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MORALITY, LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE: SETTING MODELS FOR RESPONSIBLE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

Morality is concerned with the principles of right and wrong behaviours. While no society has strict laws governing morality among its members, nevertheless, there are strong moral codes and rules expected of them. Religious doctrines also contain specific injunctions on basic moral principles guiding adherents. Thus, every society has guidelines for the moral conduct of its people. The concern of this paper is the nexus between morality, leadership and governance with a view to setting a template for responsible political leadership in Nigeria. The contemporary Nigerian society has witnessed a steady decline in moral standards over the years. In particular, concern has been expressed on the apparent immoral conducts of the nation's political actors at all levels. Rather than being an avenue for national development, politics in Nigeria has become a lucrative business venture for different calibers of people. Thus, as a purely business enterprise, only those who have money (money bags) could venture into it for the sole purpose of making more money (profits). The results of this are reflected in decades of under-development, political instability, corruption and infrastructural decay. The paper addresses this vexed issue of morality, leadership and governance in Nigeria. It draws a parallel between moral decadence and bad governance in the country and

demonstrated that in several ways, the current political, economic and social travails bedeviling the country are not unconnected with the moral decline among both rulers and the ruled. Consequently, the paper set a template for responsible political leadership in the country through moral rebirth.

Keywords: Governance; Money-bags; Morality; Political leadership; Religions

Introduction

There is agreement among scholars that morality is an important determinant of enviable political leadership and good governance. For example, Plato (427-347 B. C.) demonstrated serious concern for morality as factor for responsible leadership such that he recommended death penalty as punishment for leaders found guilty of immoral acts (Vernon, 2001). Similarly, Aristotle (384-322 B.C) viewed morality as an important characteristic of a leader because it is the factor that could enable the leader to make good judgement and as well as a critical ingredient of good governance (Lee, 2003; Hartman, 2006).

Apart from the ideas of classical scholars presented above, contemporary scholars such as Halverson (1995), Omoregbe (2003), Mintzberg (2004), Ogundiya (2006, 2009), among others also emphasized the relevance of morality as a necessary ingredient for responsible leadership. Halverson (2004) argued that the display of morality is a central function of responsible leader and an important ingredient of good governance. Also, Mintzberg (2004) posited that morality is a critical requirement for leaders to be effective in governance. Similarly, Ogundiya (2006) and Yusuf (2009) argued that morality is the ultimate factor of many activities such as religion, law making and other social activities. They argued that religion without morality is fruitless and that a man devoid of moral stance is not fit to live. Omoregbe (2003) posited that, any group of people that come together to form a government outside moral standard is nothing but a gang of criminals. The conclusion of Omoregbe implies that political leadership must take the issue of morality serious because it provides directions in governance and that the

leaders should be guided by high ethical codes in the management of state affairs (Bako, 1995; Muhammad, 2009).

From the above, it could be seen that academic attention has been directed towards the issue of morality in developing responsible leadership needed for good governance. Some of these researches have set a specific model of morality which political leaders could follow in order to develop the necessary moral stance to deliver good governance. This present effort is an attempt to present some sociological models of morality which political leaders could imbibe so as to enhance good governance in Nigeria. Setting a template for how morality could be used to facilitate responsible leadership and good governance in Nigeria is necessary due to the fact that sub-Saharan Africa has been described as a region where political leadership is seriously characterized by gross immorality. According to Omoregbe (2003), amorality is an intrinsic characteristic of the African public office holders and it permeates all level of governance, and that this single factor could be held responsible for the general backwardness of the region. In Nigeria, it is widely believed that political leadership is highly devoid of morality- a factor which has been described as one of the banes of governance in the country (Usman and Shettima, 2010; Ogundiya, 2010).

Different scholars and political observers alike have described Nigeria in various ways with regards to her state of socio-political and economic development. To some, Nigeria is a "failed state"; others contend that it is a "failing state" while others are of the opinion that it is " a country though endowed with vast natural and human resources but nevertheless has squandered these uncommon endowments". Some have gone further to describe Nigeria as the largest concentration of black Africans in the world and a country which though is rich in human, material and natural resources, nonetheless, majority of her population continue to wallow in abject poverty, decadence and under-development; a country plagued with years of leadership failure. Others describe Nigeria as a country:

- saddled by corrupt, kleptomanic, selfish, visionless and predatory leadership;

- with contradictions and crisis; a country ranked as one of the most corrupt countries in the world;
- with a paradox of a few over-affluent individuals and a large population with abject poverty;
- characterized by decayed infrastructures (poor road network, inadequate housing, inaccessible water; and comatose economy (high exchange rate, inflation, low industrial output, unemployment etc).

The sordid situation painted above is largely the result of years of lack of responsible and accountable leadership in the country. The current discussion therefore isolates the issue of morality (specifically, the absence of such value) as been the factor responsible for poor governance in the country. It then proceeds to discuss how the strengthening of moral codes in the conduct of public affairs could lead to responsible governance in the country.

The Problem

The central problem addressed by this paper is the disconnect between morality and governance in Nigeria's political experience. While it is true that virtually all sectors of the Nigerian society are affected by the current moral degeneration, the absence of morality in the conduct of political activities in the country has left a serious damaging effect on not only the political climate but also other spheres of life. For one, the nation's political leaders are expected to be the model and reference point for social and political behaviours of the followers. However, the largely immorality which pervades the political actors in the country has meant that similar values would be replicated in other sectors of the society. Moral degeneration would obviously retard political, economic and social development of a country. Hence, the current backwardness of the country in all aspects of human endeavours could not but be attributed to the factor of deficit leadership characterized by gross immorality in the conduct of state affairs.

Conceptualizing Morality, Leadership and Governance

Etymologically, morality is derived from the Latin word '*mores*', which means moral, custom, character, behaviour, inner nature, law, regulation, etc. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defined morality as principles concerning rights and wrongs or good and bad behaviour. Morality expresses certain values that members of the group hold to be important and is reflected in laws, rules, and regulations, or in policies and procedures.

Denhardt and Denhardt (2009), described moral action as an action that is consistent with the moral codes of a group, which shows the group's most basic commitment about what is right and what is wrong'. Aside from the group dimension, moral action could also be conceived at individual level to mean ability of an individual to distinguish between right and wrong; or of distinguishing what ought, from what ought not (Wayland, 2013). Parekh (1993) sees morality as centered around values and virtues, which tells human beings what they should value; what ends they should pursue and how they should pursue whatever ends they choose.

By implications therefore, morality is synonymous to qualitative characters such as self-discipline, integrity, self-reliance, prudence, the ability to live within the limits of one's moral and emotional resources, planning, foresight moderation and self-control; and other virtues such as reliability, cooperation, the keeping of promises, the conscientious discharge of one's obligations, the spirit of compromise, civility, respect for the law and tolerance, integrity and so on.

Rost (1991) found that there were 221 definitions of leadership published in books and articles between 1900 and 1990. On a general level, the term is synonymous to giving guidance or providing direction for a particular set of people. By implication, leadership is an act but the ability to portray the act is depending on several socio-psychological factors. That is why the concept of leadership has diverse interpretations among researchers. Some researchers define leadership in terms of personality and physical traits and that leadership is represented by a set of prescribed behaviours. Leadership occurs in all human social settings from the family setup to international organizations.

Literally, leadership means a group of people functionally responsible for guiding and managing the affairs of a group of persons - heads of families, mosques, churches, pressure groups, political parties, local, state, national and international institutions (Atimomo,1981; Olayiwola, 2012). Olayiwola (2013) is of the view that leadership is synonymous to ability to influence followership positively; it involves the inducement of followers by the leader to act in certain ways in order to achieve certain goals, this the leader do by providing some motivations or inducement for the followership in order that both the leader and followership would gain from the situation. Ubegbe (1999:282) submitted that 'leadership is the process of creating the subordinates' identification with the group's mission and creating their desires to achieve the group's goal'. In some other instance, leadership is seen as synonymous with sacrifice and the ability to set good example for leadership According to Osuntokun (1987), leadership can be defined in terms of direction and example provided by any person or group of persons who are chosen or who by an accident of history find themselves at the helm of affairs in a country or any vital part of it or in departments or institutions delegated to them for the purpose of overall development and good government of the country. According to Adamolekun (2002), the primary responsibility of every responsible leader is to deliver services considered to be crucial to the followership.

Governance has been conceived by some people as the style and nature of leadership or political system and issues encompassing political authority, channels and processes, institutional and structural arrangement, decision making processes etc (Imam, 2000). Governance is the exercise of power in the day-to-day management of both economic and social resources of the country which involves policy making (formulation and implementation), decision making processes, capacity building, information flows, leadership style, all within a specific political system.

The World Governance Survey (1989) conceptualized governance as the social reality that distinguishes human beings from other animals. Barkan (1992) viewed governance as those activities tailored towards the management of a group, a society or a country.

Galadima (1998) sees governance as a process of organizing and managing power structures, entrusted by the people, to provide law and order, protect fundamental human rights, ensure rule of law and due process of law, provide for the basic needs and welfare of the people and the pursuit of their happiness. Imam (2000) sees governance as the process of showing responsible leadership style, maintaining a political system and issues encompassing political authority, channels and processes, institutional and structural arrangement, decision making processes etc.

Similarly, Adamolekun (2002) viewed governance as the process of exercising political power to manage the affairs of a nation. He listed the main elements of good governance as: rule of law, freedom of speech and association, free and fair election, accountability, probity and transparency and result oriented leadership. Ukaegbu (2010) submitted that governance is seen as the range of policies that the public officials make and the means they employ to manage the affairs of society. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2011), governance is conceived as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authorities to manage a country's affairs at all levels.

Gobna (2012) identified seven fundamental elements of good governance: (i) accountability of public officials; (ii) transparency in government decision making procedures, processes, investment decisions, contracts, procurements and appointments; (iii) consistency and hence predictability in government behaviour (iv) openness in government transactions and a reliable flow of information necessary for economic activities and overall development; (v) observance of the rule of law by both government and the citizens; (vi) popular participation in decision making process based on political and social pluralism and freedom of association; and, (vii) establishment and sustenance of institutions and mechanisms that can enforce public accountability and redress transgressions. Good governance is therefore the ability to conduct state affairs on the basis of equity and justice, stemming corruption, nepotism, violence and strict adherence to the rule of law. The results of all these would reflect in confidence of the citizens in the governors (who are also referred to as the political leaders), reaping

of the dividends of democracy and socio-economic and political development.

Theoretical Anchorage

Ekeh's (1975) theory of two republics is quite relevant as the theoretical model for this discussion.
In his view,

> *There are two public realms in post-colonial Africa, with different types of moral linkages to the private realm. At one level, is the private realm in which primordial groupings, ties, and sentiments influence and determine the individual's public behaviour (primordial public). The primordial public is moral and operates on the same moral imperatives as the private realm. On the other hand, there is a public realm which is historically associated with the colonial administration and which has become identified with popular politics in post-colonial Africa. . . Its chief characteristic is that it has no moral linkages with the private realm (civic public). The civic public in Africa is amoral and lacks the generalized moral imperatives operative in the private realm and in the primordial public* (Ekeh, 1975, p.92).

Quite different moral rules govern the conduct of people in these two realms. In the private realm (*Primordial Public*), members of the community are expected to conduct their affairs with honesty, dedication and transparency. Consequently, when an individual steals community property, refuses to partake in community projects, or is suspected of witchcraft, tough social sanctions are applied. On the contrary, when the same individual operates in the public realm (*civic public*) as a government employee or top government official,

the expectation of the society changes. Here, members of his community expect to derive maximum benefits from the office occupied by 'one of their own'. Hence, if he steals public fund and makes donation to the community, he is treated as a hero! Further,if efforts are made by the state to investigate the public officer, members of his community would rise up in his defence and would engage in all sorts of ridiculous actions (including organizing public rallies, newspaper adverts, prayer sessions, etc.) to safeguard "one of their own" and prevent his prosecution!

Morality, Leadership and Governance in Nigeria: A critical Assessment

It could be deduced from the foregoing that morality is an important ingredient for responsible leadership and good governance. The centrality of morality for responsible leadership and good governance has been well discussed by scholars such as Omoregbe (2003), Yanpei (2005), Ogundiya (2010), among others. These scholars have all agreed that applying moral principles and ideals in governance by political leaders is highly fundamental in achieving good governance. According to Yanpei (2005), a responsible leader is the one who understand and utilize moral teachings and ideals in the service of humanity and community. Ogundiya (2010) pointed that the significance of morality in fostering good governance cannot be over-emphasized as it serves as the lubricant for actualizing the goals of good governance, which is manifested in the transparent, prudent and just management of the nation's resources. In Nigeria, a general observation of political actors and leaders in Nigeria would reveal that the many of the political leaders in the country have not really take to moral codes of the country and as such, this has led to poor leadership and bad governance in the country (Ogundiya, 2010). Omoregbe (2003) opined that one of the ways good governance could be achieved in Nigeria is through the inculcation of a high sense of morality in the political leaders and followership in the country.

In other words, one of the major challenges militating against Nigeria's growth and development is the palpable dominance of amoral political leaders. Most Nigerian leaders, past and present,

have not been guided by the teachings and principles of morality. Agbaje and Roberts (2002:154) pointed out that 'post independence leaders in Nigeria not only personalized power but also privatized the state for the purpose of primitive accumulation, clientelism, repression and all forms of opposition. Instead of using the state for initiating development, political leaders in Nigeria utilized it as a vehicle for terrorizing the citizenry, thereby leading to the disengagement of the populace from the public realm'. According to (Ogundiya, 2010:244), the manifestations of amoral leadership traits in Nigeria include the following:

(i) Only officials who are paid to do so are likely to concern themselves with public affairs and even when they abuse their powers and are corrupt, the ordinary people will leave the task of checking them to other officials;

(ii) Officials often see their positions as instruments of accumulation and as weapons to be used against others for private advantage;

(iii) The law is not easily enforced and is often disregarded by both officials and ordinary people where there is no reason to fear punishment;

(iv) An office holder will take bribes when he can get away with it; "But whether he takes bribe or not, it will be assumed by the society that he does;

(v) The weak, i.e. the ordinary people tend to favour regimes which will maintain order with a strong hand; and

(vi) Ordinary people do not trust politicians and hence take voting as the highest bidder's market and whatever group is in power is assumed to be self-serving and corrupt: Hardly will an election be over before the voters conclude that the new officials are enriching themselves at their expense and that they have no intention of keeping the promises they have made.

Without mincing words, amorality has been fully entrenched in the country's political landscape as many political leaders visibly manifest the traits of amorality and ungodliness in the management of the nation's resources. For example, the bane of governance in Nigeria is corruption and both Muslims and Christians form the majority among the corrupt officials. Azeez (2010) argued that corruption, which every government has always promised to eradicate at its inauguration, continued unabated. In other words, sustainable development would be eluded in a country with the dominance of amoral leadership. According to Odekunle (2007), most of the developmental hitches that the country is facing today are direct consequences of the dominance of amoral or irresponsible political leaders. Within the same framework, Onigbude (2007) opined that conspicuous absence of moral leadership has robbed the citizens of much anticipated dividends of democracy. According to Banfield (1967) cited in Ogundiya (2010:244), 'in a society of amoral leaders, no one will further the interest of the group or community except as it is to his private advantage to do so'. Achebe (1983:1) asserted that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenges of personal examples, which are the hallmarks of true leadership'.

In the same vein, Adeola (2007) argued that Nigerian political system is good, but what the nation actually lacks is moral and visionary leadership. This is palpably reflected in the manner in which they scramble for the nation's resources for their personal and selfish purpose. Political leadership in Nigeria is characterized by primordial, parochial, personalized and selfish tendencies, political brigandage, clientelism and privatized state apparatuses (Agbaje and Roberts (2002). Adebanjo (2008), on his part, was of the view that country lacks leaders of proven integrity and moral ideals incarnate who can efficiently utilize resources of the country in addressing the pervasive and excruciating problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

According to Ologbenla (2007), Nigerian leaders, past and present, are characterized by self-conceitedness, personality peculiarities, parochial cleavages, and corrupt tendencies in the management of state affairs, culminating into leadership failure in the country. Corroborating the issues on high rate of corruption in the polity, Igbokwe-Ibeto and Okoye (2014), argued that since gaining independence in 1960, most Nigerian leaders have not clearly demonstrated sense of genuine national development. They went further to argue that most African leaders plunder, defraud, embezzle and mismanage their countries human and natural resources with so much impunity. They are possessive, egoistic, selfish, individualistic, callous, greedy and secretive that transparency and accountability has no place in their administration and management of common and collective wealth (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Okoye, 2014).

For an example, Chairman South-West of the PDP, Chief Olabode George embezzled the fund allocated for special projects as in the case of the alleged financial impropriety-cum speculation of Aviation Special Fund by the former Aviation Minister, Mr. Femi Kayode, receiving contracts from the government with fictitious names and non existing companies as in the case of the allegation against the former PDP National Chairman, Chief Vincent Ogbulafor, and his Cohorts, the inflation of value of contracts by serving public functionaries as in the case of the allegation against the former Speaker of House of Representatives, Hon. Patricia Ette, the embezzlement of unspent budgetary allocation to federal ministries in Nigeria rather than returning such money to the government treasury as in the case of the allegation against former Minister of Health Prof. (Mrs.) Adenike Grenge and some members of the Senate Committee on Health, among others (Dinneya, 2006:253). In another incident, on 12 December 2005, the Stratford Magistrates' Court in London, relying on Article 301 of the POCA, ordered the repatriation of N23 million (£117,000 or $153,270) seized from Governor Joshua Dariye following his arrest in London in September 2004. Deducing from the analysis thus far, it could be said that political leadership in Nigeria grossly violate the moral codes of existence from whichever view one would see it. Either from commonsensical view of morality or from the religious

perspective nor from the constitutional angle. In this regard, there is the need to set a governance template for the political leadership in the country in order to bring about good governance in the country.

Setting Moral Template for Responsible Political Leadership in Nigeria

As has been reiterated from the discussion thus far, leadership is an important ingredient for governance and that leaders need to be morally okay in order to deliver good governance in a society. In view of the realization that morality is an important ingredient for responsible leadership, series of morality models have been set for the would-be or actual leaders to follow. Consequently, some relevant moral templates are presented in this section, which the political leadership of the country could imbibe in order to develop the necessary moral characters that would enhance good governance and national development. Specifically, two models of morality are advocated, namely, the shepherd and character-centred models.

The Shepherd Model

The Shepherd model is fundamentally derived from the biblical conception of an ideal leader. With this model, the conception is that a leader must see him\herself as an individual who guides a multitude and who should be responsible to the people under him not only in terms of taking good care of them and leading properly and that the leader must possess appropriate moral qualities before he/she could be regarded as a good shepherd. The model conceived that leadership must be morally upright to facilitate the actualization of the goals of governance. Again, that leadership is worthless if it fails to engender good governance. Therefore, the ultimate responsibility of a political leader to ensure the realisation and achievement of the common good. This is the hallmarks of leadership as conceived in the Holy Bible, where God describes leaders as shepherds. Leadership from the point of view of the Bible is service oriented. The Bible states in 1Peter (5:1-3):

> *The elders (leaders) I appeal ....be shepherd of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers not because you must, but because you are willing, as God*

wants you to be ; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. True leaders are not lords. They function as servants to the people.

Jesus Christ demonstrated this in his days by washing the feet of the disciples (John 13 verses3-5).In the book of Numbers (11:11-15) Moses said to the Lord:

Why pick on me, to give me the burden of a people like this? Are they my children? Am I their father? Is that why you have given me the job of nursing them along like babies until we get to the land you promised their ancestor?

Where am I. supposed to get meat for all these people? For they weep to me saying, "Give us meat" I can't carry this nation by myself! The load is far too heavy.

God refers to leaders in the bible as shepherd. Christ in his teaching and in his atonement showed that the task of God's man of the New Testament is not to be a shepherd of physical sheep, as demonstrated by the Old Testament types, but God's man is to be a shepherd of a spiritual sheep, which is man himself (Camping, 1972). And even as the Old Testament shepherds cared for these sheep by using the products of this world to feed and shelter his sheep, so Christian leadership must use the available resources to care for the needs of his followers. This is what we have characterized in this work as the Shepherd Model, the ideal governance and leadership principle recommended by the Bible. The respon[illegible]s of shepherd include: (i) Shepherd guides the [illegible]is sheep to the greener pasture; (ii) Shepherd provide [illegible]p to quench their thirst and possibly drink from the [illegible]he sheep; (iii) Shepherd protects the flocks against [illegible]y for them and possibly give his life in the [illegible]lock; (iv) Shepherd seeks for any lost sheep as [illegible]hem are equal in importance; (v) Shepherd [illegible] possibly carries it on his shoulder when it [illegible]Shepherd regularly account for the sheep

in order to know their need, condition and promptly take necessary steps to ensure their wellbeing; (vii) Shepherd shears the sheep (Ogundiya, 2010). The Shepherd conception of leadership and morality is akin to the maxim of John Locke (1632-1704) that, every responsible leader should provide the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people. To achieve this, leadership needs to mobilise, organise and direct the path of the followers (he must engage in shepherd work). Therefore, a leader is a mobiliser, organiser, enabler, negotiator, an institution builder, a power broker and a facilitator (Ogundiya, 2010).

In other words, the reality of leadership dynamics witnessed in Nigeria clearly shows that the country's leadership has not followed the shepherd model. The Nigeria's shepherds (leaders) have no semblance of the biblical shepherds because, Nigerian shepherds are corrupt, visionless, selfish, greedy, non-committed, unjust and inveterate shepherd and this could be adduced as a cogent reason why governance has failed to achieve its purpose in the country.

Character-Centered Model

The Character Centre Model (CCM) is derived from the Quranic prescriptions of what and what character a leader must possess in order to be a responsible leader. This Quranic model of leadership is highly exemplified by prophet of Islam, thus, the model is fundamentally based on the character of Prophet Muhammad. The model was academically developed by group of classical Islamic scholars such as Al-Mawardi (1058); Ibn-Taymiah (1300); Ibn Khalidoon (1377). The model proposed that leaders must be an epitome of morality; that everything about good morals should be located in them, they should be morally fit on their own and by extension should be exemplary to the followership, this condition is very fundamental to good governance according the proponents of the model (Beekun and Badawi, 1999). In the verse of the Qur'an (68:4), God describes Muhammad as: 'And you (Muhammad) stand as an exalted standard of character'. In other two verses, the Qur'an stresses this aspect of the character of Muhammad when it explicitly states that he is the 'Ouswatoun Hasanat'(best of examples) that mankind could follow, and then reaffirms that mankind should see him as model in terms of wisdom and morals (33:21).

According to Al-Mawardi (1058) (as cited in Al-Merdawi, 1983), leaders should be exceptionally okay in characters and morals, he highlighted some important moral character that a good leader should possess. These include: righteousness, knowledge, sagacity, and courage. Ibn-Taymiah (1300) opined that a responsible leader should possess integrity and should be trust-worthy. Ibn Khalidoon (1377) highlighted knowledge and being righteousness as the most important character a leader must possess. Hawwa (1988) provides a list of attributes a leader should enjoy as: knowledge, courage, chastity, generosity, leniency, disimpetuousness, truthfulness, firmness, intelligence, modesty, planning, and consideration.

Beekun and Badawi's (1999) outline five operational principles that should be observed by a Leader. These are the exercise of justice, the fulfillment of the trust, the observance of righteousness, the perseverance in doing what is right, and honouring promises. According to Al-Tartouchi (2005) Islamic law requires three characteristics in a leader. The leader should be kind and treat his followers with mercy; he should consult with people (Malik, 3:159); and he should not appoint someone who is seeking a position of power. In sum, following the CCM orientation, some of the important moral characters that a leader must possess to enhance good governance is: integrity, (Kouzes and Posner, 1995); accountability (Abdel-Haleem, 2005); trustworthiness;justice(Abdel-Haleem, 2004); and fulfilling promises(Muslim, 2000); kindness.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The paper has discussed the importance morality in the making of responsible leadership that would enhance good governance in the Nigerian society. The paper demonstrated that amoral leadership is antithetical to good governance. It also argued that, one of the reasons why good governance has not been achieved in a country like Nigeria is because its leadership does not possess the necessary moral elements that could make them run a successful government. The paper submitted that the political leadership in the county must be equipped with basic moral ingredients which would lead to responsible and progressive governance. In order to bring about the

desired leadership quality in the country, the following suggestions are put forward:

Comprehensive Screening: Holders of public offices in the country must go through thorough screening right from the grass-root (birthplace) to the workplace, church/mosque and other social and economic groups. This screening must involve moral, financial, religious conducts and family responsibilities

Reduction ofJuicy Offices: Political offices in the country must be removed of their enormous pecks – glamour, financial benefits and unnecessary protection such as immunity clause.

Accountability: While the recent actions by President Muhammadu Buhari and Vice-President Yemi Osibajo in publicly declaring their assets are commendable as a template for responsible political leadership in Nigeria, other accountability measures must also be embarked upon. This should include regular publication of financial allocations to all tiers of government which must necessarily be followed by publications of expenditures by the same tiers of government – local, state and federal. In addition, other political office holders (i.e., state governors, deputy governors, local government chairmen, heads of parastatals etc.) must be made to declare their assets (and liabilities) publicly.

Sanctions for Infringement of law: The only factor responsible for sanity in the conduct of public affairs in civilized world is that sanctions are imposed on those who infringe on the law of the land. On the contrary, in Nigeria, most public office holders break the laws with impunity. For instance, if these public officers are aware that corruption attracts capital punishment, none of them would dare to touch public funds. In Islamic counsssstries like Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Iran etc theft and robbery is almost non-existent since people knew that the punishment for such acts is amputation. Similarly, in China, where corruption attracts capital punishment, cases of very high public officers who were executed for corruption are common.

These serve as deterrent and helped to drastically reduce the incidence of corruption in these countries.

Setting appropriate national values: The currentvalues of materialism, selfishness, lack of patriotism, ethnicity etc. must give way for noble values like hard work, dedication, bravery, patriotism, heroism etc. The political leadership must provide model for these new national values.

Mass Mobilization for Accelerated National Development: The nation's political leadership must as a matter of necessity, commence a revolutionary programme of mass mobilization for accelerated national development. That Nigeria today is regarded as a failed state is not unconnected to the apparent absence of charismatic leadership and the collapse of the state which is so weak that in recent past many state governments found it difficult to pay workers salary! Considering the huge human and natural resources possessed by Nigeria, the political leadership has no excuse for the current state of affairs,. Other countries like Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa with equal or less resources have achieved much progress and development.

Politics for service to replace politics for business: Currently, Nigeria's political climate is characterized by professional politicians who regard politics as huge investment where they can also make huge profit. No nation progress in such situation. For a responsible leadership, politics must be seen as opportunity to serve humanity rather than for personal aggrandizement. It is only to the extent that this is achieved that the country can witness progress and development through responsible political leadership.

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