
Successful Consolidation Of Democracy In Nigeria & India

During the pre-modern ages there was less contact between people who had exposure to other cultures. These people worshipped and believed in their gods which they shared and was unquestioned within and outside their place of residence. These pre-modern societies were ideologically controlled by themselves. Even in the modern societies racial groups and religious groups are still concentrated within their homelands, but due to globalisation most places in the world have changed to a multi-racial and multi-religious.

By saying this it means that in the world we living in now there is no community or society that can any longer live in isolation from others, even so the countries that try to avoid foreign values by now have no voice to refuse it reason being pluralism enters in the form of travels, migration, trade, and through media (Jorgen, 2000). A populous democracy is referred to as a system of government that involves all political actions and in which citizen's vote. In such countries which practice democracy nothing happens until 50.1% of the people within that country vote and this is done to promote majority rules in order to increase the number of citizens that are satisfied.

In these countries which practice democracy the government only caters for the public in which corporations and private businesses are restricted from any political involvement by any means in that country. This essay will begin by producing information about what is democratic consolidation and this essay will also discuss how democracy has been successfully consolidated in Nigeria and India. This essay will further discuss how different colonial experiences affect democracy in these two Countries.

Democracy and democratic Consolidation

Democracy is a system of government where by citizens of a country exercise their power by voting for a president or candidates in a political party. According to Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton (2004) articulated that "democracy is a political system in which citizens enjoy a number of basic civil and political rights and in which their most important political leaders are elected in free and fair elections and accountable under the rule of law". There are different types of democracy which are classified as Direct Democracy, Representative Democracy, Semi-Democracy, Liberal Democracy, Established Democracy and New Democracy.

Direct Democracy is where by all the citizens form a governing body of which they will vote directly on each issue and in Representative Democracy the citizens choose or elect a

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representative on their own for themselves. Furthermore the representative join together to form a governing body such as a legislature. Liberal democracy has taken root from Europe as a form of government which has spread around the world for years. According to Anton M (2017) stated that “ Liberal democracy can be defined as a minimum of procedural and political system in which political parties compete for control of the government through elections relatively free and fair”. The advantages of liberal democracy is that it limits the power of government on citizens in a given country.

According to Schedler (1998) stated that “democratic consolidation was intended to label the challenges that makes new democracy to be secure”. The term democratic consolidation is a process in which new democracy matures and it must not revert to authoritarian regime with the presence of external shock. “Democratic consolidation is the identifiable phase in the transition from authoritarian rule to civil rule and by extension, democratic systems that are germane and fundamental to the establishment and entronement of a stable, institutional and enduring democracy “(Schedler, 1998).

Democratic consolidation is achieved when the people and government are organized and they form a system that is connected through institutions, ethics, culture and support systems that will be of good use in promoting stability and efficiency. Some scholars believe that democratic consolidation does not mean that it involve high quality society or high quality democracy reason being is that elections are the most crucial components of democratic consolidation.

Nigeria Democratic Consolidation

Nigeria is regard as one of the most populous state in Africa, with an average population which is estimated to be around 178 million people. Nigeria is the most ethnically diverse state in the African continent with a combination of several nationalities. According to Uduma (2009) he articulated that “Nigeria is a pluralistic society both in terms of ethnic and religious composition”. The democratic experience of Nigeria has established multiparty competitive electoral democracies that has been fixed and uninterrupted since 1999. Beside the local elections Nigeria has had four set of general elections in the past decade. Nigeria was regarded as partially free in 1999 and it managed to maintain the status of their country in 2011.

The 2011 elections in Nigeria if they were to be compared to the past elections one can conclude by saying it improved the democratic status of the country, reason being the past elections there were electoral violence which hindered the country to improve it democratic status. According to Etteh (2009) he stated that “Nigeria has been regarded as democratically reversing, despite the sequence of electoral cycle, since 1999”. Since 1999 until 2011 the candidates had adopted strategies that they used to try and stay in power. “The reality is that everywhere in politics, sitting governments and entrenched/ruling parties do not lose elections

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easily” (Amuwo 2009).

There some challenges which hindered Nigeria in the election which might prevent Nigeria from being democratic consolidated. The challenges are voter apathy, Elite-Manipulated Democracy, gender Issues and Parties without Ideologies. Most of the people in Nigeria did not use the opportunity to vote in the 2011 election to vote for a leader they want and some of the parties in the elections had no ideologies which hinder democracy to be consolidated. According to Amuwo (2009) he said that “almost all Nigeria’s postcolonial governments to date have been pushed to power without a concise national ideology, let alone a popular and liberating one”. Nigeria’s democracy to be consolidated they should involve participation of all citizen male and female as both genders are citizens of the country. They violate human rights which is the right to vote.

India Democratic Consolidation

India is one in a few of the oldest democracies in the third world countries. India once experienced an authoritarian rule for two years in the 70s and it managed to hold their elections in the federal units. The democracy in India in the past years was controlled by religion and social groups. India has had various attacks by citizens and ethno-religious groups which wanted autonomy and independence. Democracy become successful in India throughout and India become an example to other third world countries which were facing the same form of democratic change.

They are two theories which are mostly related to India’s democracy. The two theories that relate to India’s democracy are namely the minimalist and maximalist theoretical framework/positions. The minimalist position stresses that there should be regular elections, electoral procedures and multiparty system for confirmation that people are ruled by law. While the maximalist position deals with Nature of human rights, social justice, protection and promotion of minority rights and the redistribution of socio-economic reforms and it further emphasizes that there should be civil-military relations which will check if there is democratic consolidation in this country.

Colonial Experience of Nigeria

Nigeria was colonized by the British settlers back in the years of 1881 were by the British settled in Lagos and they became a colony. In 1886 to 1900 the company which was called the Royal Niger controlled all the central part of Nigeria. Nigeria was separated into two parts Southern and Northern part of Nigeria and in 1914 both these areas were merged. Frederick Lugard was appointed to be the first governor general to rule in Nigeria. He was in charge of all sort of

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businesses that were present in that time.

Frederick ruled the country of Nigeria with indirect rule of which that policy was formulated by him in the High Commissioner. The indirect rule meant that any form of political orders were remodelled and fitted into the British administrative and all traditional leaders were to rule their native people but as dependent rulers on the British people. The British came with a variety of changes of which one of those changes was the elimination of slavery. In the year of 1960 Nigeria obtained independence from the British colony.

A few years later after obtaining independence Nigeria experienced a civil war which began in 1970s where by the citizens competed for power, this led to Nigeria face political instability. According to Alesina and Perotti (1995) noted that "Political instability can be viewed in two ways and the first view one emphasizes executive instability, while the second view is based upon indicators of social unrest and political violence". Nigeria has dependent on natural resources since independence, the natural resource that they mostly depend on is oil which contribute more on their GDP.

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