

The Travails of Democratic Governance and Economic Development in Africa: A Prognostic Analysis

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Abstract

Democracy as a form of government has recorded a chequered history in African political terrain. Essentially, the causes of drudgery in sustaining the principles and democratic ethos in Africa are fundamentally the concerns of this chapter. Therefore, the chapter unraveled the nuances and intricacies that militated against seamless operations of democracy in Africa. Our data were gathered from secondary source through Documentary Method and we analyzed them using Content Analysis. The study utilized Dependency Theory as a theoretical nexus around which the study revolved; it maintained among others that the harbinger of developmental deficits in Africa is their socio-political and economic subjections to the Western developmental pills. Hence, the hitches in observance of democratic credos in Africa are as a result of alien and imposed nature of the concept to African political milieu. Nevertheless, the chapter found that the impediments in consolidation of democracy in Africa is because African traditional socio-political setting was never a democratic one, rather, they were hierarchically orchestrated with gerontocracy and autocratic principles. However, we suggested that the leaders and the lead have serious responsibility to demonstrate to ensure success of democracy in Africa. On the part of the leaders (government), they should ensure that the dividends of the democracy get to the people while the led should consciously participate in democratic activities of governance. Finally, if the citizens are motivated with the benefits accruing from democracy, it will attract them into observing the principles thereby eliminating the travails of democracy in Africa.

1. Introduction

In the pre-state era, which was according to Hobbes portrayed as being brutish, nasty, solitary, and short life, the gregarious nature of man played decisive roles in sustaining humanity. In a bid to wriggle out from the socio-political predicament meted to man by man in the state of nature as a result of the jungle

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***Related declarations are provided in the final section of this article.*

Living, the philosopher ruminated on the ways of maintaining a politically organized society. This arrangement is particularly necessary because of the fact that where one man's right stops, is where another man's right begins. Rousseau in Appadorai (2004) captured this paradox when he averred that 'man was born free but he is everywhere in chain'. The circumstances were amplified by Appadorai (2004) when he intoned that, every man desires to have his own way, as a rule, to act and think as he likes, but, because he lives in society where one man's desires conflict with another, everyone cannot have his own way, therefore, the relationship of individual member of the society need to be regulated by government. Sequel to the development, the actions and inactions of man were subjected to surveillance and control of government.

In another development, the above position was probed further to ascertain what constituted the government. Will it be gerontocracy, where the elders govern? Will it be theocracy, which allows the religious leaders to be political leaders? Is it monarchical form that supports autocratic and hereditary leadership? Is it plutocracy, which espouses government by the wealthy? Shall the government comprise of few powerful individuals that will rule in their interest (oligarchy)? Is it supposed to be handled by the best citizens cum nobles? (Aristocracy), or will the government be made up of majority of people in the interest of the majority (democracy)? (Okonkwo, 2019). In order to unravel the above questions, the philosophers and scholars projected tentative explanations on the ideal constitution of the government (Mukherjee & Ramaswamy, 2007).

However, the organization of men into political web and trajectory has manifested in different forms in society. In the view of Plato (427-347BC) Cited in Nwoko (2006) the forms evolved in the following intertwined arrangement:

- i. Aristocracy,
- ii. Timocracy,
- iii. Oligarchy,
- iv. Democracy and
- v. Tyranny.

Expatriating further, he narrated thus:

...aristocracy is a political society where the best citizens rule, considering Plato as the idealist, he called this form of government an ideal state. The degeneration from the ideal state, where dissention manifests within the governing class (the rulers and the auxiliary), who are not in good terms with the subjects is known as timocracy. Also, oligarchy manifests as degeneration from timocracy, when the few that accumulated wealth in the society form a ruling class, which literally suggests government by the few. More so, democracy on the other hand occurs when there is change from oligarchy where majority poor people defeat the few wealthy people. Finally, tyranny connotes degeneration from democracy due to over-emphasis on liberty. It means a form of government by absolute ruler or despot with oppressive and cruel hands without the rule of law (Nwoko, 2006, p.23).

As a form of government that incorporates the majority in its governing activities, democracy is cherished in the society by modern political thinkers and leaders. Reflecting the above notion as people-oriented form of government, Abraham Lincoln, a onetime American President defined democracy as 'government of the people by the people and for the people'. More so, countries of the world theoretically claim to be governing democratically because of its simplicity and demonstration of sense of belonging to all citizens, but the issue remains the practical applications of the tenets and principles of the concept of democracy in their political processes, through constitution and operations of the government. Indeed, African society is entangled in this dilemma of mismatch and misnomer in the form of government in the Political Science diction, where a

country proclaims to be democratic but the actions and inaction of the government and the governs are despotic in nature.

Essentially, since the independence of African states in the early 60s, the leaders have been hobnobbing with democracy, by strategizing and re-strategizing, structuring and re-structuring on how to ensure democratic governance in Africa to no avail till today. This ugly situation has advertently and/or inadvertently plunged African scholars into incessant writings for consolidation of democracy in Africa. The extant scholars have contributed enormously in directing and correcting the anomalies in observance of democratic credos in Africa, but the gap in literature remains that there are fewer contributions on the causes of the lapses, severance and better still travails of democracy in Africa. Therefore, this chapter is focused on interrogating the survivability of democracy in African political milieu, through assessing and unraveling its challenges in Africa. To ensure focus and unbiased venture, the work is designed under the following paradigms: methodological underpinning, demystification of democracy, history of democracy in Africa, travails of democracy in Africa, conclusion and prognoses.

1. Methodological Underpinning

The research design adopted by this study is Ex-Post-Facto design, which seeks to reveal potential relationships between two or more phenomena by observing the state of affairs, an existing condition and search back in time for the possible factor that contributed to it. It seeks to unveil causal-effect relationships between issues and circumstances (Kerlinger, 1986). More so, data for the study is collected through a documentary means, through which information is gathered from existing/already-made sources such as books, book chapter, journal articles, newspapers, periodical and internet sources to support or guide my views on the problematic. Also, the generated data are analyzed using Content Analysis, which in this context akin to analysis based on qualitative descriptive. It is a summarization of information generated in research verbally. More so, it is used for analysis of generated data from the secondary sources for the purpose of making a systematic logical deduction (Asika, 2009).

The study is analyzed under the theoretical underpinning of Dependency Theory. Dependency Theory is seen as a social science theory that emphasized the idea that wealth flows from the poor or underdeveloped states to the wealthy or developed states, where the latter enrich at the detriments of the former. It is the basic argument of the dependency theory that poor countries are made poor because of the premature linkage into the world economic system and the lopsided economic relations therein (Rodney, 1972). The theory was developed in the late 1950 by Raul Prebisch as a reaction to modernization theories of development, which maintained linear stages of development. The theory debunked the above view, stating that underdeveloped countries are not merely primitive versions of developed countries, rather, have unique characteristic of their own. However, they opposed to free-market economy and suggested that underdeveloped countries should delink from their connections with the world market so that they can carve a niche in keeping with their own needs and be free from pressures of external dictates (Frank, 1976).

The theory construes underdevelopment and development as being mutually reinforcing because they are the inevitable results and the practical manifestations of the global capitalism and its innate contradictions and exploitative tendencies. The theory classified the world into the core and the periphery and argues that the export of capitalism by the West to other parts of the World and its resultant colonialism cum neo-colonialism is responsible for the dependency and underdevelopment of the Third World. The theory also argues that capitalism is propelled by the quest for wealth accumulation (Ake, 1981). Specifically, the theory has the following propositions among others:

- ❖ Development is a situation that is different from underdevelopment;
- ❖ The differences between underdevelopment and development places the poorer countries different historical context;

- ❖ Alternative use of resources is better than the resource usage patterns imposed on the poor states by dominant ones;
- ❖ Dependency theorists believe that there exists a clear 'national' economic interest, that can be articulated for every country and
- ❖ The diversion of resources over time is maintained by the power of dominant states and the power of elites in the dependent states (Wallerstein, 1970).

By a way of application, development is all-round phenomenon that is why we have political development, economic development, social development and even religious development. In whichever way, the stronger is always imposed itself on the weaker ones, which make the latter to be dependent on the former. Therefore, political development of the Western world brought about democracy, which was imposed on Africans because it was not originally in African traditional social system. Even the general practice of the democracy is equally dependent on some factors that will make it to thrive in the society. One of the factors includes freedom from economic want (poverty). A maxim will always say that a beggar has no choice, how can a poor person make good choice in the name of democracy? Instead of making a rational decision in the electoral process, their stomachs propel the pendulum of the electoral wave.

By implication, the dependency of the African politics on the Western world pushed Africans to learn and adopt democracy as an imposed system of governance without a fertile ground on which it would be built. In the Western world, they have strong foundation on which the principles of democracy thrive, such as sustainable development that ameliorated social stratification gap, increased the living standard of the people and reduced drastically the poverty level of the populace. As a result of the weak political and economic base in Africa, which the democratic principles will lean on, the democratization process in Africa remain stillbirth and wallowing in shambles.

By extension, democracy is quite good and beneficial as a form of government. Therefore, African leaders and the lead should go to the drawing board and follow judiciously the principles and also fortify through the apparatuses of the state, the basic requirements for it to thrive in Africa. This will involve ratification of the principles of democracy, alleviation of poverty, adoptions and implementation of development programmes etc. The more the African leaders adopt the above measures, the more citizens are equipped with the prerequisites to participate in politics the less the challenges and the travails of democracy in Africa.

2. Demystification of Democracy

For clarity sake, the concept of democracy needs to be unveiled under the above caption. Etymologically, democracy was originated from the word of the Greeks 'demokratia' and it implies the people's rule. It was developed in the mid 5th–4th century BC to mean a system of politics that existed in some city states of the Greek, mainly Athens, as a result of popular political upheaval in 508 BC. The culture of the following countries contributed in evolution of democracy: Ancient Rome, Europe, North and South America (Dahida & Adekeye, 2019). In the view of Appadorai (1975) Democracy is a type of government where the people indirectly or directly exercise their power of governance by choosing or electing their representatives or leaders. For Tal (2019), it is a wide and popularly accepted system of government that comprises of certain rights and freedoms. One of the features of democracy is fair and free election, that guarantees greater participation of masses in the governance electoral process.

According to Nnoli (1994) democracy is a form of politics, that allows all the electorates/citizen to participate in the regular replacement of the government through a peaceful means, if they want to do so by a absolute majority, it gives them the opportunity to avail themselves of non-violent exercise by freely establishing their choice of associations and parties, with none restricted, with the aim of playing their roles as citizens, and which grants them the privilege to enjoy fully all the commonly accepted rights of citizenship, protected by legally guaranteed written body of law, that is imbued with higher authority over the government and is

subjected to the judicial organ independent of the government in the situation of complaints. From the above definition, democracy cannot exist if a political society or public sphere is not recognized.

3. History of Democracy in Africa

Without mincing words, democracy is an imposed system of government in African political setting. Prior to colonialism in Africa, the component states in the regions were organized and administered under monarchical and centralized system of government. The monarchs or better still the kings were absolute, whose orders were not questionable by the subjects. This form of administration enhanced indirect rule of the colonial West, which facilitated their proper coverage of the African continents. With the advent of colonialism, the colonial overlords started dishing out rules and regulations through creation and corresponding amendments of constitutions. With this development, the idea of democracy was incorporated in the dictions and constitutions of African states. For instance, the following African countries are selected for illustrations to demonstrate the history of democracy in Africa (Congo, Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa):

3.1 Congo

The second-largest country in Africa is the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), it has approximately a population of 75 million people. The Belgium granted DRC an independence status in 1960. Unequivocally, the post-independence history of Congo appears to be bloody with the assassinated in 1961, Patrice Lumumba, the first post-independence leader. Subsequently, the military officer, Mobutu Sese Seko in 1965, assumed power after a period of the civil war. Mobutu renamed the country of Congo to be Zaire and ruled it with one-party until he was ousted by an armed coalition led by Laurent Kabila 1996. Unfortunately, Laurent Kabila was assassinated in 2001, and Joseph Kabila his son succeeded him. With the succession Joseph Kabila democracy returned to Congo, while we credit him for introducing some important reforms, mostly on the area of coding of a new Constitution, his democratic account remain significantly poor. This can be deduced from the last election he won in 2011 that was marred by disputes, lacked credibility and widespread irregularities.

More so, armed conflict permeated the eastern part of the DRC, and despite the country's abundant natural resources, most of the population lives in dire poverty. The press freedom which was guaranteed after Mobutu's fall from leadership of Congo was inflicted with strict regulations. This was perfected through the establishment of a constitutionally recognized body known as the High Council for Broadcasting and Communications. Therefore, the DRC remains to be a country that does not guarantee freedom of the press. It is evident on the glaring fact that many laws are limitations to the ability of the press to relay matters of the day to the public. Also, journalists are often arrested and detained and independent media houses raided and banned. Many of the independent broadcasters had their broadcasting distribution signals suspended without notice (Media Law Africa, 2022).

3.2 Egypt

Egypt has been struggling for democracy since her independence on February 1922. In her Constitution of 1923, Egypt constituted a democratic parliamentary system of government that was akin to that of many European nations, with the assumption that the sources of powers were the people. The basic democratic principles such as separation of powers, ministerial responsibility, and freedom of the press as well as a wide range of civil and individual liberties were included. Disappointedly, this lofty democratic projection was truncated by emergence of the military rule on July 1952. Worthy to note is that 1923-1952 was characterized by conspicuous political instability, the Wafd party which was the majority could not hold power for two terms of four years each therefore the minority party grabbed the mantle of leadership. Hence, the above incidence ended the democratic regime of the period (Murray, 1973).

Consequently upon the collapse of the monarchy and corresponding enthronement of military regime in 1952, the juntas that occupied the leadership position established an authoritarian regime instead of sharing power with other authorities. In line with the despotic disposition, they promulgated a law that banned all political parties on January 16, 1953. This development made the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) to be the sole, legitimate political party between 1962 and 1976. All political activities were monopolized by the regime, all forms of opposition, whether secular and religious were also suppressed by the authoritarian government. Even Nasser's socio-political reforms to launch democratic government in Congo failed woefully to institutionalize itself as an ideology that could ensure its durability and mobilize the social forces that had benefited from the policies of the founder (Hassan, 2010). Sequel to the death of Nasser in 1970, President Anwar Sadat, his successor used three slogans, to legitimize his rule, which included: government by institutions, the rule by law and political freedom. Sadat used October 1974 Manifesto, which outlined basically the plans of Sadat's regime to make the Egyptian polity liberalize, as a major departure from the Nasser regime to criticize the ruling ASU. Political liberalization process and other innovations were re-inaugurated by Mubarak after Sadat's assassination in 1981 (Hilal, 1986).

Mubarak regime in 2005 had the privilege to change the authoritarianism in the country and set Egyptians on the democratization path, but the evolution was not so effective. Indeed, the Egyptian Parliament was voted by majority to renew the emergency law, which granted the president extraordinary powers to stop public gatherings, issue decrees with little or no accountability to Parliament or the people and detain citizens on April 30, 2006. This development brought about the unpopularity of his regime. Then, Mohamed Morsi, in June 2012, won the presidential election with 51.73% of total votes cast to become the first Egyptian democratically elected president. No sooner had democracy returned to Egypt than Tamarod on 28 April 2013 started a grassroots movement to remove Morsi from office (Ahram. 2013).

The National Salvation Front, Strong Egypt Party and Youth Movement supported the movement. Then, President Mohamed Morsi was removed from power by a coalition led by General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, the Egyptian army chief. With this development, the transition of Egypt to democracy has been truncated by the legacy laid for almost 60 years of consecutive military rule. These events demonstrated a contradiction in Egyptian contemporary political history. Based on the above illustration, an ardent observer can simply resolve that the country is a classic example of authoritarian government. By extension, the regime dominates political life of the people, controls much of the media and suppresses its opponents with large array of extra-legal and legal implements. The regime also carefully manipulated and monitored political parties and civil society groups.

3.3 Nigeria

In Nigerian context, all Constitutions in Nigerian history, ranging from the 1922 Clifford's Constitution, the 1946 Richard's Constitution, the 1951 Macpherson's Constitution, the 1954 Lyttleton Constitution, the 1960 Independence Constitutions, the Republican Constitution of 1963, the second Republican Constitution of 1979, the 1989 Military Constitution, the 1993 annulled Third Republican Constitution and the 1999 Fourth Republican Constitutions contained some lofty democratic provisions. Historically, democracy permeated the political fabric of Nigeria through colonialism. As a result, after independence in 1960 Westminster model of democracy was practiced till January 15, 1966 when the first military coup aborted it. In 1979, the American Presidential model of democracy was initiated in Nigeria with a Constitution, that made provision for an Executive Presidency. In December, 1983, the experiment was aborted by another military coup. The Constitution of 1989, that brought about the Third Republic was a similarly pattern of the United State model with the following characteristics: a bicameral legislature, an executive president, an independent judiciary, separation of powers, a free press, civil liberties, system of checks and balances and fundamental rights.

Very interesting to know that when parliamentary democracy was introduced in Nigeria by 1960 during independence, the idea of democracy was alien to the entire component regions, let alone the Westminster style. Essentially, the absence of those cultural necessities for ratification of democracy immediately forestalled the nascent and fledgling democratic institutions established in the First Republic. The last straw that broke the camel's back was the electoral mal-practices exhibited during the election, which manifested in desecration of the ballot, thereby frustrating the people's will. Finally, in 1966 the First Republic failed as a result of the above anomaly followed by the massive rigging of the 1965 Western regional elections, which unleashed chaos and anarchy, which culminated in the Civil War in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the political elites did not learn lessons from the debacle of the First Republic as a result; the restoration of democracy in 1979 was purely in shambles. This ugly trend of the First Republic culminated in thirteen-year military incursion, which lasted from 1966 to 1979. This adversely affected the democratic acculturation, meaning that the political class of 1979 had to start again, because those shenanigans were antithetical to democratic credos thereby making democracy in Nigeria to remain a stillbirth.

The second Republic ended on the 31st of December, 1983, owing to the fact that all the electoral principles and requirements to reflect and consolidate democracy were flawed in a flagrant and glaring manner. The military who lurked as scavengers in the political corridor of the country struck and the powers were grabbed by General Ibrahim Babangida who masterminded a fresh transition process to a democratic rule. The seemingly realistic transition programme was truncated when the election was annulled in 1992 after it was won by Abiola as against Tofa. In order to cover the face of Nigeria from international shame as being regarded as a pariah state, General Babangida stepped aside and constituted an interim government headed by Ernest Shonekon who was shortly over-throne by General Abacha. It was the demise of Abacha that necessitated another transition programme by Abdulsalam Abubaka who landed us safely to the Fourth Republic in 1999. Theoretically, Nigeria is in the Fourth Republic but the question remains the processes of the system, which is highly unreliable.

3.4 South Africa

South Africa had her first non-racial multiparty election in April 1994, which marks an official end to their authoritarian and segregationist regimes. The new vista sandwiched a mixture of constitutionalism, participation and representative democracy based on that, the people mandated the politicians to govern them through electing the politicians to power, instead of the people governing themselves, formal equality before the law, statutory institutions supporting democracy delivering universal franchise and avenues for citizen participation in governance. More so, the people looked for a better future, believing that the majority's socio-economic and political needs would be realized by a legitimate African National Congress (ANC)-led government. Following its sixth democratic elections on the 8 May 2019, South Africa arguably consolidated its status as a young democracy and thereby demonstrated how much it has achieved in refashioning the state in a more democratic way.

Inversely, socio-economic problems and wide-ranging governance-related issues over the years serve as a threat to this seemingly successful democratic progress. The problems involve corruption in corporate and public life, a perception that government is slow to deliver adequate socio-economic goods, persistent massive inequality, and cronyism. These challenges with an increasing mismatch between citizen realities and expectations have fuelled public dissatisfaction and have led to a growing perception that the quality of democracy in South Africa is dwindling. This growing dissatisfaction is significant in two broad ways. Either it is a sign that members of the public are exercising their right to question those that govern them and is therefore a healthy expression of active citizenship, or it is indicative of a population increasingly disillusioned and dissatisfied, in which case it is concerning, especially in terms of political legitimacy in South Africa (Graham, 2015). Empirically, the table one below will demonstrate the observance of the basic democratic principles in the selected African countries.

Table 1: The Fundamental Principles of Democracy, Descriptions and Percentages of Observance in Selected African Countries

S/N	Principles	Descriptions	Percentage of Observance			
			Congo	Egypt	Nigeria	S/Africa
1	Periodic elections	Conduction of elections in periods of four or more years as the case may be	70%	60%	70%	50%
2	Fundamental human rights	Respect of the inalienable rights and freedom of the citizens	20%	20%	20%	25%
3	Free and fair elections	Voting and to be voted for by the citizen unmolested and uninterrupted	25%	22%	20%	20%
4	Organized opposition parties	Presence of opposition parties that may serve as a shadow government	60%	55%	65%	65%
5	Freedom of the press	Presence of press freedom to inform the electorate on political activities	30%	30%	38%	35%
6	Independent judiciary	Freedom of judicial organ or tribunal to interpret election results	30%	25%	30%	25%
7	Rule of law	Supremacy of the constitution	20%	20%	20%	20%
8	Majority rule	The decisions of majority supersede every other decision	20%	20%	20%	20%
9	Separation of powers	There will be power sharing among the organs of the government	35%	30%	35%	25%
10	Civic participation	Obligations of the citizens to vote and be voted for	20%	25%	20%	25%

Source: compiled by the Author

Among the enumerated ten basic principles of democracy, only two such as periodic elections and organized opposition parties are observed in Africa by scoring above 50%, whereas the remaining eight such as separation of powers, fundamental human rights, free and fair elections, freedom of press, independent judiciary, rule of law, majority rule and civic participation are not observed in Africa because they scored below 50%.

4. Travels of Democracy in Africa

Democracy in Africa has been in a nostalgic state, which implies a combination of its acceptance and rejection simultaneously. The acceptance stems from the fact that the term, democracy and the embedded principles are well fancied by all and sundry, but the practical aspect of observing the principles are difficult to realize. In short, democratic governance is generally marred by centrifugal and centripetal forces in Africa. However, this segment of the study unraveled the challenges that have been bedeviling democracy in Africa. Essentially, it is worthy to note that Plato did not see democracy as the good form of government because according to him, it is against the principles of a 'Just State', where individuals are supposed to occupy the following positions: 1)

workers, who produce; 2) guards, who protect and 3) rulers (philosopher kings) who govern (Plato in Mukherjee, & Ramaswamy, 2007).

Indeed, one of the challenges of democracy in Africa is its alien nature in the basic social institutions such as the family, school and church. In African traditional society, the family is the nucleus of social cohesion, where the idea of organization of people for goal attainment is initiated. Decisions at the family levels are taken by the man as the head of the family. At school, decisions are taken by the school administrators while the church leaders decide what happens in the church. As one grows and passes through agents of socialization without observing democratic principles, it becomes a big hindrance for one to adopt the general dictates of the democracy. With this in place, democracy faces strong challenges to thrive in a place it did not exist.

More so, another factor affecting democracy in Africa is poverty. Nothing directs the actions and inactions of man like what keeps his body and soul together. This is more reason the capitalists have turned human labour into commodity because the society in general is portrayed as a market where one must live to sell or buy commodities otherwise, he has no reasons to exist in such enclave. As a result, the proletariats who have no means of production must sell their labour power to earn a living. Similar scenario appears in democratic practice in Africa. This is simply so because democracy in Africa is for the highest bidder. This is a situation where the poor will sell their democratic rights to the rich just to keep their bodies and souls together otherwise, they will die of hunger. Hence, this practice of mortgaging the democratic dividend with immediate self-gratification is a strong impediment to democratization process in Africa, thereby making it to be a mirage.

Furthermore, joblessness constitutes a big factor to travails of democracy in Africa. This point can be buttressed with the maxim that maintained that ‘an idle man is a devil’s workshop’. Obviously, a jobless person is bereft of reliable sources of income but is not free from insatiability of human wants. In African context, joblessness and corresponding needs of satisfaction of the insatiable needs of man has reduced the citizens to mere political tools for the political gladiators, who paid them handsomely to distort the fabrics of democracy in Africa. The electoral malpractices were mainly carried out by the jobless youths, who are willing tools for the politicians to engage in snatching of ballot boxes, assassination of political opponents and rigging of elections. Honestly, a person that is reasonably engaged cannot stoop so low by involving himself in those anti-democratic activities.

Table 2: Selected African Countries and their Share of Global Population Living Below Extreme Poverty Line in 2024

S/N	Countries	Percentages
1	Nigeria	11.3%
2	Democratic Republic of Congo	9.6%
3	Tanzania	3.9%
4	Mozambique	3.7%
5	Madagascar	3.2%
6	Uganda	3%
7	Kenya	2.7%
8	Malawi	2.7%
9	Ethiopia	2.7%
10	Niger	2.3%
11	South Africa	2.1%
12	South Sudan	2%
13	Sudan	2%
14	Zambia	1.9%
15	Angola	1.8%

16	Burundi	1.6%
17	Somalia	1.3%
18	Zimbabwe	1.2%
19	Burkina Faso	1.2%
20	Ghana	1.1%
21	Chad	1%
22	Cameroon	0.9%
23	Rwanda	0.8%
24	Central African Republic	0.6%
25	Eritrea	0.6%
26	Mali	0.5%
27	Togo	0.5%

Source: [www. Statista.com](http://www.Statista.com) (2024)

The table above demonstrated the poverty rate in selected African countries. Observable from the table is that apart from Nigeria and DRC that have 11.3% and 9.6% respectively, others are below 4% extreme poverty line. These show the reason that stunted growth of democracy in Africa.

5. Conclusion and Prognoses

Democracy has not gained enough grounds and momentum in Africa because it has been marred by some factors such as being alien to the social institutions, abject poverty and joblessness. In order to save Africans from the shackles of democratic travails, we suggested as follow:

1. The leaders and the lead in Africa should ratify the principles of democracy, which were alien to African social institution. If Africans can adopt and observe international law, they can through the same way practice democracy by ratifying its ethos in the local parlance.
2. As poverty has been playing negative role to democracy in Africa. The African states should initiate good policies and programmes for poverty alleviation in the society. They can do this by assisting the masses to conquer the menace of poverty in Africa.
3. The government should create enabling environment for the masses to have something doing. This will make citizens to be engaged meaningfully because an idle mind is the devil's workshop. Therefore, if the citizens are well engaged, they will not have the time to perpetrate those political vices that mar democracy in Africa. However, if the above suggestions are judiciously followed, the travails of democracy in Africa will be a thing of the past.

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