

LEADERSHIP, CHANGING SOCIETY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE NIGERIAN EXAMPLE

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Abstract

In African traditional societies man was his brother's keeper of family members carry along one another in their daily social and economic activities. Life was communal in nature which was group affair and informal being guided by internalized cultural elements. Culture is the way of life of a people. Colonialism introduced capitalism which destroyed the African communal life system where everybody was his brother's keeper rather capitalism introduced individualism. The cultural elements which promoted peace were undermined in the name of civilization which have manifested in insecurity, corruption, selfishness ethnicity and disrespect for human life etc by Nigerians today. The coming of the Europeans and the amalgamation of 1914 by Lord Lugard brought different kingdoms, empires and states together under the name Nigeria. Instead of Nigerians utilizing their pluralistic nature by tapping the values of the various groups for social and economic development it has become a devastating force. Using descriptive and analytical approach with anecdotal evidence gleaned from a qualitative and historical literature on leadership, sustainable development, traditional and modern Nigeria society. The study revealed that Nigeria could not attain sustainable development because of gender inequality, corruption, non-separation of power, lack of African shard values etc. The blatant abuse and manipulation of the constitution, the erosion of the principles of the separation of power, lack of open political system, corruption, religious intolerance and abuse of minority right. Based on the findings, the study recommended amongst others that federalism promotes healthy competition among the diverse tribes. It guarantees autonomy and

preservation of peculiarities and interest. Our national leaders opted for federalism from the British colonial masters but the unitary government was as a result of many years of military rule. Nigeria should be restructured to remove insecurity marginalization which has manifested in poverty and agitation for secession.

Keywords: Leadership, society, sustainable development, nation building, ethnic politics and cultural elements

Introduction

The traditional social system is intended to keep the community vibrant and to provide rural residents with a sense of security, honor, respect, and order. The family unit, kindred family, village group, age grade, and daughters of the community are a few examples of social organizations seen in rural communities. Traditional education concerns itself with the teaching and learning processes of the natives. It is patterned to reflect the beliefs, customs, and experiences of the society in which the child lives. The three aspects of traditional education are political, scientific, and economic. Before reaching the age of puberty, boys and girls are constantly asked what vocation they intend to pursue. In certain cases, these are family vocations, for example, farming, blacksmithing, drumming, carving, dyeing, weaving, or wood technology (Aguene 1998).

In general, women's education was centered on domestic matters: a mother's responsibility to her child and a wife's responsibility to her husband. Finally, traditional education attempts to prepare individuals to be functional and useful members of the society or country in which they live (Adesina 1988). Genderroles are not biologically set, but rather influenced by culture. The term "patriarchy" is an analytical concept that refers to

a system of institutions and political, social, and economic relationships based on socially defined men and women and gender inequality; women are generally restricted from full participation in political and economic life. Due to societal conventions and practices that favour males while denying opportunities to women, men wield power. This was accomplished through socialization, the process of assimilating societal norms and ideals. Learning and teaching are both a part of socialization, hence it serves as a vehicle for maintaining social and cultural continuity.

The term "gender oppression" refers to oppression related to a society's gender relations, stratification, and standards. It is a denial in terms of privileges and advancement for a certain group of people—women. Traditional folks desire to know the sex of a newborn infant so they can socialize it into that sex role. The cultural elements that promoted peace were folkways, mores, customary laws, customs, mortality, traditional religion, and etiquette (Anowor et al, 2023; Nwonye et al, 2023). While the mechanisms for conflict resolution include self-help, peer group assembly, a village council of elders or privileged groups, a game solution, etc., However, these only work if justice is upheld, which is the cornerstone of peace because without justice neither the individual nor society as a whole will experience peace. The people of a culture act according to its values, which also operate as a standard for judging the behavior of others in that culture. Self-help initiatives for community development are a treasured heritage in Nigeria (Ochinanwata et al, 2020). Participation of the residents encourages community growth and development. As a member of an extended family, an age group, or a guild, every member of the community in a traditional society had a part to play in the growth of the community. Since the government is now officially responsible for providing public services, individual involvement is now a

voluntary endeavor. The most prevalent voluntary organisations used to mediate it are community development associations, sometimes known as "town unions." Others include commercial groups, cooperative societies, social clubs, youth organizations, and women's organizations. (Ukwu, 2004; Onodugo et al, 2019).

Nigeria is now wrapped up in a complex crisis. The vision of the founding fathers has not been realized, despite political, social, economic, and moral crises, even if progress has been made in many areas. The economic crisis has rendered many Nigerians vulnerable, and many of them have committed or attempted suicide because they are unable to fulfil their social commitments to their families, even if there is still a long way to go before accomplishing the goal. Some have joined Boko Haram terrorist group, armed robbery gangs, kidnapping gangs, trafficking in children, and other organizations (Anyia 2019). Poor governance is responsible for Nigeria's undesirable economic situation, which manifests in high levels of poor governance, corruption, and weak social institutions, producing leaders who are "stronger" than the state because they are not questioned when they are in office (Anowor et al, 2022). Nigerians are living in extreme poverty as a result of the selective war against corruption. According to the Wednesday, October 30th, 2019 edition of the Nations Newspaper,

The preservation of life and security is the main responsibility of the government, yet nowadays, insecurity is the norm. The Boko Haram assault has shattered the North. Suspected herdsmen are responsible for needless killings, rapes, and kidnappings in the South West and South East. In the South East and South, where cries of marginalization are heard frequently, there is a lot of youth unrest and rebellion. Political leadership differs from social, economic, spiritual, or religious leadership primarily because it is

endowed with constitutional power and authority. A political leader is also anticipated to have broad spheres of influence. This influence transcends distinctions based on caste, class, tribe, race, or religion (. Internal punishments for the political leader are necessary and appropriate (Shilpa 2010). The conventional social order, or social change, involved modifications to social institutions, social behavior, or social interactions. Agents of social change in Nigeria included Christianity, Western education, the impact of science and technology, industrialisation, and a colonial public service that displayed individualism and contempt for traditional characteristics.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria was introduced to a new personality system and the use of English as the official language by the Colonial Masters. Okafor and Emeka (2013) opined that the cultural interaction brought about by Britain's intrusion into Nigerian society resulted in a harvest of cultural transfer and cultural imposition, from which the nation has not yet fully recovered.

By bringing a foreign set of ideals and portraying our culture as inferior and in need of transformation, the colonial experience undercut cultural components and peace-promoting processes. Okafor and Emeka, 2013., assert that the colonial experience had important effects on indigenous Nigerian culture. Everything foreign was shown as smart, noble, and civilized, while everything local was seen as primitive or barbaric, leading to the introduction of a distorted understanding of values. The native culture was identified. Instead of preparing students to address the pressing issues facing their own emerging nation and the culture of the English people, the colonial educational system trained them to serve in the colonial service. Admittedly, the colonial experience brought about some beneficial

reforms, such as the abolition of the slave trade, twin killings, human sacrifice, and other inhumane customs. Outside of colonial culture contact, there are internal cultural interactions; some migrants formed new traditions and modes of social interaction. When immigrants arrive, they leave behind certain parts of their culture and pick up new customs, creating little communities of subculture. This has a subtle impact on the cultural components. Every trade route, in the opinion of Okafor and Emeka (2013), offers opportunities for cultural exchange. The trade goods themselves are cultural products, and when they are exchanged, those cultural components are also shared. The English language, English culture, Christianity, and urbanization have had a negative impact on the internalization of norms and values in modern Nigerian society. The bane of peace in modern Nigerian culture is a lack of honesty, selflessness, fairness, and other cultural components. The lack of honesty among many Nigerians leads to selfishness and an absence of fairness. These cultural outlaws have corrupted conventional dispute resolution practices and cultural aspects (Aguene, 2021).

The Nigerian leadership since independence has constituted a stumbling block in the way of democratization and nation-building through its activities. The blatant abuse and manipulation of the constitution, the erosion of the principles of separation of powers, the lack of an open political system, the suppression of the opposition, corruption, religious intolerance, abuse of minority rights, and negative educational policies are not reflective of the democratization principle, thereby endangering democracy in Nigeria and rendering the goal of nation-building unachievable. These have manifested in the level of insecurity, poverty, pauperization of Nigerians, and agitation for secession across Nigeria.

As seen by the actions of Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, their participation was intended to advance and promote their personal interests or, at most, the interests of their ethnic groups or areas rather than the interests of the Nigerian people. The colonial government helped build the Nigeria that got independent thanks to the flaws in these Nigerians' views (Afolanyan 1973).

Despite the negative effects these policies had on the Nigerian people, the British considered Nigeria as their appendage and implemented political, economic, and social measures to further their imperial goals. In order to divide and dominate Nigeria, the British established ethnicity. In Nigeria, the political elite views democracy not as a tool for advancing the interests of the populace as a whole, but rather as a method of establishing political dynasties, amassing rapacious money, and other ways of achieving power. The introduction of English Language into the primary and secondary school curricula—primarily as the first lesson—and the idea that a diploma is worthless without a passing grade in English Language have drawn emphasis away from the African shared value of a man being his brother's keeper.

Objectives of the study

The general objective is to examine why Nigeria instead of utilizing the pluralistic nature by tapping the values of the various groups for social and economic development it has become a devastating force. The specific objectives include:

- a. To examine the role of leadership challenges in the underdevelopment of Nigeria.
- b. To examine whether modern Nigeria is better than traditional Nigeria in terms of observations of moral values.

- c. To examine the role of gender inequality in the non-acceptance and participation of women in sustainable development.

Research Questions

- a. Does leadership challenges give rise to underdevelopment
- b. Is traditional Nigeria better than contemporary Nigeria in terms of observations of moral values?
- c. Does gender inequality reduce the rate of sustainable development?

Methodology

Study Designs

The study design is largely descriptive and analytical with anecdotal evidence gleaned from a qualitative and historical literature on Nigeria from pre-colonial Nigeria to contemporary Nigeria and gender inequality.

Data

Data for the study were gathered from textbooks journal and internet materials. These were complemented by oral traditions (interviews, group discussion and folklore. In traditional Nigeria societies by traditional rules, histories

Findings

Members of a cultural group that internalizes cultural aspects become self-policing since culture serves as a tool for social control and a guide for behavior in certain social settings. Honesty, fairness, and altruism are the means by which these things are accomplished. The maintenance of peace—the cornerstone of harmonious cohabitation in each cultural group—is the ultimate goal of cultural components. In spite of differences in nationality, religion, and culture, a culture of peace unites people. It is the lack of justice and disregard for shared African values that led to agitation for succession by the South Easterners, South Westerners, South Southerners, and people from the Middle

Belt. The issues in Ghana that led to the Aburi Agreement triggered the three-year Nigeria/Biafra war in 1967–1970, but General Yakubu Gowon, the Nigerian government's head of state at the time, violated the deal out of greed and a lack of justice. There is no peace in Nigeria since the issues that sparked the Nigerian/Biafran civil war still exist (Aguene, 2021).

Leadership failures have led to failed governments in developing nations. We've seen admirable visions established, yet they ended in devastating letdowns. First, if leaders lack commitment to the goal and are unable to inspire a critical mass to follow it, there will be a colossal waste of time and resources, which will lead to anarchy. In Nigeria, the political elite views democracy not as a tool for advancing the interests of the populace as a whole, but rather as a method of establishing political dynasties, amassing rapacious money, and other ways of achieving power. This situation is seen in the number of Nigerian politicians who have served both under reckless years of military dictatorship and under mismanaged years of civil rule. Some of the politicians are reputed with names like "Mr. Fix It," "the political bulldozer," and "the political wizard."

Instead of Nigerians utilizing their pluralistic nature by tapping the values of their various groups for social and economic development, it has become a devastating force. Election rigging and ethnic politics, unhealthy ethnic rivalries, the suppression of opposition parties, tribal sentiments, personality conflicts within political parties, severe demonstrations and uprisings, and the civil war of 1967–1970 are all consequences of this environment. The gender gap not only affects women's well-being and that of their families, but also imposes a substantial cost on the economy through productivity losses. It also lessens contributions and lowers productivity (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2013). One

of the elements that alters economic growth in the course of cultural human development is gender-equality views (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

Leadership

A parliamentary system of government is a system of government in which the power to make and execute laws is held by a parliament. Nigeria adopted this system of government in 1967, after independence, until the military took over power in 1979. The military ruled Nigeria from 1967 to 1979. In 1979, Nigeria adopted the presidential system of government, which is a form of government in which the president is the chief executive and is elected directly by the people. In this system, all three branches—executive, legislative, and judiciary—are constitutionally independent of each other, and no branch can dismiss or dissolve any other. Since 1999, Nigeria has had the following presidents: Olusegun Obasanjo, Umaru Yaradua, Jonathan Goodluck, and Mohammed Buhari. Nigeria will have a presidential election in early 2023.

Almost everybody will want to be a leader, but this is not possible because certain attributes of a leader are lacking in many people. According to Maxwell (1993), leadership is influence, which is the ability to get followers. In his own contribution, Garry (2002) believes that leadership is mobilizing others towards a goal shared by the leader and followers. According to Idogho (2009), we can understand the power of influence in a prominent leader when the person's opinion seems most valuable, when others look up to the person the most, when an opinion is quickly accepted, and most importantly, when others follow the person. Leadership is a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in all efforts to reach organizational goals. According to Iheriohanma (2009).

Leadership implies the ability to lead a group of people into desired circumstances or places. It entails the capacity for knowledge, originality, exploration, adaptability, accommodativeness, altruism, and talent. It understands when to be hard or flexible and ought to be empowered by a supernatural spirit that attests to both its legitimacy and the will of the populace. The resources should be utilized for the benefit of the vast majority. According to Oyedepo (2014), it has been shown that leaders who lead as servants do not die but instead leave a lasting impression on people they have aided. According to Agbese, (2010)., "a leader is a leader because he leads; he leads because he has followers." He has followers because a group of individuals cedes some of their freedom to him in exchange for him carrying out specific specified tasks on their behalf and for the benefit of the entire group. This demonstrates unequivocally that stewardship is essential to winning over followers. People will follow you because of the promises and services you provide for them. They will voluntarily release their hands as you lead them after being touched by your tenderness. Nigeria is currently in "hell" because the country's authorities are unable to uphold the interests of the populace.

If Nigeria must overcome the challenge of political instability and underdevelopment, it must begin to address the problem of weak institutions. The constitution must be honored, the people must be given the power to participate actively in governance at all levels, and elections must continue to be the primary method of choosing and ousting leaders.

Most academics seem to concur that there are about five fundamental components, or basic ideals, of democracy, suggest Abioye and Amuwo (2014). These include:

(i) The people's right to hold regular, fair, and free elections to choose their leaders;

- (ii) The freedom of association, especially that of political parties;
- (iii) the right to freedom of expression, including freedom of speech and press freedom
- (iv) The supremacy of the rule of law and judicial independence; and
- (v) the commitment to openness and accountability by elected governments must be accountable to the people.

It is the marginalization of the Igbo people, which led to the Nigerian/Biafran civil war of 1967–1970, that has continued. This has led to an uprising for self-determination. There is a claim that the Fulani tribe receives preferential treatment in Nigeria, both in terms of employment and in their conflict with local farmers. The key goals of the National Gender Policy 2006 (2008–2013) are gender equality, women's empowerment, and women's human rights. The new National Gender Policy 2021–2026, which establishes a minimum standard required of the Nigerian government to fulfil its duty for gender equality, has been approved by the Federal Executive Council.

According to the National Gender Policy (2006), the core strategies for achieving the objectives of the national gender policy include:

- a. Reforms to programs, partnerships, and policy that include gender issues at all levels of discussion
- b. Enhancing technical proficiency and fostering a supportive gender culture through gender education and capacity building
- c. Reforms to the law that will ensure human rights compliance and gender equality.
- d. Economic changes that prioritize the interests of women, children, and disadvantaged groups are particularly necessary if we are to increase productivity and promote sustainable

development (National Gender Policy, 2006).

Changing Society

The cream of traditional society were medicine men, diviners, traditional priests, rainmakers, titled men, those who had many wives, and retired warriors. Traditional cultures were built on agriculture, and nearly everyone worked as a farmer. Their traditional African religion was a part of their everyday life since their religion and culture were intertwined. Traditional education included studying the lifestyles of one's own people. Colonial society During colonialism, the cream of society shifted to those who had received formal education, and there was no unemployment for the educated, who were mostly concentrated in urban areas. Some women began to work outside the house, gaining some financial independence from their husbands, which raised their social standing. Some women began participating in family decisions, but not those made in the village or the community. The present-day geographical area called Nigeria was originally inhabited by people living in kingdoms, empires, and states, and they were independent in their different areas before the advent of the Europeans. The coming of the Europeans and the amalgamation of 1914 by Lord Frederic Lugard brought the different kingdoms, empires, and states together under the name "Nigeria." Nigeria, as a heterogeneous nation, is made up of many people or ethnic groups (Afolayan, 1978).

The British saw Nigeria as their appendage and introduced political, economic, and social policies that would serve their imperial interests, notwithstanding the damaging repercussions of these policies on the Nigerian people. As stated by Yongo, (2004)., When the colonial administration tried to establish a unified form of

government in the late 1940s, it ran into opposition, particularly from the Northern Region. As a result, the government chose a structurally lopsided federation, which today is one of the factors working against national unity and nation-building. The British encouraged the development of cash crops and the use of mineral resources from a socioeconomic standpoint. In order to link up just the places that served their economic interests, they built roads, trains, and telecommunication infrastructure to facilitate the evacuation of the resources they had extracted. In this sense, it is evident that colonial transportation and communication infrastructures were not designed to encourage social contact and movement among Nigerians.

According to a foremost political scholar, Appadorai (1975), the basic characteristics of a nation are the sense of nationality or oneness, unity, and cohesion derived from shared values, traditions, customs, culture, and language, which make them live happily together and cannot tolerate submission to others who do not share these ties. Consequently, a feeling of oneness exists. True federalism would always promote unity in diversity, oneness, cohesion, peace, and harmony if there is true federalism and excellent, honest, and committed leadership. The current situation resulted from the long years of military rule's disdain of federalism and its imposition of a unitary government on the nation (Anyia, 2019; Onodugo et al, 2017).

Considering the heterogeneous nature of the ethnic communities in the country, as well as the partitioned communities living under separate but neighboring governments, identifiable groups of Nigerians still feel that justice has not been done to them in the federal arrangement. (Anyian 2018). Prior to colonization, the common African values that bound Africans' moral consciousness together were replaced by selfishness and greed, which took the form of a disregard for human life

and property. People are getting slaughtered and properties are getting destroyed in contemporary Nigeria. Capitalism came with individualism and disrupted the communal life of Africans, where man was his brother's keeper. Since language is the means through which culture is transmitted, learning the English language also entailed learning about the English way of life. Without an English language credit pass, a school diploma is meaningless. In modern Nigeria, one even requires a credit pass in English to study one's own native tongue in a tertiary institution.

Following the country's independence in 1960, successive Nigerian administrations have employed mobilization strategies, such as National Accelerated Food Production (NAFPP) in 1973, River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA) in 1972–73, Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) in 1992, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1976, The Green Revolution Program in 1980, The Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) in 1986, and Mass Mobilization for Social Justice, Self Through the Agricultural Growth Banks (ADB), People's Bank for Poor Masses (PBPM), Microfinance Banks, and BLW (1987), which largely targeted rural regions for the development of small and medium-sized companies, better lifestyles for rural women were made possible. The government adopted the self-help model after realizing that it was unable to make significant progress toward rural development using mobilization techniques.

Sustainable Development

According to an International Labour Organization (ILO) report (1977 report 111), development involves the participation of all the people, men and women, old and young, either directly through their daily work or indirectly through their economic and social groups. This demonstrates that both men and women must be on board for any meaningful growth to take

place. Currently, the "invisible women" phenomenon severely undervalues the role that women play in the rural economy. The CDD strategy differentiates from the traditional "top-down" strategy, which has never had a long-lasting effect on beneficiaries' living conditions. Instead, it evolved a "bottom-up" strategy that was more democratic and inclusive. The genuine agents of change in rural communities, i.e., traditional organizations like peer groups, women's groups, producers' unions run by cooperatives, etc., are given authority over choices and resources under CDD. This strategy enables participants to freely choose their course of action and assume accountability for policies that have an impact on their daily lives. Communities have learned via CDD how to prioritize infrastructure (drinking water supply, healthcare facilities, roads, and schools) and how to accomplish these goals in a way that is efficient, transparent, and long-lasting. The beneficiaries claim that these initiatives have assisted them in finding employment, covering their children's tuition costs, and feeling helpful to their community by aiding in its growth. The communities and villages who have benefitted from this strategy, together with state and local governments, would like to see this effort expanded to additional areas.

Sustainable development involves the participation of all in the process of production and sharing in the output. Therefore, in a particular economy, the number of people engaged in the production process impacts both the input and the output. According to Arisi and Aghure (2009), "a situation where a section of society is denied participation even though they are capable" does not speak well for sustainable development. Gender bias has been discovered as placing limitations on a section of society, making it almost impossible for such a group to be given the opportunity to serve their fatherland. This bias has the consequence of

delaying the community's or society's sustainable development. The topic of gender inequality in Nigeria has been addressed through the National Gender Policy of 2006 and other legal promulgations. Good governance has eight major characteristics, which are: participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and it follows the rule of law. It mostly guarantees that corruption is minimized, minorities' opinions are taken into consideration, and the voices of the most vulnerable members of society are heard while making decisions. The demands of society, both now and in the future, are also taken into account (UNESCAP, 2014).

While governance is the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs in order to produce development and progress, good governance accomplishes these tasks in a manner that is essentially free of abuse and corruption and shows due respect for the rule of law. The extent to which development projects are carried out, thereby ensuring the right to high-quality education, sound healthcare, adequate housing, regular energy supply, and other rights like justice, fairness, and security, is the fundamental measure of good governance. Onyisishi,(2010) lists the following as some of the guiding concepts for effective governance:

- a) Transparency and accountability;
- b) Efficiency in public administration;
- c) Responsiveness to the basic needs of the people
- d) Proper participation in the development process;
- e) Development oriented-budgeting
- f) Social responsibility for equity and fairness;
- g) Promotion of constitutional democracy;
- h) Adhere to the rule of law and social justice.

Corruption and ethnicity have denied Nigerians democratic dividends. The 8 principles of good governance are not adhered to strictly by Nigerian leaders.

Leadership, Changing Society and Sustainable Development

The instinct to put others' needs ahead of one's own signals the start of servant leadership. He then decides consciously to want to be a leader. The effort made by the servant-first to ensure that other people's top priority needs are met makes a difference. The greatest question to ask is: Do those being served evolve as people? Do they get smarter, wiser, more liberated, more independent, and more inclined to become servants as a result of receiving service? According to Abioye (2014), there are two types of leadership: servant leadership and ruler leadership.

- While a ruler-leader uses people, a servant raises men.
- Whereas a ruler-leader seeks to possess, gain, and grasp, a servant-leader seeks to contribute.
- When a ruler-leader is looking for a 'crown to wear' and a "seat to occupy," a servant-leader's main concern is service to render and 'feet to wash.'

Unfortunately, Nigeria has not been blessed with servant leadership. According to Ayo and Ekong (2008), most of the conflicts witnessed all over the world would be preventable if there were avenues for dialogue and interaction. Some are politically motivated and caused by leaders out of their selfish interests, while others are borne out of anger by oppressed minority groups because of the unavailability of a forum for redress. The happenings in Nigeria, Egypt, Liberia, Sudan, Mali, and the DR Congo are a few examples. The colossal waste, cost, and wanton destruction of lives and property cannot be quantified.

When a Nigerian is not in government, he is able to recognize all the flaws in the system and offer suggestions for fixing the issues. Unfortunately, the same Nigerian when elected tends to forget the brilliant suggestions he made as answers to the nation's challenges while he was not in government because he becomes overwhelmed with the duties of operating machinery of government (Irukwu 1983).

On September 20, 2009 at the Covenant University Faculty Advance Seminar Dr. David Oyedepo remarked:

“Before the advent of colonial master, who taught our forefathers the art of farming? Who helped them to discover what is edible? Who taught them how to prepare their meals? Who taught them the planting season for every crop? If they had waited for the colonialists, would they have had what to eat? – The imperialists would obviously have met no one. Secondly, who taught them the technicalities of child-bearing and child-care delivery? Yet, they understood what to do at child-birth, and they knew how to care for the young mother. Our forefathers were obviously great scientists in their own right. It should also be noted that they maintained their territorial integrity, constructed their own weapons of war, and designed our own textile mills. They had their own formal judicial system and operated it efficiently. They exhibited self-actualization through self-determination. They were self-reliant and had plenty of dignity in all of their endeavors. But the foreign agents came and dubbed our value uncivilized and debased. As I have said earlier, without a sense of history, no one really makes progress.”

The future of Africa and Nigeria rests with Africans, as former President Obama stated in his historic speech delivered in Ghana. Without effective government, no amount of oil, assistance, or effort can ensure Nigeria's prosperity. But Nigeria can overcome any obstacle with competent administration. Eze, 2019 observed that: Most of today's leaders pushed their way into positions of power. So, a capacity question does not arise. It is for the highest bidder, and anybody can get in there. Become a senator, and he can't speak a word of English; neither does he understand the Constitution. He has not read it anyway. So, there is a major capacity problem. Nigeria failed to follow the rule that says you should use the greatest talent you have to achieve your goals. If we do not promote the principle of excellence, what do you think will be our best results if we use people who are not competent, our weak people, as our front runners? Nigerian nation-building would therefore mean finding a permanent solution to the problems of revenue allocation, population census, the nature and practice of Nigerian federalism, religious intolerance, the ethnicity question, indigene ship, the North/South dichotomy, and neo-colonial pressures. Nation-building implies that people who view themselves as belonging to different nationalities think of them as one and feel that they are one. This would mean the transfer of allegiance by these constituent nationalities from the local nationalities to the larger geopolitical entity. This is the transition from the amalgamation stage to the integration stage—from reluctance to comply to enthusiastic support and unchecked compliance—the stage where the citizens feel like "this is my nation." "I am a Native of Nigeria." Nigerians struggle to experience a sense of unity.

The former president of the United States of America, Barack Obama, claimed that the problems facing Africa were mostly caused by

poor governance, which resulted from a lack of democracy's significant benefits and from a failure to pay attention to unresolved resentments and corruption (Obama, 2014). In order to achieve fair and sustainable development, good governance includes the transparent and responsible administration of human, financial, and economic resources (ADC, 2011). It is "the method in which power is exerted in the administration of a country's economic and social resources for development," according to the World Bank (IFAD, 1999). Ake, (1987) sees democratic governance as the operation of government through democratic consensus where the value of the democratic process and the institutions that aid the process are dominant. When democratic governance is truly practiced, it has the unique characteristic of converging leadership values. Dysfunctionality in leadership values also affects democratic culture and systems. A symbiosis exists between the two. In reality, however, the synergy between leadership and governance is dynamic, depending on the value systems that dominate the polity in question.

Conclusion

African shared values are based on the principles of "eating and letting others eat" and "treating others the same way you would like others to treat you." The ultimate aim is to make individuals place the community above themselves, be peace-loving, advocate for peace, and inculcate the spirit of selflessness among community members. This sharing of values helped to make peaceful coexistence possible among community members before the advent of colonialism and the subsequent partitioning of Africa in 1885. The white men, according to Achebe, struck the things that held us together, and we have fallen apart. Many parents can no longer transmit to their children the African shared values and other cultural elements because of the agents of social change; some parents are even cultural deviants

with no cultural elements internalized to transmit to their children.

Nigeria is still battling with the basic problems of food, shelter, and security. Poverty has become so magnified that the country is now globally identified as the "poverty capital of the world." Nigeria has one of the highest rates of out-of-school children in the world, and its unemployment rate is at its peak since the country's independence. The dismal situation of the economy has made all of the country's governments weaker. The herdsmen/farmers clash has ruined the economy of the nation, and Boko Haram and the various agitations for secession have left many Nigerians dead and their property destroyed. Our findings revealed that Nigeria could not attain sustainable development because of gender inequality, corruption, a lack of separation of powers, religious intolerance, and abuse of minority rights.

Sustainable development in any society is tied to gender equity, which is a situation whereby equal opportunities, access privileges, and citizen rights are guaranteed. Bias as a result of gender differences due to one's sex, age, tribe, personality, class, and religion are factors capable of slowing down sustainable rural development. The development of a place requires the participation of all of its citizens. Education is used to mobilize these rural people, whether male or female, and prepare and equip them with knowledge and skills for leadership, production, and services, which are the bedrock for sustainable rural development.

Recommendations

Even though agents of social change have had an impact on certain aspects of African culture, the African shared value can be revived with humility—a quality that makes it easier for people to admit their flaws and limitations, and the African moral code, which is based on a strong set of values that serve as a guide for

conduct even when others aren't watching. Nigerians want a country where citizens' lives are sacred; where material needs are met in abundance, where poverty is eradicated, where people's aspirations for autonomy and self-actualization are not thwarted by political barriers that are intentionally put in place, and where social welfare provisions like affordable housing, access to free healthcare, and high-quality education are prioritized. A nation with a strong social infrastructure, one that will be proudly praised by other countries, and one in which a citizen may proudly declare, "In my future life, I would like to be born here." These may be accomplished through promoting gender equality, practicing sound governance, and upholding the law. Page 15 of the Guardian newspaper, October 3, 2019. Restructuring Nigeria will put an end to marginalization, which has resulted in the agitation for secession. We have practiced regional government; it was the long years of military rule that centralized power and gave rise to marginalization.

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs, in any area and at all levels. It is a way of ensuring that both men and women share in the benefits of policies and programs in all political, economic, and societal spheres by including their concerns and experiences into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes. Gender equality is the ultimate objective of mainstreaming.

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