

DEMOCRACY AND AFRICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

This paper on “Democracy and African Political Development: Problems and Prospects” is an attempt to assess the level of growth, acceptability, challenges and the future of democracy in Africa. It identifies major problems or challenges facing the practice and entrenchment of democracy in Africa, including: military incursion in politics, sit-tight syndrome, illiteracy, poverty, weak institutions, the challenge of communication, violence, imposition of candidates in elections, negative influence of religion and endemic corruption. Using analytic method, the paper discovers that these problems are artificial and remains due to inherent selfishness of African leaders; but are surmountable when inclusiveness is encouraged in the politics of African States. The work also establishes that African democracy ought to be modelled and influenced by African ideology of communalism, which entails egalitarianism. The work concludes that democracy ought to be the best alternative in contemporary Africa and a veritable source of development. It recommends amongst other things that internal democracy should be entrenched in the political parties and education of citizens as a panacea to solving the problem of political underdevelopment that is militating against democracy.

Keywords: Democracy, Corruption, Political Development, African Political Development, African Development.

Introduction

The development of democracy as a form of socio-political system of government is traceable to the age-long demand for freedom as a prerequisite for citizens' rights. From Aristotle's city-state to the contemporary mega States, the demand for freedom by citizens was and still is sustained through various forms of agitations, demonstrations and resolutions. The freedom to decide an acceptable form of government through a collective decision by the individuals and groups concerned leads ultimately, to accepting personal and collective responsibilities is, of course, a form of democratic ideals.

Democracy and development are interrelated and remain an integral part of the features of socialized government that defines the roles of individual and collective engagement of citizens in the task of running any particular form of government. The nature of African life and the mode of their living both in private and public or social settings are overtly engrafted into the thinking and nature of African society. African society is predominantly socially oriented. Modern and contemporary democracy in African focus at egalitarian society where the rights and privileges of citizens are protected and every citizen is treated equally without undue preferences occasioned by myopic, ethnic and chauvinistic biases.

From the foregoing, this work attempts to assess the development and impart impact of democracy and its influence on African experience. As expected, this work shall endeavor to clarify the concept of democracy and political development. Furthermore, effort shall be tailored

towards assessing various problems and challenges facing democracy as a system of government and development strategy. Attempts to examine the prospects of democracy as understood and practiced in line with African social ambience and orientation shall be considered.

Understanding African Democracy and Political Development

The communal living which characterised the ambience of African traditional society largely informs us about the understanding, application and general practice of democracy in Africa. That is to say, democracy is a contextualized system of government in Africa. The nature of African democracy reflects the nature of African system and thought. Togetherness can best describe the perception of an African man towards another. This idea of togetherness, in this way, is not detached from collective decisions, actions and responsibilities. If democracy in the West involves participation of the masses in organising their future and society through peaceful and orderly selection of leadership, then, African democracy does not need to be westernised for it to be relevant or result-oriented to the people because, the very nature of African life is characterised by communalistic living and have been the preferred system of integration and cooperation from the beginning of the sociopolitical configuration called Africa. The communalistic practice now called democracy has been, from time immemorial, the usual and effective system of government known to the traditional institution nay traditional African society. The advent of modern democracy in Africa and its involvement in political development as a foreign product introduced by the Western colonisers is a misnomer, fallacious and a mistaken conclusion. The basis for integration in African society, be it matrimony, patrimony, monarchy and any other form of defined system of ruling, is still part and parcel of the system of “give and take”, “live and let's live” strategy which has endeared Africans.

Although westernization of African communities through colonialism has dealt a big blow to communal African spirit in recent years, but in spite of the problem and challenges of xenophobia being one of its negative influences, majority of Africans still retain the harmonious living spirit which is characterised in their organum and translated to African moral dictum of “being our brothers' keepers”. This perhaps, is far from a sense in which the western idea of democracy is represented. Democracy emphasizes the idea of collective bargaining, existence of pressure groups to press home demands for better life through enforcement of decisions and principles that guarantee total protection for citizens. D. D. Raphael (147) believes that “democracy in a sense means following the view of the majority”. The phrase: “for the people” by Abraham Lincoln and Rousseau's concept of the 'general will' opt for the participation of the masses or citizens in governance through few selected individuals who are first and famous, elected by the people to represent them by being their mouth piece and exercising completely, the sovereign will of the people who are the legitimate sovereigns which they owe allegiance to.

African society is of course, at the top of this enforcement. African democracy is devoid of cosmetic and window dressing approach to social justice which we have unfortunately experienced through western democracy, which is viciously warlike with clashing and confrontational mode of agitations. Before now, these vicious strategies of gaining control of government and achieving group's goals, objectives and demands were not identified with African system. In fact, the recently practice of military democracy and selfish capitalist's economic and political regime is far from being Africa's preferred strategy of governance. **The**

Concept of Democracy

Apart from the etymological definition of democracy which derives its meaning from the Greek root demos which translates to 'people' and kratos meaning 'rules' thus, connoting rule by the people; rule by the masses; rule for the generality of the populace. Democracy as understood by

one time American President, Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address is: "Government of the people, by the people and for the people". Judging from the Greek root *demos* and *kratos*, we infer with categorical exactness that democracy as practiced by Africans as a populist political system and method of government that allows for massive participation of citizenry in party activities, general elections and major interactions through what is currently phrased as the 'town-hall meeting' which avails the citizens an opportunity of addressing major and nagging issues affecting the people; and, in some cases, selecting leadership through balloting.

Elijah John in his book *Man and The State* (2020:99) believes that democracy as a concept is difficult to define. He explains that the difficulty in definition "is not because the concept is vague like so many political terms, but more importantly, because democracy is complete polymorphous concept. Hence, he submits: "it is common for one to talk of 'participatory', 'popular', 'consensus', 'guided', 'bourgeois', 'liberal'... eastern democracy, western democracy, among others. Secondly, the difficulty is that what "one person would regard as a paradigm for democracy, another would deny it as democracy" (2020:99). John's submission above is to buttress the point that democracy exists with different strands and evokes different interpretations and understandings.

Some scholars like Rubushka (81), Anam-Ndu (152) and McHenry (5) consider democracy not just as a form of government, but as a particular method of government where the rights and privileges of citizens are guaranteed; where the citizens freely exercise their franchise and participate in selecting the government they want; and where the citizens know the rules and follow it in all aspects of their engagement in government as constitution provides and guarantees such freedom; for instance: freedom of speech, of peaceful association, freedom to property and all other human rights as provided by the United Nations Charter on human rights. This understanding of democracy is somewhat a contemporary inclined position. On his part, Nnamdi Azikiwe understands democracy to mean: "The rule of the people by its majority inhabitants and includes a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation, usually involving, periodically held free and fair elections" (1937: 23).

The general understanding of democracy is that it is a system that encourages timely conduct of elections which allows their citizens the privilege of participating and aspiring to various political offices as a right. The nature of such an election is not a kind that is marred by violence and various other forms of irregularities but a kind that is judged free and fair. In his characteristic, "Pragmatic and Instrumentalist" dispositions, John Dewey considers democracy both as a system and a method of government. He believes that democracy is "the settling for free use of the experimental method in social inquiry and thought, which is required for the solution of concrete social, political and industrial problems" (John, 2020: 104).

Appadorai (137) is of the opinion that democracy maybe described as a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by them. He further explains that a state may, in political sense, be termed as democracy if it strengthens the institutions for the expression and, in the final analysis, the supremacy of the popular will on basic questions of social direction and policy. Moreover, Appadorai considers the fact that "political liberty is the indispensable minimum" qualification for democracy. Where such minimum standard of freedom or liberty is not guaranteed, then the claim for existence of democracy is definitely in doubt. He highlights these indispensable minimum provisions for democratic entrenchment to include:

Equal rights of all normal adult to vote and stand as candidates for periodical elections, equal eligibility for executive and judicial offices (provided the essential qualifications for the performance of these duties are satisfied); and

freedom of speech, publication and association. These rights provide the opportunities for political participation, that is, for choosing rulers and deciding the general lines of their policy, they enable those who are so minded to devote themselves to political problems as much as they please. Among the political rights outlined above, stress must be laid on the rights of speech, publication and association. These rights are integral to democracy because they make possible free discussions and the continuous participation of the people in the government, not only in time of the general elections (Appadorai, 137-138).

From Appadorai's submissions above, we can appreciate the importance of freedom of speech and necessity of media functioning as basic ingredients for democratic governance. Free association of citizens is one aspect that must be allowed in the state before we can accept such system as democracy. Blackburn on his part reasons that "in modern society, the sovereignty of the people in general is expressed not directly by a vote on individual question, but through representatives. He however raises concern whether these various mechanisms can ensure that decision making authentically answers to the people or serves their interest. He further submits that the problem of eliminating a democratic constitution howsoever suggest that political democracy is hallow" (Blackburn, 93). Thus, Harold Laski's assessment of modern democracy as an option for totalitarianism.

As expressed above, one discover that democracy occurs in different forms and entails complicated economic relationships with other countries of the world. Besides, democracy occurs in different forms of economic and political indices such as capitalism, socialism, welfarism, etc. Following these different forms of democracy as explained earlier, scholars like John Rawls and NnamdiAzikiwe emphasize on a welfarist form of democracy where the resources of the state are managed and shared to citizens as primary responsibility of the state towards the welfare of its members. (Popkin and Stroll, 106; Igwe, 187-191).

All these forms of democracy are necessary for engaging in development agenda of any society and African political development is not an exception. However, as had been observed earlier in the work, emphasis on modern form of democracy is not alien to African, in terms of social, political and economic integrations, African society has set a model that cannot be ignored even by the so-called developed democracies. For instance, African communalism exemplifies in Ujaama of Julius Nyerere and Connsciencism of Kwame Nkrumah are ideologies focused on socialism and welfarism which are typical of African practice; all expressing cooperation, freedom and responsibility to one another as 'brother's keeper'.

This sense of unity, togetherness or communal living creates a possible opportunity for inter-personal discussions in all aspect of social life. It encourages and enforces a bond of unity and inclusiveness in the minds of citizens, it is this sense of collectiveness in decision making and action which gives a sense of collective responsibility that makes McLearn and Macmillan believe that democracy as "a descriptive term is synonymous with majority rule" (139). The majority rule typically finds its meaning in an egalitarian society where there is emphasis on equal rights and rule of law. Thus, African democracy thrives through deep rooted communalism and inclusiveness that elevate the spirit of African brotherhood towards building and sustaining egalitarian system that gives vent to equality and liberty. If the tenets of democracy include freedom of the citizens, then any freedom enjoyed under democratic system is not freedom in disguise that tends to enslave the citizens in a way and manner that they cannot enjoy their inalienable rights to life, such as freedoms of speech, association and movement, then it is a dubious freedom; freedom that cannot erode all forms of neo-colonialism and its attendant negative effects on the citizens.

The nature of African democracy encourages massive participation and representation

of all stakeholders in a political system, but modern African democracy tends to follow Western democratic ideals and trend which is suffering from blending and synchronisation of the best elements of ancient African democracy that thrive through mutual trust and deep sense of brotherhood exemplified in communal living and sharing and considers human life as sacred; urging respect and protection for citizens' lives as a major responsibility of leadership in piloting the machinery of government and its affairs.

Challenges facing African Democracy and Political Development

In this section attempt shall briefly discuss some of the inherent challenges facing democratic development in Africa. We cannot deny the fact that there are numerous problems facing democracy and political development in Africa. Some of these problems are natural and others are artificial. That is to say, some of the problems are caused by African cosmogony and heterogenic nature, while others are manmade and motivated by ignorance and greed. The following will buttress the assertion made above:

Election Rigging: One of the ingredients of democratic practice and development is timely conduct of election that is seem to be fair, free and peaceful. Davidson and Oleszek in Tunde Opeibi's *Discourse, Politics and the 1993 Presidential Election*

Campaigns in Nigeria (2009:6), observing the importance of elections, held that "elections celebrate the individual citizens' membership and participation in the community's decisions and thus allowing the voters to signal their approval of the regime in power or to express their disapproval and set in motion an orderly transfer of power. In Africa, the electioneering exercise is constantly turned into violence and in the process human lives and property are lost. Typical examples abound in countries like Nigeria, Senegal, Liberia, Zimbabwe, Gambia, etc. However, in recent times, some African countries have started learning the lessons that violence during elections is like a whirl wind that blows no one any good, As a result, conscious efforts have been made by stakeholders to ensure a hitch free exercise though pockets of violence become inevitable at times.

Other negative tendencies that characterise elections in Africa include: vote buying, thuggery, ballot box snatching, ballot paper stuffing, change of original result of opponents in favour of particular individuals or government preferred candidates, unnecessary inducement, false propaganda during electioneering campaign (that is, spreading of falsehood), incitement of electorate against government and the contestants as the case may be, disenfranchisement of electorate by election officials and political gladiators, over voting, under-age voting, etc.

Lack of Proper Political Communication and Wrong Use of Language: Political communication has been a major set-back to political development and promotion of democracy in Africa. But in recent times, the advent of GSM, social media, and other communication platforms including internet, Facebook, messenger, twitter handle, instagram, WhatsApp, etc, have aided tremendously in easy dissemination of information. Besides, the establishment and installation of high frequency radios and television stations by government and private individuals have helped in no small way in dissemination of information. Also, the role played by print media cannot be overemphasized. The programmes of government and political parties are communicated with ease through the above mentioned media.

Nevertheless, we cannot pretend that the challenge of information and communication is completely surmounted. The reason for this conclusion is due to unfavourable network terrains that most African electorates are faced with and this has negatively affected the free and speedy flow of information. But fabulous effort is being made to spread development programmes to such difficult terrains through construction of 'road network, rail system and installation of high

frequency and digital media gadgets.

Opeibi (1995:16) observes that "in recent times, political communication has occupied a centre stage in discourses on governance because democracy as a form of government itself has become a global phenomenon". Political development and democracy cannot adequately thrive without addressing the challenges of communication channels. In some cases, wrong information in form of propaganda and attempt to sabotage the efforts of government and integrity of opponents in an election may be disseminated to the electorates who have no means of verifying such information. Before they realise that the information they had was not correct, a lot of damages may have been done both to government and the affected individuals whose integrity might have been soiled and their characters assassinated.

It is therefore of importance and necessity for electoral bodies and government to address squarely the communication challenge if democratic development in Africa must be sustained. In our digital age, it is proper for relevant agencies of government and non-governmental organisations (NGOS) to campaign for and ensure that an up to date communication equipment are provided for speedy and right-channelled dissemination of information. It is also necessary to observe that wrong use of language and uncontrolled hate speeches have characterised most African political campaign outings. That is to say, wrong use of language of politics is a challenge to ideal and ideological electioneering process in African clime. Beard in his *The Language of Politics* has clearly shown the relevance of language in political development when he reasons that "looking at the language of politics as an occupation is important because it helps us to understand how language is used by those who wish to gain power, those who wish to exercise power and those who wish to keep power" (2).

In a similar perspective, Christiana Schaffner (202) believes that in linguistic literature, political language has been used either to donate the use of language in the content of politics, that is, a specific language use with the purpose of anchoring a specific politically motivated function. She justifies two types of political communication which are: internal and external political communications. The internal political communication concerns discussions that centres on "functioning of politics within political institutions, that is, governmental bodies, parties or other organisations", while external political communication is aimed primarily at "general public, especially the non-politicians for the purpose of carrying them along on government activities and other political developments around them" (202).

The essence of analysing the language of politics here is to draw attention to the necessity of proper utilization of political language not as a means to deceiving the public but as a machine for proper articulation of political ideals and programmes to the understanding of the populace. Communication, and perhaps right communication for that matter, is a panacea for the problem of misinformation and misrepresentation of government, political parties and other interest groups' strategies that have been misconstrued and is currently setting a wrong political and anti-development agenda in our society. Of course, right and strategic information is a means of overcoming the deformity occasioned by misinformation. One fact is clear: either we are properly informed or (improperly) deformed. In either way, the effect on the lives of people in the society and from government programmes cannot be underestimated.

Struggle for Power: African democratic process has over the years experienced fierce battle or struggle for power. Power play at all tiers of government has negatively affected the progress of African nations. Roche and Stedman in their joint work: *The Dynamics of Democratic Government*, aptly observe that, "Among the most complex problems that rise to plague democratic government are those which relate to the extent and basis of executive power" (322), since absolute power is said to corrupt absolutely. However, there are those who maintain that strong or vigorous leadership is a dangerous proposition, while others, like the great political

sociologists, Mosca and Michel, according to John Rosche and Murrays Syedman, are of the opinion that "leadership is by its very nature undemocratic" (322).

Their assertion is of course, directly or indirectly inferring that leadership cannot be democratic since the trace of autocracy has been implanted in every leader. To this end, two opposing ideas resurface: some persons are of the opinion that strong democratic executive is not necessary on the ground that they are likely to manipulate the process and ignore the ideals of government to satisfy personal ego and run away with the resources of the state, while the other group believes that strong leadership is necessary since democracy is a facade, a "political formula" which clever leaders use to convince the masses that they are working in the best interest of the society as a whole. We can appreciate the level of misunderstanding of the use and function of power that is, democratic leadership power.

One has to agree with those who kick against dictatorial leadership. Our experience in Africa (and most especially, amongst countries that practise what we may call camouflage democracy) is the fact that few groups of people often runaway with government. They do this through various means: either by ignoring the people after assuming office; siphoning their money from the treasury and heaping them in foreign lands; creating a barrier that makes it difficult for anybody to approach or confront them on issues of good governance or embarking on vicious power mongering expedition such as unjust arrest or detention of oppositions on trumped up cases; withdrawal of aids and incentives from the people and concentrating such aids and incentives within small enclave of political and family bourgeois; and creating insecurity that may climax in incessant and sustained assassination of innocent people who are seen as posing a threat on their stands on certain issues of governance.

Power struggle is a challenge that has to be handled with care if meaningful achievement is to be attained by government. Political power should not be seen as an end in itself but rather, in the right sense of the word, a means to an end and should be taken as such. If we acquire political power to serve the people, then it should be acquired in a most responsible manner that is devoid of physical and psychological assassinations of the very people we aspire to serve. The physical and psychological assassinations, in this case, involve spilling of blood and destruction of individual's character, respectively. Those who struggle for power should endeavour to imbibe acceptable ethical code of conduct in order to avoid a rancorous situation that will destroy the peace and progress of the society.

Military Incursion: Military incursion into politics is one of the unfortunate experiences and the worst destabilizing factor in African political system. In majority of cases, military takeover of government has negatively affected the development of political life in African society. The military, on taking over power run a unitary government with minimal number of civilian involvement in the administration. The constitution as a basic democratic principle of government is often suspended. The supreme leader rules only with degrees promulgated by the supreme military council that acts as an alternative legislature at the same time wielding executive powers. During this time, major political activities are suspended, the existence of pressure groups which is one of the features of liberal democracy ceases; thus, giving room for the regime to rule the society with naked force. The recent experience of military incursions in some West African nations bears one out on this score.

Through the brazen use of barrels of gun instead of reasoning, which liberalizes the process of good governance, the military personnel rule with impunity. In fact, groups' agitation for a return to democracy and infrastructural development is met with stiff punishment and in most case, death penalty is pronounced and execution of agitators carried out with immediate effect and with ease. Typical example of this scenario in Nigeria's history was the execution of Ogoni Chiefs including Ken Saro-Wiwa – a human right activist and 'environmentalist who

clamoured for a better deal for his people. However, other small sections of the African society would be comfortable with a call for military incursion in politics.

It is a matter of individual and group's preference after taking into cognizance what one stands to gain or lose in the process of military incursion. Once there is a disagreement in the political party where some individuals feel their interest is not protected, they will immediately contact the military politicians to overthrow the government. They do this in connivance with some self-seeking civilian politicians who move to act primarily on selfish' interest. In some cases, such individuals are compensated with appointments and huge contracts by the military government if the coup d'état is successful.

On this account, therefore, we may assume that selfish or egocentric political and economic manoeuvre is one of the factors militating against the realisation and entrenchment of democratic ideals in African system and this may be the reason that Africa is lacking behind in development both in politics and infrastructure. This egoistic, egocentric and narrow-minded political calculations by certain powerful individuals in the society usually lead to instability in the political calendar of democratic society. If we must achieve a steady political development in Africa, such egocentric and egoistic individuals must be put under check.

God-Fatherism: One can identify the problem of god-fatherism which has characterised the democratic landscape of African countries. God-fatherism breeds jealousy, hatred, nepotism and puts unnecessary pressure that becomes counterproductive as far as peace, progress and stability of government and society is concerned. What these god-fathers want is to have unflinching access to the machinery of government and influenced executive and parliamentary decisions in order to satisfy their whims and caprices. They are known to have often hand-picked less qualified individuals, close relations and associates and impose them on the populace during political selections.

This is one reason some persons see Elections in African as mere 'selectocracy' instead of real and direct elections where every party in the race is protected and allowed to compete freely and favourably. Once there is a level playing ground in an election, the contestants will have no option than to accept the result and congratulate the winner. And in such atmosphere, the winner will ensure that the fellow contestants who could not win are carried along, accommodated and rewarded when they assume office because in every competition, there must always be a winner.

Weak Institutions: Weak institutions in Africa constitute a major set-back to democracy. Respective institutions that should support democracy in Africa are weak and corrupt. In this circumstance, the possibility of having vibrant democratic culture is very slim. John has succinctly submits thus:

The judiciary, the security agencies like the Police Force, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences (ICPC), the legislature, labour unions, Directorate of State Security (DSS), Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the press, civil society groups, religious, economics, political parties and other trade and professional bodies are highly sentimental, bias, corrupt and, as a result, very weak and incapable of supporting democratic ideals in different African nations. (2019:229).

Sit-Tight Syndrome: Another major challenge to democratic development in Africa is the sit-tight syndrome of some Africa leaders. Experience of this situation abounds in some African countries. We cannot forget the political uproar in Libya, Morocco, Egypt, Zimbabwe, Gambia, Kenya, Cameron, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo; and even up to 1990's Apartheid regime in South Africa, that experienced the sit-tight syndrome of some of their past and current leaders. This sit-tight syndrome had been experienced also in Nigeria during the regimes of

Gowon, Babangida, Abacha and even Obasanjo. African leaders are noted for attempting and at times succeeding in perpetuating their stay in the corridor of power by amending degrees or Electoral Acts and the constitution to favour their negative political and egoistic desires, namely: to stay longer than necessary in power, but it however turns a huge misadventure for them. But not for divine intervention, most of these leaders would have succeeded. The issue here is that selfishness cannot be removed from contemporary democratic practice in Africa. This selfish desires lead to nepotism, ethnicity and complete absence of patriotism.

Other seeming problems that inherently discredit African democratic development are poverty, greed, corruption, absence of continuity in governance in term of project execution and policy direction, poor allocation of resources, violence, insecurity (which in some cases lead to voters apathy during elections), and absence of political ideology in existing political parties and other pressure groups. Of course, the root cause of most of the problems enumerated so far is illiteracy.

John (2020:122) has explained the pattern in which this can affect the whole process of electioneering. He believes that illiteracy would not allow the very process of election to be fair and free “since the people may find it difficult to distinguish party symbols, read and understand manifestoes of different political parties for them to vote for ideology” if at all such ideologies do exist. In this scenario, we cannot undermine the need for result oriented training and formal education in polity. The more literate the people are the fewer problems they will impose on the society. Knowledge is virtue and virtue is power if I may align my thought with Aristotle's idea in this regard.

Prospects of Democratic cum Political Development in Africa

Despite the numerous challenges and problems that democracy encounters in Africa, the prospects are there. In fact, the advent of modern democracy has had some major positive impacts on the people. One of the many impacts is the participation of women in politics which hitherto was an exclusive right of men as African political space will continue to experience liberalization and massive mobilisation and participation of inclusiveness. In an inclusive political culture, development is assured and the unnecessary heating up of the polity is drastically curbed leading to reduction in crime will have direct impact on the people.

It will also encourage proper exchange of ideas for the purpose of building a strong and viable economic cum political society where citizens are economically, socially and educationally empowered to contribute their quota in the development of their society. The current over bearing influences of religion which John (2020: 113) identifies as one of the problems of democracy will be overcome through the power of reasoning which, qualitative education both formal and informal can guarantee. It is a truism that knowledge is power. The more voters are educated the less the indoctrinating influence of religion on their placement of loyalty.

In recent times, many educational institutes and universities have been established. It is hopeful that the establishment of these institutions will translate to quality-trained individuals who would actively participate in the task of democratic governance and development. Besides, efforts should be made to ensure compliance to the principle of internal democracy within existing political parties that is competing for power. The institution of internal democracy will help to control rancour amongst members of the same party. By so doing, the booty and dividend of democracy will be enjoyed by citizens and it will boast African political development.

Conclusion

African democracy and political development have grown beyond mere experimental practice. What we have now as democracy in Africa is basically, a modernised African democratic culture of communalism. This communal influence of African lifestyle is positively encouraging the thriving of democracy and political development. The tribal and ethnic influences on democracy can be checked through political education. Propaganda that often lead to a minimal level once a pragmatic, political education is accepted as the basic government principles for development.

This work, therefore, concludes on a positive note that African democratic and political development is on course. Democracy is the most acceptable form and system of government in contemporary African states although we still have few communities that still uphold the traditional African culture that supports successive monarchy which produces direct biological heirs in the society in event of the death of the leader or king as against democratic principles. However, this practice is not given wider acceptance as it is merely taken to be a process of selection of leaders and not a system of governance in Africa.

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