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MONETIZATION OF POLITICS AND PROFESSIONALISM IN THE NIGERIAN FOURTH REPUBLIC

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## ABSTRACT

This paper looked into monetization of politics and professionalism in Nigeria. It explored the consequences of money induced politics which expressed itself in the fourth republic on professionalism and development in the country. It was necessitated by the fact that while other professions in Nigeria were/are occupied by those trained in those areas of specialization; politics has been misconceived as a calling and a market place devoid of professionalism. Plato's Leadership Theory was used as a lens in the study. Descriptive design was also employed. Secondary method was adopted in gathering data, while data gathered were analysed descriptively. The study found that monetization of politics in Nigeria in the republic created room for unprofessionalism – a situation where medical, legal, engineering, etc professionals as well as retired military men and businessmen abandon their areas of specializations and switch into politics at will without the fundamentals of political administrative related qualification(s). It equally found that most political appointments in Nigeria between 1999 to 2019 were not based on professionalism but on party alliances and investment. These have had negative implications on professionalism and development in the country. The paper recommended amongst other things, demonetizing politics to enable most suitable cum qualified candidates participate actively in politics; politics to be seen as a profession and not a calling; and those switching from other professions to politics to have a certificate in political administrative related courses.

*Keywords—Monetization, Politics, Professionalism, Careers, Philosopher ruler.*

## 1.1 Introduction

Every profession in the world has people best fit to operate within its confines. For instance, medical profession is occupied by medical doctors who are saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that the sick get better/adequate medical attention. So, the effectiveness and efficiency of the medical profession is made manifest through the competence of trained medical doctors or professionals.

Furthermore, the Law profession is occupied by Barristers and Lawyers whose professionalism is demonstrated in courts and legal matters. In other words, their strength and weaknesses are measured in courts and legal matters.

We also have Engineers who are knowledgeable in the field of engineering. For instance, if a newly constructed building collapses (just as recorded in Lagos in October and November 2021), we blame the building contractor(s) cum civil-engineer(s) for incompetence and inadequate knowledge of his profession. This is because he/she is supposed and expected to be a professional and should show/demonstrate professionalism in that area. Put differently, he/she is supposed to foresee any danger that could result in a building collapse.

A pharmacist also shares his/her blame(s) when there is a mistake in manufacturing drugs that end up causing adverse effects on consumers instead of treating the disease they are literarily meant to treat. In fact, the law under commercial Law vis-à-vis Consumer Rights Protection Laws talk about Duty of Care and Negligence when a product manufactured by an expert causes a health damage to a consumer (see Monye, 2005; Okany, 2009).

All the above apply to all professions but political science and public administration. While each of these above mentioned professions is practiced by those trained in that area and that area only, politics and public administration happen to be a market place for unprofessionalism. Put differently, everybody is qualified to partake in politics and leadership whether qualified or not.

In Nigeria today, everybody is a politician (even those meant to be confined in laboratories engaging in life-saving researches). Everybody is accommodated in politics provided he/she has money to buy party forms, run expensive campaigns, pay party king-makers, pay INEC officials, pay voters, pay security agents, pay tugs that will help protect or steal the ballot boxes, and of course, have enough money to pay his or her way through possible court/legal institutions.

This has bastardized politics as a distinct discipline in Nigeria and even the world at large. A political scientist is not qualified, fit or allowed to practice medicine, law, engineering, pharmacy, and other professional-related professions even when such a person may have some knowledge of law, medicines, engineering, pharmacy, etc by virtue of extensive reading and exposition. This is because he was not trained and certified as a lawyer, medical doctor, engineer, etc and as such is not qualified to practice any of those professions.

Unfortunately, he/she trained in the field of politics or administration is even made to compete with other professionals in the field he/she majors. That is an error. Ironically, the medical doctor, by virtue of being able buy his way into politics acquires for himself the titles of being a medical doctor and a politician. This was demonstrated in Anambra state as the labour minister in Nigeria when this study was carried-out was a medical doctor that had held different elective political positions not related to his medical profession. A lawyer is not left out in this. He calls himself a lawyer and a politicians simply because he is able to buy his way into politics and automatically becomes an expert in that area by choice without training. An engineer is even given or appointed to the post of an adviser to a political scientist on political matters. That is equally an error.

With this development, the political scientist cum public administrator trained to manage public affairs is made to see his/her course as non-professional and a mere appendage to other courses in the university. In fact, he is made to serve

under a medical doctor, lawyer, engineer, etc in his area of specialization where competence and professionalism are expected to be measured. To this effect, a certificate in political science or public administration in Nigeria looks like a debased certificate begging for acknowledgment.

Some years ago, there was an educational policy in the country that mandated every lecturer in the tertiary institutions to have a certificate in education as a requisite to fit-in as a teacher in the academic environment. This made some lecturers who were doctors and professors in different areas of specialization to go back, enroll in different schools, and acquire a certificate in Education to compliment their existing certificates. Unfortunately, no medical doctor, engineer, pharmacist, lawyer, etc-turned politician in Nigeria has been forced or made to secure a certificate in politics or public administration to be qualified to become a politician. That is an error.

In Nigeria today, most of our politicians are struggling to go back to school to study law to complement their curriculum vitae. As a result, most of the JAMB direct entry admissions in law in the Nigerian universities today are given to them. Rivers State University (RSU) can attest to this assertion. Those of them that were in sciences in their school days who are now politicians are not struggling to get certificates in political science or managerial courses to become experts in politics and administration as if matters of leadership do not require expertise. Having enough money with a degree in a legal profession is now seen as a requisite for becoming an unbeatable and dogged politician in Nigeria. That is equally an error.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The Nigerian political system has been monetized and this monetization has trampled upon the principles of professionalism in the country. Today, everybody in Nigeria irrespective of their level of education, discipline/profession, status, etc is a politician and can assume any political position provided he/she has the financial wherewithal to contest elections by affording the institutional high cost of party form, campaign costs, party-agents fees, National Electoral Commission (INEC) agent fees, voters inducement, party tugs, security agents, and of course legal fees.

Unfortunately, the trained political scientists cum public administrators are made to see their profession as a mere appendage to other professions. They are not permitted to practice law or give legal advice not because they are not knowledgeable in the field of law having done some courses in legal studies like Nigerian Constitution, Constitutional Development in Nigeria, Nigeria Legal System, International Law, Administrative law in Nigeria, Law and Public Policy in Nigeria, etc., but because they were not issued a degree certificate in law. Meanwhile, others whether qualified or not are permitted to practice and even advise the political scientists in their area of specialization as long they meet the constitutional requirement of registering with a political party cum purchasing its outrageous party-ticket, carry out expensive awareness campaigns, woo the heart of the electorates by all means, contest and win elections.

An attempt to demonetize politics has been criticized by the capitalist thinkers who are of the assumption that the idea to demonetize politics will be a futile effort since social relationship of members in any given political community *ab initio* is economic in nature. In their understanding, it is not uncommon in Nigeria today to have politicians (those who struggle

to capture political positions through electoral process) spend money to win election so as to make and maximize profit of the money spent. Simply put, in their opinion, there is a synergy between politics and the use money and as a result, the notion of demonetizing the political process is nothing but a utopia.

Well accepting the above opinion without reference to the consequences on professionalism, leadership, efficiency and effectiveness, and of course overall development of the State is an error of the highest magnitude. Against this backdrop the problem of this study was identified.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The study sought to;

1. Investigate the implication of monetized politics on professionalism and development in Nigeria
2. Explore the concept of politics and political science
3. Interrogate who a politician is
4. Ascertain whether politics is a profession or a mere appendage to other professions
5. Ascertain who is best qualified to rule in Nigeria

### **1.4 Study Questions**

2. What is the implication of monetized politics on professionalism and development in Nigeria?
3. What is the meaning of politics and political science?
6. Who is a politician?
7. Is politics a profession or a mere appendage to other professions?
8. Who is best qualified to rule in Nigeria?

## **2. Theoretical Underpinning: Plato's Theory of Political Leadership (Philosopher King)**

The background under which this paper takes roots is Plato's Theory of political leadership also known as Theory of Philosopher King. He (Plato) by virtue of his association and relationship with his predecessor (Socrates) is of the opinion that only those who acquired the knowledge of science of government or ruler-ship could rule everywhere (Ndu, 1998). This theory is premised on the significance of professionalism or expertise in any profession in the society.

To Plato, the State is flawed because political philosophers are not rulers. He proposed this theory of a philosopher king in his quest for an Ideal State founded on discipline, professionalism and division of labour. In his analyses, every profession has those best fit to practices it. On leadership, it is his belief that the political philosopher has the necessary knowledge, intellect, and training to govern. Leadership, like any other task, necessitates skills and qualifications, and the goal is to ensure everyone's well-being. A good leader is one who not only protects his subjects' lives, but also transforms them as people. The philosopher ruler is the best candidate to lead since he will be less interested in gaining power for the sake of self-promotion but for the sake of wellbeing of the people.

Socrates, on the suggestion of Glaucon, characterized a political philosopher as one who valued knowledge cum wisdom, had a desire for information, and was constantly inquiring and keen to learn, which Plato adopted. Socrates stated that a

philosopher was someone who loved truth (Yadiv, 2021). So, a political philosopher is most equipped to rule because of his understanding of the notion of Good, since knowledge could only be attained by a limited few who had the time and material luxuries.

Plato shares the common ancient Greek belief that leisure was necessary for the pursuit of knowledge. A political philosopher would be capable of administering justice and acting in the community's best interests. He will have a decent personality, a calm demeanor, a clear mind, the characteristics of a king such as honesty, high-mindedness, discipline, and courage. He would be honest and direct, unfazed by death and a lover of the truth. Being above physical and material pleasure, he would not be petty or nasty. In the same vein, being public-spirited devoid of emotional ties and economic considerations, he will better manage the affairs of the public without fear or favour. His contention is that politics and political philosophy ought to be safe for one another. A philosopher ruler would make a wise legislator and frame laws in accordance with the Idea of Good.

For Plato, an Ideal State ruled by the philosopher ruler was a divine institution perfectly worthy of emulation and imitation. Political philosophy became a practical enterprise, in which various possibilities of establishing a good society in light of the philosopher's vision of Good was the aim. The Idea of Good was the highest form of knowledge. It could be compared with the Sun, for it illuminates all intelligible and knowable things.

Plato's rationale for conferring absolute power to the enlightened philosopher ruler was essentially to achieve two unrelated aims. The first was to avoid tyranny and caprice, the second being the welfare of the community. Strict control over education, family life, and property and living arrangements ensured that the ruler did not become self-serving, imperious and dictatorial. Plato was confident that austerity and self-denial would lead to the cultivation of temperance and endurance, making the ruler selfless. He saw philosophic rule as being beneficial to both the ruler the subject. He was confident that it would promote the happiness of the entire community. By happiness he meant harmony, efficiency and moral goodness.

### **2.2.1 Concept of Monetization of Politics**

Adetunle (2011) from the **INSTITUTIONAL** point of view averred that the desire of the moneyed elites to retain power by all means including adapting the political mechanism to the new conditions in the political sphere is at the root of their abuse of the use of money in the electoral system. From this observation, he defines monetized politics as the use of money by the now power elites in the electoral process as a new strategy of ensuring their domination of the political process which **involves the jacking up prices for elective positions and emasculating the very essence of democratic institutions, thereby, creating a situation in which the ordinary citizens cannot afford democracy.**

The points in his definition are buttressed by his former and subsequent works in 2013, 2015, and 2017 where he tried to conceptualize monetized politics from **elitist perspective** with illustrations to back up the conceptualization.

In a nutshell, while Ojo (2007) and Ovwasa (2013) see the concept from give-and-take (vote-buying and selling) (**ATTITUDENAL**) perspective, Adetunle (2003; 2011; 2013; 2017) sees it from elitist (**INSTITUTIONAL**) perspective.

So to Adetula's (2017), view, the influence of money in the contemporary political systems is made prevalent by the political elites as a means of retaining political power and accumulating public wealth. Drawing an analogy to this assertion on the implication of the above scenario, he added that one of the former Senate President of Nigeria (Adolphus Wabara) was quoted as saying that "membership of the National Assembly is an investment because most of us sold our houses to get to the Senate ... the maturity is there but it is the ability to recoup whatever you spent legitimately that is the problem" (p.9). As a result of this, political offices that did not attract much money in the past have been made more financially attractive to ensure recoupment of investment by the power elites. Thus, monetization of politics intensifies attracting businessmen who may not have public interest at heart but maximization of profit.

So, in the view of this study, the conceptualization of monetization of politics should accommodate not only willing-buyer willing-seller relationship that exists between political candidates (vote-buyers) and electorates (vote-sellers) as well as costly party forms and campaign costs, which in our own opinion, takes account of the activities before and during elections, but should also accommodate remuneration packages associated with political positions after elections.

Having taken into accounts the ingredients cum elements in the definitions of the above scholars on monetization of politics as well as the lacunas (gaps) in their definitions, we see monetization of politics as the excessive use of money by politicians, before and during elections to influence electorates behavior in other to win elections, and the structuring and restructuring of the political system to accommodate only the wealthy (whether qualified or not) who must recoup their investments as they assume office to the detriment of public good .

### **2.2.2 The Concept of Professionalism**

Professionalism on a general parlance depicts the conduct, behavior and attitude of someone in a work or business environment. In other words, professionalism in politics denotes demeanor, actions and approach of a political leader in government or public office as well as the political environment. Professionalism leads to workplace success, a strong professional reputation and a high level of work ethic and excellence.

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) (nd) in their study on Career Readiness conducted opined that professional ethics cum competences is a sine qua non to employee's level of success in any organization. They identified certain ways through which professionalism increases efficiency and effectiveness. From their findings, professionalism increases productivity, develops a professional image of the professional, makes for initiative taking, improves effective work habits, encourages effective management of time, spurs demonstration of integrity, accelerates excellence, makes the professional a problem-solver, makes for resilience in tackling problems, encourages effective communication, increases self-awareness, building effective social, economic, and political relationships, etc.

Professionals include those who are qualified to pursue a vocation or calling. Law, medicine, and engineering became professions because they required professed knowledge, shared values and wisdom, and a fiduciary relationship with others. A more contemporary and comprehensive definition of professionalism is:

A calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive preparation including instruction in skills and methods as well as in the scientific, historical, or scholarly principles underlying such skills and methods, maintaining by force or organization or concerned opinion high standards of achievement and conduct, and committing its members to continued study and to a kind of work which has for its prime purpose the rendering of a public service (Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged. Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1993).

The above definition really demonstrated what professionalism stands for. This conceptualization is equally buttressed by that of Garner in Black Law Dictionary tenth Edition thus "professionalism is the characteristics, ideas, and ideals of those who belong to a professional calling; specif., the practice of a learned art in a characteristically, methodological, courteous, and ethical manner" (p.1403).

The above implies that there are certain elements that characterize the concept of professionalism. These elements manifest in methodology and the application of ethics. In other words, those who lack certain requisites associated with a particular profession should be classified as non-professionals. Simply put, a lawyer, a medical doctor, etc, are professionals as long as their disciplines are concerned and vice versa. Ascribing that which should belong to a political scientist to a medical doctor, a lawyer, an engineer, etc is an error. A political scientist, by virtue of the captured conceptualization is equally a professional in politics and leadership having gotten the knowledge through a methodological, courteous, and ethical manner.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Design**

Research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to research purpose with the economy (Ezeah, 2004, p.39). In other words, it is a blueprint, a plan or structure of any aspect of research endeavour. The study adopted descriptive design. The design was considered suitable to the study because the issue of monetization and professionalism in Nigeria is an on-going phenomenon or present state of affairs which the study set out to examine as to its impact and implications vis-à-vis the underpinning, relevance and solution.

#### **3.2 Sources of Data**

This study made use of secondary sources of data which included; texts materials from different authors, journals of social sciences on monetization of politics and professionalism issues/reports, and internet websites.

### **4. Discussions**

#### **4.1 Implication of monetized politics on professionalism and development in Nigeria**

Without mincing words, the excessive involvement of money in the Nigerian politics has a negative implication on

professionalism. The Nigerian political arena in the fourth republic has become a market place for the rich and wealthy to struggle for power so as to accumulate more wealth. The issue of professionalism seems to have been relegated to the background. All that matters is the ability of a self-appointed politician to raise enough money for outrageous party nomination and interest form, afford exorbitant campaign cost, pay everybody in the electioneering processes and emerge a winner at the polls.

In fact, the political parties even compensate their rich losers at the polls with some appointments if a party candidate happens to win a desiring post through appointments. For instance, Uche Ogah (a rich oil dealer) of Abia state under Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) contested for governorship in the state in 2015 and failed. In 2019 he also contested under the platform of All Progressive Congress (APC) and equally failed. However, upon the reelection of the president (Buhari) in the same party, he was compensated with a ministerial appointment. The table below depicts some of the Nigerian ministerial positions and the certificates of those occupying them even in the face of more qualified citizens in the country.

**Table 4.1.: Some Nigerian Ministers, Portfolios and Academic Qualifications as at 2019  
Against the Principle of Professionalism**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Qualification(s)</b>
1	Minister of Petroleum	WAEC
2	Minister of State, Environment	LLB
3	Minister of Education	BSC Accounting /MSC Journalism
4	Minister of State Industry	BA English/ PGDE
5	Minister of State for Petroleum	BSC English Linguistics
6	Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development	BSC Sociology and Anthropology.
7	Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment	LL.B Hons
8	Minister of State for Education	PhD Law
9	Minister of Water Resources	BA Modern History
10	Minister of Environment	BA Law
11	Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development	Certificate from Business School
12	Minister of Works and Housing	LL. B
13	Minister of State, Science and Technology	LLB Hons
14	Minister of State, Labour and Employment	Chartered Accountant).
15	Minister of Interior	BSC Mechanical Engineering
16	Minister of Transportation	BSC English Studies and Literature
17	Minister of Police Affairs	a degree holder not a police man
19	Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management	MBA Business Administration
20	Minister of State Mines and Steel	PhD Chartered Accountant

(Source: Culled from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/347816-full-list-portfolios-of-buharis-44-ministers-2019-2023.html>).

When a political system of a State is structured and restructured to accommodate only the rich who can afford politics, the assignment of duties will not be based on professionalism or merit but rather by level of individual's level of financial investment which must be compensated through appointments or awarding of contracts if the individual loses election. This is detrimental to development because you cannot really measure level of effectiveness and efficiency when you have square pegs in round holes.



Muhammadu Buhari is a president and also the Minister of Petroleum (dual capacity). Such dual capacity could be referred to as self-appointment. Meanwhile, under the present constitutional arrangement, every public office holder is accountable to the National assembly. And by virtue of sections 88 and 89 of the 1999 Constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria as amended, when the National assembly is conducting an enquiry on public affairs where money has been appropriated, any public officer can be summoned for defence. In a situation where the president makes himself a minister as is the case with Nigeria today, what happens where there is the need for the minister of petroleum to be summoned for defence? Would he be coming in the capacity of a president or a minister? As rhetorical as the questions may seem, their answers lie with the social, economic and political realities of the contemporary time in the Nigerian political history where professionalism and accountability only have relevance in white papers.

In the midst of academic doctors and professors in related cum relevant areas, a WAEC holder manages a country's critical revenue sources and the masses expect positive development in the country. Lawyers are now more relevant in politics than in court rooms where they should be demonstrating their mental excellence. The same goes with other professionals that have found succor in the Nigerian politics today. The truth remains there can be no development in a situation where professionalism in public offices is relegated to the background. In this Fourth republic, while the Nigerian debt stock keeps progressing geometrically, her development rate does not even show arithmetical progression. This is not out of place where a Health minister is an Accountant, Industry – English major, Education, Environment, Housing – Lawyers, etc. at the outbreak of COVID 19 (corona virus) in 2020, the Health Minister was having obvious difficulties addressing the press on health related issues associated with the virus in Nigeria. That is the tragedy of relegating professionalism to the background in public office occasioned by monetization of politics in Nigeria.

#### **4.2 The Meaning of Politics and Political Science**

This paper projects a rather realistic cum explanatory definition of politics devoid of ambiguous contemporary conceptualizations championed by modern scholars aimed at getting universal appeals. Succinctly put, politics are the processes by which the basic problems of **group life** (socio-economic activities) in a society are resolved which involve the regulation of conflicts, authoritative allocation of resources, etc and ends in determining 'who gets what, when, and how' (see Ndu, 1998; Amadi, 2015; Nwokocha, 2007; Laski, 2010; Laswell *cited* in Nnoli, 1985; Nnoli, 2003; Nimmo, 1974; Kalagbor, 2001; Ntete-Nna, 2004; Appadorai, 2014; Abasiokong, 2010; Nwaorgu, 2002; Alapiki, 2004; Perry, 1988; Enemuo, 2008).

The above concise but comprehensive definition put to the fore that politics is not associated with a man living alone in an environment and struggling to survive. In other words, the word Politics is not associated with an individual irrespective of his/her economic historical development. This is because such does not bring about disagreement since the man in question does not interact or associate with anybody. Politics becomes an interesting concept because it emphasizes disagreement of people in a community which occurs as result of an attempt(s) to determining or resolve conflict which is endemic in group social and economic relationship. Politics is interesting because people of a community disagree. This disagreement borders on how they should live, who should get what, how power and other resources should be distributed, whether the community should be based on cooperation or conflict, how much influence should an individual

have over another, how should a collective decision be made, who makes the decision, etc.

Following the above, Aristotle (ca 350 B.C.E/1972) tells us that politics is nothing but a social activity through which human beings attempt to improve their lives and create a good society that will accommodate everyone. The point here is that politics is an activity devoid of monologue as it does not express itself in an individual but rather in a group-life where dialogue is used to resolve issues emanating from social interactions.

When Adam was alone, there was no politics because there was no one his interest conflicted with his/hers. He was rather living a solitary life. The emergence of Eve in his social life gave birth to social interaction that culminated into the struggle to protect interests. The end product of that social interaction led to a conflict that even involved God and subsequent punishment as well as a new beginning for the duo. That relationship between Adam, Eve, and God was political.

So, politics is ubiquitous, atemporal, and aspatial, meaning that it is universal, cuts across time, and space. Put differently, in every two in a social relationship, there is politics. The solitary man like Adam may be able to develop a simple or even a complex economy, produce for his life sustenance, etc., but cannot engage in politics. He cannot engage in politics because he could not have experienced conflict which is endemic in any human social and economic relationship. Conflict arises as a consequence of attempts to protect individual's interest in the face of that of others. The process through which this conflict is resolved is what in all ramifications defines politics.

Having established the above, the problem that lies at the heart of politics as a concept is the nature of the subject, how it should be studied (as a sciences or an activity), where it takes place (within the government, the state, within human social relationships, etc.). Well, there is a general agreement amongst scholars that politics has three connotations – political activity, political process, and political power (Johari, 2012, p.4). These connotations in a state border on how the issues of distribution of scarce resources in a state are handled, how to determine public policy, and how to deal with relations and conflicts amongst members of a state (see Kalgbor, 2001). This leads us to the next endeavor that centers on politics as a science which is the concern of this paper. Note that politics is all encompassing as it is not limited to the connotation of an activity, a process or power, state-related, government-related, individual-related, etc. That is why the study put forward above that it is ubiquitous, atemporal, and aspatia. Succinctly put, all man's social relations in a society are within the ambit of politics.

#### **.4.2.1 Political Science**

Before delving into what political science is or what it is not, it will be sage for us to have a background knowledge of what constitutes science starting with what political means. Simply put, anything that has to do with word, society, association, institution or interaction connected to politics is considered political (see Ndu, 1998, p.1). Science on the other hand is an organized body of knowledge or data acquired scientifically through observable and / or experiment, and which is subject to verification. This suggests that it adopts scientific procedures such as observation, generalization, formation of hypothesis, experimentation, verification, etc. in arriving at summary and conclusions while solving social,

economic, and political related issues.

Having established the above, political science is the application of scientific methodology in tackling social problems in a State. It solves societal problems using the following scientific procedures;

1. Social Problem identification
2. Development of questions / hypotheses
3. Data gathering
4. Data quantification
5. Data analysis
6. Summary
7. Conclusion
8. Recommendation

So, political science simply implies the use of scientific methodology to study politics. Here, it deals with political activities cum social phenomena. Every academic professional degree in Nigeria has a similar process in tackling issues that concern them. Unfortunately, it appears that political science as a course of study only ends in the classroom. A political scientist is only a scientist in white papers. Meanwhile, the scientific or professional nature of other professions or courses goes with those who studied them even when they abandon their professions for politics.

#### **4.3 A politician**

Having addressed the question of who a political scientist is and what constitutes politics, there is need to identify with who a politician is. On a general parlance, a politician is someone who is involved in party-politics or who holds or seeks an elective position in government. Politicians offer, promote, and enact laws that control the land and, by implication, the people that live therein. Simply put, a "politician" is broadly defined as someone who pursues or occupies legislative political authority.

From the conceptualizations on what politics and political science means above, we can deduce that a politician is he who takes a profession in politics. In other words, he is a person professionally involved in politics, especially as a holder of an elected office or an interested political office seeker in a political party. He has the following attributes;

- ❖ Legal acquaintance and government set of laws.
- ❖ Social, economic, and political knowledge of the society
- ❖ An understanding of the society and culture.
- ❖ Outstanding oral communication ability.
- ❖ Analytical judgment and ability.
- ❖ Dynamic listening proficiency.
- ❖ Ability to consider clearly with logic and reasoning.
- ❖ Thorough attention to details of public concerns, etc.

The above details and more are to be possessed by a politician. It should be noted that it is possible for people who did study political science to have the above attributes, yet there is need to be trained or educated in that light to achieve professionalism while seeking a career in politics. According to Plato, "when we are ill, we do not ask for the handsomest

physician, or the most eloquent one, our most concern is on getting healed (Plato Quotes, n.d.). In other words, we look for those trained in that profession. Having said that, there is no guarantee that the wealthiest from different professions whom by virtue of being able to afford expensive political system became politicians and are able to use money to buy votes and win elections in Nigeria have all it takes to perform well in public office. **Nobody pays you to serve you.** Politics is a career and those who engage in it are referred to as politicians.

#### **4.4. Politics as a Profession or a Mere Appendage to other Professions**

In the Nigeria political system, it appears emphasis on selecting leaders rests more on the size of the pocket of the aspirants. The economically less-privileged but qualified candidates tend to face outright rejection while aspiring to contest for elections, not because they are not qualified, but because they do not have money to share or a political godfather (political businessmen cum Shylock) supporting their candidacy.

Every profession in Nigeria and the world at large has people academically qualified or trained to practice it. The legal profession has barristers and lawyers best fit to practice it. The same goes with Medicine. Unfortunately, politics has been bastardized to accommodate everybody whether qualified or not. Stevenson (2019) once opined that “Politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary”. To him, people see politics as a “calling”. This explains why in Nigeria today, it is common to here a medical doctor that should be saving lives in the hospital, after making some money that could afford the Nigerian expensive political system, coming out to say he has a calling to come and serve and save his people as though his personal interest is in tandem with that of the masses.

This scenario raises a cynical question that borders on whether politics is a profession or just a mere appendage to other professions. To address this, there is need to understand and put to perspective what politics is and what constitutes professionalism. This paper projects that professionalism is a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive preparation including instruction in skills and methods as well as in the scientific, historical, or scholarly principles underlying such skills and methods. It equally brings to limelight that politics are the processes by which the basic problems of **group life** (socio-economic activities) in a society are resolved which involve the regulation of conflicts, authoritative allocation of resources, etc and ends in determining ‘who gets what, when, and how’. In the same vein, those who are involved in party-politics or who holds or seeks an elective position in government so as to manage public affairs are classified as politicians. In other words, politics is a career and those who engage in it are referred to as politicians.

If the above conclusion is conceived and perceived to be correct, then it simply means that politics is a profession and not just a mere appendage to other courses as it has been made to be in Nigeria today. Politics is a profession because it has the rudiments found in other notable professions. To become a Lawyer, one has to study law; to become a Medical Doctor, one has to study medicine; to become a Nurse, one has to study nursing; to become and Engineer, one has to study engineering, etc. and by extension, to become a politician, one has to study political science where courses relating to managing public affairs are taught.

It is a truism that those who want to switch from other professions to Law do not just do that without taking a certificate in

law related courses. Those who want to switch from other professions to Medicine or Engineering do not simply assume professionalism without a due process of identifying themselves with the fundamentals or rudiments of the new intended career. A political scientist cum politician who desires a profession in Law, even with relevant knowledge in law by virtue of taken law related courses in his/her degree programme in political science, does not just venture into law practice until he/she gets a certificate in law. He/she passes through the professional rigors of being taught to fit into the new profession. Unfortunately, a switch from medicine to politics as a new career does not require any professionalism. All you need is enough money to buy yourself in and occupy any public office. That is an error and against the principles of professionalism.

The argument of this paper should not be misconceived. By mere becoming a party member or a party supporter does not intrinsically connote one a politician. Those classified as politicians here are those who have chosen a career in politics and as a result seek political positions through the constitutional provisions of the country.

At this point, it becomes imperative to distinguish between types of political participations and politicians. In any democratic political system, there exist types of political participations. Some of these include;

- ❖ Political party membership: This is a form of active political participation in which participants form political parties. Members of these political parties partake in electioneering campaigns, political rallies, and other types of political gatherings and activities. Contesting elections: Some active political participants stand as candidates seeking elective positions in the public offices on different political party platforms.
- ❖ Sponsoring of political parties: This is another form of political participation where wealthy citizens invest and sponsor political parties or candidates seeking elective positions in government.
- ❖ Holding of public office(s): This is where someone holds elective or non-elective public office. Here, the public office, by virtue of constitutional provisions, allows the holder to contribute in decision making. This is exemplified by political appointments in a country.
- ❖ As a voter: Political participation also manifest in the form of voting in an election aimed at electing or bringing in representatives in government.
- ❖ Polling agents: Working as party representatives at polling units during elections equally demonstrates a form of direct or indirect political participation in a country.
- ❖ Partial participation: This comes in form of attending political rallies and writing political articles on the pages of newspapers.
- ❖ Observatory postures: In every political system, there are those who simply sit back and observe political events. There do not identify with a particular political party but take part in politics through listening to radio and television political discussions, debates, arguments, etc.

All of the above categories of political participation have made it look as if everyone involved in political activities is a politician by profession. That is a misconception. Being a participant should not be misconstrued to chosen a career in politics. The concept of professionalism here has relevance in two of the above mentioned the include active political participation involving candidates seeking elective positions in the public offices on different political party platforms,

and those holding elective or non-elective public office where by virtue of constitutional provisions, allowed to contribute in decision making exemplified by political appointments in a country. These categories of persons have chosen a career in politics (some under the guise of answering a call to serve their people) and as such designate to themselves the title of a politician as a profession in their identity.

In the same vein, social, economic, and political realities have shown that there are different types of politicians in different political systems. Their kind of activities in political parties where they belong defines their membership and position. They are as follows;

- ❖ **Active politician:** An active politician is one who contributes capital to the party and takes active part in its progress. This includes those who are interested in seeking elective political positions and appointments as well as those occupying political public offices.
- ❖ **Sleeping/Dormant politician:** This is a politician who contributes only capital to the political party, but does not take part in political activities of the party. He is also referred to as a financier or investor in the party that he belongs to.
- ❖ **Nominal politician:** A nominal politician does not contribute capital nor take active part in political activities of the party. His contribution as a member of the party is limited to allowing other party members make use of his name as a member to generate public appeal.
- ❖ **Secret politician:** A secret politician is equally a member of a political party but he does not hold out to the public as a member. He rather keeps his membership secret. The loss of the party is also his loss.
- ❖ **Politician by estoppel:** This politician may not be a member of a political party but by his words and conduct he leads the outsiders to believe that he is also a member of the party. More often than not, this arises, when he fails to give notice about his leaving the party. Such a politician leverages on his past political records and expects members of a party to see reasons with him.
- ❖ **Politician by holding-out:** Though this politician is not a member of a political party, he knowingly permits himself to be a member of a party by his activities.
- ❖ **Politician in profit:** A politician in profit becomes a member of a political party whenever the party progresses. This is made manifest when a political party keeps winning elections in different states and local government areas thereby instigating cross-carpeting of members decamping from one party to another or attracting observers who thereafter joins the party to enjoy the spoils of the war.

All these people could be classified as politicians, but they are not the interest of this study. The concern of this paper is on active politicians where the intention to occupy elective position is observed. These are those who seek elective political positions directly or indirectly. They also include those occupying political position through elections or appointments. Those who join political parties with aim of vying for or occupying political offices through election or appointment as well as those already holding political offices are the ones that have chosen a career in politics and thus referred to here as career politicians.

#### 4.5 Who Should Rule

Addressing the issue of who should rule in Nigeria brings to the fore the Leadership Theory of Plato (see Amadi, 2014; Amadi, 2016, Ndu, 1998). To have a functional society where professionalism becomes a watch-word, Plato designs an ideal society into three parts each attending to a particular responsibility devoid of interference. This design was informed by the fact that every human soul according to him has three qualities (rational, spirit, and appetite) and justice as a corresponding quality that makes for virtue and harmony in the body and the society the individual lives in. In everyone with the aforementioned qualities, there exists a predominant quality. Those with rational predominant quality have wisdom and power to comprehend the idea of the Good. The spirited are gifted with the quality of courage to defend the State, while those with appetite as their predominant quality have economic desires to sustain the State (See Mukherjee & Ramaswamy, 2007). To achieve virtue (excellence) in a State, Plato argues that individuals should identify themselves with their predominant qualities so as to fit-in in a particular profession. This led him to divide the citizens of a State into three major classes thus;

1. The economic class: This class is made of those with natural appetite qualities for materialism needed to sustain the State. They are the artisans, businessmen, profit-maximizers, etc.
2. The guardian class: This encompasses the highly spirited set of individuals with courage and strength needed in a State to ensure the safety and security of life and property vis-à-vis, law and order.
3. The philosopher ruler: The quality of this class manifests in wisdom and power to comprehend the idea of the Good. The philosopher ruler is rational in thinking and can differentiate between reason and pleasure. He has limited desire for material things unlike the economic class.

Plato settles for a philosopher ruler as most qualified for the position of rulership. A philosopher is most equipped to rule because he has the rational qualities and the kind of education (**an instrument of moral reform**) that enables him the mastery of the Idea of Good and expertise which could only be attained by a select few who have the necessary attributes, time and temporal comforts. It is his contention that this political philosopher, with required education and knowledge would be capable of administering justice and acting in the community's best interests. He would have a decent personality, a calm demeanor, and a clear mind. He would possess the characteristics of a ruler, such as honesty, high-mindedness, discipline, and courage. He would be honest and direct, unfazed by death and a lover of the truth. Being beyond physical and material desires, he would not be selfish or nasty. He would be public-spirited and wise if he were free of emotional attachments and economic reasons.

Politics and political philosophy, according to Plato, should be secure for one another. A philosopher ruler would be a wise legislator, enacting laws that are consistent with the Good Idea. An Ideal State controlled by a philosopher ruler is seen as a divine institution befitting of emulation and imitation, according to him. Political philosophy evolved into a practical endeavor, with the goal of building numerous options for establishing a decent society in light of the philosopher's concept of Good. Note that the highest type of knowledge is the Idea of Good. It was comparable to the Sun in that it highlights all that is understandable and knowable.

Plato's justification for giving the informed philosopher ruler total authority is basically to attain two distinct goals. The first is to prevent tyranny and whim, and the second is to ensure the community's well-being. The ruler's strict grip over

education, family life, property, and living circumstances guarantees he would not become self-serving, domineering, or dictatorial/despotic. Plato believes that self-denial and discipline would lead to the development of temperance, moderation and fortitude, making the ruler unselfish. He believes that philosophic rule would benefit both the ruler and the subjects. He is convinced that it would benefit the entire community's satisfaction. He means harmony, efficiency, and moral excellence when he talks of happiness.

Following the above ideal of Plato, it follows that a State cannot be talking of excellence in its political administrative system where professionalism is relegated to the background. Effectiveness and efficiency in public services cannot be achieved where a medical doctor abandons his profession and joins politics under the guise of being called on a rescue mission, without necessary education regarding the rudiments of politics.

From the above, Nigeria may continue with illusory development policies in her administration system so long as those in her political leadership are misfits. Those with huge appetite for material things occupying administrative positions should have been in the local or international capitalist market doing what know best. You cannot be money avaricious and do well in leadership. Those with capitalistic tendencies of profit making and profit maximization in leadership positions cannot drive people-oriented policies in office. They cannot invest in politics in the interest of all. In the same vein, those retired military men that should have been giving the young soldiers military advice have nothing to do with the leadership of the country. You cannot have a career in the military and at the same time, develop a career in politics without the fundamental knowledge of the nitty-gritty.

## **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

This paper concludes that monetization of politics has negative implication on professionalism and development in Nigeria. It holds that every profession has those best qualified to practice it, but unfortunately, people see politics as a calling devoid of professionalism. This paper therefore, contends that politics is a profession and those who decide to take a career in it should acquire the necessary certificate in political science or any other related course so as to be qualified. In other words, those who switch from other professions to politics should not be misconceiving politics as a calling. One can be called by God to become a pastor, it is understandable. However, though there is call, there is still need to attend Bible school and classes for better understanding and interpretations of the word of God. Making politics a market place for unprofessionalism is like spreading a sizable quantity of local rice at its processing stage in the open without protection and questioning the fowls for having their fills from it.

The political philosophers whom Plato suggests are more qualified to be in leadership positions are those with exceptional natural characteristics and necessary educational qualification(s) which can enable them administer justice for the best interest of the State. Nigeria may continue with illusory development policies in her administration system so long as those in her political leadership are misfits. In a situation where those with huge appetite for materialism (businessmen), through outrageous monetized political system, assume leadership positions, the issue of effectiveness and efficiency would only have relevance in white papers devoid of realities. Those with capitalist tendencies and profit maximizers have a place in the local or international capitalist market where they are most qualified to do what they know best. Furthermore, the



military (both serving and retired) have a place in the defense and security of the country and not in her leadership positions. The lawyers, medical doctors, etc all have where they all fit in to practice their profession. Switching from any profession to politics at will without the fundamental knowledge of the nitty-gritty of politics amounts to bastardizing the profession with negative implications on administrative effectiveness and efficiency. When this happens, development will remain a mirage in the desert.

### 5.1 Recommendations

From the above conclusions, the paper makes the following recommendations;

1. Nigerian political system should be demonetized to enable most suitable cum qualified candidates participate actively in politics and occupy leadership positions in the country
2. Politics, like other professions should be seen as a profession and not a calling.
3. Those who switch from other professions to politics (in the name of being called to serve their people) should be made to have a certificate in political science or other related courses.

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