national development requires a centralized, strong and highly autonomous government, especially when the developing countries need to accelerate the development process to meet up with developed nations, and that politics of democratization are too messy and unpredictable to provide such environment and political structure. Again, in authoritarian regimes state actors usually enjoy much longer time horizon and does not need to worry about the short term politicking that usually arise from the electoral process and distort national development plan ([Halperin et al., 2009](#)).

Even, with the above anti-democratic argument gaining momentum, it is still not yet established with any precision that authoritarian rulers will always play positive part in developmental process. On the contrary, historical evidence has shown that anti-development or non-development authoritarian state in East Asian, Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe and defunct Soviet Union are in abundant ([Evans, 1989](#); [Bardhan, 1999](#)). It can also be contended that some authoritarian states, which are highly autonomous, insulated and centralized decision making process have time and again played a key role in triggering a serious socio-economic crises and that the magnitude of this crisis could have been either ameliorated or even completely avoided if there is an institutionalized democratic mechanisms to constantly keep the executive power under control ([Rocha, 2007](#)). Also in [Dreze and Sen \(1999\)](#).'s classic work [Dreze and Sen \(1999\)](#) argued that the absence of effective democratic forum and its concomitant institutionalized democratic principles would inevitably result in among other things poor accountability, which was also central to the Asia economic crisis of the late 1990s. Therefore, while democratic principles such as wider, inclusive and participatory decision-making processes can be, or appear to be problematic on close examination as we have already discussed above, they also implicitly contain some vital institutional features to keep power holders under control, to promote accountability and more importantly to help correct some wrong policy decisions as may be required to achieve a sound national development goals from time to time. However, it's as a result of the above perception controversy that this comparative study is embarked upon using Nigeria and Indonesia as its point of departure.

The choice of Nigeria and Indonesia for this study is purposive, going by the principles of precision matching techniques, as expounded by [Leege and Francis \(1974\)](#), such comparison according to them, can be undertaken on individuals, objects, community, nation, state or countries with historically compatible experiences. It is here contended however, that Nigeria and Indonesia have a history of colonial domination, both moving from colonial rule to parliamentary system of government. The politics of Nigeria and Indonesia takes place within a framework of a presidential, federal and representative democratic republic, in which the executive power is exercised by the government under the leadership of an elected president. And both countries were sandwiching between authoritarianism and democracy and are presently preoccupied with the regularities of bicameral legislature. Though it is understandable that Indonesia appears to be more homogenous in terms of social characteristics than Nigeria, but with the little differences we are of the view that a comparative evaluation and analyses of the two countries is important in understanding the relationship if any between the two variables first above mentioned. The study is not basically on the extraneous variables; hence, we shall bring them under analytical control in order to examine essentially the significance or otherwise of democratization for attainment and sustenance of national development, with a particular emphasis on the political economy of democratization and national development of the two countries first above mentioned.

**National development:** By national development this study refers to a phenomenon that encompasses a whole nation. Hence, national development can be viewed and described as the overall development or an amalgam of socio-political, economic as well as religious advancement of a nation or country. And these are actualized through developmental planning, which can be seen as a collection of country's strategies mapped out by the government. The concept national development is used to refer to a set of sustainable growth and development of a nation to a more conducive and desirable one. National development plan is usually people oriented and its success or failure is determined in terms of the impact it has on the masses. In substantiating the term national development, the third National Development Plan 1980s diary ([Adekoya and Ajilore, 2012](#)) stated thus; True development must mean the development of man, the unfolding and rationalization of his creative potential, enabling him to improve his material condition of living through the use of resources available to him. It is a process by which man's personality is enhanced personality creative, organized and discipline which is the moving force behind the socio-economic transformation of any society ([Adekoya and Ajilore, 2012](#)).

Also in Enahoro's diary ([Onabanjo and M'Bayo, 2009](#)), contend that, national development must be man oriented and not just an institutionally oriented venture. What he is implying is that national development must be people

oriented, as in, collectiveness, and not just an individual interest prone. National development to, [Jamo and Review \(2013\)](#) refers among other related things to the growth of the nations in terms of unity, economic well-being, education and mass participation in the activities of government what Elugbe is implying by implication is that national development involves the provision of the necessary equipment and social materials that will ensure that man make a very good living out of his environment in every society. The national development discourse seems to be in state of motion since the end of World War II. In fact, in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the ideological differences between the capitalist west and the socialist east seem to have influenced the conceptualization and the meaning of the term national development. [Ake \(2001\)](#) for instance argue that “the ideology of development itself has become a problem for development because of the conflict between its manifest and latent functions” in those days when national development appeared to be understood as a direct consequence of economic growth, countless theorist such as [Rostow and Rostow \(1990\)](#) and [Harold and Domer \(1957\)](#) among other scholars proposed models of development, holistically identifying savings, investment and structural change as the main source of economic development and national growth ([Abegunrin, 2016](#)). Their believe was that in the long run economic development or growth would generate fund for national investments and infrastructural development which would engender better living condition for the people.

However, in the late 70s it became clear that economic development in most developing and underdeveloped countries especially in Africa and Latin America do not provide corresponding social well-being. Obviously economic growth could not completely address the explosion of unemployment, disease, hunger, poverty, illiteracy and the ever increasing crime and political/religious extremism. Therefore, “post development thought has called for a return to the stress on people as both the measure and determinant of national development” ([Rapley, 2007](#)). These trends have necessitated the current thinking and redefinition of the concept ‘development’ from economic growth centered panorama to human centered approach. “national development is now seen as transformation of the society, a move from the old ways of thinking and old forms of social and economic organization to new ones,” Stiglitz diary ([Majekodunmi, 2012](#)) in corroboration of the above, [Chandler \(2007\)](#) also contend that “development has been redefined, taking the emphasis away from traditional economic indicator of GDP and trade and broadening out the concept to take in psychological and material factors related to the measurement of human well-being.” Also, [Dreze and Sen \(1999\)](#) are in this queue as he highlighted the importance of freedom in his analysis of national development, he is of the view that “National development requires the removal of the major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, prior

economic opportunities as well as a systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over-active of repressive state” ([Dreze and Sen, 1999](#)). Based on the above, Africa in general and Nigeria in particular need to go back to drawing board and design a bottom-top approach to national development. Since a closer examination of development trend in the past few decades, has depicted that development trajectories in Asia (Asian Tigers) and Middle East are not compatible to that of Africa. National development has also been used to connote a stage of advancement that characterizes a nation-state at some point in their existence, this progress in question is resulted from the interplay of modern political, economic and social forces and processes which transforms variety of people, developing a common geographical area, from allegiance to, and participation in a transitional policy to the creation and acceptance of, and participation in a modern nation-state ([Lukpata, 2013](#)). The above entity is characterized by a strong but not autocratic government agencies and machineries that are capable of commanding loyalty, eliciting legitimacy, keeping order, permitting mass participation, fostering integration and satisfying popular demands and expectations. It also has access to skilled citizens, who exercise their potentials to create an advanced industrial society and exploits its environment to achieve a high quality of life for the entire population. When any state or nation is able to organize and agree on a national development strategy, it is a good sign that the state or nation in question is strong and lively. On the other hand “when a nation no longer defines a historical horizon to be pursued with courage and hope, it enters the unhappy state of awareness that Hegel referred to: the inability to take a harmonic stance before life” ([Comparoto, 2005](#)).

Indeed, the national development discourse attracted a lot of scholars with different contributions including [Rodney \(2018\)](#), [\(Nnoli, 1981\)](#) and [Ake \(2001\)](#) who has argued fervently that the concept of development is multi-faceted and cannot be discussed in isolation of man centered. For instance [Nnoli, 1981](#)) contend that development can be conceptualized as a dialectical phenomenon in which the individual and the society at large interact with their physical environment, manipulating and transforming them to the satisfaction of their needs and at the same time being transformed by it. This idea of development [Okolie \(2009\)](#) contends would generally improve man’s capacity and potential and subsequently remove and/or reduce the rate of poverty, inequality, unemployment, penury and also enhance the general condition for human existence and self-reproduction. On this note, therefore, national development can be rightly understood as the process of empowering the entire population in a given society with a view to increasing their potentials and the ability to manipulate their environment to the satisfaction of their daily human needs. It can also be viewed as a process through which the quality of life and the capacity to conquer daily needs are diametrically improved.

Finally national development has also been conceived as "a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of poverty" ([Tadora and Smith, 2009](#)).

**Democratization and national development:** The interface between democratization and national development is a relatively new idea but with a long history in the academic discourse. Democracy is also the most acceptable system of government globally. Its global acceptability arises from the basic principles and mechanism to which it offers, such as the rule of law, justice, liberty, higher participation among others. Its method of maintaining order among the people remains its most essential feature. Unfortunately, it is also its most vulnerable source of scholarly attack in recent times, but we shall come back to that later. One of the major questions in comparative political economy and development studies, remain the direction of this interface, since it has been established that there is a relationship between democratization and national development. However, the way in which scholars responds to the questions about the links between democracy and national development depend to a great extent on how they conceive the term "development". Those who concurred with [Dreze and Sen \(1999\)](#) postulate and adopts a definition of development as "freedom" which is an encompassing definition that subsumes not only economic indicators but also social opportunities, freedom like human and political rights, guaranteed transparency and protective security, contend fervently that democracy would definitely lead to development. It is on this ground that [Lawal et al. \(2012\)](#) on their famous essay "*democracy and development in Nigeria*" argued thus: Democracy is development induced. The more democratic ethics in a society, the higher the dividends of democracy the better the level of sustainable development... development can hardly be felt or achieved when democratic ethics are not imbibed and adhered to by the leaders and administrators. This is because the accommodation of the ethics of democracy enhances performance and facilitates development ([Lawal et al., 2012](#)).

In addition, they contend that democracy and national development are intertwined and inseparable, since the major components of development such as; honesty, transparency, commitment, accountability, discipline, peaceful co-existence, integrity, etc. are reinforced in democratic environment. The point being made here is that the success of democracy would definitely lead to national development and vice versa. Although democratization and national development has some unique characteristics; e.g. capacity expansion, popular participation as well as freedom ([Mazoui, 2002](#)), Democratization has the position of independent variable, and on that bases determine the degree and level of development in any nation or society.

[Osaghae and Openings \(1994\)](#) on the other hand is arguing that, it is essential to highlight the point that while

democratization may generate national development, much of it would depend to a certain extent on the context under which the analysis is based. Beside the impact of democratization on national development may be a reflection of its time-spell as well as the degree of the democratization process. [Osaghae and Openings \(1994\)](#), by the above analysis is not as specific as we would have wanted him to be, but he has made his point. The idea of popular participation as already highlighted is important to both democratization and development. In its comprehensive application, popular participation is the process of empowering the people to get involved them in the regulating structure and designing policies and agendas that serve the interest of the entire population in that society and also contribute optimally to the development process. It must be because of the above that ([Zack-Williams, 2001](#)) opine that "no democracy no development". He contends that the essential force of democratization which makes it a *sine qua non* for national development is that the mechanism and doctrines of democracy empowers the people to control the decision-making process by that very fact, the governed or the people are presumed to be wise enough to hold the government accountable for any wrong doing, by insisting on accountability, transparency and other measures of control. The absence of all these major democratic characteristics is seen as inimical to the pursuit of national development ([Adedeji, 1991](#)). This school is of the view that democratization facilitates national development with little or no political or social exaction from the people. [Bellinger and Arce \(2011\)](#), on the other hand, are suggesting that "democracy shapes social responses to economic liberalization" according to these scholars, democracy has the capacity for creating "a favourable environment or opportunity for societal responses". ([Bellinger and Arce, 2011](#)). Drawing from the above, it is however imperfect to encourage collective political activity, not render it obsolete ([Goldstone, 2004](#)). Furthermore, another study of the productivity of Philippine manufacturing sector, after their transformation to democratic regime in 1987 reveals that productivities increased as accountability ensued among the managers of government institutions. [Cororaton and Abdula \(1999\)](#) opined that; As democracy was restored in 1987, economic reform facilitated the recuperation of industrial productivity. Annual growth of one percent ensued together with the recovery. Import liberalization has been revived. Investment has been promoted through the reinstatement capital-cheapening measures. Preference over exports however, was branded together with the change in the focus ([Cororaton and Abdula, 1999](#)).

The above postulate implies that Philippine's manufacturing sector experienced stagnation in productivity prior to the democratization process but picked-up immediately after the institutionalization of democratic principles and mechanisms, by that very fact, it will not be totally wrong to argue that democratization would eventually lead to national

development. Although, [Leftwich \(2005\)](#) contends that “there are powerful theoretical ground for doubting that democratization, especially when pre-mature can universally provide the appropriate political forms for either good governance or sustained economic development”. He is of the view that “an effective public capacity for promoting development is not a function of good governance as currently understood, but of the kind of politics and state that can alone generate, sustain and protect it”. Besides, the wave of democratic expectations that accompanies this historic transition to democracy in many developing economies may have placed upon itself unusually high expectation about what these latent emerging democratic system could and intend to accomplish. And therefore turning most of the traditional assumptions immanent in modernization theory upside down, a new devout emerged within the global community, specifically among donors, beginning in the 1990s which seriously contend that democracy is not an outcome or consequence of development but on the contrary a necessary ingredient to bring about development. By substantiating democratization, especially in relation to market liberalization and development, it is evident that there is expected association between democracy and national development ([Leftwich, 2005](#)). Hence, [Elahi and Danopoulos \(2004\)](#) argued that; Democracy promises to protect citizens’ civil right, which include the right to posses and promote private property. Capitalism allows individuals to pursue their economic ambitions. Since human beings are selfish by nature, they are naturally motivated to cultivate their creativities to amass private wealth for deriving physical, psychological and social pleasure. In other words, capitalism is an economic system that inspires individuals to prosper privately. These private prosperities eventually result in national prosperity, because national wealth is simply the sum total of individual wealth ([Elahi and Danopoulos, 2004](#)). The above postulates are the lines of thought that underpins most of the “good governance” agenda advertised by the international community, especially the multilateral and bilateral donors. This donor program is essentially concerned about rules and regulations according to which government are chosen and state power are exercise. [Rocha \(2007\)](#) in his essay “Analyzing the relationship between democracy and development” argued fervently that there are so many advantages to a transparent, participatory and democratic process to policy making process, even if it means that such decision-making procedure would take longer time and less efficient in the short run. [Khan and Jomo \(2000\)](#), however, argued that the good governance agenda tends to welcome a perception of politics that may be idealistic and overly naïve, and it can foist a request *vis a vis* a quality of governance which are far beyond what is required, or even realizable at very low degree of development ([Khan and Jomo, 2000](#)). And it also tends to believe easily that all good things go in *pari passu* and that democratization will definitely lead to the establishment of government policies that encourage

redistribution ([Rocha, 2007](#)). However, that has not been the case in most developing countries including Nigeria. Still on the other side of the spectrum, it is argued that “democracy will act as a boost to development” ([Bhawati, 2002](#)). He is of the view that democratization with its concomitant market liberalization would by implication be equipped with the capacity to establish and accelerate national development in such a way that a quasi-democratic system cannot be able to do. Although he also contend that “market and competition can deliver growth with or without democracy” ([Bhawati, 2002](#)). What he seems to be implying here is that democracy cannot claimed to be the only panacea for national development but that “democracy and market act as complementary forces in fostering development”. The above assertion cannot be said of some Asian countries, such as South Korea, Taiwan Singapore and Hong Kong who attained a very high level of social, political, cultural and economic development under authoritarian regimes. In fact, it is evident that while these Asia Tigers are busy developing their economies beyond expectations, most African countries with Nigeria included are getting more and more underdeveloped and greatly impoverished under analogous political institutions, that is under authoritarian political system. On the exposition of the possibilities of national development under authoritarian political system Olson also, argued that “though experience shows that relatively poor countries can grow extraordinarily fast when they have a strong dictator who happen to have a progressive economic policies, such growth last only for the duration or ruling span of one or two dictators”. This is because; other variables that are needed to sustain the economic growth are not constant as is expected under a democratic political system. Olson has also argued that “the conditions that are required to have the individual rights needed for maximum economic development are exactly the same conditions that are needed to have a lasting democracy” Perhaps it is this cyclical relationship that has led to the contemporary academic debate *vis-à-vis* the nexus between the two variables (democratization and national development). The wealth distribution capacity of democracy is evident in its method of organization and administration such as progressive taxation, land distribution, social policies, or simply put, opening up market and institutions in the society to those that has been hitherto excluded from the struggle for capital accumulation ([Meltzer and Richard, 1981; Lenski, 2013](#)) with this type of institutions with development dependency, both the socio-cultural, economic and political development becomes inevitable. This is probably why [Gerring et al. \(2005\)](#) contended that “it seems reasonable to expect that the longer this regime type is in existence the greater will be its aggregate effect on the achievement of social equality and hence growth”, [Gerring et al. \(2005\)](#) and his cohort considered the duration of a particular democratic dispensation in their analysis of its expected impact on the society. This is expedient considering the fact that democratic

practices do not have similar effect globally, therefore, the degree of democratic consolidation of a society may be an explanation for the corresponding levels of economic development in that society. It is also assumed "that the longer a country remains democratic, greater will be its physical, human, social, and political... and the better its growth performance".

[Gerring et al. \(2005\)](#) analyzed national developing on the bases of how political, social, physical and human capital has fared in a given society. In synopses, they are of the opinion that democracy that has lasted for a long period of time would have the propensity for reproducing mature capital whether, physical, human, social, political and material; more than the latent democratic institution that is still battling with the traditional and, or cultural institution that has existed hitherto. They are also of the opinion "that a country's political experience today effect tomorrow's political capital and in turn, its economic output". He also highlighted the essential role of the rule of law in a democratic dispensation which would always ensure strict commitment to the requirement of the government policies and agenda to achieve a sustainable development and argued that since this is not the case with non-democratic political institution; an authoritarian regime would inhibit national development. In other words "democracy + time = economic/national development". So much on the issue of democratization and national development. We shall now turn to a comparative historical background of the two countries under study.

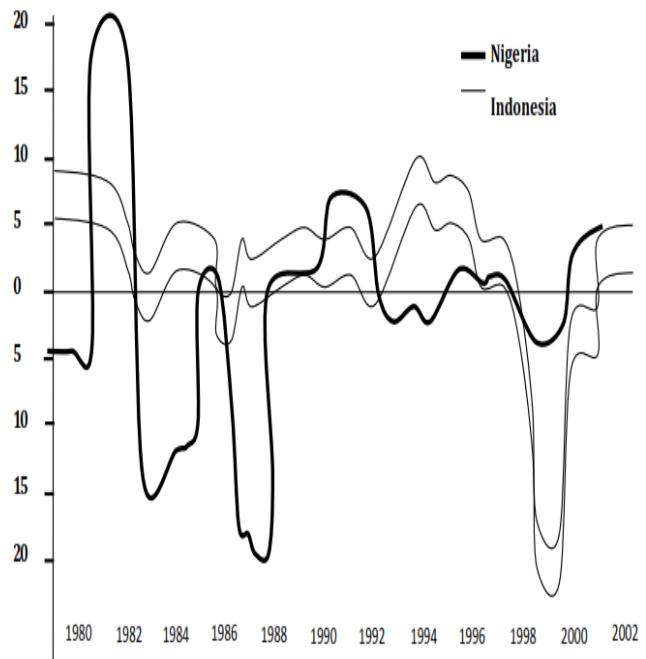
**National development trends in Nigeria and Indonesia:** National development as envisaged here is derived from the famous Dudley Sears's magnum opus, as highlighted hitherto in this study. Dudley contends that the questions to be asked when measuring the degree of a country's development should be first and foremost, what has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to poverty? And what has been happening to inequality? He maintained that if all three of the above social quandary have declined from high level then beyond doubt these has been a period of national development for the society concerned. However, he also posits that if one or two of these central problem have been growing worst especially if all the three have been growing worst then it would be strange to call the outcome national development even if the GDP or GDP per capita income has doubled within the period under study ([Seers, 1969](#)). Therefore, the national development as envisaged here must have purpose and that purpose should be man himself as both the object as well as the subject of development. On the other hand, there is still the acceptance of the desirability of economic growth as part of national development but we must consciously underline equally the vital need for the distribution of equity, if only to enhance the life of man in his environment. Therefore, In this study national development is seen as a holistic phenomenon, the emphases being man overall wellbeing in the society.

**Economy:** However, the data gathered for this study revealed

that prior to the 1990s, specifically in the early 1980s, Nigeria economy experienced a robust and flamboyant GDP real growth rate, specifically in 1981, Nigeria GDP increased to 20.8% which is the highest GDP real growth rate Nigeria has recorded till date, while Indonesia on the other hand also reached their highest GDP real growth rate of 9.8% in 1980. Notwithstanding the difference in value Indonesia was far much better than Nigeria on average with 5.3% between 1980 and 1998 (their transition to democratization era). While Nigeria can only manage a menial 2.5% average GDP real growth rate within the same period which also coincide with her transition to democratic era, See figure one and two for a review of Nigeria and Indonesia GDP real growth rate within the period under study. While Nigeria were swinging from negative to positive GDP real growth rate of 20.8 in 1981 to -10.8% in 1987, 12.8, 7.6 and 2.8 in 1990, 1996 and 1999, Indonesia never experienced a negative GDP real growth rate ([IMF, 2015](#)). Throughout the same period, that of cause highlights the degree of commitment of the national economic manager of both countries.

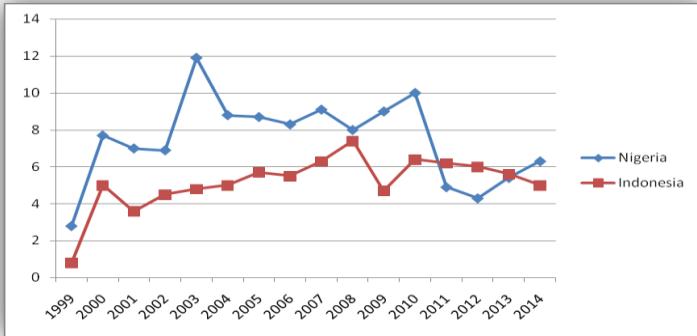
Although Nigeria and Indonesia GDP real growth rate are not progressing at the same pace both countries maintained a relatively steady growth rate since their historic transition to democratic rule in 1998 (Indonesia) and 1999 (Nigeria). However both countries also never tasted the records of GDP real growth rate they enjoyed during their authoritarian days with the highest GDP real growth rate of 11.9 for Nigeria and 7.4% for Indonesia between 1999 and 2014 and 1998 and 2014 respectively (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

Figure 1: The GDP real growth rate of Nigeria and Indonesia 1980-2000



Source: IMF, world economic outlook (WEO) April 2015; CIA World Fact book, June 2015 ([IMF, 2015](#)).

Figure 2: The Nigeria and Indonesia GDP real growth rate 1999-2014.



Source: IMF, 2015; CIA World Fact book, 2015 ([IMF, 2015](#)).

In so far, as it is arguable to suggest that the democratization process helped to promote steady and or consistent GDP real growth rate of both countries especially Nigeria from declining into a negative growth rate, it is also debatable that the GDP real growth rate of Nigeria and Indonesia significantly fared better on annual bases during their autocratic regime years, with their highest growth rate of 20.8% for Nigeria 1981 and 12.3 for Indonesia in 1987 as against the 11.9% for Nigeria and 7.6% for Indonesia in their period of democratic rule. However on the average bases, the GDP real growth rate of Nigeria and Indonesia performed much better between 1999 and 2014 which falls within the period of democratization with 7.4% for Nigeria and 5.2% for Indonesia respectively see figure two for details. It is also noticeable that while Nigeria appeared to be better off between 1999 and 2014 on the average bases with 5.4% as against 1980 to 1998 with 2.5% Indonesia is not really finding it easy on average bases with 5.2% between 1999 and 2014 as against 5.6% between 1981 and 1988 in figure 1 and figure 2. Between 1980 and 1998, the above evidence seems to be supporting the notion of some scholars that authoritarian political systems are more conducive for economic development than democratic political system (Table 1) ([Krugman, 1994](#)).

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Nigeria	4295	3202	2618	2594	2711	3880
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
	4716	4949	5176	5353	5580	
Indonesia	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
	2931	3391	4096	5593	5171	6193
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
	7802	8211	8601	8970	9097	

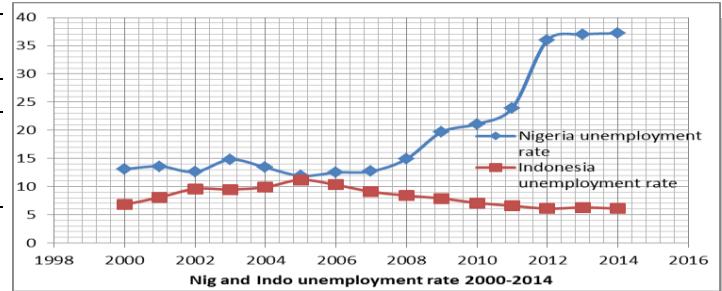
Table 1: Nigeria and Indonesia GNI per capita (2013 PPP\$) in selected years.

**Unemployment:** One of the major challenges facing the Nigeria society in contemporary time is poverty which is believed to be engendered by the relentless unemployment increase within the system, which scholars has attributed to many reasons, prominent among which are corrupt government and disjointed leadership. While the

authoritarian Indonesia were busy trying to find a lasting solution to their unemployment problem the authoritarian Nigeria were busy turning public fund into private fund, specifically, while General Suharto and his immediate successors were experimenting different administrative approach to National development, their Nigeria counterpart were more interested in opening off-shore account and consolidating their political power through religious, language and ethnic means to the detriment of Nigeria unemployed population ([Okolie, 2009](#)). Figure three below will explain better.

When General Suharto came into power in 1966 he introduced the 'Orde Baru' from which he tried all he could to keep unemployment under check, irrespective of the AFC that erupted in the late 1990s. he however succeeded in keeping unemployment as lower as 1.52% in 1984, although it rose to 2.8% in 1992 and 4.7% in 1995 ([Ilo, 2015](#)) General Suharto maintained an average unemployment rate at 3.48% between 1984 and 1998 when the democratization wave engulfed Indonesia ([IMF, 2015](#)). On the other hand Nigeria unemployment rate spiked under the military regime, although there are scanty data on the arrow movement of unemployment rate in Nigeria between 1984 and 1999 it is on record that Nigeria experienced 28.0% unemployment rate in 1992 during which the military are in control. This arrow trend however came down to 13.1 % in 2000 which coincided with the beginning of democratic rule in Nigeria (see figure three), and becomes relatively steady until 2008, when it began to climb again as a result of poor economic management. By 2014 unemployment rate in Nigeria has reached 37.2%, against Indonesia's 6.1% in the same period. It is therefore arguable that over a decade of macro-economic planning and development has succeeded in suppressing Indonesia unemployment rate into a relatively consistent downward trend of 6.45% average growth rate between 2010 and 2014 while Nigeria economic planners has also succeeded in raising the average unemployment growth to 27.3% between 2010 and 2014 (figure 3).

Figure 3: The unemployment rate of Nigeria and Indonesia 1991 to 2014.

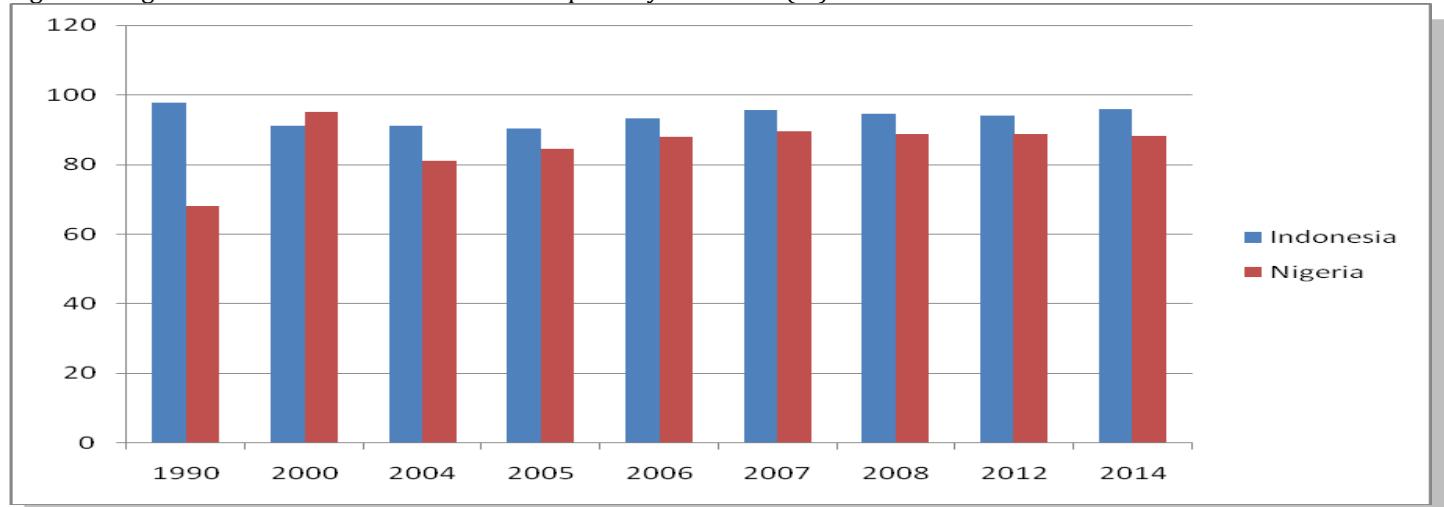


Source: IMF (2015) and Ilo (2015).

The review of unemployment history of both countries also reveal that authoritarian political system in Indonesia are more organized and development minded than its Nigeria counterpart, considering the fact that Indonesia military

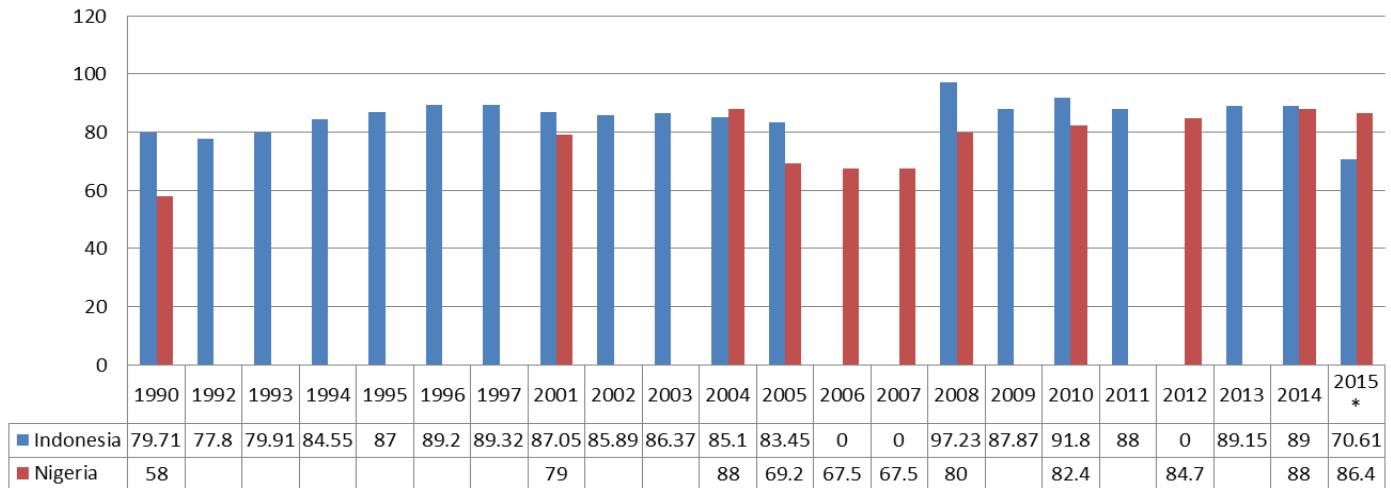
government were able to reduce unemployment rate to as low as 1.52% in 1984 thereby creating a conducive situation for the democratic successor to build upon and by implication support the hypothesis that authoritarian regimes are more effective than democratic political system in promoting rapid national development.

Figure 4: Nigeria and Indonesia net enrolment in primary education (%) 1990 to 2014.



Source: FRN, 2015; NBS, 2015, World Bank, 2014 and CIA World Factbook, June 2015.

Figure 5: Nigeria and Indonesia primary school completion rate (%) 1990 to 2014.



Source: FRN, 2015; NBS, 2015; World Bank 2014 and CIA World Fact book, June 2015. Note \* = e

This growth behavior in the index seems to be taking an unpopular side in this scholarly debate and appears to be supporting the notion that authoritarian political system are more conducive for both economic and human development in the east Asia than the democratic political system. Although the arrow trend never really collapsed during the democratic era with 92.09%, 93.96% and 94.55% in 2004, 2007 and 2014 it never tasted the 1990 record till date. It can on these bases therefore be argued that the Indonesia authoritarian era laid the foundation for their contemporary flamboyant education enrolment record. And at the same time also

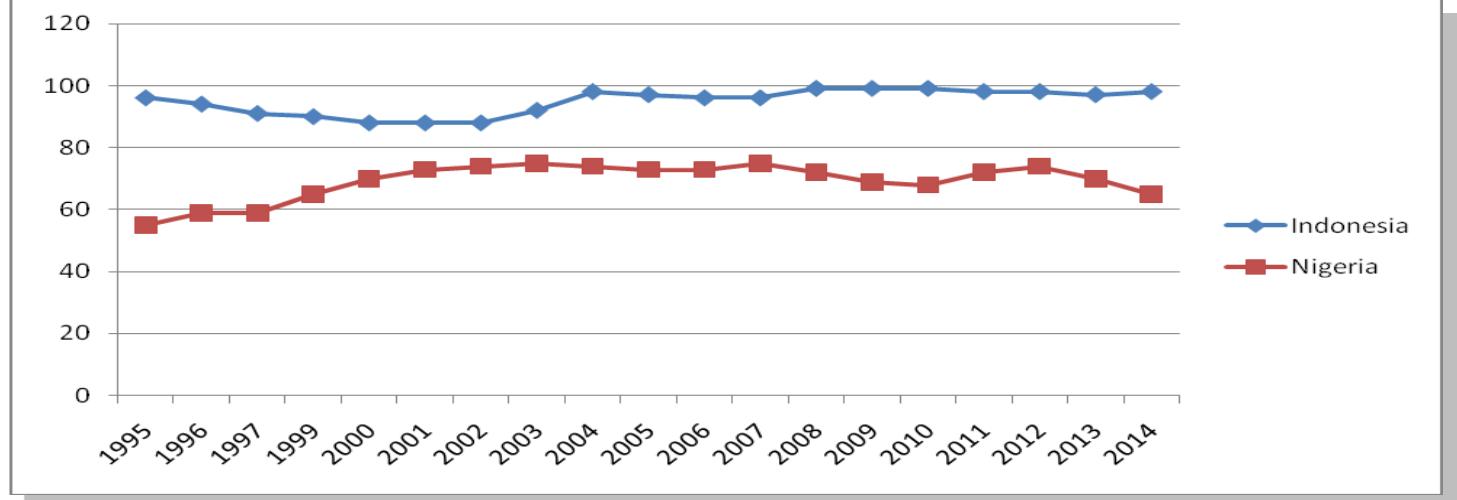
support the hypothesis that authoritarian political system can also be developmental.

On the other hand the Nigeria authoritarian political period has no agenda for primary education enrolment, hence maintained 68.0% until the democratization era which saw the arrow trend move up to 95.0% in 2000. Though this trend was not sustained due to poor and corrupt management problem that has engulfed Nigeria democracy since inception. Same can also be said of the primary education completion rate in Nigeria which stood at 58% in the 1990s and only to climb to 76.65% in 2000 probably as a result of universal

basic education that was rekindled in 1999. However, this trend increased to 82.0% in 2004 but slumped again to 67.5 and 67.5 in 2006 and 2007 only to rise again in 2008 to 80.0% and continued to grow up to 88.0% in 2014 (Figure 4 and Figure 5). By 1997 Indonesia primary school completion rate has reached 87.05% from 79.71% in 1990 and continued with almost the same record till 2010. When it entered 91.80% and continued to 90.81% in 2014. The high retain rate suggests a minimum dropout rate, which implies that school system has improved in its capability to manage students of official school age until they successfully complete their primary education.

Therefore the observed differences in primary school enrolment rate between Nigeria and Indonesia also depicts the degree of managerial expertise and policy implementation commitments of both countries. It also reveals that types of political system may not have any relationship with the level of national development of a given society, since some countries can also develop under authoritarian regime, as in Indonesia' while others can only do so under democratic political system, as in Nigeria' (Figure 4 and Figure 5). The literacy rate of Indonesia was already at 96.2% during their authoritarian era while that of their Nigerian counterpart can only manage a mere 58.9% in the same period. Thus while the Nigerian literacy rate appears to be rising under democratic

Figure 6: The national literacy trend of Nigeria and Indonesia (%).



Source: CIA World Fact Book 2015; NBS, 2015; and World Bank 2014.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the preceding sections, using the time series analysis we have seen that in virtually all the development indicators employed in this study which was derived from the 2015 United Nations/Word bank development indicators, but with a particular attention to *People* and *economy*, such as GDP growth rate, GDP per capita, GDP current prices, GNI per capita PPP etc, Nigeria has either outperform or at par with Indonesia between early 1960s and 1980s. But this trend took a swift turn from the mid 1980 to the present era. The Indonesia development trend didn't just catch-up with

political system the Indonesia literacy rate seems to be stabilizing to its original state since it slumped to 89.9% immediately after democratization.

However, our historical review of the national literacy rate of Nigeria and Indonesia between 1995 and 2014 indicates that the literacy trends of both countries did not collapse under democratic regime, in fact while that of Indonesia appears to be stabilizing, its Nigeria counterpart seems to be rising to a better position between 2000 and 2012 though this trend nosedived again afterwards. However, since Nigeria fared better under democratic rule during the period under study it can be argued that there is a positive correlation between the political economy of democratization and national development vis-a-vis their percentages of primary education enrolment, the proportion of children completing their primary education and national literacy rate. But that cannot be argued in the case of Indonesia, since the above review indicates that Indonesia has already attained 97.86% net enrolment in primary education in the 1990s as against the 88.81% in 2014, it is also evident in the above review that Indonesia achieved 99.38% in 2008 as against the 89.00% in 2014 which coincided with the democratic era. Meaning that they have seen better days in those aspects of national development before their democratization process began in 1989 (Figure 4 to Figure 6).

Nigeria they surpassed it with some kind of alacrity, in other words, by 1980 the Indonesia GNI per capita at PPP was 2,931 dollars, while that of Nigeria stood at 4259 dollars in that same year or period but by 1985, while Nigeria's are dropping to 3262 dollars Indonesia has climbed to 3391 dollars, leaving Nigeria behind by 189 dollars. In fact by 2014, Indonesia has almost doubled the Nigeria GNI per capita PPP. While Nigeria kept going down in almost all the global development indicators employed in this study, Indonesia is rising to perfection with unprecedented pace, which has led some scholars to contend that it is only a matter of time before they

join the league of Asian tigers (Hill, 2000), While Nigeria on the other hand has no hope of becoming an African Lion any time soon, (Table 1).

We also noticed from the preceding chapter that the democratization process in Nigeria and Indonesia between 1998 and 2014 has a positive correlation with some national development indicators insofar as it enhances their growth or development, notwithstanding the conspicuous differences in the growth rate and pace, which appear to support the hypotheses that democratic political system with its concomitant market liberalization would by implication be equipped with the capacity to establish and accelerate national development in such a way that a pseudo-democratic political system cannot be able to do. The difference is that, it's not in all aspect of development indicator that this can happen since this study has revealed that some development indicators such as unemployment, proportion of primary school enrolment and completion rate as well as real GDP growth rate on average, fared relatively better during their authoritarian era. Nevertheless, it also implies that democratic institution promotes developmental governance by countering temptation for political opportunist behavior that can be economically damaging and reactionary in a given socio-economic formation, as already highlighted by [Lance \(2004\)](#). But on the other hand the thematic assessment of the development indicators and trends in both countries also revealed that Nigeria and Indonesia in some aspects performed relatively better during their authoritarian days than their democratic period, though with different pace still, specifically, the school enrolment rate of Indonesia were better with 97.8% in 1990s against 95.2% in 2014. While Nigeria was at 68.8% in the 1990 against 88.85 in 2014. Nigeria and Indonesian also recorded their highest GDP growth rate during their authoritarian political dispensation. In addition both countries appear to have enjoyed a better control of their unemployment rate and or, unemployment problems during their authoritarian period than they are at present. Although Indonesia once again is far much better in terms of growth rate than their Nigeria counterpart, historical facts still contends that both countries had better control of unemployment trend prior to democratization, with Indonesia recording as low as 2.4% unemployment rate in the 1990s, as against the 6.1% rate in 2014, while Nigeria on the other hand recorded as low as 28.0% unemployment rate in 1992 against 37.2% unemployment rate in 2014 (Figure 3). The empirical data therefore contend that authoritarian political system in Indonesia are more organized and developmental minded than that of her Nigeria counterpart, considering the fact that the military Indonesia were able to reduce unemployment to as low as 1.52% in 1984 ([IMF, 2015](#)) and thereby creating a super conducive situation and or, environment for its successor political system (democratic) to build upon. The above analysis appears to support the hypotheses which argued that 'national development is neither exclusively a function of democratic

system nor that of authoritarian regime or political system, but a function or a consequence of interplay between the socio-economic, political and cultural environment'. This implies that the national development of any given society is and must be people oriented rather than political system base. In other words the people have to come together and agree among themselves that a developmental project has to be embarked upon ([Bell, 2010](#)). It seems at point that what is in issue here is no longer the minor matter of the state forms, but the nature of the state. And understanding the profundity of this debate is fundamental on our understanding the fact that it was crises that first involved the ultimate substance of society's constitution ([Onyishi and Okou, 2017](#)). What are we trying to imply? our point of departure is this; government in the final analysis is seen in this study as the primary agency of the modern state, whether democratic or autocratic state. This primary agency is managed by men who were able to attain and sustain preeminence through various designs, including authoritative applications and or threat of use of physical force. The political philosophy or ideologies of these government managers automatically becomes the official ideology of that collectivity independent of the state forms. If it is developmental, then it will herald a developmental state just like in Indonesia but if it's reactionary it will bring a conservative state just like in Nigeria. Democracy or democratization has no role to play under these circumstances vis-à-vis the national development of a given society.

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