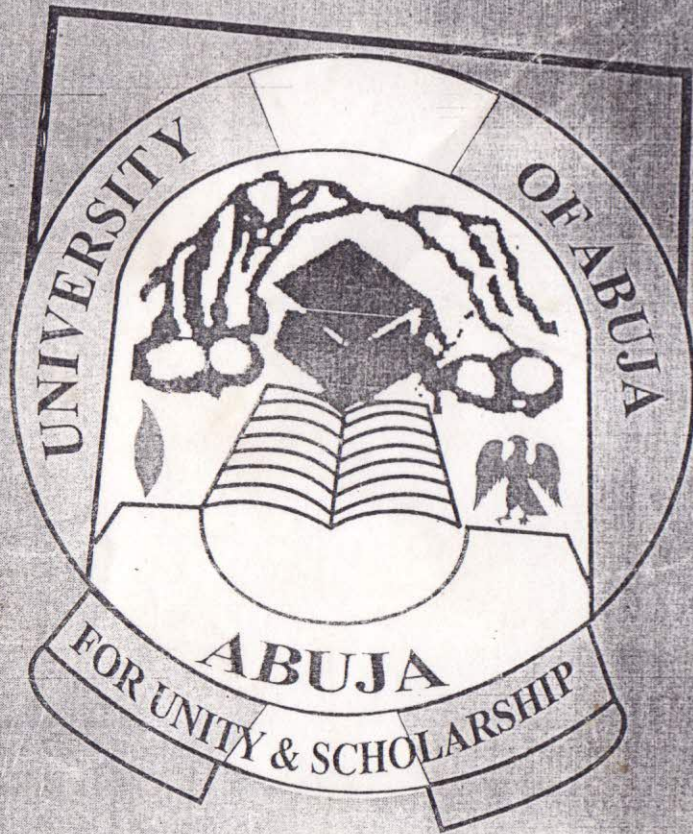




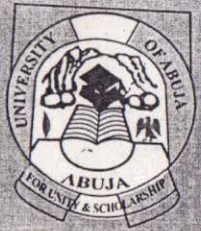
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RELIGION AND ELECTION IN NIGERIA: A MORAL RE- APPRAISAL

BY

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NIGERIA

Introduction

It is notably important to assert that politics where election features is inevitable in all facets of human existence. For "man is a political and social animal", as Aristotle had briskly enunciated. Thus, election becomes a medium for choosing leaders or representatives into public offices. Religion and election in Nigeria have become avenues for political mobilization and propaganda, such that today both religion and election in Nigeria have become moral issues that need critical re-evaluation. It is in the light of this that this paper will cursorily give an overview of religion and election in Nigeria. The paper will x-ray moral issues in Nigerian elections with the intention to establish a blueprint for contemporary Nigerian polity.

Religion: An Overview

In all ages, religion has come to grips with the existence of all human endeavours. Religion at all times plays pivotal role in shaping the thought, perception, approach, feeling and history of humankind. Thus, religion embraces all aspects of life and it represents wholeness of all existence and as well as life itself. Apparently, religion is the keystone or cornerstone of the people's lives and cultures. Religion is far more than a believing way of life in the Nigerian context, where a distinction or separation is not made between religion and other areas of human existence. It serves the aim of building and maintaining human society. No doubt, with its consciousness and sensitivity, there is no known society without religion. Dopamu is apposite when he states that there is no known society without the existence of religion.¹ In line with the above position of Dopamu, Abe argues that religion is the provenance and consummation of all things. According to him, "in the beginning, it was religion; and in the end it shall be religion."² In fact, religion has explained the world and human understanding of it. Without equivocation,

The production of this first edition of AJPR was not without difficulties that should or could be expected in any pioneering adventure. Among the many difficulties we encountered were the slow take off of the project of publishing the Journal. When it was finally taken off, the delay in submission of articles, the process of reviewing or vetting and returning them for editing, the communication problem, notwithstanding the modern communication gadgets, the financial constraints and all that has to do with first time production of a Journal. But we are grateful to God that it is better delayed than denied. However, while we strive for quality and excellence, the Editorial Board accepts the limitations that may be noticed in this first edition. The advantages and the joy of publishing the first edition of AJPR outweigh the possible limitations. It is our belief that subsequent issues will improve upon what is given in this first edition. We invite you to read, enjoy and savour the articles.

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religion has been explained by gamut of scholars. However, the explanation seems to defy the satisfactory quest for a universally acceptable definition. Yet, a new definition is not offered either.

Kenny aptly describes Religion "as any system which relates men to ultimate values, whether God or something else and which embodies a creed, a code and a cult."³ In another development, Kegley distinguishes three basic features of religion as belief, feeling and action.⁴ It is imperative to note that what is pivotal to religion is belief in God or gods, the nature and destiny of the meaning of history and the end. On the basis of this, we come to appreciate the fact that religion does not only command loyalty but also gives its adherents something they are glad to live for and if need be, die for...⁵ In the same vein, Ejiofor also attests to the fact that:

Religion is the complex of beliefs and behaviour of men in the supernatural sphere and realities and in the dynamic linkage of supernatural with the natural... Religion is one major drive behind human behaviour. Religion has had an important disciplinary effect on the whole social order in any given civilization.⁶

The above shows that religion is a very deep factor in the lives of men. In point of fact, religion identifies itself with the first instinct for self-preservation. "Men take off from religion, men march along with religion and they arrive at religion with a minute-to-minute phenomenon:"⁷ Ejiofor further buttresses that religion is:

The pride of the mind, the strength of the will, the relish of human emotions, coveted object of delicate sentimentality...In short, it is the comprehensive resume of man's spiritual, rational and corporate existence.⁸

The above definitions reveal certain essential elements as relating to Religion in Nigeria. Thus, the concept of God's relationship of man to ultimate values, a creed, a code, a cult, belief, action, feeling, super sensible world, law and social order, the relish of human emotions, and the pride of the mind are indispensable to religion in Nigeria. Perhaps, in all things, Nigerians are religious.⁹

As sensitive as religion is, it is worth living for, a pride of place for people as they subsequently derive satisfaction from it as well as sense of security. In Nigeria, there is the practice of triadic religions of African Religion (Afrel), Islam and Christianity. The history of African Religion or Indigenous Religion is as old as the people themselves. It is a religion handed down by our forebears from the yore,

and it is orally transmitted from one generation to another. It does not possess sacred scriptures, yet, it is written in memory of the very world we live and is transmitted orally as the occasion demands. This is not proselytizing religion, it does it have a drive for membership, yet it is tolerant, it accommodates and remains autochthonous. Therefore, we are born into it, live in it and die in it.¹⁰ Commenting on the overview of African Religion, Dopamu has this to say:

This is clearly seen in African Religion (Afrel), which encompasses all aspects of life. Africans do not know how to live without religion. They celebrate life religiously and they never embark on anything without bringing in religion. Thus at birth, marriage, death, warfare, healing, the foundation of any project, planting, harvesting, enthronement of chiefs and kings and other areas of human endeavour, Afrel plays important roles.¹¹

Islam and Christianity are the proselytizing religions, which had been imported into Nigeria. Thus, Islam was introduced into Nigeria in the 11th century by the Timbuktu traders who had contact or encounter with the Northerners. It was in the 16th century that Islam spread to the south-west. While Christianity penetrated into Nigeria in the 16th century. However, this attempt to Christianize Nigeria failed due to many factors. Be that as it may, Christianity came to be planted permanently in the 19th century. They have had disproportionate size. Interestingly, Nigeria is a secular and pluralistic state without any particular religion being adopted as a state religion. There is no gainsaying the fact that Nigeria is a country of diverse cultures, traditions and beliefs. But of the entire diverse elements, religion has proved to be the most sensitive in the society. It is this fact about religion that has made it an instrument of legality, unifying factor as well as social mechanism for national development. Of a truth, the tenets of religion provide individuals with shared values, roles and incumbents, altruism and responsibilities. Religion as a way of life is aimed at the transformation of individual life. This individual life is a means of microcosmic structure in the overall macrocosmic structure of the society.

Apart from this, "each of the patterns of life and practice presupposes a structure of shared beliefs. When the credibility of central religious beliefs is questioned other aspects of religion are also challenged."¹² Succinctly therefore, religion is recognised as a channel for human and national development as well as legal instrument. Idowu becomes apposite when he states that religion is the keynote of the people's lives:

Religion forms the foundation and all-governing principle of life for them. As far as they are concerned, the full responsibility of all the affairs of life belongs to the Deity; their own part in the matter is to do as they are ordered through the priests and diviners whom they believe to be interpreters of the will of the deity. Through all the circumstances of life, through all its changing scenes, its joys and troubles, it is the Deity who is in control.¹³

Without doubt, Religion has all-governing principles of life and infuses discipline and social order. Thus, religion is a cord that binds people together in order to promote social cohesion and communal well-being. As the rule of law is a machinery set in place to guide the conduct of the people likewise religion is both a social and legal mechanism for harmonious living and co-existence. Besides, religion is a divine law or mechanism that regulates human conduct and as well institutionalises social norms in human society. Religion has the knack of bringing people together where they can experience presently what it means to live the full human life. It is also a major instrument of transforming any human society into a community that acts justly. To this end, Religion becomes the law of life, pathway to God-realization, absolute value truth, living power, justice, and morality.

Election: An Account

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines election as "the action or an instance of choosing by vote one or more of the candidates for a position, especially a political office".¹⁴ Also, *Encarta Dictionaries* describe election as "an organised event at which somebody is chosen by vote for something especially a public office".¹⁵ The above definitions of election have identified some key concepts like "choice," 'vote' and "political or public office." All these key concepts truly represent the elements of election. Election therefore is the method of choosing representative(s) through vote to lead the electorate who understand that sovereignty resides with them with tenure of office.

Historically, elections were used in ancient Athens and Rome, when, democracy was introduced in the third century B.C.¹⁶ As a result of civilization, there was the idea of direct representation. However, the origins of elections in the contemporary world lie in the gradual emergence of representative government in Europe and North America beginning in the 17th century. At that time, the holistic notion of representation characteristic of medieval periods was transformed into a more individualistic conception; one that made the individual the critical unit to be counted.¹⁷ For instance, the British parliament was no longer seen as representing estates, corporations and vested interest but was rather perceived as standing for

actual human beings. This movement that abolished the so-called 'rotten boroughs' electoral districts of small population controlled by a single person or family- that climaxed in the reform Act of 1832 was a direct consequence of this individualistic conception of representation.¹⁸ Once governments were believed to derive their powers from the consent of the electorate and operated to seek that consent was necessary.

Advocates of full democracy favoured the establishment of universal suffrage. Across Western Europe and North America, adult male suffrage was properly ensured almost everywhere by 1920, though women suffrage was not established until sometime later.¹⁹ Meanwhile, it is common to equate representative government and election with democracy; and although competitive elections under universal suffrage are one of the democracy's defining characteristic, universal suffrage is not a mandatory condition of competitive electoral politics.²⁰

During the 18th century, participation in elections was regulated mainly by local customs and arrangements. Both the American and French revolutions declared the equality of every citizen formally equal to every other, the vote remained an instrument of political power possessed by very few.²⁰ Even with the complementation of universal suffrage, the ideal of one person, one vote was not fully achieved in all countries. In fact, systems of plural voting were maintained in some countries giving certain social groups an electoral advantage.²¹

In Sub-Saharan Africa, competitive elections based on universal suffrage were introduced in three distinct periods. In the 1950s and the 60s, a number of countries conducted elections following decolonization. However, many of them reverted to totalitarian kind of rule. In the late 1970s, elections were conducted in a smaller number of countries when some military dictatorships were dissolved e.g. Nigeria and Ghana. Beginning in the early 1990s, the end of the cold war and the reduction of military and economic aid from advanced countries brought about democratization and competitive election in more than a dozen of African countries such as Benin, Mali, South Africa and Zambia.²²

Functions of Election

In society at large where governance is given priority and subsequently essentialized, elections make a fundamental contribution to such governance. Because direct democracy- a form of government in which political decisions are

made directly by the whole body of qualified citizens- is impartial in most contemporary societies, democratic government must be conducted through representatives. Elections enable voters to select leaders and to hold them accountable for their performance in office.²³ Thus, accountability can be underestimated when elected leaders do not care whether they are re-elected or not; or when, for historical or other reasons, one party or coalition is so dominant that there is effectively no choice for voters among alternative candidates, parties or policies.²⁴

Nevertheless, the possibility of controlling leaders by requiring them to submit to regular and periodic elections helps to solve the problem of succession in leadership and this immensely contributes to the continuation of democracy. Moreover, where the electoral process is competitive and forces candidates or parties to expose their records and future intentions to popular scrutiny, elections serve as a forum for the discussion of public issues and facilitate the expression of public opinion.²⁵ They also serve to legitimate the acts of those who wield power, a function that is performed to some extent even by elections that are non-competitive. Elections also reinforce the stability and legitimacy of the political community. Like national holidays commemorating common experiences, elections link citizens to each other thereby confirming the viability of the polity. As a result, elections help to facilitate social and political integration. Finally, elections serve a self-actualizing purpose by confirming worth and dignity of individual citizens as human beings. Whatever other needs voters may have, participation in an election serves to reinforce their self-esteem and self respect.²⁶ Voting gives people an opportunity to have their say and through expressing partisanship to satisfy their need to feel a sense of belonging.

Attributes of Election

Election as an organised event at which somebody is chosen by vote to occupy a public office has many attributes that are associated with it. Suffice it to say that eligibility and franchise are some of them. Thus, for election to be recognised by all and sundry a voter must be eighteen years and above and such a person must have the franchise. Thus, franchise is the right to vote and be voted for in an election. Therefore, not everybody is eligible to vote in an election especially under-age and those convicted as criminals, prisoners or ex-convicts. Furthermore, free and fair voting is one of the good attributes of election. Elections conducted must be free and fair, to be representative and popular. To this end, it must be devoid of intimidations and victimizations of political opponents.

The people should therefore be free to make a choice out of competitive alternative political ideas and leaders.²⁷ Moreover, a regular periodic election is one of the good attributes of election. It is a popular saying that where there is no election there is no mandate. Thus, it is through a popularly conducted election that the masses of the people transfer their will to their elected representative.²⁸ A system will only be representative if and when people are given the opportunity to periodically decide who would represent their interest at each election.

Not only that, up-to-date Electoral register is also one of them. A record of qualified voters should be kept at each ward and constituency. This is a roster containing the names of qualified prospective voters. The register should be up to date with the names of those who are dead or have moved out of the territory deleted and the new residents included for periodic elections. After a fresh review of such register for an on-coming election, the compiled list of voters must be publicly displayed for about two weeks to enable the members of the public to see and raise any objection where necessary. The objection may be against the omission of names of resident qualified voters against the inclusion of 'ghost' names aimed at giving any party or candidate undue advantage over others.²⁹

Election in Nigeria

In Nigeria, elections came shortly before decolonization in 1960. Before then, full political participation and direct representation was occasioned by the establishment of political parties. Some of these parties were recognized even before independence. Agreeably therefore, elections were compartmentalized into parties. Political parties are bodies of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours, the national interest, upon some particular principle, in which they are all agreed.³⁰ However, Anson D. Morse as quoted by Iyare defines

a party as durable organization which in its simplest form consist of a single group of citizens united by common principles, but in its more complex forms of two or more such groups held together by weaker bond of a common policy and which contrary to the view usually held, has for its immediate end the advancement of the interest and the realization of the ideals of the people as a whole, but of the particular group or groups which it represents.³¹

In the final analysis, a political party serves as the singular most preferred arena, avenue and channel for political participation everywhere in the world. This is mostly channelled through the parties to access power and be part of the government. Political party in a nutshell is like the engine room of democracy.³²

Nigeria became engrossed in politicking before independence. The awareness of political participation was the womb that gave birth to independence. Elections have been severally held since decolonization. However, the military regimes had actually conducted majority of the elections in Nigeria. Election in Nigeria became organized after independence. Different political parties emerged in the course of elections. In 1960, the likes of Action Group (AG), Northern People Congress (NPC) and National Congress for the Nigerians and Cameroons (NCNC). While in the 70s the likes of Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), National Party of Nigeria (NPN) National Advance Party (NAP), Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP), People's Redemptive Party (PRP) and some others. In the late 80s, and early 90, parties such as Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republican Convention (NRC) were floated by General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida; and later in the 90s, the Late General Sanni Abacha established five parties. Consequently, upon his death Gen Abdul Salami Abubakar established People Democratic Party (PDP), All People's Party that metamorphosed to All National People Party (ANPP), Action Congress (AC), and other parties. Truly speaking, all party organizations that were founded by the military regimes were founded with the sole aim of establishing civilian governments.

With all these political parties, elections have been conducted one time or the other. It was through the conduct of elections that second republic was ushered in. The third republic was almost successful when Gen. Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida annulled the June 12 election widely acclaimed to be free and fair. It was also through elections keenly competitive that brought in 1999 Retired Gen Olusegun Obasanjo till 2007. It was through the same election that brought in the Late Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar Adua. However, election has been the channel through which a popular government is entrenched having religiously applied the attributes of elections.

Despite the attributes of election, Nigeria as a nation celebrating her fiftieth year of independence has not been able to apply the attributes of election to the fullest. Interestingly, in Nigeria, political parties are not established with any ideology. In the Western Europe and North America, ideology is the basis for the formation of political Parties. Such ideology overrides the interest of the individual, hence the agenda of the party is strictly followed or adhered to by the individual. There is no room for anti-party agenda or propaganda.³³

Apart from that, in the Nigerian election, there is the obvious fact of under-age electorate being allowed to exercise his /her franchise. During election, electoral malpractices are common phenomena, manipulation of figures, massive or census rigging and ghost votes in Nigeria. During elections in Nigeria, political thugs are freely used, to snatch boxes and to whisk away stubborn individuals who fail to yield to their pressure in the polling station to which the Nigerian police are helpless. There is the denial of voting to some individuals by political hoodlums and murderers in the Nigerian elections. The announcement of results without elections in Nigeria is not news. Ehusani notes passionately that the pursuit of power during election and census rigging as well as politics of bitterness and vindictiveness, coupled with the engagement of murderous thugs and private armies that unleash a reign of terror during electioneering campaigns are common carnival. In Nigeria also, there is no truth-telling during electoral manifesto. Ehusani asserts that truth is the seed of democratic government. According to him:

Democracy in its highest expression is the mutual acknowledgement of certain fundamental truths including the truth of the dignity, equality and freedom of all in a society. In Nigeria, democracy will only germinate and thrive upon the mutual recognitions and acceptance of the truth that all the inhabitants of the geographical expression we call Nigeria must enjoy equal dignity and opportunities; that all who qualify to be called Nigerians by birth or naturalization must enjoy equal protection of the law, irrespective of social, status, ethnic origin, religious affiliation or political preference.³⁴

But in Nigeria, the contestants do not uphold the truth after mandate is given to them during the election.

Religion and Election in Nigeria

It is worthy of note that religion is a very powerful tool in Nigerian politics. Interestingly, Nigerian politics revolves around religious divide. In the annals of Nigerian politics, there is the consciousness of religious consideration in the choice of a leader or leaders. Election or electioneering campaign is programmed along religious interest. The political contestants are either Christians or Muslims. Today, these religious cleavages have deepened so much that they serve as a check and balance in the choice of a candidate and running mate.

Historically, religious cleavage has been the order of the day. It is either a Muslim Presidential candidate or Christian Presidential Candidate while his vice would be a Christian or a Muslim respectively. This trend has continued in Nigerian

politics. In the second republic for instance, Alhaji Shehu Shagari was the President and his vice Chief Alex Ekwueme was an Eastern Christian. This phenomenon has become a continuum except in 1993 when M.K.O. Abiola, a southern Muslim and his vice Alhaji Babagana Kingibe, a Northern Muslim- the same religion ran under the platform of Social Democratic Party (SDP).

Meanwhile, religion positively serves advisory role to any constituted government and it is also used to mediate during crucial situation. Religion is also used for political mobilization. It aids contestants in prayer, conscientizes electorate on the acts of political awareness and participation.³⁵ Thus, religious sentiment is displayed in Nigerian politics and the tradition of Nigerian politics in that regard is broadly overwhelming. A handful of contestants actually turn Christians over night to seek and campaign for election. In Nigeria, the cheapest way to secure votes as a Christian is to go through Christian Organization and use the name of Jesus to attract votes claiming to be "born-again". The same is applicable to Muslims. As a result, Party Contestants turn fellowship into a political campaign ground.³⁶ Even the present Electoral Reform Act has recognized religion as a political tool in that it has created an enabling atmosphere for the recognition of religious holidays. "Friday; Saturday and Sunday excluded in deference to the religious feeling of Muslims, Seventh-day Adventist and Christians respectively."³⁷ During election, religious discrimination is often employed in Nigerian politics. All the elected officials either use Christian religious advantage or Islamic religious advantage to win. Religion is now turned into a strong political weapon in Nigerian politics. This same religious cleavage has penetrated into other organizations.

However, this religious sentiment and cleavage is not healthy for the nation polity. This is reckless high stake game of power which is likely to end in disaster and misrule. Kukah therefore argues that employing religion in Nigerian politics is not healthy. According to him "the emergence of two Muslims who were themselves friends of President Babangida was largely seen as an attempt to frustrate the process by dampening public enthusiasm"³⁸ He further enunciates that political mobilizers have become arrogant in exploring and exploiting religion to their own advantage which is a minus to the entire nation. To him

The election dealt a blow to the arrogance of the Northern elite who have always relied on religion to mobilise their people. Across the Northern part of Nigeria there was the feeling that it had the power to take back what it had given by exploiting religious sentiments. Bearing in mind the experiences people had had with the Sharia even in the North, religion became a liability... Nigerians did not vote for Obasanjo because they are happy. On the contrary there is massive disaffection in view of the persistence of corruption, the collapse of the Infrastructure, etc. Nigerian voted against religious extremism and they sent out a signal that should serve as a warning to the religious war lords who have taken advantage of it.³⁹

It is also evident that these contestants who used religious houses and religious organizations during electioneering campaign suddenly turn as devils against the religious organizations and remain inaccessible.

A Moral Re-Appraisal

Having evaluated the use of religion in Nigerian election, it becomes clear that it is not healthy for the future of the nation because it does not represent true democracy and good representation. Similarly, Ujo asserts that, the political culture of the people which exhibits a general disregard for the need and essence for scrupulous moral standard even in giving factual information on routine matter.⁴⁰ In view of the foregoing, normal political culture abhors the abusive use of religion, gratification and influence. Conditions provided for election must be strictly adhered to in a normal democratic process. Handsome remunerations should be paid to ad-hoc staff in order not to make them vulnerable to influence by the government and political stake holders.

As regards manifesto, truth-telling is required during manifestoes and what Murphy and Elli refer to "ethic of responsibility"⁴¹ becomes crucial. The ethics of responsibility is concerned with the political order toward achieving ends which promote pure intent and pure means. Although, men are not equal or even nearly equal in power and privileges as such, the political leaders who are elected should respect the rights of others and their rights protected. To be moral involves respecting those rights and decision which must include making sacrifice and the acceptance of absurdity. Morality also requires free and fair election, equality and justice. Election must be free and fair, for morality demands the distribution of happiness as evenly as possible, whether the person is being endeared or not he must also be considered in any final decision. This is the principle of utilitarianism. The requirement of justice makes it compulsory to every contestant and electorate to treat everybody with equity and affection and remove all sense of insecurity and suspicions which make for disintegration and balkanization among the people.⁴²

Religions permeate all people as creatures of God, each with an infinite endowment, and thus men are never to be treated only as means but as people deserving respect in their own right. It is reasonable that individual contestant be given equal consideration irrespective of religious affiliation. The religious virtues of humility, truth, respect, detachment and candour will add glamour to the political

health of the nation. With regard to violence and political thuggery, the electorate must put into proper focus not only the socio-political implication of the recent past, but also the moral climax and the values and disvalues that have accorded the past. Indeed, the electorate must desist from quick-fix and short-cut to success and must pursue sustainable programme capable of instilling worth and urgent examination of individual and collective consciences.⁴³

Voters in elections must be eligible to vote instead of under-age which selects at least for cynicism and perhaps for brutality in its practitioners. This promotes banal sense of the claims that they are crooks and breaks down the law to their own advantage, take bribes, do shady things that are not actually legal for personal gains. In view of the above, political or election morality would perhaps come to be identified as a specific pattern of social consciousness built in electorate which will bring out always decent and virtuous behaviour which aid morals that increasingly and essentially become values in their own right as obligations. In politics, the justifying consideration will characteristically be of the consequentialist kind. Moreover, a vital aspect of consequentialist reasoning lies in maximizing expectation, the product of the size of the pay off and its probability.⁴⁴

It is gratifying to note that the electorate should cultivate moral character which will deeply be entrenched in their moral consciousness. Similarly, the electorates' belief should be in the interest of good government only functionally, that they should not share a set of understanding which to markedly differentiate them from students who are not politicians. These are of course, only hint at certain dimension that political leaders should abide by the moral tenets of normal democracy. Callahan has this to say in the affirmative:

An important issue connected with this is the extent to which a political leader's tasks, particularly in a democracy, is defined in terms of defending the interest of the state, whether if the interest of some other rival, state will be advanced.⁴⁵

In activating the above, Political leaders and their followers must exhibit a strong moral rebirth for "without civil morality communities perish; without personal morality their survival has no value."⁴⁶

Therefore, Nigerian leaders and political electorate should imbibe the culture of morality such as respect for the rule of the game; respect for honesty and endeavours; respect for the rights of everyone; eradication of corruption; and promote of harmony and unity.⁴⁷ The importance of campaign in the electoral process was echoed thus by Ujo:

No political campaigns or slogan shall be done with abusive language, directly or indirectly likely to injure religious, ethnic, tribal and sectional feelings. Abusive, intemperate... base languages or insinuations, or innuendos designed or likely to provoke violent reactions or emotion shall not be employed or used in political campaigns. Places designed for religious worship...educational institutions shall not be used.⁴⁸

In a nutshell, Ujo having understood the ethos of politicking admonishes politicians and the electorates as well to imbibe the culture of moderate campaign void of rancour and acrimony. Likewise, election should not be conducted in an environment charged with tension and contemptuous disparagement. On this final note, these norms and values must be sincerely employed, considered and reconsidered in order to appreciate the norms and values in upholding and sustaining subsequent elections in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study has examined religion and election in Nigeria. (Having evaluated religion and election in Nigeria morally). It discovered that there are moral lapses in Nigerian elections. The moral lapses ranges from religious sentiments to lack of political ideology; lack of honesty during manifesto to electoral malpractices, political violence and thuggery to denial of voting right by disgruntled elements; declaration of result without proper conduct of election among others. All these are the business of Nigerian politics today.

Despite these moral issues, it is obvious that morality cannot be separated from politics. (Politics and morality cannot be detached from each other). As long as morality continues to be removed from politics it becomes a dirty game. Dipo Irele argues that morality is a *sine qua non* for politics.⁴⁹ Politics and morality revolve around man, man acting in an organism whole; therefore, they complement each other. Morality should be brought to Nigerian politics so as to enjoy the polity of commonwealth, for "moral freedom and political freedom go together."⁵⁰ Political leaders must be morally prepared to administer good governance as acknowledged by Omoregbe that the "prosperity of a society depends on the moral disposition of its members."⁵¹ Of course, it must be noted here that none of these adopted methods for inculcating moral values would yield immediate results. Once these moral tenets are internalized, the tempo of election in Nigeria will rise by leaps and bounds and its effect will be felt everywhere.

Endnotes

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