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INVOLVING THE TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL VALUES IN RESTRUCTURING NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigeria is a country that has multiple facets of culture and ethnicity. It is a country that came to be as a result of unification of many people from different ethnic backgrounds, religions and cultures. These differences in backgrounds gave rise to ethnic consciousness and religious dogmatism, which lead to ethnic sentiments and religious bigotry. These increased the zeal and quest to be in charge and gave birth to ethnic conflicts and religious extremism, spirit of intimidation, feeling of rejection and quest for disintegration, among others. The abuse of ethnicity, disrespect for human life and religion are seen as the major cause of the said tussles, and it needs to be put in place in order to avoid catastrophic situation. This calls for restructuring of the system to ensure peace, unity and integration. This paper identifies moral laxity as the major challenge facing Nigeria on national consciousness and therefore, aims at involving traditional religious and cultural values in restructuring Nigeria. Using descriptive and historical phenomenological methodology, the paper points out that Nigerians abandoned their cherished traditional norms and also neglected the moral values in the quest for power and supremacy at all costs, which gave rise to corruption. It is recommended that not minding the differences in ethnicity and culture, that Nigerians should appreciate and hold in high esteem the moral values of the traditional religion to ensure peace, unity and oneness. This paper concludes that restructuring involving traditional religious values will surmount the ineluctable agitations.

Key words: religion, politics, restructuring, cultural values, traditional society

Introduction

Religion and politics are two significant variables that influence the societies of the world. Politics is the art or science of government; it is concerned with guiding or influencing governmental policy, as well as winning and holding control over a government (Merriam Webster, 2018). Politics is all about governance, which involves the structure of power for achieving some articulated goals (Madu, 2004). On the other hand, religion is the recognition of the Supreme Being to whom man surrenders to through worship. Ekwunife (1992) sees religion as, "man's awareness and recognition of his dependent relationship on a transcended Being - the Wholly Other, expressible in human society through beliefs, worship and ethical or moral behavior" (p.10). In the context of this paper; politics and religion are integral features of man's social existence and interaction.

Government exists for the common good of the people. The essence of a good democratic government is to make the citizens to live in real freedom, provide an assured welfare that will benefit human dignity, and enhance the attainment of social justice and peace. For Alkali (2004), "accountability and transparency are the hallmark of governance"

(p.45). Governance also involves the interactions among structures, processes and ~~that~~ that determine how power is exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens and stakeholders have their say (Plumptre and Graham, 1999). In governance, there is ~~rule~~ rule of law, equity and fairness in the distribution of resources.

Nigerians are suffering from ineffective governance, which is one of the major ~~of~~ of development problem in African countries as a whole. These problems of ~~ineffective~~ governance include a situation where people observe democracy but do not receive benefits of economic growth; the prevalence of violence or threat of violence and ~~peace~~ law and order in every corner of the continent; a lack of opportunity, the continuance of poverty, and persistent marginalization and disempowerment of large sections of population (Cubitt, 2014). This is the evidence that negative values have become so ~~over~~ covert in behaviour of people of this contemporary time.

The system of governance in Nigeria is not transparent as people expected. The ~~country~~ is faced with the realities of corruption in every sector of the society. It is apparent that ~~the~~ sentiments, unfair allocation of resources, inability to provide for its citizens the basic ~~to~~ to make life enjoyable, trampling on people's fundamental rights and insurgencies, ~~and~~ others; are the reasons why poverty condition has remained unabated in Nigeria. In ~~different~~ sectors of Nigerian government, those occupying strategic positions are only interested ~~in~~ *their individual pockets at the detriment of the poor masses. All these encourage the increase* of crime and violence in Nigerian society, which affects the peace, unity, social cohesion, structural stability of Nigeria and African nations as a whole. These also show the absence of appropriate moral values. These problems facing Nigeria in this contemporary time ~~if~~ properly handled, can lead to disintegration. In other to save the situation, many enlightened citizens are calling on the Federal government to restructure the country.

Restructuring is a very hot debate in Nigeria politics of today. This paper ~~then~~ advocates the involvement of traditional religious and cultural values in restructuring Nigerian government. In this view, certain traditional religious and cultural values are ~~discussed~~ in this paper. These values if well culminated could help in making moral leaders who ~~have~~ moral conscience to take up the affairs of this great nation in their independent regional ~~and~~

Conceptual Clarification

Restructuring

Restructuring is the order of the day in the political world of contemporary Nigeria. Restructuring of Nigeria does not mean creating another nation called Nigeria. Restructuring Nigeria would be meaningful if it is properly understood and then well implemented. The term restructure consists of two words, "re" and "structure". "Re" means again: anew. "structure" means the action of building. The word "restructure" means that there is a particular structure on ground that needs to be restructured. To restructure an organization or system means to change the way it is organized, usually in order to make it work more effectively (Collins, 2018). In relating the concept to Nigeria, when people talk about "restructuring" they do not mean creating a Nigeria, or strengthening that commonality. They can create a national spirit in a new Nigeria. They simply mean, each group "staying apart and dealing with its own issues (Nwakanma, 2018).

To elaborate more on the concept of restructuring, Nigeria is running a government known as centralized government (Ogih, 2017). This system of centralized government is ~~not~~ known as federal government. They control virtually all the affairs of the state government. Nigeria as a country is endowed with numerous natural and human resources. It is the federal government that is in control of the resources given to state governments and appropriate amenities to be put in place by the states. The state government requires the approval of

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federal government to carry out any capital project and may not go ahead with any project if denied by the federal government, even if the project is much needed in the state (Ogih, 2017).

However, from the above elaboration, the process has been abused by those in the corridor of power because of greed, self-motivated and self-seeking attitudes; ethnic sentiment and favouritism. These attitudes have affected the standard values and moral character for national development. The natural and human resources are now seen as a "national Cake" which an average Nigerian is interested to partake in the sharing if given the opportunity; what a misplacement of value. Those in governments, without exception, continued to enrich themselves with the nation's resources while the masses wallow in abject poverty (Edema, 1988). All these are as a result of lack of internalization and practice of the core values of the traditional religion and culture as enshrined in the nation's constitution.

Traditionally, before the colonization and unification of the protectorates to form Nigeria, there were many societies with their ethnic identification. Enebe (2012) postulates that, "each of these societies such as those of the Oyo Empire, the Benin Empire, Sokoto Caliphate, Kanem Borno Empire, the Igbo and other South Eastern City States, tried to forge their own systems of living based on their own knowledge and experience" (p.45). The advent of European colonialism brought about the unification known as "the Amalgamation of 1914". This amalgamation as viewed by Enebe (2012) is the "complex mix of nationalities that were forced into the 'contraption' or 'geographical expression' called Nigeria" (p.45). As a result of amalgamation, the functioning of the traditional societies was distorted as the British introduced the Indirect Rule system that enabled them to use the leaders against the people. Consequently, the initial trust, which the people had built in their leaders were destroyed (Enebe, 2012). Tamuno (1980) keenly observes that, "the British rule in Nigeria was in the final analysis buttressed by force or by the threat of using it (p.393).

Based on the above account, colonization brought a set-back to the traditional societies in developing their own systems fully. The societies were compelled to adopt European values, which they did not fully understand in the act of governance. Thus, those who were expected to make laws for better societal living could not easily identify their priorities and address to themselves to the Europeans. Instead, they aimed firstly at the acquisition of property and wealth (Enebe, 2012). Restructuring anchors on idea that the country might be run in a different way that is transparent, and even smoother than the way it is being run before. By this idea, it is pertinent for power to move to regions by decentralizing the federal government. This would help to move the country forward both economically and socially. But it takes morally sound persons to carry out these functions successfully. A morally depraved person cannot take Nigerians to the next level of growth, development and progress. It requires the right values assimilation for moral transformation to take place.

Values

Values are those attitudes one appreciates that influence the behaviour. It is those beliefs that influence a person's action. *Values can be seen as the important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable.* Values have major influence on a person's behavior and attitude and serve as broad guidelines in all situations (Business Dictionary, 2018). Value can be defined as the regard that something is held to deserve; the importance, worth, or usefulness of something (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018). Ilogu (1974) states that, "value is the quality of a thing that makes it more or less desirable or useful" (119). Value further expresses the significance, which is ascribed to a particular experience, activity or life in general. This significance gives the guidance and decisions man makes in daily life and behavioural traits. Value can be objective when it is guided by laws and customs; and subjective when it is guided by

individual whim and caprices (Ilogu, 1974). Value from the above definitions has to do with what someone cherished, which could be good or bad. Values are important because they influence human perception. The traditional religion is full of values that are culturally accepted to guide the behaviour of the members of a given society. Before going into the values, it is pertinent to have the insight of the traditional religion.

Traditional Religion

Nigeria in pre-colonial era is made up of ethnic groups that were independent of each other; and as well relate well with each other (Oloidi, 2018). They also have their own traditional belief systems known as African Traditional Religion (ATR). Madu (1997) defines ATR as the indigenous religion of the Africans and thus described as, "a way of practicing religion by Africans before the advent of the missionaries. In other words, it is the indigenous African way of worship and life; arrived at from undergirding African normative norms, values, ethos and customs" (p.132). For Awolalu and Dopamu (1979), "it is the religion that has been handed down from generation to generation by the forbearers of the present generation of Africans (p. 26). This religion has been in existence before the coming of other religions like Christianity and Islam.

The traditional religion is encoded in the people's life style. It is a religion of love and tolerance. Being the traditional religion of the people, it is rooted in the people's worldview and its values are incorporated in the people's culture. The traditional religion is embedded in the system the beliefs, values and cultural practices that are very helpful in sanitizing the moral life of the people.

The Situation of Nigerian Public Institutions that nurture the idea of restructuring

In this 21st century Nigerian nation, irresponsibility of the political and administrative leadership is very alarming. Being in leadership position in Nigeria is seen as an avenue to make up huge fortune for personal and immediate family to make money because of greed. Achebe (1983, p.81) clearly observes that, "there are simply too many political actors on our stage whose prime purpose in grabbing power seems to be no higher than a desire to free themselves from every form of civilized restraint in their public and private lives". This is achieved through injustice, dishonesty, indiscipline, favouritism and ethnic sentiment. The incorporation of these negative ideals is as a result of moral laxity among the citizens. The practice of these ideals made Nigeria to be a morally bankrupt society, without minding the values and virtues as stipulated in Nigerian constitution. All these are as a result of deviation from the traditional moral values to embrace alien culture brought by colonization. This deviation leads to what we see today as corruption, which is an antithesis of development and progress (Obasanjo, 2000); and also seen as a question of conflict of values (Emezi, 1998).

The desire to be in charge and to get rich quick, which is known as materialism, encourages corruption in Nigerian society. However, the events in the country today show that, Nigeria is suffering from the crises created from the scales of theft of public funds. This is possible for the corrupt politicians because of the excessive centralization of resources in public treasury. The ruling class easily succumbs to mismanagement of natural and human resources to enrich their private purse. People no longer regard hard work and duty as right attitude and positive values of life; instead, stealing and fraud are seen as worthwhile without knowing that they are destroying the moral fabrics and the foundation of the society. In line with the above, Ota (2002) observes that, "patience and hard-work no longer became virtues but disabilities as favouritism took priority over merit in promotion of civil servants and soldiers" (p.33). It is claimed that some of our leaders, administrators and top government officials have been stealing billions of naira and dollars. They divert these huge amounts into their private bank accounts in foreign countries; building the economy of that country and

leaving the masses in poverty. This is a sign of loss of sense of rationality and lack of conscience. The misplacement of values in our society today is known as 'the sale of moral conscience' (Agha, 2003).

In the pre-colonial traditional society, these selfish and greedy behaviours are not so common. The advent of colonialism brought about these changes witnessing in the society today. The traditional family system starts from the cradle to teach the children etiquette, discipline and morals of the society. Any deviation from the morals attracts discipline. Parents too are living an exemplary life. The change brought by colonialism alters the traditional life style. This is because the laws of the land, the traditional social structure, the norms and values that regulate the conduct of the people are replaced with the new values brought by colonialism; thereby keeping the traditional values aside. The value traits of kinship and communalism that is replaced with individualism brought by colonialism, gave room for greed and self-centeredness. This also affected other areas of the traditional social structure; meanwhile, the ideal moral principle that is rooted in selflessness has been abandoned. Collier (2002) postulates that

In honest societies each generation hands on to the next generation the valuable assets of a reputation for honesty, whereas in corrupt societies each new generation inherits an initially undeserved expectation that it will behave corruptly. These expectations tend to be self-fulfilling. Pp.198-199.

In the wider society, individualism leads to ethnic sentiment, nepotism, favouritism, intolerance, lack of fairness, equity and social injustice. These are wrong ethical values that destroy the fabric of peace and unity of the society. Apparently, they are the major causes of crises, violence and seeking to disintegrate Nigeria today. The leaders are not sufficiently groomed to take up the challenges facing Nigeria as a country. This is because of inadequate mastery of the application of traditional values. Moreover, in a society with norms, moral customs and tradition, it is not everything you want to do that you are allowed to do. It is important to embrace the religious and cultural values of the traditional people since it is the basis for moral foundation. This will serve as an indispensable factor towards actualizing the restructuring agenda for a better Nigeria.

The Traditional Religious Values in Restructuring Nigeria

There are several traditional and cultural values that are very important in bringing out the potential in the life of every person in Nigerian society. These values are core to the traditional societies, as they are the acceptable moral values that govern the people of different ethnic groups preceding colonial rule. These values are the light that radiates the life of the society and enhances social cohesion and as well determine the individual conducts and their general world view. These values are discussed under the following headings.

Respect for Human Life: Human life is very important in the traditional cultures of Nigerian people. Life is the foundation of existence. The traditional religion of all the ethnic groups in Nigeria attached man's life to God, since God is the creator; and man is the highest in all the creatures. For the traditionalists, God is the source of life. Life for them is precious and sacred, and should not be wasted at will. Human life is highly appreciated and respected in the traditional society. No one should be deprived of his life intentionally. Taking human life in the case of homicide is regarded as a grievous offence not only against the society but also a violation of divine law (Oraegbunam, 2010).

In this contemporary time, Nigeria suffers cases of incessant killings from Boko Haram insurgency (Ogundipe, 2018), herdsmen and farmers clash (Marama and Okolie, 2018), and force men brutality (Human Right Watch, 2010). All these are as a result of cruelty and human wickedness brought by moral laxity. Proper inculcation of the value of respect for

human life in restructuring Nigeria will transform the killings and change Nigeria nation.

Respect for Human Dignity: Man as a living being has individual sense of self-worth, respect and integrity. All these make up the dignity of man, which is inherent. Humans in the traditional culture are seen as valuable members of a given community, the right to life. Human dignity denotes the special elevation of human species, the potentiality associated with rational humanity, or the basic entitlements of each individual (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2018). The concept of human dignity has developed along the line of religious and ethical perspective, in the sense that it is in line with the accepted norms and values of the traditional society.

Human beings should not in any way maltreat their fellow human beings. Respect for human dignity is the foundation of human morality because no traditional society encourages killing of a fellow human being unless for justice according to the societal norms and accepted principles. Abuse of human dignity in any form should be discouraged because all human deserve dignity by the fact that they are already human beings (Ruud, 2010). Dehumanization of human dignity is a negative value, which is very prevalent in the society of today. This retards a country's progress and growth. It is pertinent to the value of human dignity in restructuring Nigeria. This will help to put in place any threat, humiliation and retaliation of any kind in Nigerian society.

Sense of Good Human Relation: It is the social relationship between individuals, how they interact and cooperate with each other for growth and development. The guiding principle of human relation in African traditional community is "live and let live". This principle presupposes inter-personal and inter-community relationship realized in the interaction between individuals in the same community and different community (Kanu, 2010). Good human relation is all about recognizing, respecting and safeguarding the dignity of each individual and caring for each other's welfare. But today reverse is the case. Discrimination has eroded the value of good human relation, which gave rise to ethnic sentiment, favouritism and nepotism, among others.

Human relations from the traditional perspective evolve around interactions between human persons, individual dignity of those involved in the interaction, and individual's skills and valued contributions. All these dealings and interactions in human relation are recognized; human feelings and sentiments are also accommodated and are given due regard. By involving the value of good human relation in restructuring Nigeria, those conflicts that come up as a result of human interactions are avoided or resolved amicably. This will help the country maintain, improve and enhance a healthy relationship within, and make a nation.

Sense of Community: The traditional African society believes in community life. Every human person is a member of a particular community. In a community system of living, individuals are guided with the principle of "be your brother's keeper". No man is an island; therefore, no individual is self-sufficient. In community life, there is nothing like individualism. The whole body works together for the betterment of members of the community, and to enhance the welfare and growth of the community. Sense of community makes one to know his/her neighbours, interact with them and do things in common. That is why the African identity, security and its value depend on personal identification with the community as well as with the community (Onwubiko, as cited in Kanu, 2010).

Presently, the communal life has been replaced with individualism. For instance, those in the corridor of power are solely concerned in their selfish interest. With their position, they exploit and maltreat the poor. Therefore absorbing the true spirit of communalism in restructuring Nigeria will eliminate individualism and give every citizen sense of belonging.

Sense of Hospitality and Generosity: The sense of hospitality is one of the traditional and cultural values that are still intact. It can be seen as that extension of generosity without holding strings. It is the spirit of selfless service, friendly reception and entertainment of invited or uninvited guests. This also explains the African sense of communality, which is the sense of brotherhood. Hospitality in the traditional society consists of treating people in most appropriate way depending on the situation, which could be ethical, cultural and religious. In the traditional culture, there is always spontaneous welcome and accommodation for visitors and strangers.

The traditional society also shows love in sharing with their needy brothers or neighbours who seek for their assistance. For instance, the Igbo people help themselves virtually in all aspects of life. The wealthy ones among them help to incorporate the poor ones who are able in apprenticeship to learn and engage in one form of trade, work or the other. Currently, it is unfortunate that the values of hospitality and generosity are no longer what they were some decades ago because of crooked mind and selfish desire of people. Those accommodated encroach on the land that was not given to them, which results to clashes as one can see in most cases of the farmers and herdsmen. Inculcating a good spirit of hospitality in restructuring Nigeria will ensure a good sense of nationhood.

Sense of Respect for the Elders and those in Authority: Respect is the hallmark of the traditional culture. Respect for elders and those in constituted authority are positive moral values. Elders are seen as repositories of communal wisdom, because of their long years of experience. The wisdom of Nigerian fore-fathers is enshrined in the utterances of the elders since there are no written books on that. It is preserved and handed over to the present generation through oral traditions. The elders are the custodians of culture; therefore the young ones can tap from the experience of the elders. The words of the elders and their instructions if heeded to are very helpful for promotion of good behaviour among the youths.

Respecting those in constituted authority is also the ethos of the traditional society. Those in authority are held in high esteem in the traditional society because they are tied to the tradition and custom and are seen as the embodiment of the authority as well as rulers. Therefore, they are the custodians of positive values, norms and traditions. It is too appalling that some of those in authority are living a life devoid of good values. Their lives are filled with greed and corruption; leaving the younger generation with negative lifestyle to copy. On the other hand, some of the youths abuse their elders and disrespect those in authority, because they are morally bankrupt. There is need for proper cultivation of the value of respect for the elders and those in authority by the corrupt leaders and the disrespectful youth. Involving this value in restructuring Nigeria will help to create a peaceful nation.

Honesty: Honesty is fairness and straightforwardness of conduct (Merriam Webster, 2018). It is an aspect of moral character that is highly valued in many ethnic and religious cultures (Van Lange and Kuhlman, 1994). It is also one of the most cherished values among human beings. Honesty manifests in virtuous attributes like trustworthiness, truthfulness, integrity, sincerity and fairness. It means the absence of falsehood and deceit; cheating, lying and theft. Honesty is exposing one's true self therefore producing trust. This attracts the tendency of relying on an honest person. In traditional society, the titled men are believed to be honest; that is why in Igbo traditional setting a titled man is known as *onye asalu ire* – the one whose tongue is sanctified to uphold the truth. That is the basis of their title.

Honesty is very important in solidifying the foundation of any relationship, be it family or friends. It is seen as that aspect of value that glue or bind people together. Trust manifests as a result of honesty. The Nigerian leadership of today has shifted from honesty to dishonesty and deceit. Dishonesty threatens ones relationship with others, creates no room for

who would help him to handle problems and overcome challenges. Trust, credibility, which is at the core of being able to influence people and leadership. It is important to absorb the true value of honesty in restructuring because honesty incorporates sense of duty and dedication, which gives corruption. Honesty helps to build trust, strengthening relationships and development.

Justice: This is the maintenance or administration of what is just especially by adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments (Merriam-Webster, 2018). Justice is fairness in protection of rights and punishment of wrong (Business Dictionary, 2018). On the other hand, Justice is what the society is "right" based on the moral concepts of ethics, rationality, law, religion, equity, which needs to be in the light of the democratic principle of the 'rule of law' (Cassidy, 2018). Justice is an essential virtue in the traditional society. The social order is beckoned on the principle of justice. In Igbo traditional society for instance, the structure of family is recognized, justice is a virtue that prevails when there is disagreement, disputes and the likes. Every kinsman is equal before the law. Nobody is denied his right, entitlements and justice. That is why the Igbo adage says *anoro n'ofu onu eke ikpe* - you cannot give judgment with one sided story.

Before administering judgment in Igbo traditional system, the panel of judges must first hear from the two parties. Justice in this traditional system includes consultation and deliberations on the matter. After the deliberations, the panel will arrive at a decision and then deliver judgment. At this level, the justice must ensure conformity with the law and ethical standard for societal good. With the above order, there is nothing wrong with justice, this is because justice is given out by measure of appropriate sanction or punishment as well as the reward according to the laid down rules. That is why Igbo adage says *"ikpe mara eziokwu, mara n'aka azu di ya* - meaning that any verdict against the truth is not straight forward. In this contemporary time, perversion of justice is a serious problem facing Nigeria today. A classical example is the case of Chief James Ibori, former governor of Delta State, who was declared innocent in Nigeria and found guilty in the UK on the same sets of primary facts (Nnochiri, 2012) and Dr. Joseph Nwobidike (Nwobidike, 2012). Perversion and denial of justice affects the social peace and order. These create a barrier to maintaining certain degrees of ethical standard and justice.

Good Character: This is another essential virtue in human life. Our character is what makes a person; that is who we are. Character is made up of individual traits or qualities that are peculiar to that person. The determinants of the person's character include his environment and training. Humans are created with initiatives and also endowed with the power of reasoning. The inculcation of ideas of right and wrong action is the formation of character. Exercising the power of reasoning according to the ideas leads to good or bad character. Character formation starts from childhood. The society impart on its members the moral values and principles of good conduct. This can be achieved through oral tradition. The elders would help the young ones to internalize the moral values and virtues of the society. The ideals of honesty, respect, tolerance, self-control and purity, among others, are passed on by imitation. Children depend on imitation since the sense of reasoning at that stage is not fully developed. This will help the child to form a habit that will fix his character. When the character is formed, the result would be the production of wise and worthy citizen. Character is the foundation of one's action whether good or bad.

In traditional society, the people's conducts are guided by the principles, laws, and social rules of the society; since they are in tandem with the beliefs of what is right and wrong conduct. They also form the good or bad character. Living a good life in traditional society is living a moral life. The most important concept in moral evaluation is the person's character. For Yoruba traditional society, the person's character is the foundation of one's action whether good or bad.

perhaps, "the most important moral concept. A person is morally evaluated according to his or her *iwa*-whether good or bad." In Igbo traditional society, *agwa bu mmadu*- character makes a man. Someone without good character is seen as one without morals. It is good character that is attributed to *ndu oma* - good life. *Ndu oma* - good life is the most general and highest value cherished by the Igbo (Nwala, 1985). Good character is a virtue as well as a value people should cultivate. Therefore involving the value of good character in restructuring Nigeria will be of greater advantage in promoting the value of nation globally.

Therefore, involving the above listed traditional value in restructuring Nigeria will serve as a means to achieve peaceful coexistence and integration in the country. Nigeria as a country needs leaders with strong formation of worthy mindsets. This could be achieved by absorbing the above listed traditional religious and cultural values in our daily lives and in all our endeavours. This will positively harness all ethnic groups in building a strong nation which anchors in healthy cultural, social, political and economic lives of Nigerian citizens; and as well serve as a viable ideology and practical framework for governing a multifarious cultural society.

Recommendations

The context in which Nigerian citizens are operating requires value re-orientation in all sectors. Individually, there is need to embrace the core values of love and selflessness, and internalize them. The value of hard-work should be inculcated in the members of the society from the early years of life. People should embrace and cherish positive values like respect for human life and human dignity. Greed, selfishness and materialism are negative values and should be avoided. People should show concern for one another and embrace the spirit of hospitality, which will ground tolerance and accommodation.

Leaders of every religious sect should conscientize their members to uphold the positive values of love, peace, unity, tolerance and forgiveness, among others. Church and community leaders should stop honouring people who got their wealth through dubious means. Government should ensure equal distribution of resources and maintain rule of law. There should be recognizance separation of power to ensure checks and balances; and also enforce the constituted laws of the land without compromise.

Conclusion

In conclusion, things have fallen apart in Nigeria and as a nation she needs a change for the better. Many Nigerian elites deem it fit to decentralize power through restructuring, involving the traditional religious and cultural values in the process is very important. Building a disciplined society requires a disciplined leader who leads by example. Therefore, leaders should imbibe the moral values of good character, communitarian spirit, and high sense of responsibility, honesty and integrity. This can be achieved through moral and value re-orientation of the leaders in every sector. With values like love, respect to human life and human dignity, trust, transparency and accountability, equity and social justice, among others, there will be peaceful coexistence, peace, unity and integration in Nigeria, despite religious, cultural, ethnicity and personal ideological differences. This will bring growth, development and progress.

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