

POLITICS: THE DIALECTICAL BASE OF POVERTY AND PROSPERITY IN NIGERIA

*Gregory Emeka Chinweuba**

Abstract

Politics impact on societal institutions and form the fulcrum of poverty and prosperity in the world. It fosters the fortunes of the elites and their cronies that control it, but greatly frustrate the prosperity of the masses; creating a conspicuous gap between the greater poor and the few rich in Nigeria. The spate of elite controlled politics in Nigeria results to massive corruption, socio-economic monopoly and ineffectiveness of vital institutions that affect the existence of the greater population. This paper therefore investigates the dialectics of politics with other human institutions in Nigeria. The study analytically exposes the broad causal patterns of present Nigerian socio-economic inequality evident in the poverty of the larger population of the citizenry and the prosperity of the few. The paper again determines the philosophical base of the connection between politics, poverty and prosperity, and proffers axiological panacea to dire Nigerian political practices. The research however finds that politics everywhere shapes socio-economic systems as well as the life of the people within the state. This is evident from the exercise of power; decision making and policy implementation which check and control the socio-economic and general existence of the citizenry. The paper thus concludes that people oriented and just politics maximize socio-economic opportunities, quality education, sound security, and paves the general prosperity of the greater population of the citizenry.

Keywords: Politics, Institutions, Dialectics, Poverty, Prosperity.

Introduction

Prosperity is not strictly guaranteed by mineral deposits and resources in a country. For predominant mineral rich and natural resources societies like Nigeria thrive with poverty. The source of poverty and prosperity in many countries of the world therefore lies with the institutions that shape and manage human society, and especially the socio-economic life of the citizenry. When these institutions grant unequal opportunities and incentives in favour of the few, the result is massive poverty amidst the few privilege rich. At the center of civil society and its institutions however is politics, which determines the nature, mode of operation and existence of other human institutions as well as the socio-economic arrangements that affect economic incentives and opportunities. Politics is therefore the catalyst behind power distribution, economic opportunities, market incentives, and socio-economic space that determine actualization of economic objectives, dream projects, means of livelihood and self-reliance. It shapes the entire market economy in which the citizenry can produce, buy and sell any product and services (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2013:64).

In Nigeria however, politics has become the monopoly of the insatiable rich, their cabals and cronies who alternate themselves in government posts. These individuals hijack political power at every dispensation and use politics to amass great wealth to the impoverishment of the larger population. To be true, the leadership in Nigeria thinks more about politics, governance and survival of democracy in terms of personal gain. As such, universal recognition which is the fundamental human longing and the fulcrum of politics in liberal democracy has eluded the Nigerian citizenry (Fukuyama, 1992:288). Thus, unlike all true liberal democratic societies, politics in Nigeria is dedicated to institutionalizing socio-

economic inequality and private gain. The result has been corruption in low and high places, incompetency, poverty and low rating of Nigeria in the international community. When politics is non people oriented as in Nigeria, similar condition characterize other critical institutions controlled by politics. As such, the larger population unlike their counterparts in politics faces uphill challenges, and little or absence of incentives needed to achieve greater heights.

Conspicuously, the common citizens face the challenges of being exploited, intentionally delayed or ignored by security institutions in their quest for security rights, legal institutions in their quest for justice, educational institutions in their quest for knowledge, financial institutions in their request for funding, communication institutions in their efforts to bring their goods and services to the public and other public institutions in their efforts to access necessary services needed for socio-economic development. Worst still, the citizenry face the threat of their output being unjustly taxed or expropriated by Politicians and their cabals in government when they resist compliance. These are exacerbated by unlawful arrests, security and law enforcers' intimidations of the public and especially the business rivals of the Politicians. Consequently, initiatives, talents, ambitions, investment, inventions, innovations and long term productivity of the greater population of Nigerians are generally hindered. As such, Nigeria is presently viewed as an unjust society filled with grave discrepancies in income and standard of living of the rich and the poor. With politics inimical to socio-economic growth of the greater population, the societal institutions which are necessarily controlled by this pattern greatly favour the rich, elites, politicians and their loyalist, and cripple the socio-economic emancipation of the masses. Here then lies the source of spate of migration of Nigerians to other countries in present epoch. Such migration is often detrimental as there are evidences of these Nigerians ending in the hands of unsuspected human traffickers who enslave them in many ways. And so, this study is compelled to investigate the dialectics of politics with societal institutions as well as the causal patterns of the present Nigerian socio-economic inequality.

Conceptual Analysis

Unexplained concepts are largely misnomers that obstruct understanding and knowledge (Ezeugwu & Chinweuba, 2018:28). But defined concepts set the limit and point to meanings inherent in a term. Since philosophy thrives in distinction, clarity, explicitness and creation of better insight into the meaning of words, there is need to explain the concepts; politics, institutions, prosperity and poverty which are outstanding in this discourse. The word "politics" came from the Greek word "polis" meaning city, city-state, state and society. With time, the term "politics" acquired a new meaning incorporating decision-making regarding what a society should do; when, how and why as well as who should determine what is done (Elijah & Ette, 2018:25). Seen in this light, politics came to involve the struggle for power which enables the possessor to determine what policies a group or state should carry out (Eminue, 2001:10). As such, politics corroborate the entire tussle which precede and surround any decision of the state or government (Jouvenel, 1957:15). This means that politics are human activities associated with running a government, an organization or a movement. In these activities, differing interests within a given unit of rule are conciliated by giving people a share in power in proportion to their importance to the welfare and survival of the whole community (Crick, 1964:21). In other words, politics refer to how human beings govern and are governed hence the activities involve who gets what, when, how and the authoritative allocation of values (Magstadt, 2009:4). Indeed, politics also extend to all the analysis of government and its workings which meddle with every sector of the state (Appadorai, 2004:4).

In a nutshell, institutions are organizations and corporations within a political state that engage in production, education and public services (Blackburn, 2005:187). They can also be the customs or practices of the society. However, prosperity is when people have everything that is needed for good life. It is characterized by availability of goods that enhance material wellbeing. Indeed, differences in incomes and standard of living separate the poor and the prosperous. Moreover, poverty and prosperity are determined through comparison with citizens of nations replete with better living conditions, abundance means of livelihood and longevity of life. This is why Acemoglo and Robinson submit that prosperity and poverty are based on access to long range of options in life, amenities and government services from vacation to career paths which the citizens of the comparing country only dream of (2013:40). Ndianefo supports this submission, arguing that prosperity and poverty point at economic abundance or lack among the larger population (Ndianefo, 2011:107). And these conditions result from inclusion or neglect of measures necessary to eradicate poverty or ensure prosperity in the politics of a country.

Cradle of the Present Trend of Politics in Nigeria

The present trend of politics in Nigeria with its character of neglecting the welfare of the masses stems from politics of different periods. In pre-colonial epoch was the monarchical politics. Then, politics and institutions were in favour of the monarch, royals, stakeholders and loyalists whose welfare people largely work for. Consequently, exploitative taxation system was in place and deviants were brutally punished and their possessions expropriated by these monarchs to deter others. Indeed, life among many tribes in Nigeria at this period was evidently based on masters-servants relationship which hampered socio-economic development of the larger population. Following the monarchical system was the colonial politics characterized by same exploitation of the native population. In places without kings like Igbo land; warrant chiefs were installed for effective implementation of colonial policies and governance.

Writing about colonial politics and their effects, Achebe documents that the welfare of the native population was jeopardized as most of the colonial kings and warrant chiefs were upstarts and ruffians in the community, installed to uphold colonial policies at the expense of the people (1998:60-61). Consequently, a great number of the natives suffered long years of economic stunt and impoverishment. Yet, with Nigerian independence in 1960 came nationalists' politics that absorbed the monarchical and colonial systems paving way for the present stunting socio-economic trajectory that deprives the larger population of growth in agriculture and industry. In the past, countries of the world like United States of America, Canada, Japan, Singapore and India suffered similar politics. But they gradually changed their pre-colonial and colonial institutions and embraced a people oriented politics. Thus, Britain colonized United States, India, Canada, Singapore, Nigeria, etc. but a grave socio-economic difference lies among these countries. This difference stems from the people oriented politics prevalent in these countries at the moment, which evidently affect the mode of operation of other institutions of the state and socio-economic life of the citizenry.

Truly, most Nigerian nationalists consider themselves as the new monarchs and colonialists. Hence, they incorporate the same politics of exploitation and impoverishment of the masses characterizing colonial and pre-colonial era. Achebe for instance draws attention to the unfortunate thoughts guiding the actions of some of these Nigerian nationalists which are in contrast to the ideological expressions of Mboya, Nyerere and Nkrumah (1998:13). In unveiling his guiding principles in politics for instance, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe writes; "...henceforth I shall utilize my earned income to secure my enjoyment of a high standard of living and also to give a helping hand to the needy" (Achebe, 1998:13). Chief Obafemi

Awolowo similarly writes; “I am going to make myself formidable intellectually, morally invulnerable, to make all the money that is possible for a man with my brains and brawn to make in Nigeria” (Achebe, 1998:13-14). Truly, thoughts and egoistic politics of these nationalists underscore the present political trend in Nigeria, and have been unabated in producing mass poverty and baseless millionaires than selfless and effective leaders. Thus, the early Nigerian nationalists were quite different from most of their counterparts over the world. Hence, at the same epoch, the Singaporean nationalists declare;

We cannot afford to forget that public order, personal security, economic and social progress, and prosperity are not the natural order of things, that they depend on ceaseless effort and attention from an honest and effective government that the people must elect (2011:xiii).

The early nationalists who won independence therefore lack the essential objectivity, patriotism and selfless service at the critical moment of the Nigerian formation and consequently incline the country to disorderly politics and governance. Since then, politics in Nigerian has been all about reneging the social contract binding the state and the individual, which revolves around provision of equal socio-economic opportunities and protection of lives and property. Worst still, the suspension of the pristine constitution in 1966 resulting from military incursion in Nigerian politics, and formation of unitary structure of governance at the federal level strengthens more the foundation of egoistic politics. This is as it institutionalized the exploitation of the masses and what Fukuyama calls *megalothymia*, (i.e. absolute domination) which characterizes subsequent politics in Nigeria (1992:182-187). Thus, the years of democratic rule from 1979 to 1983 and from 1999 till date sees the resurgence of chain of dysfunctional and irresponsible politics evident in lootings, exploitation, unequal distribution of socio-economic opportunities and unaccountability. Today, most Nigerians are poor and few are rich because of politics. Thus, unlike all true liberal democratic societies, Nigerian political foundation is dedicated to institutionalizing inequality and mass poverty. This is coupled with the consistent tribalism, cult of mediocrity and state dishonesty which exposes the citizenry to unfair treatment, backwardness and social injustice.

Politics in Current Nigeria

Politics in present day Nigeria is utopic. This is as it lacks the real content of politics and is wanting in delivering public good. More so, it is predatory in nature. This is as it enhances rulers’ opportunities in using their expertise to extract resources or rents from the rest of the society (Fukuyama, 2012:210). Thus, the essence of Nigerian politics is visible in the power and access it gives to economic rents (Evans, 1989:561). In their politics of power therefore, the members of the ruling class and their cronies work to extract the highest level of resources they can from the underlying society and divert them to their own private uses (Fukuyama, 2012:210). Thus, leadership and government offices in Nigeria are not for the service of the people but means of accumulating personal wealth (Onuigbo, 2005:27). Forsyth echoes this politics of spoil system in Nigeria and states:

political power means success and prosperity, not only for the man who holds it but for his family, his birth place and even his region of origin. As a result, there are many who will go any length to get it, will surpass themselves in order to get it (1982:15).

Because of the power and access politics gives to wealth, Nigerian society is monetized by politicians and this adversely widens the gap between the massive dominated poor and few subjugating rich. Politics have thus become the occupation of the highest bidder and elites who alternates themselves and their cronies in leadership and political positions. Characterizing Nigerian politics also is the fact that there is no permanent enemy, friend, party or ideology but a permanent private interest. This parochial interest revolves around remaining in politics so as to maintain personal enrichment from the public treasury. This grave injustice exacerbates human right abuses, tribal and ethnic discriminations, marginalization, irresponsible governance, political neglect and poverty of the citizenry. (Oladepo, 2017:6). Truly, the essence of politics in Nigeria and its resultant dire condition have for long kept the citizenry dissatisfied in real, profound and deep ways, and no country with such politics, corruption, centralized governance, absolute domination and mismanagement of resources can survive as a nation.

Sequel to these, politics in today's Nigeria compromises education, religion, human life and health, legal, security as well as law enforcement institutions, and paves way for annihilation of the economic life of the masses. It as well abhors all the ideas and practices such as referendum, restructuring and rational popular opinions which put human societies on the track of sustainable development. This character in recent time ignites militancy, terrorism and secessionist movement of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Truly, the influence of politics devastates everywhere in Nigeria; from the office of the President to the smallest administrative unit of government and private sector, making millions of people poor and destitute despite the enormous human and material resources present in the country. Today, the larger population of Nigerians counts their losses, and only hopes for an end to the present politics of uncertainty, monopoly of public offices, diversion of public funds into private pockets, crumbling infrastructure and general poverty (Asiegbu, 2011:1).

Rationale behind Politics in Nigeria

A critical investigation into politics in Nigeria reveals some driving forces. These are the forces of poverty and greed which breed every kind of social dysfunction in an individual; such as the feeling of financial insecurity and irrational pursuit of wealth (Fukuyama, 2012:5). Since most Nigerians have trailing history of poverty, the tendency is always to live above this deplorable condition. Some others could not however control their greed. These have led to politics of self-aggrandizement replete with machinations to appropriate common goods. This condition is again propelled by most Nigerian cultures where one's social status, worth and recognition are measured by the amount of wealth one has accumulated.

Thus, the accomplishment of high social status in Nigeria fundamentally goes with amassment of tremendous wealth. And politics in Nigeria is presently the only sector where such wealth that guarantees one immediate honour, recognition and social domination can be amassed. This is as it gives one irrational access and chance to appropriate public wealth without much ado or consequence. As such, recognition which is central in most Nigerian cultures is a critical driver of politics in Nigeria.

The Dialectics of Politics in Nigeria

The dialectics of politics in Nigeria directly involves societal institutions. For politics as a social force necessarily evolves, and meddles with societal institutions shaping, guiding and driving them to an end. In other words, the societal institutions such as economic, education, security, social, legal, etc, derive from politics, and their continuous existence, contents, directions and mode of operation are synthesis of their dialectics with politics

(Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013:42). In fact, economic opportunities, social amenities, patterns of human existence in the society, cost and condition of living, dynamism of market prices; goods and services are all consequences of the dialectics of politics with societal institutions. In recognition of these dialectics, the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown in 2007 observes that politics meddles with every sector of human society including individual utilization of talents, public services and happenings in the market giving rise to societal practices (Mackenzie, 2009:1). These practices range from social norms, human behaviours, actions, to institutional and market operations within the society. Thus, political institution not only generates and implements the necessary policies that underscore the existence of state institutions; it also meddles with these institutions to produce the patterns of life prevalent in the society.

Impact of Politics in Modern Nigeria

Since politics in Nigeria is largely in the hands of oligarchs, their cronies and loyalists, the rest of the masses have little influence over governance. This condition further leaves the people helpless over the control of their political representatives and their incessant pursuit of selfish agenda. This is worse as people's decision at the polls have little or no effect following the imposition of candidates on the people and manipulation of electoral processes by the cabals or the ruling party. Worst still, these politics give rise to policies and governance as well as state institutions and their mode of operations that generally affects the citizenry. One of such effects is market failure resulting from absence of science of economics that guarantee a market economy. The science of economics within market economy consists in availing circumstances and situations for the individuals and firms to freely produce, buy and sell any legitimate product or service that they wish. The science of economics also involves the best use of scarce means or resources to reduce inequality and achieve common good. Indeed, the leadership and those connected to them feel less of market failure since their enterprises are patronized by government agencies, enhanced by government policies and protected by government agents. Plato and Aristotle earlier envisage these conditions, hence their repudiation for democracy and its politics, for its character of turning into oligarchy, plutocracy, partitocracy or tyranny (Aghamelu and Ani, 2011:95).

Therefore, politics in modern Nigeria is to a large extent inimical to the socio-economic growth of the citizenry. Even the little incentive is hijacked by the leadership and their loyalists; and the talented and those with ideas and inventions are denied enabling environment that enhances the implementation of dream projects or benefiting from them. In reality however, institutional constraints made possible through politics are even viewed by the cabals as useful tool for impoverishing the masses for easy buying of their support during and after elections. The impact of politics in Nigerian society is also evident in the malfunctioning or redundancy of institutions necessary for the sustainable development of the country. This is why the despot Sani Abacha mockingly refers to Nigerian politics as "home-made democracy" (Arua, 2009:79). And Odey further holds that such politics is not by the people but by an organized clique, cabal, political jobbers, looters and robbery consortium that collaborate with imperialists and convert government into breeding ground for unemployment, insecurity, hunger and hopelessness (2002:14-15).

Nigerians and the Burden of Politics

From the foregoing, it stands that politics in Nigeria undermine the individuals; their rights, freedom and efforts. This is as they are excluded from governance which affects them, coupled with the persecution of the intellectuals, outspoken, critic, dissident, talented and

anyone whose loyalty is or might be doubted. This results to brain drain, huge loss or waste of society's talents and resources as well as massive impoverishment. And so, those with ideas and inventions hardly express, expand or benefit from them. More so, the people are followed with media orientation where lies and deceits are constantly painted as truth or merely referred to as "political statements". Indeed, both the legislators and the Judiciary have also become part of the oppressing system. This is as they concentrate on repressing the activities of the common people with laws and sing the praises of the political class. Truly, Nigerian people are psychological and physically crushed that despite the politics of oppression, their massive support and votes are still cheaply bought at the polls. As such, politics in Nigeria create perpetual fear of mediocre becoming leaders through electoral manipulations. These mediocre often turn dictators and come up with harsh policies aimed at expropriating public and individual wealth, imprisoning the innocent, threatening people's lives and livelihoods and alluding to interests in society that warp the government in an economically disastrous direction (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013:43).

As a result of these, the larger Nigerian population faces uphill challenges. These are the challenges of expensive licenses one have to obtain, red tapes one have to cut through, Politicians and incumbents who are stumbling blocks on the way coupled with the difficulty of funding from the financial sector who are in cahoots with the incumbents one is trying to compete against (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2013:39). Coupled with these is absence of consistent basic amenities such as electricity, water, etc and the fact that the average Nigerian is viewed as one who should be exploited. As such, the law enforcement agents extort the masses in their day to day movement of goods, and government officials do same during the masses' quest for services. The touts or hooligans used by some states to execute taxation also indulge in public exploitation. Amidst these, the common Nigerians also risk the robbers whose menace remains unchecked. And getting all the permissions from socio-economic institutions, meeting up with the different taxations and greasing all the palms just to open or to continue operating a business are not easy endeavours. When security challenges eventually strike, the common Nigerians often spend fortune trying to seek redress and get their right or the security attention or legal justice that may never come. Consequently, most small and medium enterprises (SME) in Nigeria often collapse within the shortest period.

It therefore stands that conspicuous poverty in Nigeria results from her oppressive politics. The prosperity of the few on the other hand stems from the social and economic incentives granted to them by successive governments. Thus, the institutions driven by Nigerian politics generally pave the prosperity of the few and reversal of fortune for the larger population. Worst still, the present existence of the majority of the citizenry is still governed through unfavourable politics that consistently undermine their rights and privileges.

The Philosophical Basis of the Argument

The fact that civil society and human living conditions depend on politics dominates the thoughts of thinkers from the beginning of philosophy. This is why many of these thinkers propound political theories and posit ideals that enhance politics and make human society habitable. Aristotle for instance teaches that Athenian politics was at its peak in provision of good life to the citizens under Pericles because of the implementation of the concepts and ideas in the natural Philosophy of Anaxagoras (2004:4). Supporting this view, Russell testifies that Anaxagoras dwells on political contents and qualities which sharpened Pericles and Euripides, making of them outstanding politicians of ancient time replete with true knowledge of realities and nature of the intellect (2007:68). Indeed, the Sophists (Protagoras, Trasymachus and Gorgias) came to Athens in the early epoch of Greek democracy with the intention of impacting

positively on their politics. Consequently, their teachings on rhetoric, grammar and critical interpretation became essential rudiments in politics guaranteeing effective public speaking, persuasion, social prestige, quality leadership and prosperity (Chinweuba, 2018:86). Subsequent Philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle allude to politics as the basis of prosperity and poverty. Hence, their writings and teachings tend towards promoting politics that will reduce poverty and guarantee human basic needs and good life. Based on this, Aristotle had the historic privilege of being invited to inculcate qualities of politics in Alexander the great, son of king Philip of Macedonia (Agbanusi, 2011:82).

Adding to these, philosophical works like *Republic* by Plato, *Politics* and *Art of Rhetoric* by Aristotle etc. are all replete with essential qualities of politics and good governance applicable even in contemporary societies. For politics and the state according to Plato and Aristotle originated for the sake of human economic needs and good life (Stumpf, 1994:70). As such, its end should be the provision of the best life for the people (Appadorai, 2004:39). And the best state is that whose politics promotes the number of the middle class (Nwoko, 1988:28). When Plato taught about Kings becoming Philosophers or Philosophers becoming Kings to ensure a stable civil society and good life for the citizenry, he was pointing at the central role of politics in human survival (Okafor, 2006:88). To achieve good life, Plato argues that People involving in politics must acquire the intellectual capacity to understand the distinction between the visible and intelligible world, realm of opinion and knowledge, as well as appearance and reality (Chinweuba, 2018:85). Plato further avers that Politicians must be characterized by firm knowledge of literature, music, mathematics, dialectics and philosophy. This is for effective management of the state and provision of good life for the larger population. Thus, Plato was convinced that there can neither be reduction of poverty nor sustainable prosperity of the greater population of the citizenry without quality politics. This is as good politics implants good constitutions and effective implementations that positively enhance socio-economic wellbeing of the citizens.

In his *Two Treatises of Government*, John Locke echoes the connection between politics, poverty and prosperity as he reflects on natural right to private property. Locke however stresses that the duty of the state to protect life, liberty and property happens through reasonable politics played for the general good of the citizens (Appadorai, 2004:25). On the other hand, Karl Marx's dislike of the bourgeoisie results from politics of exclusion and oppression which alienates the people and impoverishes them. In other words, Marx views politics as a superstructure that shapes economic substructure (Marx and Engels, 2008:28). Hence for him, socio-economic inequality; prosperity and poverty are more of social creation brought about by capitalist egoistic politics (Fawole, et al, 2011:11). This underscores Marx's conclusion that the existence of poverty in societies like Nigeria results from the exploitation and oppression of the powerful class over the disadvantaged (2011:12). Consequently, he suggests conflict of classes and socio-economic revolution as tools that will lead to qualitative change and guarantee good life for the individuals. In addition, the utilitarian Philosophers; Bentham and Mill posit that since happiness is the highest human value, the structure of politics should be adjusted to gratifying it. Thus, they taught that the greatest happiness of the greatest number should be the criterion of morality and the end of politics in the state (Stumpf and Abel, 2002:394). This utilitarian philosophy forms the basic foundation of electoral processes and democratic culture around the modern world (Laslett, 1967:380). Tracing the foundation of politics however, Peikoff re-echoes the philosophical thought of Ayn Rand arguing that ethics derives from metaphysics and epistemology, and politics is based on ethics. As such, the idea of politics in civil society should gear towards ensuring adequate application of ethics to social questions (1993:351).

From the foregoing therefore, it stands that the dialectics of politics with institutions of the state and its resultant socio-economic conditions have been the burden of Philosophy. For even the fundamental presuppositions and suppositions that determine politics and state institutions come from philosophical thoughts (Odimegwu, 2008: ix-1). More so, Philosophy provides the sense of reason, consciousness, cognition, evidence, arguments, analysis and criticism that underscore politics. It is as well employed in the justification of the grounds, terms, position, advantages, structures, logical and factual consistency as well as the end of politics which makes the art desirable to the people. Most importantly, politics are replete with philosophical beliefs, convictions and positions. Therefore, crisis of contemporary Nigerian politics which give rise to the widening gap between the poor and the rich is not unconnected with the dislocation or disregard for philosophic foundations in the practice of politics and exercise of governance (Nze, 1989:1-10). This why Okolo insists that the duty still lies on Philosophers to define and clarify the meaning of daily use concepts and terms in politics for better application (1985:1-23).

Axiological Panacea to the Present Trend of Politics in Nigeria

To change the pattern of politics in Nigeria and its consequent socio-economic inequality, there is need for servant leadership. Such leadership must be capable of applying the science of economics or dynamic economic policies in addressing market failures. This must be a leadership with conviction that achieving greater prosperity depends on solving basic political problems that hinder socio-economic activities. This is a leadership with political will to embark on public consultation on critical matters with the aim of providing adequate public services that will encourage productivity, exchange of goods and services. Such a leader must focus on people oriented governance, refocus the trend of politics and paves way for policies that will guarantee economic reforms, adequate market incentives in agriculture, industry, individual creativity and investments. Such leadership must consistently work with the knowledge that sustainable socio-economic development depends on politics, state policies and institutions that guarantee incentives and reduce constraints people face in the society.

To further ensure the prosperity of the greater number of the citizenry and minimize poverty, there is need to restructure the country through creation of semi-independent federating units. This will enhance efficiency and proper management of political processes, resources and economy (Kaplan & Weisbach, 1992:107). This will as well facilitate the socio-political and economic capacities that will enhance sustainable development and better living conditions. Indeed, restructuring will create and enhance functional politics, larger participation of people in politics, competitive advantage and functional institutions that will give incentives to invest and to work hard. It will also pave way for efficient generation and management of resources, and enhances human capacity building and capital base that foster sustainable development. Whereby such change as described is not forthcoming, revolution from the citizenry to salvage the politics of the state and their wellbeing is a desideratum. This revolution will be justified on the ground that those involved in politics have reneged the social contract leaving revolution as the remaining option.

Conclusion

Politics in Nigeria has been a closed system inimical to the progress of the citizens. This is as it does not embrace the citizenry nor create incentives, free market, and equal socio-political and economic opportunities to the larger population, but expend huge amount of funds to programs that benefit the rich, political class and their loyalists (Fawole, et al, 2011:12). The nature of Nigerian politics has thus given rise to enormous human suffering which cuts down

people's life expectancy. It as well strangulates innovation and denies the larger population access to better education, health services, gainful employment, equal political rights and economic opportunities. Consequently, the country is presently characterized by escalating restiveness, agitation, secession and class struggle. And unless the trend of politics which controls every sector of Nigerian society is refocused to accommodate the good life of the citizenry, Nigeria will remain replete with instability and class struggle as postulated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (2008: 3).

Chinweuba, Gregory Emeka, PhD

Philosophy Unit, General Studies Division,
Enugu State University of Science and Technology,
(ESUT) Enugu.

Email:gregorychinweuba@yahoo.com

References

- Acemoglu, D & Robinson, J. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. London: Profile Books, 2013.
- Achebe, C. *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing CO., 1998.
- Agbanusi, A. "The Need for Philosophy in the Quest for Sustainable Development", *The Humanities and Sustainable Development*, Nimo: Rex Charles & Patrick Ltd, 2011.
- Aghamelu, F & Ani, E. "Francis Fukuyama on Democracy and the End of History", *Humanities and Nigeria's Democratic Experience*, Nimo: Rex Charles & Patrick, 2009.
- Appadorai, A. *The Substance of Politics*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, (Trans.) Lawson-Tancred, H. C., London: Penguin Books, 2004.
- Arua, K. "The Years of the Hypocrisy of Democracy in Nigeria (1999-2009)", *The Humanities and Nigeria's Democratic Experience*, Nimo: Rex Charles & Patrick, 2009.
- Blackburn, S. 2005. *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chinweuba, G. E. "Leadership and Higher Education in Nigeria: The Philosophical Nexus", *Sapientia Journal of Philosophy*, 9, 2018.
- Crick, B. *In Defence of Politics*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964.
- Elijah, O. J & Ette, E. E. "Political Education and the Sustainability of Democracy in Nigeria", *Sapientia Journal of Philosophy*, 9, 2018.
- Eminue, O. *Introduction to Political Science*, Calabar: Clear Lines Publications, 2001.
- Evans, P. B. "Predatory, Developmental, and other Apparatuses: A Comparative Analysis of the Third World State", *Sociological Forum*, 4 (4), 1989.
- Ezeugwu, E. C & Chinweuba, G. E. "The Supreme Being in Igbo Thought: A Reappraisal", *Philosophia E-Journal for Philosophy & Culture*, 21, 2018.
- Fawole, O. A., Ogunkan, D. V & Omoruan, A. "The Menace of Begging in Nigerian Cities: A Sociological Analysis", *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 3(1), 2011.
- Forsyth, F. *The Biafran Story*. London: Hudahuda Publishers, 1982.
- Fukuyama, F. *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Penguin Books, 1992.
- Fukuyama, F. *The Origins of Political Order*, London: Profile Books, 2012.

- Chinweuba* *Politics: The Dialectical Base of Poverty and Prosperity in Nigeria*
- Hobbes, T. *Leviathan*, (trans.) C. B. Macpherson, London: Penguin Books, 1981.
- Jouvenel, B. *Sovereignty: An Inquiry into the Political Good*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.
- Kaplan, S & Weisbach, M. S. "The Success of Acquisitions: Evidence from Divestitures", *Journal of Finance*, 47, 1992.
- Krinsky, S. "African Philosophy in the Age of Development: The Case Study of Nigerian Pentecostalism", Address to the First Annual Conference of the National Association of Philosophy Students Nigeria (NAPS), University of Ibadan, February 2, 2007.
- Laslett, P. "History of Political Philosophy in Edwards", *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 6, 1967.
- Mackenzie, I. *Politics: Key Concepts in Philosophy*, New York: Continuum International Publishers, 2009.
- Magstadt, T. M. *Understanding Politics, Ideas, Institutions, and Issues*, Belmont: Wadsworth, 2009.
- Marx, K. & Engels, F. *Selected Works*, London: Progress Publishers, 1982.
- Marx, K. & Engels, F. *The Communist Manifesto*, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 2008.
- Ndianefo, I. J. "Philosophical Perspectives on the Politics and Crisis of Sustainable Development in Africa", *Ogirisi Journal of African Studies*, 8, 2011.
- Nwoko, M. I. *Basic World Political Theories*, Owerri: Claretian Institute of Philosophy, 1988.
- Nze, C. *Aspects of African Communalism*, Enugu: Veritas Publishers, 1989.
- Odey, J. *Democracy: Our Lofty Dreams and Crazy Ambitions*, Enugu: Snaap Press, 2002.
- Odimegwu, I. *Philosophic Foundations of Politics*, Amawbia: Lumos, 2008.
- Okafor, F. C. *Philosophy of Education and Third World Perspective*, Lawrenceville: Brunswick Publishing Company, 2006.
- Okolo, C. *Philosophy and Nigerian Politics*, New York: Pacific College Press, 1985.
- Oladapo, F. A. "The Structure of Nigeria's Restructuring Rhetoric." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2017. doi:10.2139/ssrn.3035520.
- Onuigbo, S. "Africa: The Future is Bleak". *Essays in Philosophy*, Nsukka: Afro-Orbis Publishing Company, 2005.
- Peikoff, L. *Objectivism: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand*, New York: Meridian, 1993.
- Russell, B. *History of Western Philosophy*, New York: Routledge classics, 2007.
- Stumpf, S & Abel, D. *Elements of Philosophy*, New York: McGraw Hill, 2002.
- Stumpf, S. *Philosophy History & Problems*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994.
- Yew, L. K. *From Third to First World*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2011.