Changing Cultural Values And Politica Development In Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The assumption of this study is that the changing cultural values is the arrow head of the political development in any country. This is squeal to the fact that the complexity of beliefs and values which are prevalent in a society forms the basis for rationalizing the people's actions and are termed ideology. Ideology is an important mechanism for the sustenance of society as it has the capacity to induce political development hence a society without ideology risks disintegration. It is on this premise that this paper feels that Nigeria should take stock of its achievement and failures, 52 years after independence and then determine what we need to do in the years ahead to realize the dreams of the founding fathers. Against this background the study examined such areas as cultural values, political development in the country. Based on this we found out that there is an interface between the values of the people and the leadership in the country and this is actually occasioned by mass poverty in Nigeria. We therefore recommend that provision of employment opportunity, income redistribution and to de-emphasized materialism will be necessary in ensuring not just democratic but an egalitarian society.

INTRODUCTION

Everything we do from, shaking of hands to falling in love is shaped by our culture and constructed with the resources our culture provides. This is why (Craig 1997:93), provides that "we praise democracy, worship one God, and value competition in part because our culture teaches us to do so." However, culture does not dictate thoughts and behaviour, it leaves room for action and that is why (Harrison, 1983:94), observed that culture is something people develop, use and modify as necessary, to suit their needs and aspiration in life. This also implies that culture is dynamic. Many of the traits we think of as defining us as human, such as language, morals, technology, and skills, are elements of our culture that we learn through social relationship, beginning with our families, and through participation in cultural institutions, like schools and religious institutions. Culture provides us with shared resources for thinking and acting, the most notable of which is language. The concept of culture is indispensable for the understanding of human societies (Ifeanacho, 1998, 2). It is hard to imagine any period in time that man may live without culture. Thus, such imagination is not possible because culture is an established ways of doing things. Ndu (1998:5), noted those established ways of doing things formed part of cultural heritage. Thus for culture to exist, then there must be a people, and environment, interaction amongst the people, and interaction between the people and their environment.

Overtime each society as a result of the contributions of individuals and groups within it develops Values, Myths, Norms and Ideas that are distinctive and differ from those of other societies. It is these elements of culture that enables man to distinguish one culture from another. This ability of distinguishing one culture from another is more emphasized in the value system of the people. A cultural value is something that is widely believed throughout a collectivity to be desirable or worthy of esteem for its own sake (Anikpo & Atemie 2006:3). Values provide standards used to judge behaviour and to choose between various goals and lines of action. Such cultural values as honesty, family's name, respect for elders, good house keeping, politeness self reliance, material wealth, democracy, and other values are very dear to most cultures. On the basises of these values activities of most societies are carried out. The premium placed on these values demonstrates its level of reliance or importance in that society.

For instance in most Nigerian culture family names are valued so much that no one is ready to drag his/her family name in the mud. People for this singular reason attempted a level of honesty and sincerity in all situation at all times. For this reason (Haralanbus and Heads, 2000:315) asserts that, values are usually inferred from observed behaviours of the individual within the society. According to Tueker (1992), values are deeply held criteria for judging what is good or bad.In some culture, individuals attempt to treat themselves with some degree of decorum. The Japanese value beauty and treats it with lots of reverence. The understanding is that based on the value inclination of a people, the activities of such societies may be understood. They are the

underlying, general, often unconscious and unexpressed standards by which we evaluate specific acts, objects, or events. The values that people hold often overwhelm their overall ways of life.

Political organization and the choice of leaders are often predicated on cultural values of society. According to Craig (1997:94), one enduring American value is competitive success. The Americans strives to win not only in sports, but also in politics and their social lives. However, values may change and such changes may affect the people's traditional ways of doing things and sometimes may not. It does depend on the strength of the cultural patterns. There are two types of culture patterns-ideal patterns and behavioural patterns. Ideal patterns, (Ekpenyony, 2006), defines what the people of a society would do or say in particular situations if they conformed completely to the standards set up by their culture. This means that the desire to change from a particular attitude if everything is equal may be very remote as people's interest is usually coherent with the societal values and ideology. The behavioural pattern explains that people are likely to behave differently in certain situation with little or no regard for an ideal way of doing things in that society. This becomes more pronounced in situations where numerous alternative procedures that may not be equally acceptable are provided.

The argument here is clearer when we understand the difficulties of an organic society like Nigeria. Many may naturally reject the ideal pattern to actualize their aims and aspiration in life. In view of the foregoing we may hypothesise that:
- There is an inverse relationship between cultural values and political development in Nigeria.
- The more cultural values changes the greater the impact on the development of Nigeria political system.

CULTURAL VALUES
Values are deeply held criteria for judging what is good or bad, desirable or undesirable, beautiful or ugly. The underlying goal of any social activity is to maintain good relations and save face. According to Light (2003:94), the Americans join groups and organizations but prefer to do so as free agents, reserving the right to withdraw when the groups no longer serve their personal needs. Similarly, if a job is not rewarding or a marriage is unfulfilling, we move on, or at least know that we have the option. People in other cultures also tend to remain in the community where they grew up, to consider relationships as more fixed, and to put less emphasis on the value of individual choice and more value on stable, dependable commitments. For instance, the Arab people treat friendship as a life long, all-or-nothing commitment (Stewart and Bennet, 1991). In this culture, they make a clear distinction between acquaintances and real friends. Individuals are expected to be there for their friends, to spend any amount of money or travel any distance to help a friend in need. This cultural type typifies third world as friendship in Nigeria and else where in Africa shares similar features. In America and Europe, friendships may be close, but they are not binding (Brinkely, 1993:95). Thus, values indicate what people in a given culture prefers as well as what they find important. Values therefore may be specific, such as honouring an individual, and owning a home, or they may be more general, such as health, love and democracy (Orisa, 2010:19). However, values influence people's behaviour and serve as criteria for evaluating the action of others. Nigerians appear to give more weight to materialistic considerations than most countries of the world does. This attitude no doubt is responsible for the different ways of life as represented by the political activities, the drug-users, and born-again Christians (Ekpeyong 2008). In all known societies, beliefs and values of the people which manifest themselves in norms and goals constitute important guide to behaviour.

The complexity of these beliefs and values which are prevalent in a society and forms the basis for rationalizing the people's actions are termed ideology. Ideology is an important mechanism for the sustenance of society and may induce change as well; under certain conditions. Thus, ideology provides people with new motivation to focus their attention on such values as transparency, hard work and frugality necessary for a major restructuring of their political life. Max Weber's exposition concerning the causal connection between Calvinist Protestantism and modern capitalism is an instance of one of the crucial efforts to establish a relationship between ideology and socio-cultural change. Webers argument here is a demonstration of how a people's beliefs and values could motivate men to consciously seek for success in order to achieve greater height in life.

CHANGING CULTURAL VALUES:
In every epoch, in human history change is often used as a synonym for development, progress or evolution. All of these terms used above merely denote a difference that occurred over time. Cultural change thus, is an

emergence of new traits and trait complexes that is, changes in a culture's content or structure. Change, we must know, comes in so many forms and rates. This is why Ekpenyoung (2008, 302), provides that it is a pervasive phenomenon in social life. In a social system, changes occurring in one component of a system is likely to be felt in other components. As Defleur, etal (1977), observed changes in informal norms have often been accompanied by related changes in society's structure and its systems of sanctioning and social ranking.

On the whole, just like social organizations, cultures undergo changes. Ekpenyoung (2003), new traits may be acquired while old ones may become obsolete. Change is an inevitable phenomenon that affects all aspects of human life. Society like nature is in a state of ceaseless flux. Changes in materials and technological culture are perhaps the most obvious example of cultural change. New technology and gadgets which facilitate work for people are changes added to the stock of existing ones. In Nigeria cultural values have undergone continual modification (Anikpo and Ateme, 2006). So much of the changes we make today and our priorities are radically different from what they were in the past but until now no one thinks of the woman's status and position in society. When women who are the prime movers of the family are excluded or incapacitated, the whole society also loses at the long run (Obioha, Tuly-Gyado and Nyenke, 2004:207).

According to Kalu (1998:118), the number of households headed by women has been increasing in recent times. To be able to take care of the needs of their households; most women especially in the south Eastern states of the country are engaged in the informal sector of the economy. The argument here is that there is need for the cultural values to undergo changes to. Given this scenario, (Uzorka, Okemini and Odoemalan, 2012), provides that allowing women to own land is the magic wand that would bring an equitable income redistribution in the society. A tenurial system that, would empower the woman economically shall be relevant in making the woman a power broker in the society and by extension reduce the level of discrimination against the woman. This is undoubtedly the obvious today, for as the United Nations Economic commission for Africa put it, Women in Africa do up to three-quarters of all agricultural work in addition to their domestic responsibilities. Unfortunately, the emergence of sub-culture is probably one of the most significant kinds of change that has occurred in Nigeria. The 1990s for example, have witnessed widespread dissatisfaction with the Nigerian value system. Thus, this gave rise to a variety of different ways of life as represented by the born-again Christians, the drug-users, the political activities and the violent demonstrators. Youth today nolonger have respect or regards for their elders and parents. The detororating nature of our value system has affected the cultural institutions of the society so badly that they are nolonger effective. Institutions like the family, age grades, religious institution, the school etc are now mere toothless bulldog that cannot bite.

The point is that the change is not holistic. It is expected that such change should produce a corresponding change in other aspects of human endeavours. If the stereotypes and discrimination against women are droped as we have done away with other cultural traits like female cricumstinssion, Osu caste system in some cultures, killing of twins to mention just a few; most societies by now would have moved in terms of development beyond where they are as a people. Paying work has an empowering impact on women's status and ultimately on women's health (Ebong, 1998). Through this potential, women can have some financial autonomy and personal confidence to reject sexual favours given in exchange for economic support and all others favours that decreases their self worth. Besides more women will see this as a window of opportunity to join politics. This will go a long way to ensuring political development in Nigeria.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT:
At independence in 1960, Nigeria's founding fathers hard lofty dreams for the political development of the country. This we may still refer to as the unfinished/unrealized agenda. According to Ogameruaye (2011), the issue of equitable power sharing has been very contentious in Nigeria, especially since independence. The problem of power sharing had been responsible for much of the tensions, emotions, conflicts, stresses and strains that have belaboured the country's political development. The purpose of this segment is to examine the political development in Nigeria with the aim of developing an understanding on how the changing cultural values have affected the country. A Nation can only be actualized when it gains statehood. Thus most conception of nation sees it within the context of common goals. Essentially therefore, in forming a nation its members must have a community of shared meaning in communication so that they can understand each other effectively well. Because, it is characterized by common goals and social practices, it develops moral values and a common system of meaning and world view. It deeply shapes and moulds its members into specific kinds of persons by endowing them with specific identity and structuring their personality (Ntete-Nna, 2004). It is on the basis of the

above that one can effectively say we are a nation-state and there is, in fact, hardly a single human activity which is not in some way regulated by the state. The state is, thus, the sovereign power in a nation, it is, in the words of a French writer, a body which gives orders to all and receives order from none. The state lays the frame-work within which all other exercises of power must function. Thus the definition of state explains where power resides and why it is unchallenged.

Power: This is one concept around which any meaningful definition of polities revolves. This is why (Rourke and Boyer; 2003) opins that "until human nature changes, power will remain at the heart of political activities in the world. To Nye (2000:55), power is like the whether. Every one talks about it, but only few understand it. According to (Nte-te-Nna, 2004), the exercise of power limits the range of choices open to an individual and is imposed by the will of the one who exercises it. The exercise of power may be predicated on possession or the application of some form of sanctions. Sanction may either be negative or positive as seen in the form of punishment or reward. While imprisonment is a negative form of sanctions, the allocation of goals or cash gift may also serve as a positive form of sanctions. Sanction or coercion therefore demonstrates the difference between power and influence. However, the possession of either of them may not ultimately guarantee compliance. Political power is not distributed evenly in any given political system (Seymour, 2000). Thus the rich possess more power than the poor since they have more access to political and economic resources. In view of the above, while it is possible for the rich to finance campaigns, bribe the electorate or purchase other political goals, the poor is incapacitated by their low education and all other short comings.

Consequent upon the foregoing, power sharing at the federal level among the major ethnic groups and regions of the country has been thorny issues since independence. Although the 1960 and 1963 constitutions were silent on the mechanism for power sharing, the founding fathers recongnised the need for power sharing to ensure that no group is marginalized or oppressed (Ojameruaye, 2011). In recognition of the need for power sharing; the federal cabinet had representatives from all the regions and sections of the country. For instance the minister of finance is Dr. Mrs Ngozi-Okonjo Iwela who is from Delta State while secretary of Government, Chief Anyiam Pius Anyiam is from Abia state. If power sharing is to be successful; it will be pertinent to have it enshrined in the country's constitution in such a way that when it is the time for a zone/region to produce the president, all the political parties must present candidates that are from that particular zone/region to which the presidency is zoned under that election cycle.

Besides the issue of power, is federalism. Federalism in the real sense of the world is defined as a system of Government in which sovereignty is constitutionally shared between a central governing authority and constituent political units. It is based on democratic rules and institutions that power to govern is shared between national and regional/state governments, creating what is often called a federation. Thus the division of power between federal and regional/state governments is usually outlined in the constitution and the right to self-government of the component region/state is constitutionally entrenched (Palmer and Perkins; 2005). Component states often also possess their own constitutions which they may amend as they see fits, although in the event of conflict the federal constitution takes precedence. It is the practice with every federation for the central government to enjoy the powers of foreign policy and national defense.

The founding fathers of Nigeria from the onset, in consideration of the benefits of the federalism; saw it as panacea to the problem of the country and therefore adopted it as reflected in the 1960 and 1963 constitutions. However, beginning with the military coup in 1966, Nigeria has witnessed significant erosion in the concept of federalism as evidenced in the concentration or centralization of physical power at the centre with the federal government (FG) appropriating over 50% of the total revenues paid into the federation account while all the 36 state governments and 774 local governments combined share less than 50%. The recent establishment of the sovereign wealth fund by the federal government in-spite of opposition by the state governors is a negation of true federalism and an antics of a unitary government. Given the country's vastness and diversity, a unitarism is an evil wind (Ogameruaye; 2011).

Governance: Governance by way of definition is "the process by which governments are elected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them" (Kaufmann, et al, 1990). This was in consonance with the dreams and the aspiration of the country's (Nigeria) founding fathers who saw it as a necessary condition for "peace and unity". However, greater part of Nigeria's

52 years of existence has been characterized with bad governance as evidenced by the grand corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, political instability, complete absent of law and order, weak public institutions, poor public policies, weak leadership, and inadequate provision of public services (Usman; 2010).

A critical examination of governance indicators in Nigeria since independence, paints a very disappointing picture of the country's performance. It is unbelievable that the World's Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) index and the country performance rating index for Nigeria and four other accidentally selected African countries-Ghana, Uganda, Senegal and Tanzania; shows that the other four countries were better governed than Nigeria. Nigeria's C.P.R (Country Performance Rate), scores has consistently remained lower than those of the other four countries in 2006, 2009 and 2010. As Usman (2010), observed, the most telling is that Nigeria's very low C.P.I.A (Country Policy and Institutional Assessment) scores (2.9) shows that Nigeria has adequate human resources (manpower) for improved governance but that Nigeria lacks in the systems and tools for good governance. For instance, to promote transparency and accountability. The National and State Assemblies should conduct regular public and televised hearings on issues of national and state interest including allegations of abuse of office.

ELECTIONS:
Over the past 52 years, elections in Nigeria have been very problematic. Elections in the country have been anything but free and fair. They have always been characterized by massive rigging and fraud which resulted in protest, conflicts and long-drawn court litigations. The truth is that after most elections, the courts are usually inundated with electoral petitions and cases, some of which take over three years to decide (Jeffrey; 2005). Statistically, the military conducted-elections (1979, 1995 and 1999) have generally been better than the civilian-conducted elections (1963, 1983, 2003, 2007 and 2011). The June 12, 1993 election that was based on a two party system (SDP and NRC) and the so called option A4 (open ballot and queing) system was perhaps the best election conducted in the annals of Nigeria's political history. The 2007 elections, which was aptly titled "criminal politics, the Human Rights watch remarked that" conduct of many public officials and government institutions is so perversely marked by violence and corruption as to more resemble criminal activity than democratic governance… Many of Nigerian's ostensibly elected leaders obtained their positions by demonstrating an ability to use corruption and political violence to prevail in sham elections. In violent and brazenly rigged polls, government officials have denied millions of Nigerians any real voice in selecting their leaders.

It is on account of the foregoing that Ojameruaye (2011), observed that, in place of democratic competition, struggles for political office have often been waged violently in the streets by gangs of thugs recruited by politicians to help them seize control of power. Besides him, many seasoned observer also declared the 2007 polls to be the worst they have ever witnessed any where in the world.Even though the 2011 elections was adjudged to be better than those of 2003 and 2007, it also left much to be desired.

CULTURAL VALUES AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT:
Nigeria cannot afford to continue on the path of unbridled corruption because corruption erodes the capacity of governments at all levels to provide public services at the quality and quantity needed to improve the living standards of the people. Corruption has made public office a fast track to wealth in Nigeria, and has intensified the struggle for elected office, making elections a do or die affair thereby creating conflicts and instability (Ojameruaye, 2006), This has scared many genuine and competent persons from contesting elections and thus offered opportunity for charlatans to dominate the political arena.Corruption in Nigeria is so much that it has permeated even the judiciary and legislature such that the needed "check and balances" in a democracy no longer exist. The media is not left out. It has also become a victim of corruption, that politicians now bribe newspaper editor's not to publish unfriendly reports about them in their newspapers (Ojameruaye, 2011). Infact it is being envisage that corruption may ultimately kill democracy in Nigeria, and for this not happen all hands must be on deck in renewed war against corruption at all levels of governance.

Ostensibly therefore, we should reawaken the values inculcated in us by our grand fathers. This is the essence of the family system in African society. Writing about social institutions, Giddins (2003) observes that the family is a basic mode of social activity which are followed by the majority of members of a given society. This involves norms and values to which large members of individuals conform; it also include the institutionalised modes of behaviour which are protected by strong sanctions. This is why Ekpenyoung (2008) provides that institutions

form the "bedrock" of society because they represent relatively fixed mode of behaviour which endures over time. And according to Okodudu (2007) it is within the family that the members receive their first lesions on the values and normative expectations from their immediate society.

Values represents the worth that is attached to an item. In sociological parlance, values are those standards that are considered worthy of a member of any society. It is in-view of the forging conception that in this study we argue that values are widely held by people in society as what is important to the well being, survival, and identity of a society. Values are important for the singular reason that they influence social behaviour through their incorporation into the content of norms. However, the institution of the family is the driving force of values in every society. According to Defleur (1977), the importance of the family is very glaring in socialization and education functions of the family. It is within the family that the members receive their first lesions on the values and normative expectations from their immediate society (Okodudu 2007).

The fear of punishment from the ancestors against one who planned evil against his lineage members was enough to induce good behaviour (Ekpenyong, 2003). Children therefore, had no option than to follow their parents foot-steps. Religion in traditional Nigerian society was central to social life and so religious training of children was a basic family responsibility. According to Ekpeyong (2008), every lineage had its own shrine where members of the lineage gathered to offer scarifies to the ancestors, and requesting them to mediate between them (the living members) and the high god; and asking for all blessings and forgiveness.

In addition to the above; societies then were very peaceful and therefore progressive. Such things as brother against brother, heiniuos crimes, leadership struggle, back biting etc were unheard of and every one's station in society was clear and understandable. Although there was turbulent times but it was scarcely heard of then. The lineage system of worship provided the check and balances in the behaviours of the individual members of the society. Thus what this means is that the anomic nature of modern day Nigeria society May find expression in the organic nature of the epoch, where everyone scrambles for what he can take from the system by all means. This becomes very possible as people are highly individualized and nobody is his brothers keeper any more resulting to moral decadence.

Writing from the conflict perspective, Ekpenyong (2006), observes that Marx and Marxists did not lay emphasis on consensus, values, ideology and procedures in the persistence of a political system or its alteration. Government can survive by force even if it has a low level of legitimacy and effectiveness. Considering politics in Nigeria, this is true once it can apply coercion. Hence the form government takes is not the outcome of consensus but of struggle among the competing groups. Political domination rests on the group in control of specific economic and political resources and never on the willingness of most people in society to abide by the "rules of the game" (Rourke and Boyer, 2005).This study supports the above assertion as that is the true position of things in the country presently where institutionalized procedures for non-violent struggle exist, but there function is only cosmetic; as coercion is the underlying mechanism. Again the reported cases of massive looting of states treasures by Sitting Governors and the hide and seek game between the EFCC and ex-Governors justifies Marxists assumptions.

RECOMMENDATION:
Arising from the findings of this study; we have recommended the following in order to save Nigerians from further political harassment in the future.
A return to the high premium on our cultural values: In the past Nigerian have high premium on cultural values. This attitude necessitated the amalgamation of Nigeria as a country by Lord Lugard in 1914.Values are deeply held criteria for judging what is good or bad, and therefore abstinence from those things we believe affect good taste as the underlying goal of any social activity is to maintain good relations and save face and keep the society going. It will be recall that Nigeria in the past provided a heaven of opportunity for people to aspire high in order to make it in life. This simply implies that people became what they were because of hard work and honesty, unlike these days that wealth is rather emphasized without work.

What we are experiencing today akins to anomic state, and any society in that situation risks disintegration, for its members in a state of anomic lack guideline over their personal desires.

Accountability: Perhaps when people begin to account for every penny they make Nigeria will be sanitized. It is because people make wealth that are unaccounted for that we now experience the emergence of wealth without root. The system has collapsed and so the house presently as it were is on fire.

Ideology: The complexity of beliefs and values which are usually prevalent in a society, becomes the basis for rationalizing the peoples actions and these are referred to as ideology. Ideology is an important mechanism for the sustenance of a society and has the capacity to induce positive changes. Thus ideology provides people with new motivation to imbibe such values as transparency, hard work and frugality necessary for the restructuring of their political life. It is unfortunate that Nigeria as a country does not have ideology and until this is done the people continually will grope in the dark for better things in life but to no avail.

Employment opportunity: Most Nigerians today have either lost their jobs or do not have any and roam the street without shelter. The argument here is that most of the heinous atrocities are carried out by parsons in this situation. Though poverty is not an excuse for misconduct or anti-social behaviour but there is a limit to human endurance. If the state will do well to create job for the teeming graduates without job; we are sure the incidence of electoral malpractices will come to an end and true democracy will be enthroned. This is so because the deteriorating level of our cultural values is a consequence of the position the people found themselves in a country with so much wealth.

Income Redistribution: Income redistribution is very necessary especially at this age and time to further bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. This has become necessary in view of the fact that this two classes of persons until now share the same market. In most cases, it is very painful the way the rich treat the poor so that if you are involved, you simply cannot help but indulge in anything within your reach to be a human being in the eyes of the very rich.

Tenurial system: The most constraining problem facing man today is the issue of "land ownership" practice in our society. The economic importance of land accounts for its use as the bases for agricultural activities in African continent. To this extent, land constitute the ecological background in which social, political and economic activities of a people are determined. Thus, it is this importance attached to land that formed the basis for instituting in societies how land is to be exploited. The point of note here is that, in whatever pattern of ownership adopted both man and woman should enjoy the same opportunity. With a parcel of land both man and the woman may start up something that is worthwhile in order to earn a living without resorting or thinking of quick means and ways to get what they need in life.

Restructuring of the age grade system: The age grade should be re-structured and reinvigorated to function as a social control mechanism in the different societies of Nigeria. In the past it served this purpose very well and people were very mindful of their activities in our villages and towns. The age grade was the people's police and any body who misbehaved was adequately handled to serve as deterrent to others. Because of the activity of the age grade, many people abstained from any action that did not cohere with societal norms. The presence of the modern day police rather created a cover to people, so that many could commit crime and go free. Those who are in the habit of contravening laws, in most cases are friends to the police and so even if they are locked up today tomorrow their friends brings them out and they continue with the same misconduct. The position of this paper is that the disgrace from the age grade has lasting effect and stigma than the number of times you put a criminal in a police cell.

CONCLUSION

The issue concerning the changing cultural values and political development in Nigeria is one that concerns every Nigerian except you are still an under aged and so may not be affected by its impact. Based on the above, in this study we examined the cultural values, political development with the view to understanding how changes in the cultural values have affected political development in this country. It is amazing to note that Nigerians are more materialistic now than they were in the past and people are ready to die to make money. It all boils down however, to the fact that Nigerians are hungry and there is no job.

We have stated in this paper that Nigeria cannot afford to continue with the present day experience where few individuals because of the vintage position they occupy will not stop determining the feature of Nigerians. There is therefore, an urgent need to restructure the country in a more fundamental way to reflect the dreams of the founding fathers. An ad-hoc constitutional amendment by appointed committees or the legislatures are often not far-reaching. Therefore, for a proper political restructuring of the country, a sovereign national conference is indeed a necessary condition. Based on the foregoing the current administration needs to revisit the issue of restructuring effectively well as the members of the national assemblies cannot come up with consensual solutions. The truth is that, experience has shown that a government controlled national

conference cannot come up with any far reaching solutions. In most cases, the government usually does not implement some or most of the recommendations of such committees. The 1994/5 national constitutional conference is a good example where Abacha failed to implement the recommendations from that conference. Besides, I have no fear that Nigeria can make it. In spite of the daunting challenges Nigeria is facing, this researcher still have a dream that someday, perhaps very soon; that the African giant, will free itself from this shackle of captivity and join the club of the fast developing countries of the world

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