



## **Democracy in Crises: Nigeria and the Problems of National Development after Democratization**

Augustine, Ejiofor Onyishi. Phd<sup>1</sup>, Solomon, Ogbonna Abugu<sup>2</sup>

1. Department of Political Science, University of Calabar Cross River State Nigeria

2. Department of Human Resource Management, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike

*In contemporary time while some scholars are of the view that democratization is the only panacea for national development because of its essential attributes, other scholars contends fervently that its 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 however, attempts to address this lacuna or perception controversy, with data empirically generated from the secondary source, to analyze the nature and relationship between democratization, and national development in Nigeria. Specifically, it examined whether the process of democratization in the countries enhances their national development. This study however, reveals that national development is neither exclusively related to democratic political system nor authoritarian political regime.*

**Keywords:** Nigeria, Democratization, National Development, Unemployment rate, Poverty trend and GDP Growth rate.

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Nigeria Road to Democratization**

The modern day Nigeria is a culmination of numerous kingdoms and tribal nations or societies over the millennia. The contemporary Nigeria is an outcome of the British colonial rule that started officially in the 19th centuries and enhanced by the merging of the Northern and Southern protectorate in 1914. The colonial masters established administrative and legal institutions which facilitated the practice of indirect rule through the local and traditional chiefdoms. However the country becomes officially independent federation in 1960. But due to distrust among the political class, the country was plunged into a prolonged political pandemonium that culminates to a fierce civil war from 1967 to 1970. Nevertheless, since 1970 the country has been swinging from democratically elected civilian

government to military dictatorship until 1999 when it appears to have achieved a stable democracy from the third wave of democratization as has argued by Huntington (1984). Nigeria has been running a presidential democracy since 1999 uninterrupted. And also have been able to record four successful general elections since then. The democratization processes that heralded in the dawning of forth republic can be argued to have effectively begun with the establishment of political bureau in 1986 by the government (military) of General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida IBB, though others will argue otherwise and suggest that it started with the constituent assembly which was elected in 1977 to draft a new constitution for Nigeria as a means of transformation to civil or democratic system. But the military sandwiched again into the democratic process four years later

\*Corresponding author: AUGUSTINE, EJIOFOR ONYISHI. PhD  
Department of Political Science, University of Calabar Cross River State Nigeria  
E-Mail: [onyishiaugustine@gmail.com](mailto:onyishiaugustine@gmail.com)

and set aside the 1979 constitution which was a culmination of the 1977 draft. The 1986 transition program of IBB was reputed as the most imaginative, complex, ambitious, long expected and expensive transition globally. But it unprecedentedly ended in disaster, with the infamous and arrogant annulment of the June 12th 1993 Nigeria presidential election (Omotala, 2007; Aziegbe, 1992). However, after series of killings and political pandemonium following the annulment of June 12th general election, Babangida left office and stepped aside, but not before installing an interim government headed by Earnest Shonekan, a prominent and assumed non-partisan Nigeria businessman. The preliminary plan was for him to control the leadership Baton until the elections scheduled for February 1994. Although, he was a key member of the IBB Transitional council since 1993, Shonekan lacked the necessary quotient to reinvigorate the already ramshackle political economy of the Nigeria nation and Salvage the lingering political tension in the country, resultantly his government lasted for only eighty four (84) days before ushering in a new dawn in the struggle for democratization. With the emergent of General Sani Abacha as the new military leader on 19th November 1993 (Anigala, 2001). General Abacha, promised to return power to the civilians as soon as possible. But his regime or government instead of imposing another constitution on the people beside the 1994-1995 constitutional conference probably to guide in the long anticipated fourth republic, kept the submission of the conference recommendation in abeyance, as a result the constitution never see the light of day. He went ahead and dissolved all the newly established democratic institutions and replaced elected governors during the interregnum with military officers. Irrespective of his promises of a speedy return to civilian Rule, Abacha refused to announce his transition programme until 1995 after combined effort of the United States and the International community, through trade embargo, sanctions, and among others, travel restrictions of some key government official and suspension of arms sale and other military assistance to Nigeria (Agagu, 2005).

As the system continue to heat up and some prominent political figures already running for cover, both within and outside the country, the

General was reported dead as a result of heart failure on 8th June 1998. Though the actual post-mortem remain unclear. The sudden death of the General marked another variant of Nigeria political journey and indeed a prolonged political pandemonium in the country. It also paved the way for the emergence of General Abdulsalami Asubakar as the extempore Head of state. (Omotala, 2007). The basic concern of the Abubakar's regime appears to be a successful transition to a democratically elected government within the shortest possible time, since the military provisional ruling council (PRC) under general Abubakar commuted the sentences of those accused in the alleged military coup during the Abacha regime and released almost all the known civilian political prisoners. Pending the promulgation of the constitution written in 1995, the government observed some provisions of the 1979 and 1989 constitution respectively. But neither the government of Abacha nor that of Abaubakar lifted the decree suspending the 1979 constitution, and still the 1989 constitution was not implemented fully. The judiciary system continued to be hampered by corruption and politics of excludivism, coupled with lack of resource after General Abacha's death. In an attempt to ameliorate this social discordant General Abubakar's regime implemented a civil service pay rise and other related reforms (Okafor, 2011). General, Abubakar established the Independence National Electoral Commission (INEC) to conduct and oversee elections for the local government councils, state legislatures and governors, the National Assembly and Presidency. The Independent National Electoral Commission Successfully held election on the 5th December 1998; January 9th 1999; February 20th and February 27, 1999, respectively. For local governments elections nine parties were granted provisional right, with only three fulfilling the requirement to contest the election. These political parties includes P.D.P (People's Democratic Party), the APP (All People's Party) and A.N.P.P (All Nigeria People's Party) and also the A.D. (Alliance for Democracy).

The prominent presidential candidates among the above registered political parties were chief, Olu Falae from the alliance of APP and AD. And General. Olusegun Obasanjo (rtd) who was granted amnesty by the General Abubakar's regime

purely on political reasons (Agagu, 2004). Both presidential candidates were from the south-west geopolitical zone of the country probably as a consolation for the annulled June 12th presidential election, which was presumed, won by MKO Abiola from the geopolitical zone. At the end of the presidential election, Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo of the People Democratic Party was declared victorious and by implication laid the foundation upon which the democratization process was established and ushered in the fourth republic on 29th may 1999. But before the inaugural ceremony of the new president elect it was constitutionally concluded to switch from unicameral to bicameral legislature with the National Assembly consisting of 360 members for the House of Representative (lower house) and 109 members of senate (upper house) respectively, the actual reason for the legislative expansion remain unclear till date to Nigerian public. Nevertheless, the dawning of a democratic Nigeria brought to an end a turbulent 16 years of consecutive authoritarian military rule. This fourth republic was harbored on the provisions of the 1999 constitution, whose essential attributes are more or less the same with that of 1979 constitution (Nwanolue, and Ojunwu, 2002). However, the democratization process or alternatively the democratic governance has been restored in Nigeria for several decades ago with struggle and constitutions spanning for over ninety year. Yet they have all failed to provide, in the true sense of the word democratic ethos in the country. Example; Obasanjo's eight years administration from 1999-2007 was largely dictatorial, it was a form of government which compelled the liquidation of other political parties through an institutionalized manipulation of electoral process to favour his own party (PDP). Consequently, there was massive decampment from other parties to the ruling people's Democratic Party (PDP) thereby steering the country towards a one party system. He also tried to manipulate the constitution of the federal republic to back his tenure elongation policy, but his selfish political dreams was dead on arrival, in the turbulent milieu of Nigerian political firmament ( Osibanjo, 2010) . To get back at the people who publicly fought against his tenure election or ' third term' bid, president Obasanjo resorted to political gerrymandering and succeeded in installing a sickly president Umaru Musa Yar'Auda whose long terms prognoses was

very unclear as at that time, through advanced digital electoral malpractices, (Ibagere and Omoera, 2010). The 2007 general election was rated as the worst in the nation history, as is evident in the various legal nullification of electoral result by supreme court of justice. From state house of representatives, through gubernatorial seats to the national Assembly.

The sudden death of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua on the 5th of may 2010, paved the way for the emergence of the vice President Goodluck Jonathan. Through a reluctant motion from the Nigeria Senate on the 6th of may 2010 to complete the four year term of Late President Yar'Adua, Jonathan was however re-elected in April 2011 in an election that some expert has argued may have been the most free and fair election in the history of the country (Okafor, 2011). After recording some success and failures in the national economy he gave way to President Mohamadu Buhari and become the first African President to hand over power to opposition party. On the 29th may 2015. President Buhari among other policy agendas kick-started his administration with anti-corruption war, which has been on the top list of the people's disappointed expectations, since the inception of democratization in 1999. Some people are happy while others remains moody about the unfolding political and economic development, although it is still too early to predict with any clarity on what side the victory would rest because it's highly expected that corruption would definitely fight back.

### **Democratization and National Development**

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 Sen's (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 and Olukayode(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 and Olukayode, 2012, p.452).

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 (Mazrui, 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 (1995) 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, 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 themselves 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 & Acre (2010; p.2), 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 Acre, 2010, p.2). Drawing from the above, it is however imperfect to encourage collective political activity, not render it obsolete (Goldstone, 2004, p.361).

In challenging the position of the democratization school of thought which is of the view that free market and democracy are incompatible with each other. Bellinger & Acre (2010, p. 11-12) posit that "the forces of economic liberalization are inexorable and thus continue to forward at the expense of robust democracy". They accentuated the repoliticization paradigm by positing that "collective political activities rises with economic liberalization in democratic and semi-democratic context" (2010, p. 11-12). Therefore, democratic and semi-democratic system of government offers enabling environment and opportunity of economic performance because of the rise in tempo of political activism and people's response to the government policy, this argument that democratization promotes national development, more than the other way round is anchored on some institutional characteristics of democratic system, such as the accountability mechanism and check and balances provision, as stated earlier, these major characteristics plays a very important role in checkmating the executives abuse of state power, and also through the periodic elections and other democratic processes, they can

provide a predictable circumstance, in terms of rule, not outcome, transparent, reliable and periodic system of rewards and punishment, as the case may be. Sen (1999), for instance has argued that it is these major democratic institutional features of a functional government that explains why famines have never occurred in democratic society. In addition, after the transition to democratic system in central Europe in 1989, David Stark and Laszlo Bruszt's comparative study reveals that executives that are held accountable by other state institutions and held in check by organized societal actors...produce... more effective democratic policies" which would inevitably lead to national development.

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 Abdul, 1991) 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 braded together with the change in the focus (Cororaton & Abdul, 1991, p.8)

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 (1994, p.364) 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" (1994, p.365). 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 that seriously contend that democracy is not an outcome or consequence of development but on the contrary a necessary ingredient to bring about development (UNDP, 2008; Leftwich, 2000). By substantiating democratization, especially in relation to market liberalization and development, it is evident that there is expected association between democracy and national development. 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 & Danopoulos, 2004,p.3).

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 programmes are essentially concerned about rules and regulations according to which government are chosen and state power are exercise (Kjaer, 2004). Rocha-Menocal (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. On the participatory feature of democratization Saez (2005) argued that;

In the first place, participation allows for the creation of alliance of various interests in favour of set objectives. Secondly, it creates a sense of ownership of adopted decision, even if they oppose certain interests defended by them third, it contributes to sustainability of policies over time. It reduces the chances of backlash if participation is solid and decision-making are considered legitimate in their origin and outcome. Fourth, participation fosters more informed decision. Lastly participation permits society to demand for more accountability of those in charge of public policies (Saezi, 2005, p.32)

Khan, 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, 2005). 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 (Fritz and Roca-Menocal, 2007). However, that has not been the case in most developing countries including Nigeria democratization has not really been associated with a significant redistribution of production and income (Gradstein & Milanovic 2004; Chong, 2004). Still on the other side of the spectrum, it is argued that "democracy will act as a boost to development" (Bhagwata, 2002, p.157). 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" (Bhagwata, 2002, p.157). What he seems to be implying here is that democracy cannot be claimed to be the only panacea to national development but that "democracy and market act as complementary forces in fostering development" (2002, p.158). Although with this he nearly really argued that national development is an exclusive attribute of democratization, he also concurred with suggestion that national development is possible in

authoritarian regime with favourable market forces. However, he summarily asserted that "democracy and market are the twin pillars upon which lasting development can thrive" (2002, p.159). In Rodrik (2000) study, he also associated democracy to the establishment and maintenance of a good administrative institution which would in turn engender national and economic development in any given society. Using Mauritius illustration as a case study, he contends that "Mauritius illustrates nicely how participatory democracy helps to build a better institutions that lay the foundation of a sustainable economic growth" (2000, p.19). The point in focus is that Mauritius was able to achieve economic and national development, simply because they were able to create the political and social institutions that encourage participation, compromise and negotiation. Remmer (1990) seems to be taking the side of Bhagwati in this heated democracy/development polemy, in this discourse when he suggested that "not only are policy chaos constrained by socio economic realities, but also the political similarities and differences among nations appears to be far too complex and multifaceted to be captured by simple distinction among types of regimes" (Remmer, 1990, p.316). This stand however highlights the usefulness or effectiveness of some extraneous variables which must not be ignored in this scholarly enquiry if a lasting solution must be reached. On this very position, he posits that "the experience of Latin American countries since the outbreak of the debt crisis establishing no basis for asserting that authoritarian regime outperform democracy in the management of economic crises" (1990, p.36).

Still on Rodrik (2000) emphasis on the important establishment and for creation of good socio political and economic institutions (increased, participation, negotiation and compromise) as the sine qua non for national development, Alence (2004,p.100) posits that "an important insight is that successful development depends on a political and institutional environment that aligns the political incentives facing government with the requirement of economic growth and improved social welfare" by implication, Lence is arguing that the government of the people must be a responsive one before the development agenda. He further contends that "democratic institutions promote

developmental governance by countering temptations for political opportunist behavior that is economically damaging" (2004, p.178). he also maintained that "rather than being a luxury that African countries can only afford once they have developed economically, democracy appears to provide an institutional platform for improved economic performance" (2004, p.179). it must be because of the above that Chandra and Rudra (n.d) posits that "the key to uncovering the micro-foundation of the differential growth performances in democracies and non-democracies is rooted in their contrasting policy-making environment." Macedo (2003) is also of the opinion that the existing institutional arrangement plays an essential role in the socio-political, cultural and economic development of any society. He is contending that "a successful strategy for higher economic growth would be based on foreign institutions appropriate both to the local culture and the global financial markets" (Macedo, 2003, p.10). By this argument he supports the prevailing hypothesis that democratic institution engenders national development by justifying its capacity to generate higher economic growth more than the non-democratic regimes. He further argued that, "countries with democratic political systems tend to generate higher economic growth with wealth shared by a wider population than countries with non-democratic regimes (2003, p.10). A sturdy democracy has been argued by many scholars to have a stable environment for the establishment and nurturing of a robust socio-political and economic performance. Olson (1993) is also of this ideological orientation since he contends that "it is no accident that the countries that have reached the highest level of economic development and have enjoyed good economic performance across generations are all stable democracies" (1993, p.572). This postulate explains the widespread sustenance of democratic practices in the advanced capitalist societies as well as the underdeveloped and developing nations of the world, a situation that has depicted Nigeria position and the fundamental problem that has circumvented their development plan since first republic, it has been fervently argued that "Capital often flee from countries with continuing or episodic dictatorships (even when these countries have relatively little capital) to the stable democracies, even though the latter are already relatively well supplied with capital and thus offer only modest rates of return"

(1993, p.572). 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 almost similar circumstances, 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" (1993, p.572). 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" (1993, p.572). 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).

Most researchers preferred democratic political system as prerequisite for economic development on the ground that "democracy is not characterized by arbitrary rules, perhaps more effectively limit corruption and thereby preserve established property right" (Durham, 1999, p.83). One of the major attribute of modern democratic states is that "firstly, it secure order over the entire population under its jurisdiction two, is that it provides technique of a peaceful change three, it also enable demand to be satisfied on the widest possible scale" (Lasky, 2004, p.iii) this attribute has been argued to herald national development, since it provides technique for a peaceful change (periodic election) which emphasizes cooperation among the citizen. And to enable demand to be satisfied on the widest possible scale implies that it must also be a productive state and not only a distributive one, and it provides order in the society

which serves as the oiled pivot upon which the entire society rotate. All these attribute of democratic regime that facilitate national development are generally absent in a non-democratic system. In corroboration of the above Durhan (1999) maintained that "coupled with the succession problem in the dictatorships that supposedly debilitates long-run commitments, democracies are more efficient because at least some portion of the polity, the majority, also receives rents" (1999, p.83). These privileges enhance the possibilities of democratic political system to guarantee more wealth among the population which would eventually elevate both the GDP and per capita income.

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 (Lensky, 1966; lipsel, 1959, Meltzer & Richard, 1981) with this type of institutions with development dependency, both the socio-cultural, economic and political development becomes inevitable. This is probably why Gerring, Bond, and Barndt (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" (2005, p.325), Gerring 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 remain democratic, greater will be its physical, human, social, and political... and the better its growth performance" (2005, p.352). Gerring, et al (2005) analysed 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" (2005, p.328). 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" (2005, p.337). So much on the issue of democratization and national development, We shall now turn to the other variable of the study that do not subscribe to the above postulates.

Development trends before and after democratization in nigeria.

#### **FIGURE 1 HERE**

Nigeria unemployment rate (%) (1992 - 2014)

*Source: IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO), April 2015. CIA World Factbook 30th June 2015 and International Labour Organization (ILO).*

The figure one above revealed that the civil and social fabrics of the Nigeria nation has been historically stretched by the obnoxious characteristics of unemployment, and that unemployment has consistently remain one of the country's most challenging socio-economic encumbrance to autarchy. The poverty situation in Nigeria (see table 3) is underpinned by the high unemployment rate, calculated at 23.9% in 2011 as compared to 21.1% in 2010 and 19.7 in 2009 (IMF, 2015). It is evident however, that in order to ameliorate the rate of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria, economic progress must outpace demographic expansion in a progressive manner. However, the prevailing inability of economic expansion and employment generating interventions by the government to catch-up with over 1.8 million new entrants into already filled labour market annually, presents a difficult administrative situation to the eradication efforts in

Nigeria. The “Next generation Nigeria Task Force, report argued that “Nigeria will need to create 15 million new jobs over the next ten years (from 2010) just to keep unemployment at current levels (NGNTF, 2010, p. 45). It therefore appears that if Nigeria can at least actualize a 50% reduction of unemployment in the country, it will have to create 24 million jobs, expanding the job market by 50% or thereabout. Apparently if the unemployment problem is to be reduced to about 7.0% by 2030, the job market have to almost double in size, generating about 50 million on the process. However, the government of Nigeria appears committed to addressing the unemployment discomfort through the present economic transformation programme of Mr. president, which focus particularly on anti-corruption, electricity, agriculture, and infrastructural development, which if achieved will definitely stimulate private sector investment that will, in turn, make use of the ever expanding labour force. And also, the diverse public sector-youth empowerment programmes will at the same time, or expected to play a very big part in absorbing the labour force, *ceteris paribus*.

The Nigeria economy can be rightly argued to have experienced a rather turbulent historical development within the period between 1980 and 2002, swinging between negative and positive growth (see figure 2). Also a condensed historical economic growth, between 1999 and 2014 (see figure 4). The Nigerian GDP real growth rate recorded a whopping 20.8% percent growth rate in 1980, 12.8% in 1990 and 9.1% in 1997 respectively marking an average record of 3.6% percent growth rate between 1980 and 2000. Coinciding with the period of Nigeria’s transformation or alternatively transition from the military authoritarian political system to the contemporary democratically elected government, that took off in 1999 under the leadership of General Olusegun Obasanjo (Rtd) (NRC, 2013). However, between 1999 and 2014, the Nigeria economy has evidently exhibited a reduced but steady development. With the spillover effect of -13.1% growth rates in 1998, the GDP real growth rate reluctantly picked-up with 0.8% in 1999, and struggled up to 6.9% in 2005 and slowing down again in 2014, making a cumulative average of about 5.2% between 1999 and 2014. (See figure 4) for more clarification. The Nigeria economy however, has exhibited a relatively steady and uninterrupted

GDP real growth rate over the last decades or thereabout, which averaged 5.9% as illustrated in figure 4 below. The

### **FIGURE 2 HERE**

: The GDP real growth rate of Nigeria (%) 1980-2002

*Source: Data was retrieved from IMF, world economic outlook (WEO) April 2015; CIA World Factbook, June 2015, while the line graph was constructed by the student using the MS excel package.*

country has not really been noticeably affected by any major macroeconomic crisis over this past period and the pace with which the annual GDP growth rate move has not been below 6.0 % of growth on average since 2007. Although growth in 2014 seems relatively better than the recent past, recording 6.3% by preliminary estimates, as opposed to 5.6% growth in 2009. This may be as a result of weakened sectors of the economy, particularly, oil, trade and agriculture. Sluggish growth in agriculture, trade and oil likely reflects a combination of fallout from series of national strikes, higher energy price (in form of tariffs) and also the growing challenges of insecurity in the northern part of the country (World Bank, 2013).

Notwithstanding, the fact that Nigerian economy appears to be inconsistently growing, under the democratic political dispensation, fact is that, the proportion of Nigerians living in poverty is escalating every year (see figure 3) The percentage of Nigerians living below the poverty line amplified drastically from 1999 to 2015.

In distributing the data into: country poverty incidence, estimated population and the population living in poverty, we observed that the proportion of poverty incidence increased from 27.2% in the 1980s to 65.6% in 1996 and then came down to 54.4% in 2004. But it rise again to 69.0% and 78.3% in 2010 and 2015 respectively. For the population living under poverty in Nigeria, the picture was somewhat different as the trend or proportion remains in the ascending position between 1980 and 2015, irrespective of the promises of democratization, from 17.7 million to 142.7 million respectively. It never relented throughout the period under study. And so is the demographic composition of the country, from 65 million in the 1980s to 182.2 million in 2015. In other words, the

proportion of people living under poverty is quiet higher in the country between 1999 and 2015 (after democratization) compared to 1980 and 1999 which coincided with the period of authoritarian political system in the country. In addition to the above, in fact

### **FIGURE 3 HERE**

Nigeria Relative Poverty Head-count.  
(Selected years)

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). HNLSS 2015

The harmonized Nigeria living standard survey 2010, which is the most recent national representative survey revealed a 62.60 poverty prevalence rate in Nigeria, which implies that over hundred million Nigeria are living in absolute poverty (NMDGR, 2016). The above situation in Nigeria evidently are not in tandem with the country's progress in other macroeconomic indicators already discussed in this section. On that note the situation demand immediate policy change, preferably to the one that can translate and or transfer macroeconomic growth into measurable improvement in the people's welfare and living standard. Independent of the prevailing political system. The people's priority is to be able to secure the basic necessities of life such as food shelter, and peaceful coexistence with others irrespective of tribe or religion and not a popular political system that guarantee nothing related to the standard of life of the people.

The key element in the calculation of Relative Poverty dimension in this study is the family spending. The expenditures as perceived here referred to all the goods and services used in the household. It comprises all the financial connections or transactions, such as donations, daily contributions, savings, Esusu contribution and the likes.

### **FIGURE 4 HERE**

Nigeria Real GDP Growth (%) 1999-2014.

SOURCE; IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO), April 2015. CIA world Fact book 30th June 2015. While the line graph was constructed by the student using the MS excel package.

The Nigeria macroeconomic outlook remains relatively good especially in the side of GDP growth rate (see figure 4). Although the per capita growth rate has shown a not-too-impressive outcome between 2000 and 2014, with an average of 4.86% growth rate (IMF, 2015), the non-oil sector is expected to remain very strong in the years to come. Also the exchange rate, inflation and other macroeconomic are also expected to remain relatively stable in the short and medium term. What cannot be forecasted or predicted in the foreseeable future is the dimension of unemployment and poverty escalation in the present democratic era.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the preceding sections, using the time series approach we have seen that in virtually all the development indicators employed in this study to examine the development trends in pre and post-democratized Nigeria, and which was derived from the 2015 United Nations/World bank development indicators, but with a particular attention on economy, such as GDP real growth rate, unemployment rate and poverty level. Nigeria was never in a standstill at any point in the period covered, she continued to climb both in the negative and positive directions. But the study objective is to ascertain whether the democratization of Nigeria enhanced their national development. In order words it seeks to understand if the attacks on the validity of democratic hypotheses have any substance, or if it's just a scholarly exercise.

However, we noticed from the available data that the democratization process in Nigeria between 1999 and 2014 has a positive correlation with some national development indicators insofar as it enhances their growth or development, notwithstanding the conspicuous difficulties and tempo of the trend. 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 problem is that, it's not in all aspect of development indicator that this has happen, since this study has revealed that some development indicators such as unemployment,

poverty 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 Nigeria in some aspects performed relatively better during their authoritarian days than their democratic period, though with a sluggish pace still, specifically, the poverty trend were relatively better with 27.2% poverty incidence in 1990s against 78.3% in 2015 (see figure 3). Nigeria also recorded their highest GDP growth rate on annual bases during their authoritarian political dispensation (see figure 2). In addition the country appears to have enjoyed a better control of her unemployment rate and or, unemployment problems during their authoritarian period than they are at present. historical facts contends vigorously that the countries had better control of unemployment trend prior to democratization, with Nigeria recording as low as 28.0% unemployment rate in 1992 against 37.2% unemployment rate in 2014 (see figure 1). The above data 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, 2005). It seems at this point that what is in issue here is no longer the minor matters of 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 (Lasky, 2004). What are we trying to imply here? 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. However, the political philosophy or ideologies of these government managers, or alternatively the ruling class within that society automatically becomes the official ideology of that collectivity independent of the state forms. If it is developmental idea, then it will herald a developmental state just like the Asian tigers, but if it's reactionary it will bring a conservative state just like in Nigeria. Democracy, democratization has no role to play under these circumstances vis-à-vis the national development of a given society.

#### REFERENCES

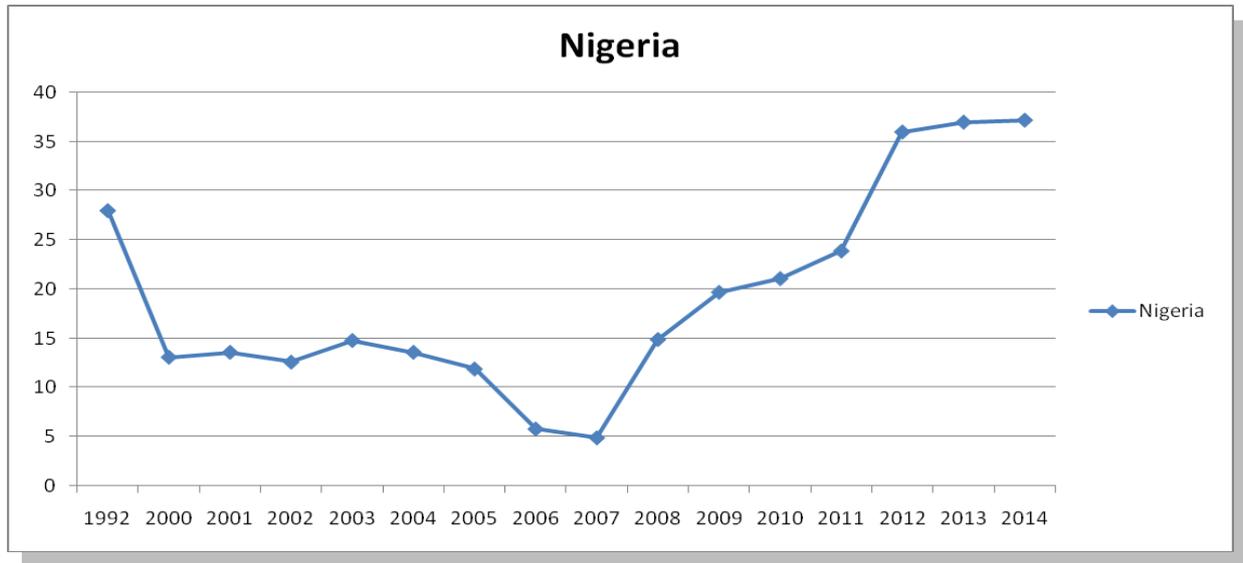
- Acemoglu, D. and Robinson, J. A. (2001). Inefficient redistribution. *American Political science Review*, 93 (3), 9-22.
- Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S. and Robinson, J.A. (2003). An African success story: Botswana. In R. Danny (eds.), *In search of prosperity* (pp. 200-222). New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Adedji, A. (1997). Popular participation, democracy and development. Is there a dialectical linkage? In A. Adedeji and O.Oniju (eds.), *Nigeria: Revival from the root? The struggle for democratic development* (pp.310-343). Ijebu Ode: Oni Publications.
- Agagu, A.A. (2004). The Nigeria State, democracy and development: A hope betrayed? In A. A. Agagu and R.F. Ola (eds.), *Development Agenda of the Nigeria State* (pp.123-140). Ibadan: Fiag Nigeria Publishers
- Alence, R. (2002). Political Institution and Developmental governance in Sub-Saharan Africa.. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 42 (2), 163-187.
- Anigala, A (2001). *Democratization process in Nigeria*. London: Avebury Inc.

- Ary, D.; Jacobs, L.C. and Razavieh, A. (1972). Introduction to research in education. New York: HOLT, Rinehart and Winston.
- Aziegbe, A.J. (1992). The third wave of democratization and Nigeria experience. *The Journal of African studies*, 4 (1), 35-47.
- Azra, A. (2003). The Megawati Presidency: Challenge of political Islam. In S. Smith and M. Ling (eds), *Government in Indonesia: Challenges facing Megawati Presidency* (pp.44-69). Singapore: ISEAS.P.
- Bellinger, P. T. and Acrcce, M. (2010). Protest and democracy in Latin America's market era. *Political Research Quarterly*. Published by Sage
- Bhawati, J. N. (2002). Democracy and development: Cruel dilemma or symbolic relationship? *Review of Development Economics*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Cororaton, C. B. and Abdula, R. (1999). Productivity of Philippine manufacturing. *Philippine institute for development studies*. Discussion paper series No 99
- Durham, J. B. (1999). Economic growth and political regimes. *Journal of economic growth*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Press
- Elahi, K. Q. and Danopoulos, C. P. (2004). Democracy and development: exploring the expected association. *Journal of security sector management*, 2 (4)
- Gering, J. Bond, P. and Barndt, W. T. (2005). Democracy and economic growth: A historical perspectives. *World Politics* 57
- Goldstone, J. A. and Kocornik-Mina, A.(2005). Democracy and development: new insight from diagraph. *Centre for Global Policy Working Paper* 18/25/05.
- Huntington, S. P (1984). Will more countries become democratic? *Political Science Quarterly*, 99 (2), 112-125.
- ILO (2015). Global Employment trends for youths <http://www.ILO.ORG/WCMSP5/groups>. Retrieved August 25, 2015
- International Monetary Fund (2013). Nigeria 2012 Article of consultation. (International Monetary Fund No 12/194. Geneva: IMF.
- International Monetary Fund (2015). World economic outlook. (International Monetary Fund No 17/188. Washington DC: IMF
- Khan, M. H and Jomo, K., S. (2000). Rent seeking and economic development: theory and evidence in Asia. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Kim, R.K. (2003). Case study, research and method (3rd eds). California: Landman Inc.
- Kjear, M. (2004). Governance. Cambridge: polity Press.
- Leftwich, A. (2005). Democracy and development, is there institutional incompatibility? *Democratization*, 12 (5), 686-703.
- Lepset, S.M. (1959). Some social requisite of democracy economic development and Political legitimacy. *American political science review*, 53 (1), 69-105.
- Lipset, S: M. (1981). *Political Man: the social basic of politics*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.
- Macedo, J. B. (2003). Development redux: reflection for a new paradigms. OECD Development Centre. OECD Working paper No. 215
- Mazoui, A (2002). Nigeria research for good governance and national development

- dilemmas of policy and leadership. In I.Y. Lane and H. Dabin (eds.), *Democracy, good governance and national development in Nigeria: Actualizing the Public mandate* (220-237). Ibadan: Spectrum Books
- Meltza, A. H. and Richard, S. F. (1981). A rational theory of the size of government. *Journal of Political Economy*, 89.
- Nigeria Bureau Of Statistics (2013). *Gross domestic product ( Revised 2011 and Estimates for Q1-Q4)* Abuja: NBS
- Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (2013). *The Millennium Development Goals Survey 2012*. Abuja: NBS
- Nigeria Bureau Of Statistics (2014). *Economic outlook for Nigeria economy (2013-2016)*. Abuja: FBS.
- Nwanolue, B. O. G and Ojukwu, U. G. (2012). Legislative efficiency and democratic stability in the fourth republic governance and politics of Nigeria: A re-appraisal of National Assembly. *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and management Review*, 1 (9), 25-37.
- Okafor, E.E. (2011), *Youths Unemployment and Implication for stability of democracy in Nigeria*, *Journal of sustainable development in Africa*, 13 (1), 40-57.
- Olson, M. (1993). Dictatorship, democracy and development. *American political Science Review*, 87 (3), 45-58.
- Omotola, J.S. (2006). No democracy no development or vice versa?. In A. Salin (eds.), *Democracy and development in Nigeria* (34-49). Lagos: Concept Publishers.
- Oseghae, E.E. (1995). Ethnicity in Africa or African ethnicity. The search for a contextual understanding. In G. Himmelstraid (eds.). *African perspectives in development, controversies, dilemmas and Openings* (83-97). London: James Curracy Ltd .
- OSSAP-MDG (2010). *Nigeria Millennium Development Goals (MDGS): Countdown strategy 2010-2015-Achieving the MDGs*, Abuja: OSSAP-MOGS
- Remmer, K. L. (1986). *The Politics of economic stabilization: IMF standby Programme in Latin America 1954-1984*. *Comparative Politics*, 19 \
- Remmer, K. l. (1990). *Democracy and economic crises: the Latin America experience*. *World Politics* 42 (3), 73-88.
- Rocha -Menocal, A. ( 1998). *The might of the infallible technocrat: Policy-making in Mexico under the Salinas administration*, *Journal of public and international affairs*, 9 (1), 167-182.
- Rocha-Menocal, A. (2007). *Analyzing the relationship between democracy and development: Defining basic concepts and assessing linkages*.
- Rocha-Menocal, A. and Rogerson, A. (2006). *Which way the future of aids? Southern civil society perspective on current debate on reform of the international aid system*, ODI Working Paper. No 259. London: ODI.
- Rodrick, D. (2006). *Institutions for high quality growth: what they are and how to acquire them* (55-62). NBEL Working pepper series.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Zack- Williams, A.B. ((2001). *No Democracy no development: Reflection on democracy and development in Africa*, *A review of African Political economy*, 28 (85), 24-37.

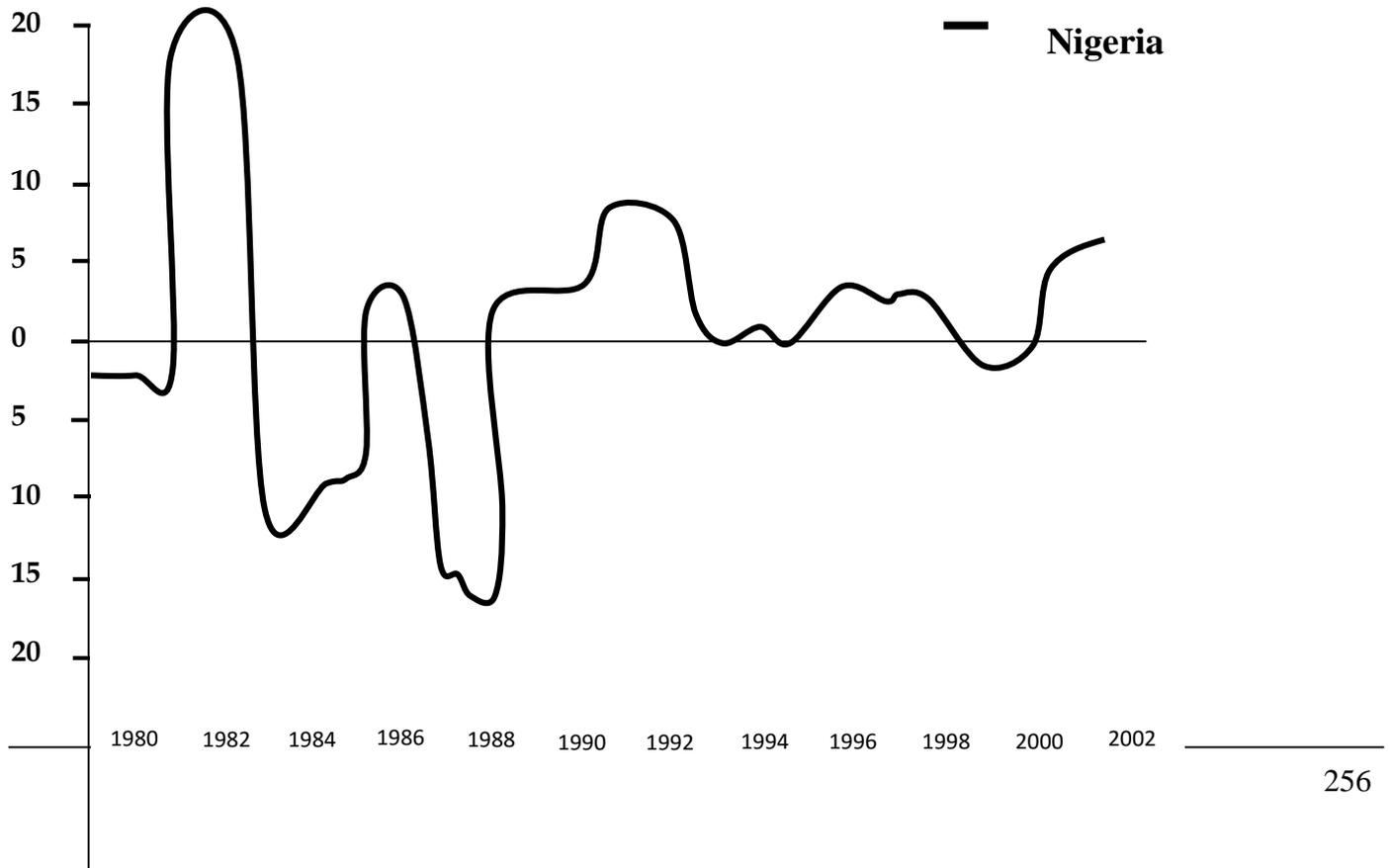
## APPENDIX

Figure 1: Nigeria unemployment rate (%) (1992 - 2014)



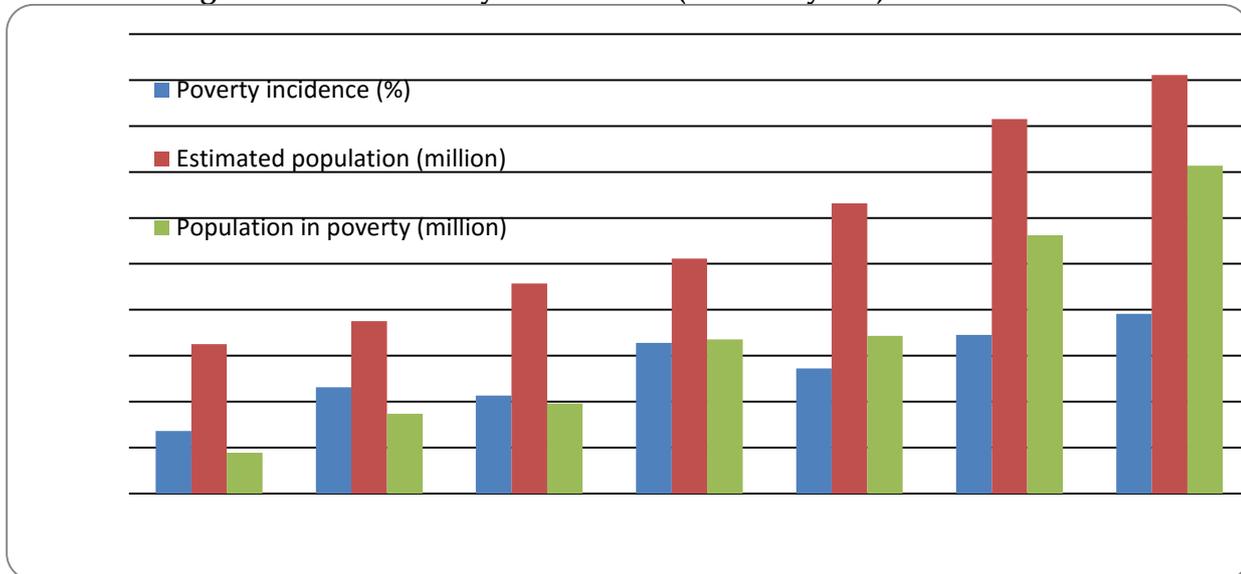
Source: IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO), April 2015. CIA World Factbook 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and International Labour Organization (ILO).

FIGURE 2: The GDP real growth rate of Nigeria (%) 1980-2002



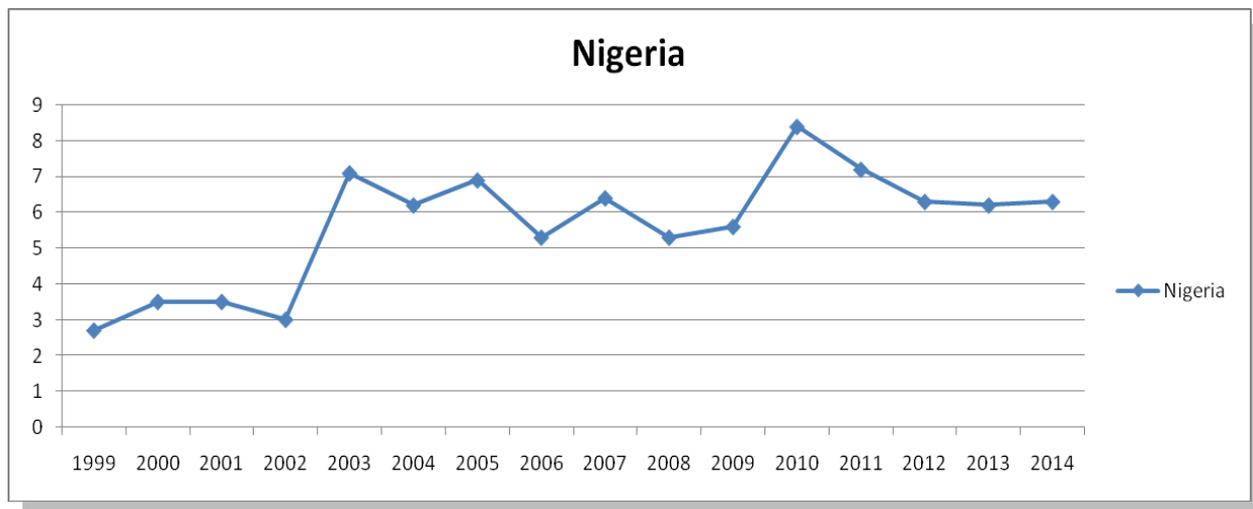
Source: Data was retrieved from IMF, world economic outlook (WEO) April 2015; CIA World Factbook, June 2015, while the line graph was constructed by the student using the MS excel package.

FIGURE 3: Nigeria Relative Poverty Head-count. (Selected years)



Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). HNLSS 2015

FIGURE 4: Nigeria Real GDP Growth (%) 1999-2014.



SOURCE; IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO), April 2015. CIA world Fact book 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015. While the line graph was constructed by the student using the MS excel package.