IGWEBUIKE AS AN IGBO-AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY OF INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

A cursory glance at the historical development of the concept of leadership in Africa reveals that proposals during the nationalistic movements of the twentieth century were basically in the direction of an inclusive system of government. Thus, Senghor places the family at the centre of social structure; Nyerere's political philosophy was familyhood; while Awolowo called for a socialist system of government, Nkrumah proposed Pan-Africanism, and Azikiwe welfarism. All these were based on the African worldview that is inclusive, integrative, complementary and wholistic. Following the complementary nature of the African worldview, this work makes an attempt to articulate an Igbo-African concept of leadership within the context of Igwebuike philosophy, to serve as a model for the essential elements of effective leadership. For the purpose of this research, the hermeneutic method of inquiry and Indigenous Wholistic Theory would be employed. This research hopes to produce both Inclusive Leaders and Inclusive Organizations in Africa that would run a system of leadership that would carefully include the contributions of all stakeholders in the community or organization.

Keywords: Igwebuike, Inclusive, Leadership, Igbo-African, belongingness, Socialism.

Introduction

With the collapse of the Second World War emerged new city states of which Singapore was one. Lee Kuan Yew, the charismatic leader of Singapore wrote a book in 2000 titled: "From Third World to First: Singapore and the Asian Economic Boom" in which he narrated the story of the transformation of

Singapore from a Third World country to a First World Country[106]. Granted independence in 1965 with a population less than two million, with 75% Chinese, 13.6% Malay and 8.6% Indian, however, adjoined in the South with Indonesia of aver a hundred million and Malaysia with about 6.28 million, she seemed like a nation that would turn out to be the slave of bigger nations. However, Lee Kuan Yew led Singapore from a nation people thought would simply survive to a state that excels. How was this achieved?

> Lee Kuan Yew summoned his compatriots to a duty they had never previously perceived: first to clean up their city, then to dedicate it to overcome the initial hostility of their neighbors and their own ethnic divisions by superior performance. The Singapore of today is his testament. annual per capita income has grown from less than $1000 at the time of independence to nearly $30,000 today. It is the high-tech leader of South-Asia, the commercial entrepot, the scientific center[107].

The foregoing reveals that the success of any organization, religious or secular, state or nation is highly dependent on the quality of leadership. Where there is no good leadership, there can't be unity, peace and progress. A cursory glance at History reveals a couple of outstanding leaders, true heroes of their time, who set the moral and political tones for their societies. Such leaders as George Washington of America, Mahatma Gandhi of India, Winston Churchill of Britain, Charles De Gaulle of France, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Nelson Mandela of South Africa, etc[108]. These leaders have shown that circumstances are not only enough for national prosperity or to change events, but that prudent and ordinary calculations made by extraordinary personalities- leaders can overturn events. Circumstances might be unfavourable, but extraordinary personalities can manipulate unfavourable circumstances to achieve favourable ends.

Recent experience reveals an aggressive agitation for cessation in Nigeria; there is the agitation for the Republic of Biafra from the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria, the

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[106] Lee Kuan Yew, From Third World to First: Singapore and the Asian Economic Boom, 2000, pp. ix.

[107] Lee Kuan Yew, From Third World to First: Singapore and the Asian Economic Boom, 2000, pp. x-xi.
[108] George Ehusani, Nigeria and the Leadership challenge. Retrieved 8th October 2017 from http://www.georgeehusani.org/home/index.php/other-articles/140-nigeria-and-the-leadership-challenge.

agitation for Oduduwa Republic from the South West and the agitation for Niger Delta Republic from the South South of the Nation. These agitations continue to whisper that there is a problem with leadership and thus the need to structure our concept of power. Describing the present leadership, George Ehusani writes that: "It goes without saying that the government of the day is insensitive to the yearnings of the people and deaf to their cry of desperation".[109]

If nations and organizations must succeed, there is the need for leaders who would redraw the political map of their nations and organizations. The world needs a paradigm shift from an exclusive culture of governance, to an inclusive, transparent and accountable leadership style. It is in this regard that Igwebuike philosophy, aligning with its inner principles of inclusiveness, complementarity and solidarity develops a system of leadership that concurs with the African spirit of integration, for development.

Diversity as a Basis for Inclusive Leadership

The mid 19th century will always be remembered as the period in African when European Explorers began to make significant advances into tropical Africa. As a result, the great puzzles of the geography of Africa– notably the course of the Nile, Niger, Congo and Zambezi rivers – were solved within the space of half a century[110]. Gradually, Europe realized that profitable trade depended on the maintenance of peace, and that this peace could not be assured without administrative intervention and control in the hinterlands[111]. Since the explorers came from several different European countries – Spain, Portugal, France, Britain, Belgium and Germany – Africa soon became a field for the conflicting ambitions of the major European Colonial Powers[112]. By the early 1880's these conflicting ambitions were beginning to be expressed territorially. Sections of the coast were being claimed by traders and administrators of one or other of the

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[109] George Ehusani, Nigeria and the Leadership challenge.

[110] Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, The Colonial Legacy: The Hidden History of Africa's Present Crisis". Published in *The International Journal of Arts and Humanities* (AFRREV IJAH), February 2012, Vol.1. No.1. pp.123-131.

[111] Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, African Philosophy: An ontologico-Existential hermeneutic approach to classical and contemporary issues. Augustinian publications, Nigeria.

[112] Kanu, Ikechukwu A. (2010). "Towards an African Cultural Renaissance". *Professor Bassey Andah Journal of Cultural Studies. Volume 3*, pp. 146-155.

European powers[113]. The stage was now set for the European scramble for Africa, finally to be set in motion by the 1884-5 Conference and Treaty of Berlin which divided lands and peoples without consideration of their ethnic and religious divides[114]. The boundaries of the formerly English colony were drawn to serve commercial interests, largely without regard for the territorial claims of the indigenous peoples[115].

The result of this development was that countries like Nigeria were formed without the consideration of the league of culturally and religiously diverse nations. Cultural and religious diversity is a term commonly used to describe the society with people of different ethnic origins and religious affiliations, which is manifested in their religious expressions, culture: languages, the way they dress, art, and other traditional practices that are either similar or very different from each group. In the North, while Hausa and Fulfulde are the major languages spoken, in the South it is majorly Yoruba language and in the East, Igbo language. When it comes to religion, it is more of Islam in the North and less of Christianity, in the South, there is what seems to be a balance of both religions. In the East, it is predominantly, the Christian religion.

When it comes to dressing, it varies according to regions: the Hausa are known for their baba riga and cap; the Yoruba ethnic group generally sew their cap in a long style which is neatly folded when worn on the head. On the other hand, in the eastern part of the country the Igbo are known for their red cap, which is traditionally worn. Other minority ethnic groups in the middle belt region of Nigeria, like the TIV, Ngas, Ida, Nupe, etc., also have unique cultural attributes that help identify cultural roots, when he appeared in public. For example, the TIV of people in Nigeria are well known for its *a'nger*, unique traditional costumes (cloth), linear sewn in black and white options, which typically carry TIV people identify with their cultural background[116].

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[113] Kanu, Ikechukwu A. (2013). "The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Historico-Philosophical Analysis". Published in the *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research*. Vol. 10. No. 4. pp. 131-143.

[114] Hodder, B. W. (1978). *Africa today: A short introduction to African affairs.* London: Methuen.

[115] Kanu, Ikechukwu, A. (2014). "The Nature and Meaning of African Philosophy in a Globalizing World". Published in the *International Journal of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education. Volume. 1. Issue. 7.* pp. 86-94.

[116] **Simon A. Rakov, Ethnicity in Nigeria.** http://www.postcolonialweb.org/nigeria/ethnicity.html

Beyond the three major ethnic groups: Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba, which comprise only fifty-seven percent of the population of Nigeria, there are ethnic minority groups, those which do not comprise a majority in the region in which they live. Going by the 1953 census of about thirty one million Nigerians, these ethnic groups were discovered to have over one hundred thousand members each. This would imply that with the population of Nigeria, now estimated to be about 180 million, it is safe to assume that these groups are now five times larger or even more, than they were[117]. These ethnic minorities include peoples like the Kanuri, the Nupe, and the Tiv in the north, the Efik/Ibibio, the Ejaw, and the Ekoi in the east, and the Edo and Urhobo/Isoko to the west, along with hundreds of other groups that differ widely in language, culture and even physique. These groups usually do not have a political voice like the major ethnic groups. They, therefore, often consider themselves discriminated against, neglected, or oppressed[118].

As a result of perceived discrimination and relegation of particular ethnic groups, Nigeria's unity has been consistently under siege as more than ten attempts at secession have threatened National unity between 1914 and 2017. In 1990, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People issued a 'Bill of Rights' to the Nigerian government and with an appeal to the International Community, they castigated Nigeria's federalism as arbitrary and constructed to favour the major ethnic nationalities: Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo. The group agitated for control and use of Ogoni economic resources for Ogoni development[119]. They, therefore, denounced the centralised state control and management of the country's oil and mineral resources[120]. In 1998, after the All Ijaw Youths Conference held in Kaiama, they released a communique called 'The Kaiama Declaration', they similarly denounces Nigeria's 'unbalanced' federalism and the exploitation of 'Ijaw resources' for the benefit of other groups. IYC threatens to disobey all 'undemocratic decrees that rob our peoples/communities of the right

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[117] **The American Heritage Dictionary**, Second College Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982, p.1509

[118] Simon A. Rakov, Ethnicity in Nigeria. http://www.postcolonialweb.org/nigeria/ethnicity.html

[119] MOSOP 1992. Ogoni Bill of Rights. Port Harcourt: Saros International Publishers. Nelson, H.D. (ed). 1982. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Washington: The American University.

[120] Wiwa, K.S. 1992. Foreword, in MOSOP, *Ogoni Bill of Rights*. Port Harcourt: Saros International Publishers.

to ownership and control of our lives and resources, which were enacted without our participation and consent…'[121]

More recently, the Ijaw Youths Conference has taken a militant stance, **taking up the name:** Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF). Its purpose is to seek greater local control of the Delta's petroleum resources. With the proliferation of sophisticated weapons in the Niger Delta, this has led to armed confrontations between them and the Nigerian military[122]. This agitation has become more aggressive as Nigeria's export as of 2004 was 97 percent crude oil. This has alternated with time: oil accounted for 57 per cent of total export revenues in 1970, it rose to 96 per cent (1980), 97 per cent (1990), 76 per cent (2000)[123]. While this oil is from this minority area, the Nigeria's political scene is dominated by three largely non oil-producing ethnic groups. Worst still, the Niger Delta remains one of the most underdeveloped regions in Nigeria; she remains poor as her resources sustains the nation[124].

Igwebuike Philosophy and Inclusive Leadership

The relevance of Igwebuike to a discussion on leadership is, first, because of the place Igwebuike occupies in the category of being: it is the modality of being[125]. Secondly, because of the importance of leadership in human development: Leaders are agents of change[126]; they have the task of taking people from where they are to where they have not been[127]; it is the leader who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way[128]. Igwebuike posits that the level of the leader's

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[121] Kaiama Declaration, 1998, Kaiama

[122] **Wilson Akpan, Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Nigeria: Lessons from the Niger Delta Crisis. In African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. *www.accord.org.za/ajcr-issues/◻ethnic-diversity-and-conflict-in-nigeria.***

[123] OPEC Report, 2005

[124] Wilson Akpan, Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Nigeria: Lessons from the Niger Delta Crisis. In African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. *www.accord.org.za/ajcr-issues/◻ethnic-diversity-and-conflict-in-nigeria.*

[125] Kanu, Ikechukwu A. (2016). "Igwebuike as the Expressive Modality of Being in Igbo Ontology". Published in the *Journal of Environmental and Construction Management. 6. 3.* pp. 59-69.

[126] Bernard Bass Cited in Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, Leadership Workshop for Catechists, organized at St Vincent Catholic Church, Olodi, Apapa, Lagos. 2017.1

[127] Henry Kissinger, Cited in Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, Leadership Workshop for Catechists, organized at St Vincent Catholic Church, Olodi, Apapa, Lagos. 2017.1

[128] John C. Maxwell, Cited in Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, Leadership Workshop for Catechists, organized at St Vincent Catholic Church, Olodi, Apapa, Lagos. 2017.1

impact is dependent on the level of connection he is able to have with his people. The three words involved: *Igwe* is a noun which means number or population, usually a huge number or population. *Bu* is a verb, which means *is. Ike* is another verb, which means *strength* or *power*[129]. Thus, put together, it means 'number is strength' or 'number is power', that is, when human beings come together in solidarity and complementarity, they are powerful or can constitute an insurmountable force. At this level, no task is beyond their collective capability[130].

Leadership within the context of Igwebuike philosophy is understood as an inclusive enterprise. The leader does not see himself as a separate entity from the people, but as leading from among the people; while the individual is a potent and viable being, as such a force, it is potent and viable in a limited way; however, when there is a conglomeration of forces, the human potency can be extraordinary. Leadership is not about power but about service. The leader sees himself as part of a group and not as a person different from the group or better than the people he is serving. He or she understands that there are no leaders without followers, and leadership always involves interpersonal influence or persuasion[131]. In the absence of followership, interpersonal influence and persuasion, the person is only taking a walk and not leading.

The relevance of the leader is based on the people whom he is leading; if there are no people, there can't be a leader, and the ability of the people who constitute the state to achieve their national goal, is dependent on the ingenuity of the leader. So the leader needs the led as much as the led needs the leader. This springs from the understanding that every reality has a purpose of existence. The leader and the led both share in this pool of universal purposefulness of existence, which they draw from and contribute to by playing their unique roles in the journey of existence. Situations where by the leader sees himself as superior and indispensable to the people that he or she is leading, can be

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[129] Kanu, I. A. (2016). "Igwebuike and the Unity of African Philosophy". In Kanu, I. A. (Ed.). Published by *Igwebuikepedia: Internet Encyclopedia of African Philosophy* published by the Augustinian Institute of Philosophy, Makurdi. http://igwebuikepedia.info/Intricate.asp. Online.

[130] Kanu, I. A. (2016). "Igwebuike, Personal Identity and Alterity". In Kanu, I. A. (Ed.). Published by *Igwebuikepedia: Internet Encyclopedia of African Philosophy* published by the Augustinian Institute of Philosophy, Makurdi. http://igwebuikepedia.info/Alterity.asp. Online.

[131] Sandra E. Crewe, *Five Key Styles of Leadership.* Young African Leaders Initiative, Online Courses. https://yali.state.gov/courses. p. 2

considered an aberration or alienation of true leadership. Likewise, the polarization and fragmentation of society into antagonistic factions, in the bead to 'divide and rule' is a disservice to and an aberration of the human society.

In every circumstance, the good of those led is placed over the self-interest of the leader. This is the leadership that promotes the valuing and development of people, the building of community, and the promotion shared power. leadership is, therefore, not a position, rather, it is about how well we work together; the great leader is the one who has been able to connect to the different dimensions of society, not minding the depth of its diversity. There are all kinds of human beings- good and bad, in the society, and this is where the role of the leader comes in, it is a responsibility and not a call to enjoy life; the leader should be able to manage all these peoples and make the best out of them. This makes the deciding difference. As a philosophy, Igwebuike in relation to leadership recognizes that a team is made stronger through diversity; It acknowledges that our differences are what make us stronger[132]. This would mean that the less the diversity, the less the power of the group.

The qualities of inclusive leadership would, therefore, include:

1. **Listening:** Listening is a critical communication tool, necessary for accurate communication and for actively demonstrating respect for others. Listening creates for oneself and others the experience of being heard and understood[133]. By listening to the individuals, you show you are approachable, and in turn encourage others to be the same**.**

2. **Empathy:** Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. The inclusive leader strives to understand and empathize with others, recognizing the fundamental human need to be accepted[134].

3. **Healing:** One of the great strengths of inclusive leadership is the potential for healing people. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Inclusive leaders must recognize that

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[132] Sandra E. Crewe, *Advantages of Servant Leadership* p. 3
[133] Sandra E. Crewe, *Ten Principles of Servant Leadership.* p. 2
[134] Sandra E. Crewe, *Ten Principles of Servant Leadership,* p. 2

they have an opportunity to "help make whole" those whom they come in contact with[135].

4. **Awareness:** Inclusive leaders must be attentive to their surroundings, their actions and the effect of their behavior on others. They must solicit and be open to feedback[136].

5. **Persuasion:** The effective inclusive leader builds group consensus through gentle but clear and persistent persuasion, and does not exert group compliance through power. Servant leadership utilizes personal, rather than position power, to influence followers and achieve organizational objectives[137].

6. **Foresight:** The next principle we'll review is foresight. This means learning from the past in order to have a better than average guess about what is going to happen in the future[138].

7. **Stewardship:** The eighth principle is stewardship. As stewards, leaders are concerned not only for the individual followers within the organization, but are servants to the organization as a whole[139]. **Stewards are not owners but answerable to the owner.**

8. **Commitment to growth of people:** Commitment to growth of people is another principle of Inclusive leadership. It is the demonstrated appreciation and encouragement of others, by lifting people up to grow taller than they would otherwise be[140].

This is the leader that makes the difference in society. If there are leaders who have made impact; if there are leaders who are celebrated; if there are leaders who have transformed society positively, these leaders are the inclusive kind of leaders.

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[135] Sandra E. Crewe, *Ten Principles of Servant Leadership.* p. 2
[136] Sandra E. Crewe, *Ten Principles of Servant Leadership.* p. 3
[137] Sandra E. Crewe, *Ten Principles of Servant Leadership.* p. 3
[138] Sandra E. Crewe, *Ten Principles of Servant Leadership.* p. 3
[139] Sandra E. Crewe, *Ten Principles of Servant Leadership,* p. 3
[140] Sandra E. Crewe, *Ten Principles of Servant Leadership .p. 3

The Anthropological Foundation of Inclusive Leadership

Igwebuike concept of inclusive leadership has an anthropological foundation. And this anthropological foundation is based on the nature of the human brain which hungers for something inclusive and finds satisfaction when an atmosphere is inclusive. A glance at the different inclusive leaders that we celebrate today reveals that they created an inclusive atmosphere. This explains why some leaders are able to inspire their followers while others are not. If we analyze the human brain, we discover that the human brain has different sections which could be described as circles. Below is a diagram to explain the different sections of the brain and what they represent.
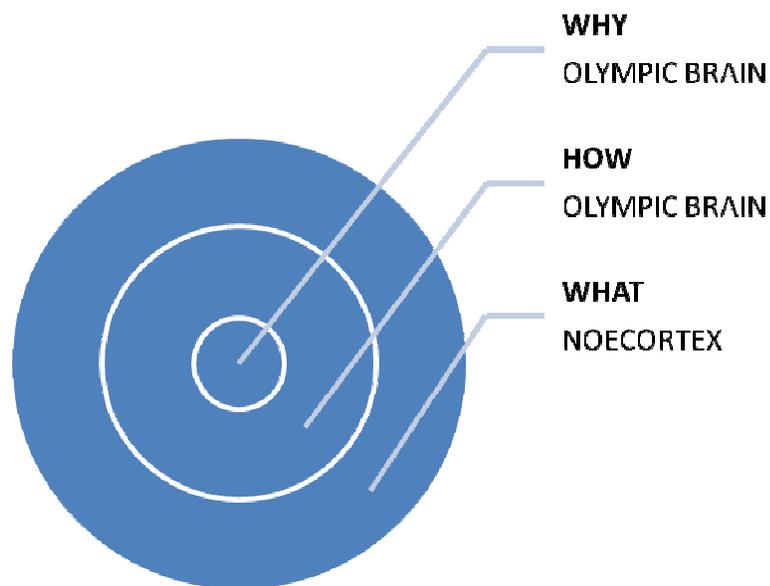
Figure showing the dimensions of the human brain

The human brain has the Olympic dimension referred to as Olympic brain and the Noecortex dimension. The Olympic brain can be divided into the inner and outer Olympic brain. Thus, in the brain we can have the inner Olympic brain, the outer Olympic brain and the noecortex brain. These different parts of the brain concern themselves with different questions that arise in human relationships. There are three questions that correspond to the different parts of the brain: the

question of WHY, HOW and WHAT. While the inner Olympic brain responds to the question of WHY, the outer Olympic brain responds to the question of HOW, and the noecortex responds to the question of WHAT.

Many who are under leaders of organizations, nations, etc., know what they do, how to do what they do, but do not know why they do what they do. Thus, in advert, most organizations only explain what they do, how they do it without explaining why they do it. This explains why many organizations fail. This is because, people patronize you because of why you do what you do and not because of what or how you do it. The question of WHY explains why you are different and the newness you are bringing into the system. In many circumstances, people led know WHAT and HOW they do the things they do, but they do not know why. This is simply because many leaders do things without carrying their people along- no communication with the people who are led. The result is that many leaders do not attract loyalty. Why is this so? At the WHY Level- corresponding to the inner part of the brain, you find: Feelings; Loyalty; Trust; Decision making and Human behaviour.

If you are able to explain why you do what you do, then you touch people at the level of feeling, which is very important, you would attract their trust and loyalty. They would make a decision to follow you, which is shown in their behaviour. At this level, you get people to believe what you believe. You inspire them from the inside. When we remain at the level of what we do, it is just the level of language. You can express what you do in the most beautiful language, but the person still leaves without feeling anything. He remains with you without conviction. He is following you but only like a hireling. The person would leave you as soon as he finds something more convincing. If leaders must be able to inspire their followers, then they must take them into the sanctuary of the WHY.

The Socio-Cultural Foundations of Inclusive Leadership

The socio-cultural foundation of inclusive leadership based on Igwebuike philosophy is first of all, the Igbo traditional model of leadership, and secondly, a Yoruba traditional model of leadership.

1. **Igbo-African Traditional Model of Inclusive Leadership**

Hundreds of years ago, the Igbo developed permanent settlements, which led to the emergence of economic, social and political institutions. From these settlements emerged leader, and as social groups developed, effective administrative systems that regulated social relations. This administrative system was founded on egalitarian and democratic structures. The political organization was constituted by different levels of autonomous democratic governments which exercised political, social and economic control over the lives of the people. These autonomous democratic governments include the Nuclear Family, the Patrilineage (Umunna), the Maximal Lineage and the Village-Group Assembly.

The Nuclear Family was the bedrock of social and political organization, referred to as *ezi na uno*. It consisted of a man, his wives, his married and unmarried sons, unmarried daughters and the servants or slaves, if any. The Father was the leader of the household and was in possession of the family *ofo,* which is the symbol of authority, justice, law and uprightness. The Father was responsible for directing the affairs of the family, however, it was done in consultation with his senior sons and wives[141]. There was also the extended family, which is referred to as the *Umunna*. It is composed of a number of families that have a common eponymous father. Uchendu defines the *Ununna* as "a territorial kin-based unit which subdivides into compounds *(ezi obi)*"[142]. The head of this political unit was the oldest male member of the extended family also known as the *di-okpara* and had the *ofo* of the extended family in his possession. According to Opone, the leader is usually a grandfather or great grandfather[143]. The *di-okpara* presided over meetings, sacrifices, issues of inheritance, settlement of dispute among members of the extended family, marriage, allocation of lands and the representation of the family with other extended families. In decision making, the *di-okpara* worked in consultation with the other heads of the extended family who constituted the extended family

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[141] Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony, *African Traditional Democracy with Particular reference to the Yoruba and Igbo political systems.* In International Journal of Philosophy and Public Affairs. Vol. 2.no. 3. P.153

[142] V. C. Uchendu, *The Igbo of South East Nigeria.* New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston. 1965.p. 40.

[143] P. O. Opone, Traditional socio-political organizations of the Enuani Igbo of South Central Nigeria. *Study Tribes Tribals. 10. 1.* 57-66. 2012.

assembly. Decisions were arrived at through dialogue, consensus *(nkwekolita)*, compromise, cooperation and consultation *(Igba Izu)*[144].

The Maximal Lineage is the next biggest socio-political organization after the extended family. This is a referred to as *Idumu* in Igbo, which means quarter. It is made up of a number of extended families who are linked by a common putative ancestor. This major lineage is headed by the oldest male among them. He holds the *ofo* of the major lineage and presided at functions concerning the major lineage and was considered as a sacred person with taboos and rituals accompanying the violation of his authority. In his exercise of authority over the major lineage, and he worked in consultation with a large assembly comprising of senior household men, titled men, priests, men of honour, intelligence and wealth etc[145]. There was also **the Village-Group Assembly, which** was the biggest socio-political group referred to as *ogbe* (village). It was composed of a number of major lineages who are descended from a common ancestor or different putative ancestors[146]. And could be referred to the *ogbe* as federation of autonomous settlements[147], and by Ozimiro as wards[148]. The assembly was the highest authority with its members being senior males of households, professional hunters, priests, honourable and wealthy men, warriors, titled men, medicine men, etc. The leader of this assembly varied from one village to another, in some it was headed by the council of elders: a group of wise, knowledgeable, courageous and transparent men, Maquet refers to their authority as "a collegial authority exercised by the chiefs of the various lineages living in the village"[149]. In some, the oldest member of the council of elders referred to as the *diokpa*, and in this case, he becomes the custodian of the *ofo*. The supreme head of the assembly took decisions in consultation with the constituent members of the village assembly. Consultation, consensus and compromise were

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[144] Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony, *African Traditional Democracy with Particular reference to the Yoruba and Igbo political systems.* p.154

[145] Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony, *African Traditional Democracy with Particular reference to the Yoruba and Igbo political systems.* p.154

[146] Ajaegbo, D. I. (2014). African democratic heritage: A historical case study of the Igbo of Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science. 19. 4.* 17-23.

[147] Onwuejeogwu, M. A. (1972). *The traditional political system of Ibuzo.* Nri: Odinam Museum.

[148] 148 Nzimiro, I. (1972). *Studies in Igbo political systems. Chieftaincy and politics in four Niger states.* London: Frank Cass.

[149] 149 Maquet, J. (1972). *Africanity.* New York: Oxford University Press, p. 57.

necessary elements in resolving issues and decision making. The village square (*ama nzuko ora*), usually a common place, was the arena of assembly[150].

In the Igbo political system, during decision making, it is not the eldest man that imposes his will upon the people, but decisions are reached through discussions, consultations, dialogue and compromise which might take the shape of imposing the will of the majority on the minority and this reveals the democratic value that does not see the community as a constellation of impersonal forces but rather a complex of human beings and human interests that upholds the ethos of resolving human antagonistic interests through negotiation. According to Wirendu:

> This should not be confused with decision-making on the principle of the supreme right of the majority. In the case under discussion the majority prevails not over, but upon, the minority- they prevail upon them to accept the proposal in question, not just to live with it... In a consensus system the voluntary acquiescence of the minority with respect to a given issue would normally be necessary for the adoption of a decision. In the rare case of an intractable division, a majority vote might be used to break the impasse. But the success of a system must be judged by the rarity of such predicaments in the working of the decision-making bodies of the state[151].

During decision makings, the perspective of every lineage in the village is represented in the presence and contributions of their representative. It can be compared to the House of Representatives, a structure that provides the space for the genuine meeting of minds for the interchanging of opinion and understanding. Decisions arrived at this council is not enforced through policing, but what Maquet called 'collective pressure'[152]. At the centre of these African traditional political structures was the rule of law.

Nigerian Nation and Igwebuike Vision of Inclusive Leadership

The geographical area that is today known as Nigeria was, before the colonial invasion, inhabited by people of varied and often conflicting traditional ideologies, cultural dispositions, and socio-political and religious orientations.

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[150] Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony, *African Traditional Democracy with Particular reference to the Yoruba and Igbo political systems.* In International Journal of Philosophy and Public Affairs. Vol. 2.no. 3. P.155

[151] Wirendu, K., *Conceptual decolonization in African philosophy.* Ibadan: Hope, 1995, p.62.

[152] Maquet, J. (1972). *Africanity.* New York: Oxford University Press. p 10

These peoples or tribes are endogamous groups descended from the same ancestor, occupying a particular territory and possessing cultural, religious and linguistic homogeneity[153]. These tribes in Nigeria are about 400, and it is the coming together of these different tribes that have united and formed the political union in the form of a federation[154]. In their respective domain, they cherished what they shared together as a people. But with the advent of colonial powers and missionaries, the policy of divide and rule along religious, cultural and political lines was introduced. Nigeria was divided into north and south[155]. This division of North and South keeps reminding Nigerians that they are different. And today, nothing in Nigerian history captures her problem of national integration more graphically than the chequered fortune of the word *tribe* in her vocabulary. As Achebe would say, 'tribe has been one time accepted as a friend, rejected as an enemy at another, and finally smuggled through the backdoor as an accomplice'[156]. If Nigeria as a nation would endure in the midst of the possibility of tribalism, then there is the need for the government to adopt an inclusive pattern of leadership which would have the responsibility to:

a. discover the circumstances which can be superimposed on the natural chains of language and culture, which has linked the human beings who inhabit Nigeria to enable them develop a feeling of personal security and group preservation[157].

b. concede coexistence to all linguistic groups, on the basis of equality, within a framework of political and constitutional warrantees. Such a federal system of government would protect individual freedom under the rule of law and thus preserve and sustain any linguistic group. By preserving the linguistic groups of Nigeria and conceding to them local autonomy of some satisfactory nature, an atmosphere for respect of their culture and traditions is created.

c. revise the Nigerian Constitution: first in relation to safeguarding people's fundamental human rights; secondly, providing citizens with adequate

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[153] Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony, The Political philosophy of Nnamdi Azikiwe as an Ideology for Political Regeneration for Nigeria. *Professor Bassey Andah Journal of Cultural Studies. 3.* 146-155.

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[157] Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony, The Political philosophy of Nnamdi Azikiwe as an Ideology for Political Regeneration for Nigeria. *pp.* 146-155.

food, comfortable shelter and a minimum level of subsistence. In this case, rulers must discover the material needs of their people. Once there is a failure in this by rulers, Nigerians will harbour grievances about political, economic and social inequalities. This will increase loyalty to tribe and disloyalty to the nation[158].

d. concede to each region *de jure* equality and *de facto* inequality. D*e jure* equality is used in the sense that every province and local authority in each region in the nation is legally equal with the Federal government providing for each of them. D*e facto* Inequality, means the acceptance of the fact that not all regions, provinces and local authorities are equal either in area, population, natural resources and financial means.

e. Have political parties that will cut across the artificial barriers of tribes and regions. National loyalty must supersede regional claims[159].

There is something in everyone that yearns for belongingness. If nation building is a national project, then the interests and participation of all parties and dimensions of society must be patronized.

Conclusion

This piece has studied the socio-political platform for leadership which Igwebuike as an Igbo-African philosophy provides. As an Ibgo-African philosophy of inclusive leadership, the focus of this work is primarily the entirety and Africa and in fact the world. However, it adopts a context for a more concrete analysis and application. It studied the basis of a philosophy of inclusive leadership, which is diversity, emphasizing that the idea of leadership already presupposes the need for an inclusive leadership. To go contrary to this would result to crisis, frustration and polarization of society. It established that Igwebuike philosophy is the philosophical basis for inclusive leadership. It established the anthropological and socio-cultural foundations of inclusive leadership; then using the Nigerian nation as a context, it studies how inclusive leadership can being about the desired future which the nation aspires for. This work, therefore, lends its voice to the many voices calling for an inclusive form of leadership as the one political system that can restore the basis for a genuine Nigerian socio-political life.

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