

Review

State-economy relations and survival of democratic governance in transiting societies: Lessons from South Korea

E.B.A. Agbaje

Department of Political Sciences, Faculty of the Social Sciences, Okuku Campus, Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria.

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Rational men support institutions that best guarantee the attainment of their socioeconomic aspirations. Of all known political rationalizations, democracy, it is that best prides such. However, in certain climes, there are inhibitive factors defiling the success of democracy, much of which is located within the state-economy relations. With a state-economy relations and democratic governance model, this paper comparatively, examined the trajectories of development in transiting societies in Asia and sub-Sahara Africa. It unveils that much of the failure at ensuring sustenance of democratic governance across transiting societies, in this case Nigeria, as compared with South Korea, stem from the contradictions arising from the interface between the state and the economy. With the Korean insight, despite regional peculiarities, it insists that efforts at reprofiling the state to ensure sustenance of democratic order should be premised on appropriate framework that captures the various indexes and promotes mutually reinforcing positive synergy between the state and the economy.

Key words: State, state-economy relations, democratic governance, transiting societies, Nigeria, South Korea, Africa and Asia.

INTRODUCTION

Marxian history of social development teaches that rational men only support government that fulfills the conditions for their continued existence. Man, to Samuelson (1980) is homoeconomicus (Ogunmodede, 1986). Economic interests and loyalty come first and permeate all his thoughts, outlooks, interests and activities. His first loyalty, however veiled, is to his economic interest; and his second loyalty will be given to any or institution which serves to promote those interests

(Awolowo, 1978). To Osaghae (1994), the extent, therefore, to which a political regime serves the interest of its subjects determines their preference for support or withdrawal.

Democracy, as of today, offers the greatest prospect despite the various charges of weakness. It is yet "the least objectionable" form of government (Appadorai, 1968). Quoting Cavour, Appadorai noted "things may be bad today but they were worst yesterday... However

E-mail: ebagbaje@yahoo.com; elijah.agbaje@uniosun.edu.ng

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grave the indictment that may be brought against democracy, its friends can answer 'what better alternative do you offer' (Ibid). However, despite the global clamour for democracy (Fawole, 1994; Onovo, 1997; El-Baz, 2005; Anon, 2006), it is observed that there are inhibitive factors that have, and may still, condition its failure in certain political systems.

Adopting comparative analysis, this paper examined the trajectory of socioeconomic and democratic development in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia with the choice of Nigeria and South Korea, both being postcolonial states, as case studies. South Korea, like Nigeria four decades ago, was typically a less-developed country with an average per-capita income of US\$100 (Lau, 1990; Mimiko, 1999), and a GDP of US\$3,810m, while Nigeria had US\$3,150m. In the modern epoch, both have experienced close to three decades of military authoritarianism with reported cases of corruption. Compared to Nigeria's 923,768km, Korea suffered serious territorial limitations- 98477 sq km. Also, it seems only ethnic diversity manifestly differentiates the two countries with Nigeria having well over 250 ethnic groups while South Korea has a small Chinese minority among her population. On religion however, South Korea is indeed more heterogeneous than Nigeria, having adherents of Christianity, Buddhism, Shamanism, Confucianism and Chondogya.

Nevertheless, today, there is a gulf of difference between South Korea and Nigeria socially, economically, technologically, industrially and increasingly, politically. This fact remains incontrovertible with the mass of evidence to that effect (Lall, 1993; Nelson and Park, 1998; Lau, 1990; Mimiko, 1999; Hart-Landsberg and Burkett, 2001; Mody, 1999). If the Nigerian and African situation must change for better, the first thing to do is to embrace the advice by Datt and Ravallion (1996) that:

A key to sound development ... may lie in understanding why some economies have performed so much better than others in escaping absolute poverty.

It is against this backdrop that this article unveils many of the factors accounting for world acclaimed socioeconomic development and sustenance of democratic order in South Korea as against the failure of similar orders in Nigeria. It traced the Nigerian failure to socioeconomic maladjustments inherent in the state-economy relations. To achieve better results in socioeconomic development and sustenance of democratic order, this paper, with elaborate indexing, attempts profiling relevant state-economy relations and democratic governance model considered appropriate for promotion of economic development and sustenance of democratic governance. It insists that except genuine effort is made to ensure positive mutual reinforcement of the state-economy nexus, sustenance of democracy or any regime for that matter will remain a pipe-dream in troubled transiting

societies.

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many of the problems inducing political and democratic instability in the less-developed countries can be traced to socioeconomic and developmental failure that is very endemic in Africa (Zehender, 1990). Anstee (1990) in explaining the 'malaise of Sub-Sahara Africa', submitted that "perhaps the term 'crisis' is often used too quickly, but the depressing living conditions prevailing in many Third World countries at the present time do not appear to permit another description". To Anstee, crisis of development is particularly pronounced in sub-Sahara Africa, as countries in this part of the world show marked differences in political systems, in natural endowments of raw materials, in their socio-cultural frameworks and in their economic order. Writing further, he concluded, "with only a few exceptions, however, they show similar symptoms of crisis".

Reviewing some of the factors causing developmental failures, Streeten (1969) identified and grouped such under six categories- output and income, conditions of production, levels of living, attitude to work and life, institutions and policies. To Streeten, these are conditions that are casually interrelated, in the sense that a change in one condition will cause changes in some or all other and properly forms the component of state-economy relations. In societies where state-economy relations are not well resolved, and therefore constituting inhibitive factors, sustenance of economically failing state and democracy stands a tall order.

The hope for continued harmonious subsistence of such transiting polities requires that those at the helm of affairs, the political leadership, which is a nodal factor of the state-economy nexus, fashion out programmes that will mitigate the increasing exacerbation of the divisive and restive tendencies among the people. No doubt, one best way of achieving this is to see that fundamental attributes and desires of the people are generally constantly respected. In particular, the socioeconomic well-being of the people should be one of the major undisguised goals of government and governance. It is incontrovertible that except the political arrangement makes it possible for people to meet their socioeconomic needs without any form of perceived or manifest inequity, prolonged injustice, undisguised discrimination and chronic interclass subjugation, it will fail to command the much needed social capital. And, where such indispensable value such as unanimous nationwide loyalty and patriotic commitment of the people to nation-building is lacking, development cannot be achieved. And in such climes, mass defense of democratic institutions will become an uphill task. This is more so in heterogeneous societies and states more often than not characterized by centrifugal tendencies.

It is to be realized that democracy thrives on national loyalty and selfless commitment of the citizens. This ideal, which forms the pillar of democratic sustainability, can only be attained where the philosophical underpinning of the state is positively developmental and based on the ideals of mutual existence and satisfaction of the leaders and the led. Attainment of widespread development and sustenance of democratic governance is clearly impossible in a system that is heavily weighted in favour of corrupt ruling elites to the detriment of the survival of the citizens. In underdeveloped societies suffering from negative state-economy relations, sustenance of democratic rule stands a tall order. The way out of impending instability, therefore, lies in properly profiling state-economy relations to attune it to the exigencies of mass development. How best to pursue this goal serves the central focus of this piece. The conviction is shared that:

Political stability, whether in democracy or quasi democracy, could not be pursued for its own sake. In the circumstances of developing countries, what was [and still] more important [is] good government that responds positively to the demands and expectations of the people (Osaghae, 1994).

To Osaghae, only a government that performs well can be stable, if what sustains it in power is voluntary support or consent of the citizens. Generally speaking, therefore, the reasons why people may be interested in politics or why they may decide to support, oppose, or be passive to the business of government, in trial democracies as we have in transiting societies, are tied to the stakes or returns they expect from it. As of now, there is so much failing in this regard.

Much of the vices (Akindele, 1995) responsible for truncation of previous attempts at democratic governance still manifest across present transiting societies. African democracies are still ridden by electoral fraud, political self-aggrandizement, state-facilitated socioeconomic corruption, poverty-induced social polarization and bitterness. In all of these, the place of leadership as an important index of state is not lost. Ideally, as an impartial and committed moderator of social milieu, Muganda (1997), in *Mobilizing quietly for impact...* stated:

Public leadership simply means members of the public through their established system have entrusted on their leaders the thrust and responsibility of managing public affairs –both political and administrative discharging their duties impartially and faithfully with public weal in mind.

Muganda (1997) expects that “the establishment of a system of integrity and the requirement that it be mandatorily observed by leaders” will spur the emerging leadership of the new democratic order to make bold moves towards eradication of socio-economic vices. Leadership indiscretion, corruption and pronounced distributive inequity that have in the past been major obstacles

to attainment of development and sustenance of democratic governance will continue to pose as potent barriers to attainment of order in developing societies.

In a recent work ‘Beyond the State: Nigeria’s Search for Positive Leadership’ analysts have revealed that post independence experience with politics and regimes up to the current Fourth Republic have largely been a perverted one in which leadership preoccupation in power has been “prevarication of truth, and self-seeking politics of frills and window-dressing” (Olukoshi Et al., 2005). Giving the negative characterization of most developing states in Africa, democracy, devoid of its constitutive economic values, despite its other lofty promises, remains threatened.

Ensuring sustenance therefore requires a state that is constructively developmental in terms of genuine leadership commitment to and mobilization for development. Democratic sustenance will not be possible in any system that is manifestly corrupt and parasitically distributive. Such can only inevitably end-up discrediting any political paradigm it adopts, democracy inclusive. Except the right values prevail and genuine effort is made to frame development-oriented state-economy relations that assures people-centered socioeconomic policies and programmes, citizens will remain disenchanting with government and governance. The result for Africa will be inducing another round of systemic instability across transiting nations.

Historicity of circumstantial and preventable failures of democracy: the case of Nigeria

Failure of democracy has been well documented across history and climes (Benes, 1939 cited in Appadorai et al., 1997; Abubakar, 1998; Diamond, 2002). Apart from indictment relating to slowness and inefficiency of some democratic methods and leadership, the high degree of partiality, corruption and incapacity of bureaucracy and other government machineries subjugated very often to the exaggerated party spirit have been observed. Across trial democracies, undue facilitation of party interests leads to situations in which ideal and appropriate sanctions are negotiated away in the spirit of partisan politics and party interest.

Not borrowing, as expected, from the successful models of the developed democracies, many of the avoidable ills of socioeconomic and political mismanagement that defiled past experiences are still the defining realities of many subsisting trial democracies in transiting African societies. Despite its oddities, these manifest abuses in pseudo-democracies have been major causes persuading frustrated mass of the people, to still see autocracy and armed struggle as worthy interludes to free society from socioeconomic and political woes committed by principal stakeholders in the so-called democratic regimes. The direct consequence of

the above, from experience, has been that people over-time have had course to eulogize autocracy recounting its achievements in places like Spain, Portugal of the past and in the recent history, South Korea and other Asian tigers. Therefore, rather than merely wishing away the possibility of failure of dysfunctional democracies wherever it persists, the earlier it is realized the better that it is the worrisome conducts of the ruling class and frustrated expectations that have, in the past decades, been swinging the pendulum from democracy to autocracy. The logical result has been the increasing systemic instability in some African countries as observed in the recent years.

Even though the fortune of these dramatic changes from disappointing trial democracies to authoritarian order last only for a short time, the authoritarian interludes, though itself abnormal when they occur, provide a break in civilian malady, and relief for people that have met disappointment in democracy. Where luck obtains, though this is very rare particularly in Africa, some autocratic leaders have instituted changes that are conducive to gestation of ideal democratic order. The examples of Ghana and South Korea are exceptionally good ones.

The focus in this paper, however, is not to discredit democracy but to itemize instances in which efforts towards its sustenance can become discredited and unsustainable. It is the belief that the realization by all stakeholders of possible failure of democratic trials will help to inspire those in positions of authority to begin to seek, within the purview of development-prone state-economy relations, ways of avoiding many of the pitfalls that currently undermines socioeconomic development and sustenance of inchoate democracies in transiting African societies.

A focus on Nigerian democratic history in the reflections of other transiting societies

Writing on some of the factors inhibiting attainment of development and sustenance of democratic governance in Nigeria, scholars have attested to cultural variegation (Isichei, 1977; Suberu, 1998; Osarhieme, 1998; Tamuno, 1998; Otite, 1973; Osaghae, 1999; Easterly, 2000). Others have pinpointed political asymmetry and dis-aggregative federal structures (Osuntokun, 1979; Ayoade, 1997). From economic point of view, analysts (Onyeoziri, 1984; Shehu, 1994; Lewis, 1994; Joseph, 1991, 1999; El-Rufai, 2005; Agbaje, 2004, 2011) have identified elitist conspiracy and corruption, laying of false foundation for economic development, mono-economy, etc as banes of socio-political development. Hence, effort is required towards unveiling an appropriate framework for overcoming many of these multifaceted and inter-woven challenges.

Just as it has been experienced in some other African countries, Nigeria has experienced three democratic

dispensations. The First Republic, which ran from October 1st 1960 to January 15th 1966, was terminated due to avoidable lapses on the part of its operators- the immediate post-independence Nigerian leadership. With the exception of a few, the bulk of the leadership of that era was not only adjudged as incompetent, unfocussed and deficient in terms of economic and developmental planning, some of its anchormen were alleged to be corrupt (Huntington, 1968). The Second Republic equally came to an end on the account of the same misdeeds, even at a greater dimension (Achebe, 1981; Akinsanya, 1987; Semenitari, 2005; Obasanjo, 2005).

The ugly experience of the failed Second Republic almost eternally discredit democracy in Nigeria as people rolled out drums to welcome the military as an end of the year gift to the nation, and a source of hope in the coming year when they decided to intervene on the New Year Eve- 31st of December 1983. The third democratic experiment, after spending billions of Naira on the longest and the most expensive democratic transition ever witnessed in Nigerian and African history, came to an end also on the same account of grand socioeconomic and political corruption (Diamond et al., 1997). Even against the military regime that superintended its birth, to put an end to the ill-fated Third Republic, as it will happen also to any irresponsible democratic regime, the high waves of socioeconomic and political dissatisfaction forced the people to resort to all manner of tactics, though unconventionally, to ensure the downfall. This widespread discontentment was not seen in the pseudo civilian interim and military extensions of the republic. They all fell into the pity of history dug the angry citizens. This insurgence by the civil populace and civil society organizations (Abutudu 1995) was contemplated and determinedly hatched irrespective of the negative effects that such anarchic and temporary instability may have on the State and the system. The belief then was that no sacrifice and effort was considered too much to free the society from the leadership-induced strangulation of Nigeria and Nigerians.

It is true that the military from historical evidences has never been a better alternative to civil governance. It is also instructive that where democracy failed to discharge its *raison d'être* of combating corruption and making people comfortable in the shortest possible time, the hurting shadows of past frustrated expectations across transiting societies in Africa remain fertile ground for full blown military and pseudo-military armed insurgencies. Just as it has been across African history, "the indiscipline of the political class manifested in intra- and inter-party squabbles, corruption, economic mismanagement provided the Nigerian military the opportunity to terminate the second republic in December 1983" (Abubakar, 1998). Democratic delinquencies arising from the cumulative effects of the mismanagement of national socioeconomic and political affairs by African political class have often resulted into assemblage of woes

(Diamond, 1995 cited by Osha, 1998). Across Africa generally, and Nigerian in particular, there has been great lag in institutional capacity, flexibility and legitimacy. Socioeconomic problem is ever-mounting. Problems are increasing due to state corruption and ineptitude, just as proliferation of crime and violence is fast contributing to the withering of state authority. More and more of the people now prefer abandoning the state while retreating into informal arenas. The delinquent state performance has resulted into political and national wealth becoming monopolized by an increasingly narrow elite and mass constituencies becoming more and more alienated, angry and embittered. "Every type of institutional glue that binds diverse cultures, regions, classes and factions together into a common national framework gradually disintegrates" (Diamond, 1995 cited by Osha, 1998).

From immediate post independence to the present, Africa generally, and Nigeria in particular, has continued to witness bad tastes in democratic trials. The nature and the effects of the socioeconomic errors committed even in democracy by the political class remain very potent in the explanation of democratic summersaults across Africa. Not borrowing from the wisdom of earlier criticism (Maloney, 1965), avoidable political mistakes and wanton corruption occasioned by economic parasitism, perpetrated through the activities of over-entrenched and selfish ruling class have made nonsense of the opportunities (Agbaje et al., 2004). The resources and dispensations that the rest of the world leaders used to bail their nations and continent out of political uncertainty and economic penury have been corruptly expended by African and Nigerian leaders (Ezeife, 1995; Nwabueze, 1993; Omoruyi et al., 1994, Diamond, 2002; Ake, 2005; Agbaje, 2004, 2011).

At the onset of the current Nigerian Fourth Republic, reviewing the democratic process in Nigeria of 1979-1983, and intending it to serve as a note of caution for the emergent Fourth Republic politicians and leaders, Diamond (2002) submitted that the failure of the then democratic regime "raises the question of the future of the democratic system. Democracy though alive in Nigeria... has been 'badly wounded... Liberal Democracy in Nigeria is still far from secure". As experienced in the recent time across some Maghreb and central African states, and even presently in Nigeria, the intended lesson has not been learnt as socioeconomic mismanagement and its attendant damages still impact on the citizens' livelihood.

While one is persuaded to want to reason that not only for Nigeria, "poverty reduction is the most difficult challenge facing African people and has remained the greatest obstacle to pursuit of sustainable socioeconomic growth and democratic sustainability". Also, in Obasanjo's words:

The growing incidence and dynamics of poverty have stratified and polarized African society between the haves

and the have-nots, between the north and the south ... The resulting...social conflicts have eroded the fabric that held society together (National Planning Commission, 2004).

Therefore, "the challenge for most of African states is not only to reform the economy in order to boost economic growth but also to empower the people as a means of revitalizing the weakened social pillar" (National Planning Commission, 2004).

To reveal the criticality of positive and development-inducing state-economy relations to systemic stability, Nikitin (1983), paraphrasing Marx on the fatal consequence of poverty to the continued subsistence of any society, objectively stated "any society will perish if it ceases to produce material wealth; so, as Marx teaches, the production of material wealth is the basis of life and development of any society". Regrettably however, rather than evolving strategies that will ensure development of their nations and people, African states and leaders, with a few exceptions, have failed woefully to commit themselves, and enlist the support of their subjects, towards the attainment of corruption-free socioeconomic development. In most cases, as Nigerian experience teaches, states and leaders have been facilitators of corruption and mass underdevelopment; and these have become major obstacles to sustenance of democratic governance.

Judging from the works of analysts (Sung, 1973; Nelson and Park, 1998; Lau, 1990; Lall, 1993; Mimiko, 1999; Ashoka, 1999; Hart and Burkett, 2001), many of the Asian countries that were also among the least developed as at the time most African countries gained their independence of *great-but-lost-hopes* have by the last decade of the twentieth century, attained transformation and greatness not only eco-technologically over the preceding thirty-five years. They have also rapidly developed from the status of technologically backward and poor nations to that of relatively 'modern and affluent economies', and are on the path to political greatness. This feat was made possible courtesy of pragmatic leadership adopting the '*Right fundamentals*', advantageously reinforcing '*Conducive culture*', allowing positive '*Contagion*', and where necessary pragmatically promoting '*Wrong prices*'. Crediting their roles, Petri (1993) described this developmental process as pragmatic application of neoclassical rhetoric by determined, development-oriented and purposive regimes and leadership. Despite the reluctance of the developed countries to transfer technology (Ake, 1978; Kwanashie, 1988), across these nations, positive investments of resources have generated rapid inventions. South Korea, Indonesia, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore that have, more or less, never witnessed political liberalism in the past have not only attained commendable industrial and technological development; but are now on the way to long lasting all-embracing socioeconomic and democratic experience. Even the 7000 islands country –Philippines, upon positive

and all-benefitting state-economy relations, despite great territorial hindrance, prolonged colonialism and authoritarianism, is already on the path of progress. At the end of the twentieth century, Philippines' education and manpower development programme was ranked one of the best in the world.

No doubt, the level of success already attained by those countries seems a testimony of the constructive philosophical foundation upon which state-economy relations is grounded in such regions. This suggests that those countries, unlike their Nigerian counterparts (Olukoshi et al., op cit) in postcolonial era, have states and leaders that pride themselves in high dosage of economic nationalism and, with a mutually reinforcing state-economy relations, are harmoniously united and oriented towards development of their respective nations and people

Has democracy a chance of succeeding in African transiting societies as it seems in Asia? Towards a new comparative paradigm –the SERD Model

Democracy has proved its success in small, big, homogenous and heterogeneous nations. It has blossomed and endured in almost all the developed nations. Surprisingly, however, democracy has failed in most less-developed and poorer regions of the world. Searching for some enabling conditions, indication around the world has been that a correlation exists between economic prosperity and survival of democratic governance. At least, if economic prosperity is not a precursor to democratic success as it has been observed in India and few other places, it is a necessary complement. Inexcusably, it is a popular view that, through its principles of openness, integrity, probity and accountability, democracy should promote economic development (Mc-Quillans in Langseth and Simpkins, 1996). But, advancing economic development, in Thomas view, requires the existence of a state and leadership class that is economically productive, all-embracing and all-caring (Thomas in Langseth and Galt, 1996). This thus suggests a bi-directional causality as against the common place unidirectional notion of democracy-development synergy.

Whereas, experience across Africa on the role of the state in economic management has been pervasively negative, the story is different in other developing regions of the world. Like Nigeria and some African countries, Brazil, South Korea, China, Malaysia, and several others in the 60s fall between the middle-low and middle-high income group, with Nigeria placed in the middle-high, hovering around the same per capita income with South Korea, and sharing other similar indexes of socio-economic and political development. All observed natural limitations of associated with territory and cultural inhibitions such as religion (Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs 2006) have been able to retard Korea's march towards development. According to Lau (1990),

South Korea four decades ago was typically a less-developed country and comparatively with little potentials for such world-acclaimed astronomical development. But the story has changed for the better.

Unveiling why some economies and democracies have performed so distinctively better than the others remains the exact goal of most comparative studies. On this line, it is here noted that there is however the need to avoid the usual pitfall of mono-factor analysis in favour of a more robust multivariate analysis as captured in Figure 1.

After decades of investigating the Korean miracle, there has been controversies generated by conscious denial of the centrality of the state by 'neoclassical analysts' [who, more often, are interested in crediting 'the market' than its 'fixer'- the state (Mimiko, 1999)] about the world producing an 'unchallenged explanatory paradigm' for unveiling the key factors of such phenomenal development. But much of these controversies have been duly interrogated (Mimiko, 1999). There is a general consensus on the undeniable role of the state in the development of South Korea; thus putting an end to the 'statist-neoclassicist controversy' (Hart-Landsberg and Burkett, 2001). As things now stand, there is a growing need not only to analyze the nature and role of the state across countries and regions in line with the accepted explanation of the 'Asian model' of development, but also to seek ways of applying the proven paradigm towards overcoming the problems of underdevelopment and systemic instability in Nigeria and other transiting societies in Africa.

As hinted above, to fully understand the complexity of the problems confronting transiting societies, as a precursor to making them truly developmental, efforts at reprofiling the state must adopt a multivariate or multi-factorial approach (Figure 1). It is very persuading that through such eclectic, clear understanding and analysis of the problems and factors, a mutually reinforcing state-economy relations capable of enabling comprehensive retooling and re-engineering of transiting states and democracies to make them truly developmental can be meaningfully achieved. To this end, attempt is made to further reveal the centrality of the state and its indexes in explaining state-economy relations that gave rise to the phenomenal development history of South Korea as one of the most successful Asian examples.

The 'state' in development discourse

For a start, the state, as a modal factor in state-economy relations has been subject of passionate analysis, differing nomenclature and statures. To Evans (1997), these changing theoretical perspectives cannot be separated from the real historical changes in the position of the state (Agbaje, 2011). Evans noted, the demand on the state has burgeoned. Across developed countries, demographically driven increases in transfer of payment have resulted in doubling of government expenditures as

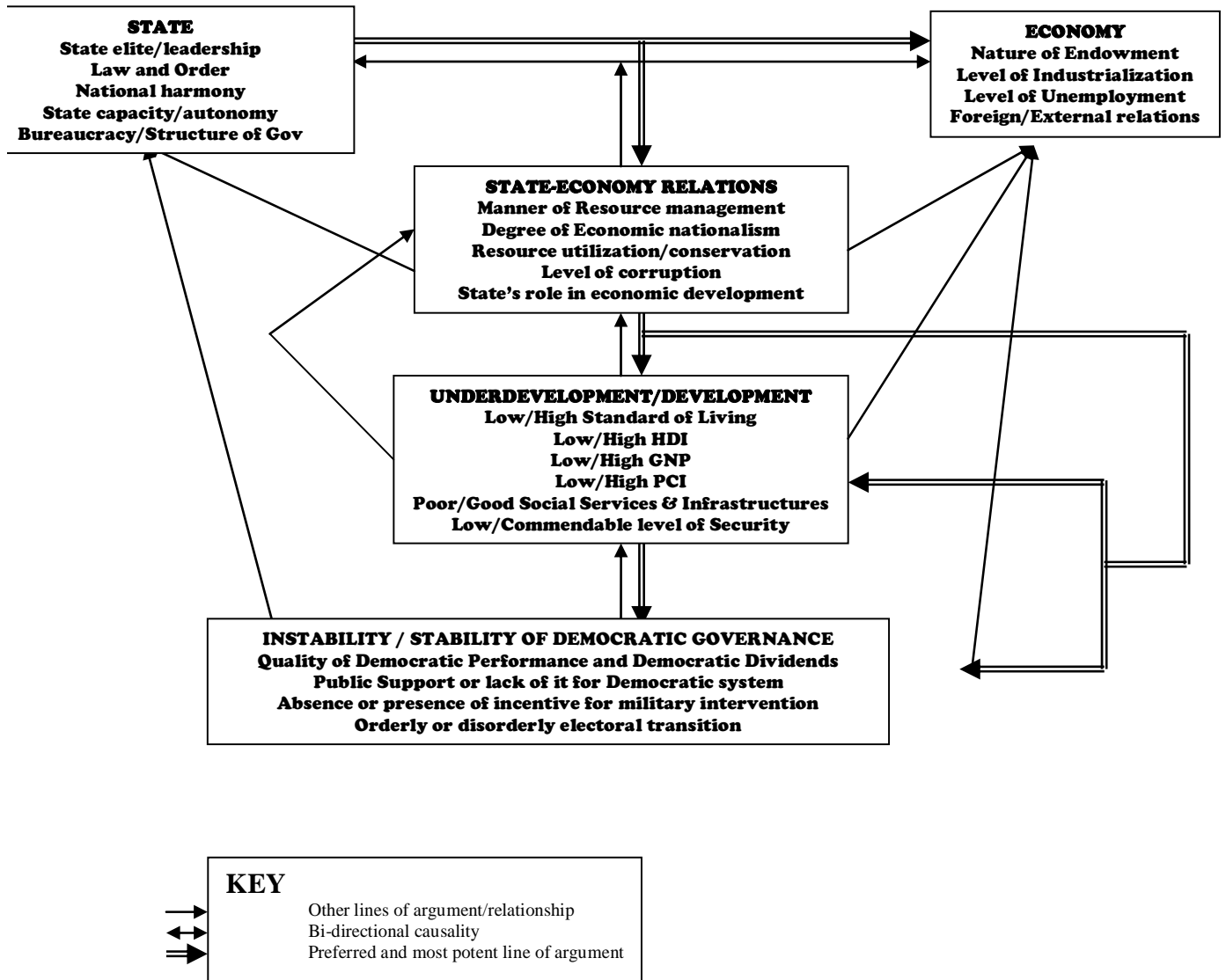


Figure 1. State-Economy relations and democratic governance (SERD) model .

a proportion of GDP. Also, in developing countries, the desire for more rapid economic development has produced similar expansion. Thus, given the diverse manifestations of the state over time, scholars have been burdened with the task of ascertaining what exactly the state is or should be. Hinting the widest possible conceptualization of the State, Benjamin and Duvall (1985) have extracted the following from literatures:

1. The state as government by which is meant the collective set of personnel who occupy positions of decisional authority in the polity.
2. The state as public bureaucracy or administrative apparatus as a coherent totality and as an institutionalized legal order (see also Krasner 1984)
3. The state as a ruling class.
4. The state as a normative order.

The state is defined, more or less, by historical realities or trajectories of development manifesting as differently as possible and necessary from one epoch to another, and across regions of the world. The state, ideally, and in the broadest possible sense of the word is:

the institutional representation of the society, in which it is endowed all formal and informal power of the people, intrinsically bonded with the fate of the society and through, and/or about, which the society makes its greatest impressions and/or expressions; and where inherently lies the potential strengths or weaknesses for societal transformation (Agbaje, 2011).

Regrettably however, for the less-developed countries, lagging development of political and administrative institutions and leadership, as notable subsets of the

state, has resulted in an ominous capacity gap, that has at a time, historically suggested the move towards eclipse of the state in underdeveloped regions.

Whether negative or positive, in whatever manner it manifests, the state is a fundamental factor in social organization. And, reviewing the interface between the state and the economy in engendering socioeconomic and political development across the globe, the centrality of the state and its indexes as independent variable, cannot be overemphasized. In the analysis of the Asian miracle and African failure, using South Korea and Nigeria as case studies, the following indexes of the state have been found to be very instructive in shaping not only economic, but also other facets of socio-political development,

- a. leadership,
- b. enactment and enforcement of law and order
- c. bureaucracy
- d. state capacity and autonomy, and
- e. structure of governance.

As will later be revealed, in all these, and contrary to the Nigerian and African experience, South Korea and other Asian states have received unparalleled commendation across the world. And as such, indexes resulting from such world-acclaimed experiences could be considered credible criteria for emulation by countries desirous of fast development and systemic stability.

Examining the interface between the state and economy in Nigeria, Odife (1985) has noted that governments all over the world have a role in both the development and the operation of the financial systems generally. Citing Ben-Shahar (1972), Odife submit further that even if the capital market in an economy were perfectly competitive, it is by no means certain that economic efficiency could be reached. In fact, in order to achieve economic efficiency, some administrative intervention and regulation by the government is a *sine-qua-non*. Proving further that the problems of development which determine the support for or frustration with and withdrawal from regimes transcends economic, Oghene (1986) observed that some of us think that our present predicament is simply an economic one, but as Kenneth Boulding pointed out:

a growth is spread all over the activity of a society; part of it is found in family... in educational system... in industrial organization and part in government. There is more than economy that makes a nation [Oghene, 1986; Olopoenia, 1998].

As revealed in Figure 1, effectiveness of the state in managing economic resources for development remains a fundamental factor for economic survival of a people. These economic variables with which the state interface to engineer rapid development can reasonably be

summarized as: (a) nation's nature and level of natural endowment, (b) nation's drive for and level of industrialization, (c) availability of labour power as well as opportunity for and rate of employment, (d) the nature and level of strategic development planning, and (e) the favourableness of its economic transaction with other nations as well as the general context of external relations at any point in time.

The imperativeness of effective state-economy relations

To underscore the need for positive and mutually reinforcing state-economy relations, Harris (1980) affirmed that in developing the concept of the state it has first to be recognized that the state is not only a political body, but also has a significant economic aspect. Its branches are themselves economic agent enmeshed in market forces. To Stolper (1963), you cannot make policy without politics. This underscores the indispensable contribution of state and its bureaucratic/administrative machineries to success or otherwise of a nation's developmental effort. Where the state is weak and ineffective, sustainable development will be unattainable. In their study of sub-Saharan Africa, Pickett and Singer (1990), citing Ghana as a case study, have clearly revealed that bad and excessive economic mismanagement by the state is the proximate explanation for poor economic performance in sub-Saharan Africa.

This led Boggar (1969) to assert that there are several difficulties and obstacles the progressive governments of the developing countries must cope with, and overcome, in order to accelerate economic growth. These difficulties and obstacles are not exclusively of an economic nature, but great many of them spring from the social and political background. Without the knowledge and analysis of these difficulties and obstacles of the political and social conditions, in other words, the entire gamut of state-economy relations, constituting their background, to Boggar, there can be no lasting economic growth. Asian tigers have indeed demonstrated that some developing countries, through positively profiled state-economy relations, are capable of overcoming such obstacles. In contrast to the Asian experience, however, Uroh (1998) has revealed that Africa is indeed in crises of development.

The present crisis in Africa...is a crisis of development, the problem is necessarily multi-dimensional. It is ... economic as well as political ... socio-cultural as well as moral. It is a product of Africa's chequered history...

From the submission of most analysts, the most formidable factor accounting for developmental failures in Africa is the nature of the state, and the resulting interaction between the state and the economy. In this circumstance, to Uroh, a workable solution to the problem would be that which deals with every department of the

problem. This exactly is the contemplation of the framework in Figure 1.

Noticing the dual manifestation –success in Asia and failure in Africa, and as captured in the above framework, analysts have labored towards identifying different elements capable of making a state truly developmental; the absence of which could lead to failure. Mkandawire (2001) identified ideological and structural capabilities. Cibber (2002) noted the indispensability of state intervention and institutional capacity for effective planning and co-ordination of programs for goal attainment. It is the presence of these capability elements in Asia that made Lall (1993) to submit that “some interventions ... may have helped some of the larger leading industrializers”. But, in certain circumstances as witnessed in Africa, selective promotion was not really effective in meeting its objectives and, cannot be undertaken by governments lacking the skills and impartiality of the East Asians. Therefore, much of the problems underpinning institutional incapacitation in African have their roots in excessive weakening of the state by “human blunders and corruption” (Davidson, 1992). This was helped by the subversive roles of individuals and groups in their avowed selfish quest for survival. Institutionally,

...the more one ponders this matter the more clearly is it seen to arise from the social and political institutions within which decolonized Africans have lived and tried to survive ... (Davidson, 1992; Esman, 1972; Young, 2004).

This systemic incapacitation has given rise to pronounced systemic disarticulation (Weignast, 1997) in socioeconomic development across Africa. Summarizing developmental trajectories of transiting societies, Rosenau (2000) stated:

Most conspicuously, there is all too little effective governance capable of ameliorating, if not resolving, these... numerous ...problems. Perhaps even more troubling, our generation [of leaders] lacks the orientation necessary to sound assessments of how the authority of governance can be brought to bear on the challenges posed by the prevailing disarray.

Hence, one commends the remark by Fukuyama (2004) that effective state is a prerequisite for development to enable effective enforcement of laws, policies and programs as well as efficient regulation of economic activities and forces. It remains sacrosanct that there exists a general causal relationship between socio-economic development and political development (Mrydal, 1968; Akkerman et al., 2004; Gonzalez and King, 2004).

Largely, past the first decade of the twenty-first century, political elites across Africa have not fully woken up to the reality that their political opportunistic disposition remains a barrier to economic development and threat to sustenance of democratic order. Political elites seem not

to have realized that it is the duty of the government to create rule of law necessary to underpin accountability, transparency and predictability; and that government interaction with its citizen, more than any other factor, remains a modal precondition for thriving or declining domestic economy (Brautigam, 1991). This is the reason issues of governance are now in the fore of domestic and international political and economic discourse (Anyanwu, 1997). For transiting regimes across Africa, contrary to the corrupt tendencies of political opportunists, governance should therefore be conceived as:

the use of political authority and exercise of control over a society and the management of its resources for social and economic development, encompassing the nature and functioning of the states, institutions and effectiveness of leadership, and the nature of the relationship between the rulers and the ruled (Landell-Mills and Seradeldin, 1991; Martin, 1991).

It is in this context that state-economy relations is summed up as a gravitational process between the state and the economy, in which the nature of one impinges directly on the nature of the other for a mutually reinforcing constructive or destructive symbiotic outcome. State-economy relations is concerned with the manner of resource management, degree of economic nationalism, manner of resource utilization and conservation, level of corruption and the extent of state's role in economic development. Except the nature of the state and the effervescent state-economy relations is constructively developmental, a nation, no matter how naturally endowed, cannot experience development. What, more than anything else, account for development or underdevelopment, or systemic sustenance or otherwise of a nation, is the nature of the state and the effervescent state-economy relations. In this comparative analysis, specific insights are drawn from Nigeria and South Korea using some of the indexes of stateness in Figure 1.

Universally, there exists a consensus that efficient bureaucracy is indispensable for an efficient state and vice versa. To further demonstrate that nature of the state, and its impacts on the effervescent state-economy relations creates much of the difference in development outcomes in Asia and Africa, effort is made in the following analysis to reflect on three other indexes (the role of leadership, effectiveness of law and order, and structure of governance).

The role of leadership as a nodal state index in the development of South Korea and underdevelopment of Nigeria

South Korea developmental experience provides an ideal example of development-envisioned leadership. Despite historical evidence of autocracy, Korea is reputed to have

had crops of leaders that are not only committed, but also through authentic performances enjoyed the confidence and support of the populace towards rapid national development. From available precolonial, colonial and postcolonial history, a recount is made below of Korean leadership exploration:

1. One of the earliest efforts towards effective national development by Korean leaders was by King Taejo, who made the first clear-cut public law drafting 10 injunctions. In quest for a just and egalitarian society, his successor, King Gwangjong (949-979) instituted emancipation of slaves in 956 to restore the commoner status of those unjustly bonded, and established a civil service examination system to recruit officials by merit. The successor, King Gyeonjong (975-981) established an effective centralized government, while King Seongjong (981-997) adopted Confucian state model, improved education (Jeong-Kyu 2001) and embarked on refabrication of arms into agricultural tools (KIOS 2003:56-57).

2. Subsequent leadership, Yi and his followers further propelled the quest for learning, leading to the establishment of a college and five municipal schools in Hanyang and several local schools in all magistrates. In 1403, Yi, casted new fonts for Korean alphabet, and his administration structured the civil service into six boards of administration, namely: civil appointment, taxation, rites, military, punishment and public works.

3. The rule in the mid-15th century by King Sejong, the Great (1418-1450) was marked by 'progressive ideas in administration, national scripts, economics, science, music, medical science and humanistic studies. This King established Jiphyeonjeon (Hall of Worthies) to promote research in institutional traditions and politico-economics, published classic work on Korean agriculture (Straight Talk on Farming), developed pluviometer in 1441 to record precipitation, and ensured better development of the Korean alphabet. King Sejong, paying great attention to the health of his subjects, compiled the first medical books and developed a 365-chapter compendium on Chinese medicine. *Hyangyakjipseongbang* –a compilation of Native Korean Prescriptions in 85 chapters was completed in 1433, which later included 959 entries on disease diagnosis, 10,706 prescriptions and 1,477 items on acupuncture therapy, and another book on collection of local medicinal materials –the *Hangeul*. Economically, King Sejong established three ports for international trade and embarked on comprehensive compilation of the *Gyeonggukdaejeon* (Grand Code for State Administration) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sejo_of_Joseon).

4. Prior to the colonial occupation, Korean leadership have ensured massive development in so diverse areas of national development including the military. As early as Joseon's reign, Admiral Yi Sun-sin was recorded to have conducted series of brilliant operations in the South Sea making use of Korean ship- *Geobukseon* (turtle ships)

(KIOS 2003:65-66) which destroyed many invading Japanese ships. The King initiated migration from densely populated to the sparsely populated area, while instituting the idea of 'Merit Award', and 3-yearly civil/military examinations.

5. Unlike the knowledge deficiency noticed in Nigerian history, to reveal the extent of the quest of the Korean leadership and state for promotion of knowledge in the pre-colonial Korea, there were more than 100 private schools in the 16th century Korea and by 17th century this has increased to over 400.

6. As derivative of visionary state and leadership that gave rise to economic prosperity and political tranquility, Korean population increased from 2,290,000 in 1657 to 5,018,000 in 1669 (<http://www.pennfamily.org/KSS-USA/hist-map7.html>). In pursuance of accountability and development, King Yeongjo, adopted an accounting system, revamped the financial system of state revenue and expenses, and participated in international trade along with Qing China. Contrary to most of Nigerian history dominated by aristocratic and development-inhibiting elitist excesses, by revolutionarily setting aside the traditional progress-inhibiting attitude of the *Yangbans*, in Korea, the coast was clear for development of technology and commerce at a greater dimension.

7. Combining the unity of knowledge and development, a Korean scholar, Jibong Yi Su-gwang, in the 16th century was reported to have said: Knowledge is of no value unless it results in action, just as enforcement is an essential part of the law (KIOS 2003:76). Contrary to the Nigerian experience in which education is still denied the required state attention, aggressive knowledge acquisition and its application by traditional Koreans greatly helped the course Korean development. Hong-Dae-yong (1731-1783) was recorded to have made valid scientific exploration pertaining to the cause of eclipses and the nature of rainbow, and in mathematics. Jeong Yak-yang, (Dasan, 1762-1836), planned the construction of the Hwaseong Fortress as Korea's emergency capital making provision for the use of his own applications- cranes, windlasses, pulleys and specially designed vehicles.

8. While research outcomes and other codified knowledge resulting from both academic and administrative inquiries are gathering dust on shelves without implementation in Nigeria, Korean masses, through education and discoveries, have come to appreciate good governance as early as 17th century (KIOS 2003:79). Resulting from cumulative efforts of nationalistic and committed leadership, the precolonial Korea was, modestly and by all standards, a rapidly developing society only to be 'disrupted and again accelerated' by colonial invasions.

9. Unlike the prevalent situation of absence of unity of direction in postcolonial Nigeria, due to accumulated knowledge, much of which outlive colonial disruptions, the postcolonial South Korea never had to lag for too long before the emergence of Major-General Park Chung-hee in 1961, following the systemically fragile regimes led by

Dr. Syngman Rhee (1948-1960) and Chang Myon (John M. Chang, 1960-1961). With General Park, the economic development of South Korea was redirected with great emphasis on outward-oriented economy and export-focused techno-industrial development. Showing committed leadership, Park's government through exemplary leadership, stood out of all regimes as the most successful development-oriented regime in modern South Korea to the extent that Belassa (1980) considered the Korean example under Park, as an ideal model for nations seeking the attainment of rapid development.

In line with externalities of development, the Korean leadership, unlike Nigeria, advantageously moving from one economic paradigm to another, were both nationalistic and pragmatic (Byong-Man, 2003) in pursuance of national goals. Contrary to the Nigerian experience, where the state appears helpless in controlling many of the socioeconomic vices, with remarkably high dose of self-discipline, the Korean leadership and government, in strict control of developmental programmes, impartially applied the well-acclaimed 'carrot and stick' principle against even the much-favoured chains of chaebols and their subsidiaries. Mimiko rightly described the developmental influence of the Korean leadership as follows:

...the moral integrity of the leadership is taken for granted, in which the mass of the people consider themselves as grass that 'must bend when the wind (i.e. superiors including government or authority of any kind) blows over it' ... in which people prefer harmony to an adversarial relationship. It becomes very easy for a dictatorial government that nevertheless has a clear vision of economic development to put the entire citizenry to work as one... (Mimiko 1999:18)

Partly due to slavery-induced intellectual retardation, and also lack of visionary leadership ever since, compared to South Korea, Nigeria lacked similar account of great developmental strides. Though, each of the three areas making up the present Nigeria prior to colonial invasion had systems of government which socio, economic and political philosophy were very much different from one area to another, generally however, the specific features and governing orientations of these states robbed them of the achievements recorded by their Korean counterpart.

Added to the comparatively lower level of her development, compared to Korea, the advent of colonialism and process of decolonization resulted into the dysfunctional state of the modern Nigeria. Unlike the unity of purpose and direction in Korea, though amalgamated, the modern Nigeria became a much more divided society breeding 'contending internal constituencies' (Mimiko, 2005) with such social stratification constraining agenda for nation building and development. It is no surprise therefore that in such a society, the state elite, rather than unite toward

national development as witnessed in Korea became factionalized along ethnic lines with each preoccupied with ethnic interest as the surest path to advancing personal ambitions and wealth.

Unlike the unity of direction among the ruling elites in postcolonial South Korea, the process of decolonization generated undue complexities in the struggle for leadership in postcolonial Nigeria with different strands of elites- the military, the bureaucrats, the professionals/merchants and the politicians- seeing each other as rivals at the expense of cooperation towards national growth and development. This undue factionalisation led to normless struggle for control of state power and resources. The ensuing mutual sidelining and short-changing by ethnic and sectional lords bred politics of division, envy and bitterness. Thus, unlike the rapid developmental experiences in postcolonial Korea, the infant postcolonial Nigeria was robbed of the leadership consensus needed to collectively promote national development and the well-being of all.

The political decay of the immediate post-independence resulted into military intervention that was to further compound the problem of the fragile Nigerian state. Rather than follow the path adopted by Park's regime, the Nigerian military and their bureaucratic collaborators regrettably soon got involved in similar anti-development malaise of unparalleled socioeconomic and political corruption that later saw the Nigeria becoming a crippled giant and a pariah among the committee of nations. While Korea's King Yeongjo enforced accountability in governance long before the onset of colonial occupation, due to corrupt maneuvers, Odedokun (1990) revealed that for a fairly long period of time in the years immediately before and those after the Second Republic (1979-1983), with many instances of untrackable recurrent expenditure, there were no record of governmental budgeting and accounting in Nigeria. Reportedly, as it was then, so it is still presently the case in Nigeria that as much as US\$20 billion of oil proceeds cannot be accounted for in year 2013. Also within the same year, the reported value of stolen crude oil was as much as

US\$12billion. Added to these are several allegations of illegal or unauthorized acquisition of cars and jets by Nigerian top public officials. Unlike the Korean experience, the Nigerian history revealed signs of unpardonable extent economic recklessness and abuse on the part of serially-unaccountable government and leadership, whose decadent level of economic irrationality obviate any evidence of genuine and selfless effort at national development. Recent experiences of corruption and wastes in government in the face of aggravating unemployment and mass poverty points to no other than a system that is operated for the pleasure of the powerful stakeholders on the one hand and pains of the masses on the other. In such systems, threat of systemic instability cannot be wished-away.

Presently, no other sector of the Nigerian nation shares

the blame for the woes of the country than its ruling class. The fact that no development policy or programme, without in-built self-serving motives of the stakeholders, has ever been properly implemented in Nigeria before now points to the unpardonable extent of leadership bankruptcy. Contrary to the success of the Korean leadership in enlisting the support of all towards national development, the prevalence of excessive leadership greed and corruption perpetrated through dysfunctional institutions, has inevitably turned the Nigerian political scene to become increasingly praetorian. The result is Nigeria becoming economically disarticulated, politically hysterical and systemically unstable.

Leadership failure, as an index of stateness, has been one single most important factor accounting for the unexpected underdevelopment of the Nigerian nation and a big source of worry for sustenance of democracy or any form of government for that matter. More than any other factor of development, the state, through the nationalistic commitment of the leadership, has been the single most important catalyst of accelerated, historically unparalleled and world acclaimed all-round development in South Korea. At the same time, state and the ruling elites has been the cause of acute underdevelopment, mass poverty and systemic instability in Nigeria.

Effectiveness of law and order, and credibility of rules- Nigeria and South Korea

Nigerian laws as contained in the successive post-independent constitutions, and elaborately detailed and specified in those signaling the inception of democratic rules, –1979, 1989 and 1999, regrettably, remained nominal and impotent entities. The duplicity of rules and institutions all aimed at, but manifestly unable to tame many of the vices in the society are clear testimonies of the country's sorry state as far as effectiveness and credibility of rules are concerned. In Nigeria, there are several hundreds of penal/criminal codes prohibiting nefarious socioeconomic activities as corruption, Economic sabotage, and detailing corresponding penalties for contravention. However, according to Ayoade:

...governments in Nigeria ... choreographed different constitutions and visions. Unfortunately ... constitutions are the perpendicular expressions of horizontal desires. They are veritable elements of strategic deception. No ... government has ever used its own constitution or any constitution for that matter...For them, a constitution is a hindrance to government. ...The absence of a constitution means the absence of a standard of measurement of performance... (Ayoade 1997:18-19, see also Anifowose 1999: 157-169)

At the inception of the Nigerian Fourth Republic, a host of institutions and processes were initiated- OPUTA Panel,

Independent Corrupt Practices Commission- (ICPC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency- (NDLEA), Economic and Financial Crime Commission- (EFCC), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), all aimed at curbing one form of corruption or another. If anything near relative success has been noticed, only the last three seem to have made marginal impact. The principal organ established for the control of politico-economic corruption has not. Hence Ogbonna (2004) submitted:

... winning the war against corruption appears to be a pipe dream with the ICPC already branded a toothless bulldog for its failure to prosecute the 'big-catch'... while the ordinary Nigerians get harassed by the Anti-Corrupt Commission.

With government's helplessness at instituting control against crude oil theft, oil-money theft and increasing reckless financial abuse and corruption by principal officers of the state, the impact of corruption and lawlessness has become so alarmingly in Nigeria. With the growing massive corruption, undisguised anti-social vices, in and out of government and daily report of wasteful and ostentatious life-style of the governing elites, Nigeria, in twenty-first century has again found itself in a state of self-inflicted vicious-cycle of underdevelopment. And, with the recorded insincerity and poor outcome of previous efforts at instituting control, no hope seems to be in sight. Noting the continued helplessness of the state at instituting appropriate sanction against corrupt practices, Agbese (2005) citing Okigbo noted:

Investigative panels have not been used as effective checks on the misuse of power in Nigeria. Instead of using such panels or commissions to hold public officials and institutions accountable for their use of public resources, they are mainly used to conduct witch-hunts against political opponents and as substitutes for dealing with difficult political problems. (Agbese, 2005 in: Guyer and Denzer, 2005:56).

Experience has shown in Nigeria, even in democratic dispensations that many of those who are to make and ensure implementation of laws are perverse individuals indulging in fabrication of self-seeking policies across levels and spheres of governance. Consequently, corrupt tendencies increasingly manifest in Nigeria despite arrays of what has turned out to be 'nominal' corruption-restraining institutions and laws. According to Otobo (2002), "Nigeria has an impressive array of institutions designed to combat corruption and promote public accountability, reflecting the strong public demand for action in this area". But, these institutions have functioned less than adequately. The result is institutionalized corruption since the late 1980s to the present dispensation.

It is known globally, that one of the key prerequisites of stateness is, the ability to have the laws of the state as the norms that guide and shape the lives of the citizens. The prevalence of corruption and anarchy in Nigeria have given rise to other problems as proliferation of ethnic militia (Sesay et al., 2003:1-2) untamed armed bandits, cultism, 419 (transnational financial scams), political assassination, criminal closure of oil facilities, kidnapping and seizure of personnel working in the oil multinationals. Policies are integral parts of rules and laws guiding the socioeconomic and political life of nations. The fact that no policy, apart from those fanning the embers of 'current power holders across regimes', has ever clearly succeeded in Nigeria, shows that effectiveness and credibility of rules have for long been a problem in Nigeria. This, no doubt, has greatly robbed on the degree of the stateness of the Nigerian state.

Against the Nigerian experience however, the South Korea state has been largely effective in making its laws as the norm among her citizens and subjects. The South Korean State has not only been able to make credible rules and formulate pragmatic developmental programmes, but also, it has been able to prudently enforce virtually all its laws and programmes to the admiration of the world (Mimiko, 1999:36 citing Lim, 1981). Given the libertarian notion and propensity of all entrepreneurs, Korea's success, contrary to the neoclassicists' notion of completely unregulated economy, could have been frustrated by the private sector's profit motive but for the vigilance and strict adoption of 'carrot and stick' principles by the Korean leadership. Despite their influence, even the chaebols, in the hands of the nationalistic Economic Planning Board of Korea became but mere executing agencies of the plans of government (Ogle, 1990).

In all these, the Nigerian state failed woefully. All through 70s and 80s import licensing was abused. SAP was made self-seeking and foreign exchange administration officially distorted and abused; political Kleptocracy heightened capital flight to unprecedented level. Overseas traveling, which was for many years state-controlled in South Korea was well used and abused as avenue by government officials and collaborators to siphon the resources of the country to overseas bank accounts. Till date, in five decades of her existence, only few handpicked public officials have been officially exposed for such vices as corruption and money laundering.

Agreed, there were reports of corruption in South Korea. It was however, in magnitude, no match for the Nigerian experience. In South Korea, there was a heavy public disdain against corrupt practices. The first elected President Sygman Rhee was forced out of office through mass demonstration against his corrupt and short-sighted regime in 1960 (see http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/ks_indx.html). Besides, unlike Nigeria where leaders dubiously siphoned billions of dollars abroad, much of such funds in South Korea were invested locally

to further boost the Korean economy. Unlike Korea, rules and regulations in Nigeria have largely remained nominal entities with no social capital and motivation on the path of the state and leadership to enforce for societal order.

Structure of governance: A structural explanation of South Korean development and Nigerian underdevelopment

Nigeria, in theory, claimed to be practicing federalism with a three-tier structure of governance- one (1) central government, thirty-six (36) state governments and seven hundred and seventy-four (774) local governments- excluding those purportedly created under the 1999 dillonised constitutional arrangement that are being denied state recognition. Though the 1976 local government reforms sought or implied a three-tier governmental structure of equal partners, going by the argument of Olowu et al. (Olowu et al., 1995:22; Enemuo and Anifowose, 1999:311-313), monarchy has being a central problem accounting for social, economic and political underdevelopment in Nigeria.

Though Nigeria has never for once, all through her jaundiced political history, jettisoned the 'federal rhetoric', the ideal spirit of federalism, due to economic and political corruption, died apparently within few years of Nigeria independence (Ayoade, 1997:19). By 1964, because of the politics of corruption and bitter ethnic rivalry between those at the centre and the regions, the paraphernalia of polycentricity have started crumbling in Nigeria. The advent of military intervention in politics soon completed the over-centralization of power and resources in Nigeria with all its attendant problems. In total neglect of constitutional arrangement, the military, rather than address the problem of "build-up of power at the centre" (Ayoade, 1997:19) has, through its operations and activities, only worsened it with the emergence of a highly centralized political, economic and administrative system that elevates too many divisive issues to the centre. The centre became too attractive and heightened the desperation in the struggle for power amongst the gladiators for political office (Olowu et al., 1995). Wunsch and Olowu (1990:17-18) identified five critical senses of such centralization in Nigeria. They include: political centralization, institutional centralization, economic centralization, financial centralization, and administrative centralization with all its attendant ills. The result:

is not only waste and corruption in central level governments but [also] inability of lower-level governments to... maintain available infrastructure ... struggle to control the central government becomes a life and death struggle among the political leadership ... Might inevitably becomes right and all norms about right, morality of government actors, legitimacy become luxuries which are easily expended (Olowu et al., op cit. 20-21).

Under such situation, the idea of promoting national development and people being the end of government is thrown overboard. Contrary to expectation, federalism and its attendant decentralized system of government have failed to yield the desired even and rapid development of both the resource-accumulating centre and the resource-starved peripheries in Nigeria. Against Wheare's principle, advocating co-ordinacy, independence and financial autonomy of centre and peripheries, the Nigerian federal arrangement and experience has been that of an asymmetric structure in which all the good things of life are concentrated at the centre where it is least needed. And, it is there, at the centre, that the resources are most extravagantly wasted to the peril of the peripheries with the consequence that the inadequate trickling-down to the peripheries also ends up being corruptly expended, since they are in most cases insignificant in meeting the actual needs of the periphery governments.

Unlike Nigeria, South Korea made no pretense of being a federal system. According to KOIS (2003:133) highly centralized government has been a strong tradition in Korea, extending back more than six hundred years to the establishment of the Joseon dynasty (1392-1910). But, her unitary arrangement allows for a level of decentralized developmental initiatives and cooperation that seem impossible to most vocal critics of unitarism. Unlike Nigeria, with purposeful centralized planning and co-ordination based on inputs from every sector, private and public- central government, periphery governments [the sixteen (16) higher level (provincial) governments and 235 local level (municipal) governments made up of 72 *si* (city) governments, 94 *guns* (county) governments, and 69 *gu* (autonomous district) governments], all sectors, private and public were well-resourced and were therefore in position to make adequate contribution to national development. Though in Korea, the 16 provincial and the 251 municipal governments have been granted some level of local autonomy. Despite the granting of local autonomy, as a safety-valve for ensuring rapid and even national development, virtually, all major policies, including those specifying local government functions, taxation, resident welfare and services, and manpower management, are determined by the central government (KOIS, 2003:119). In essence, the status of lower tiers of government in South Korea is constitutionally not different from that of the dillonised Nigerian subsidiary governments. But, because the Korean system, as against the corrupt and parasitic experience in Nigeria, is a purposeful and development-driven entity, despite centralization, all the tiers of government were able to contribute their quotas to national development.

For example, unlike Nigeria, where ownership and control of major infrastructure is centralized, only international ports are controlled by the central government in South Korea. Local governments independently operate twenty-two of the coastal ports. Despite centralization, to

accelerate the pace of development through fast-tracking of business operations, private sector participation in Cargo handling as Terminal Operating Companies- (TOC) has long been embraced in Korea. To further show the extent to which local initiatives and participation are allowed in South Korea, local governments were allowed, within the ambit of the national forest development plan to set up their own forest plan. The fact that in 1997 alone, South Korea exported US\$340 million worth of mushroom and chestnut, an undertaking that can only be best monitored through local services, meant that local involvement has its merits and contribution to South Korean development (KOIS, 2003:278-279). It should be pointed out that constitutional issues relating to the structure, power and resources of the lower tiers of government in South Korea, is not so much different from that of Nigeria. The main factor that has accounted for the rapid national development permitted by the Korean structure of governance and intergovernmental relation is the patriotic commitment of the Korean state and leadership at all levels.

Except all the indexes of stateness (leadership, enactment and enforcement of law and order, bureaucracy, state capacity and autonomy, and structure of governance) and the resulting state-economy relations, are properly profiled and effectively managed, a nation, no matter how naturally endowed, cannot experience development. What, more than anything else, account for development or underdevelopment, or systemic sustenance or otherwise of a nation, is the nature of the state and the effervescent state-economy relations. There is no doubt that the manner in which the governments go about interfacing with the economy serves as the trigger for either success or failure (Belassa, 1980). Whether in developing democracies or in autocracies such as are common to developing regions of the world, particularly, Africa in the recent past, the problem over decades has been that:

perfectly rational policy makers do not always bring that analytical rationality to play on their policy formation because of their inclined preoccupation with parochial and self-seeking motives.

To Alesino (1992), the failure of such leaders is traceable to their preoccupation with opportunistic or partisan motives of how to ensure re-election or survival in office, or persuaded to follow policies that fulfill the parochial needs of their special constituencies even when it is considered manifestly detrimental to long term overall objective of the larger society.

This work therefore reinforces the thesis that constructive relationship between the state and the economy is a sine-qua-non for all round socioeconomic development, and that more than it was in Asia (Streeten, 1969; Berger, 1971; Chau, 1993; Lin et al., 1994; Zhang, 1996; Nellis, 1999; Xu, 1999; Mody, 1999), developing

framework for development-prone state-economy relations has become more compelling and urgent for most transiting states and democracies in Africa.

Therefore, any attempt to mitigate the problems of underdevelopment and systemic instability in African transiting states and democracies must seek to first adequately understand the nature of the state, the potentials of the economy and move ahead to develop appropriate state-economy relations as a complex but indispensable network of variable, factors and processes. A purely one-shot 'political analysis' or purely 'economic-deterministic explanation' will offer a very little answer to the puzzles. Curious analysis of the nature of the state and the nature of the economy will produce the needed indexes for understanding the symbiotic relationship between the state and the economy. As yet, many of those at the helm of affairs across Africa have little understanding of the potential strengths and dangers underlining the systems they preside over. Until this robust understanding of the nexus is provided, the hope of attainment of development and sustenance democracy across Africa remains very fragile.

Conclusion

There have been serious efforts by analysts to explain the trajectories of underdevelopment and democratic instability across African regions. In particular, several univariate factors have been singled out, one after the other, to explain the regrettable pervasive and least expected underdevelopment in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, the problem of underdevelopment and systemic instability has not abated. Various regimes – democracy and military, have failed to live up to expectation and consequently, all have been forced out of power when the regime holders least imagine. In short, no feasible solution seems at sight in understanding and proffering solutions to the African myriad of problems.

Therefore, the view here expressed is that to unveil appropriate solution, we must, comparatively, understand what the experience has been in some successful regions, this time, Asia. It is believed, more than any other factor that, the problem of most African countries derive from the nature of their states and the attendant negative relations between the state and the economy. State-economy relations here summed up as a gravitational process, involving a whole network of institutions and processes, between the state and the economy in which the nature of one impinges directly on the nature of the other for a mutually reinforcing constructively contributive or parasitically destructive symbiotic outcome, has not been positive in Nigeria and sub-Sahara Africa. It is therefore expedient to posit that except the principal indexes of both the state and the economy are positively correlated as it is witnessed in South Korea, development in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa will remain elusive, poverty will become more excruciating, and democracy,

or any regime paradigm adopted will continually remain discredited and threatened. It is the belief that adoption of the analytic comparative SERD model here commended will represent a modest attempt at unveiling solutions to the many problems of the heavily underdeveloped societies. In helping to unveil the critical ramifications of the challenges of development faced by average less-developed transiting democracies in sub-Saharan Africa, this more exhaustively-indexed SERD model provides the framework for a robust characterization, analysis and understanding of the nature of the state and the 'nexus' between the state, the economy and sustenance of democratic order. It is then the hope of inventing appropriate strategies for ensuring sustainable socio-economic and political development of nations under fruitful democratic dispensation can become a reality.

Conflict of interest

The author has not declared any conflict of interest.

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