

Title of Article: Neo-Liberalism, Democracy and the Electoral Politics of Nigeria.

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Abstract: The primary purpose of any government according to the views advanced by the utilitarian theorists is that which promotes the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. This stem from the believe that governance is a social compact that aims to promote the security and well being of the people. Nigerians struggled and welcomed with enthusiasm the transition to democracy in 1999, and with the emergence of retired General Olusegun Obasanjo, a man with proven track record it was hoped that the dividends of democracy is going to be delivered to Nigerian people. But the administration in its ideological bend, clearly manifested a neo-liberal orientation of which fundamental points are free trade in goods and services, free circulation of capital and freedom of investment, a position strengthened by international institutions like the IMF following the debt crisis and the mechanism of conditionality. One area where this bend is well pronounced in the so-called Reform Agenda of the administration is the deregulation of the downstream oil sector. This is a sector of the economy that has spiraling effect on other sectors of the economy. It is a sector that affects directly the lives of the Nigerian people.

The study examined the policies of the Obasanjo administration in the area, using the doctrine of utility as the measuring stick and shall be dissected the impact and implications as well as the reactions of the people and civil society groups to the policies. It concluded that the government failed to live up to its responsibilities to

Nigerian and recommended that the succeeding government should employ utilitarianism as a guide to their actions and policies