

| CHAPTER ELEVEN |

PROF. NWADIALOR GOOD LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT: AN EXAMPLE FOR CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN POLITICAL HEGEMONIC LEADERS

Rev. Fr. Ignatius C. Uzongdu Ph.D

Department of Philosophy,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
ic.uzongdu@unizik.edu.ng

INTRODUCTION

The process of development is one that does not come automatically. Obviously, there have to be human factors in any developmental process be it economic, social, cultural and human. In essence, man is the major driving force in the process of development. The questions now are: in what ways can man contribute to the process of development? Are there factors that defined real development or what are the parameters for which a developmental process is said to be successful? What is leadership and what are the leadership style/skills that are very important requirements for development?

In this paper, the above questions will be explored with the aim of establishing solid relationship between “Acquisition of leadership skills” by those in authority and leadership positions and the success recorded in the various developmental projects during the tenure or time frame a particular leader held such leadership position. In the context of this write-up however, the ingenuity of Professor Eugene Okoye Nwadiakor is a noble topic to explore as his case is a robust practical application of those leadership theories that underscore the route to development in a number of ways. At this point in time, the scope of study is the Tansian

University Umunya, under his unique leadership for over a period of time. As it is obvious that “no philosophy arises in a vacuum”, certainly, every noteworthy thought pattern was informed by a particular situation and in a given time. And so, just as a living example of what a leader should be, the leadership skills of Professor Nwadiolor in his capacity as the Vice Chancellor of the Tansian University Umunya are measured against the contemporary development challenges for political leaders in Nigeria and Africa today.

And so, this paper assumes the descriptive and analytical methods in its assessment of the leadership temper of Professor Nwadiolor. But first, leadership and development are objective notions that would be explored in this paper on one hand and then particularized in the person of Professor Eugene Okoye Nwadiolor in his journey as leader in the Tansian University on the other hand.

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Leadership

Leadership is an action of leading a group of people or an organization. To conceptualize this terminology very well, we have to see it in dual perspectives, namely: person based leadership where one sees leadership as that individual or group of individuals in an organization who lead the organization. In another perspective, leadership could be conceptualized as an activity of a leading group of persons or an organization to a goal achievement or the ability to do so. Leadership as a process involves the activity of articulating a clear vision, sharing the vision with others and inspiring them to willingly follow, providing the information, knowledge and methodology needed to bring the vision in question to fruition and finally reconciling any conflicts of interest that may arise within the membership. In a clearer elucidation of the concept of leadership as a process, one sees it is aimed at common good when duly followed, as it can never turn out to be bad, it is always the selfishness of man that turns leadership away from the common good.

Leadership as an activity is somehow neutral, but based on the acumen and goodwill of the leader. Just like Kant upheld the “goodwill” as good without qualification, an objective moral ground for individual good and right actions, the concept of leadership could assume a negative value based on the individual's departure from the notion of goodwill as propelling force that drive action. In this case, then, the idea of bad leadership becomes an aberration of what should be obtainable or what ought to be. Whatever is the case, bad leadership is also a human activity, but based on the individual conscious determination to depart from what ought to be to what ought not to be. In this context, one has to know that the bad leadership prevalent in Africa is caused by some African leaders not because it lies in the character of Africans to do so, but in the negative intentions of defaulting African leaders to depart from the moral ideal (Goodwill in Kantian terms) and pursue their selfish interests and institutionalized elitist pursuits. This has remained the bane of bad leadership in Africa (Nigeria inclusive).

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

The skill includes communication; here one establishes open contact between oneself and his team members so that organizational goal and specific tasks are known. Emotional intelligence is another communicating skill and this helps in decoding and comprehending and relating information to others. Other leadership skills include “Open communication, Empathy, Strategic thinking, Creativity, Positivity, Flexibility, Conflict resolution, Time management, Reliability, Mentorship, Recognising potentials, Responsibility, Organization, Delegation, Feedback”¹. We have still: Decision making, Problem solving, Management, Integrity, Self-awareness, Active listening, Skills management, Interpersonal communication, Coaching, Confidence, Motivation, Decisiveness, Critical thinking, Adaptability, Goal, Project management.

Democratic leadership is shared leadership where group members participate as everyone is given opportunity to participate and ideas are exchanged freely and discussion is encouraged, however, under the control and guidance of the leader of the group. There are also the concepts of aristocracy and oligarchy. They are all aspects of political leadership. While political leadership is a concept central to understanding political processes and outcomes, yet its definition is elusive. Many disciplines have contributed to the study of leadership including political theory, history, psychology and management studies. Political leadership reviews the contribution of these disciplines alongside with discussion of the works of classic authors such as Niccolo Machiavelli, the Contractualists (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Rawls), Max Weber and Robert Michels to mention but a few. Aristotle defined democracy as “The rule of the many for the good of the poor” as opposed to oligarchy which is “The rule of the few for the good of the wealthy”² In the classical definition of Abraham Lincoln, (on November 19, 1863 at union cemetery in Gettysburg, Philadelphia) democracy is: “government of the people, by the people, and for the people”³.

However, within the context of this work, one adopts the Weber's concept of “Charismatic Leadership” and the Kantian invocation of the “Goodwill” as objective moral force that drives individual good actions to provide necessary theoretical ferment for the paper. This is because whatever the style of political leadership operational in a community or firm, it is believed that the integrity of those in positions of authority has strong influence in achieving organizational goals and making development a reality.

Development: This is a process that creates growth, progress, positive change or addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components⁴. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines development as the process of gradually becoming bigger, stronger or more advanced⁵. Development is a process that creates growth, progress,

positive change or addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components.⁶ Development is the result of society's capacity to organize resources to meet challenges and opportunities. In relation to a country Dulley Seers suggests that development is when a country experiences a reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment⁷. For Walter Rodney, it is *an overall social process which is dependent upon the outcome of man's effort to deal with his natural environment*⁸. He thus sees development from an economic point of view. So, economic and social development is the process by which the economic wellbeing and quality of life of a nation, region, local community, or an individual are improved according to targeted goal and objectives⁹. However, development does not point mainly on infrastructures as people always think, for human development is first. Thus, Ruch and Anyanwu portray enhancement of human dignity and life as first in order of development and held infrastructures as good means to an end but never end in themselves¹⁰.

LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

Here, as we establish the relationship between leadership and development, we first take off from the holy writ. We read that God after creating the first species of human beings gave them the injunction to *be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it*¹¹. Here one immediately sees leadership in form of authority and sovereignty given to the first male and female. Development follows leadership immediately as they were charged to conquer the world which means to advance or develop it. Thus, good leadership aims at development. This advancement or development is brought about in the various aspects of man's life through political organization and social control but in the contemporary times *via* education and application of science and technology. But any developmental process that is aimed at destroying the human person is to be rejected for it is against ethical principles of man's basic right to life. Development therefore negates investments in destructive technology meant to

devalue the human person for power, pride or unhealthy competition. Examples could be seen in the cases of countries inventing nuclear missiles and destructive warfare devices (as seen in America, Russia, Iraq, Iran, North Korea and the Likes) which are capable of killing or effacing humankind but sparing their weapons. Thus, such development has no ethical value for it is devoid of the transcendent dimension of mankind. Any development that lacks this aspect of human nature cannot be said to be genuine. Man is both the agent and determinant of development for a particular technological advancement to be confirmed as authentic or genuine development, it must be useful for man. Development is measured by the essential nature of mankind. Pope Paul VI affirms that every programme has service of man as its *raison d'etre* and should reduce inequalities, discrimination and freemen from servitude. Development is for social progress and economic growth and man is truly man when he is master of his own advancement as decreed by his creator whose possibilities and exigencies he assumes.¹² Authentic development is more than economic progress as Pope Paul VI in his *Populorum progressio* reminds us it is about the development of people as human beings. True progress allows every individual to grow into the person God intended them to be.

ESTABLISHING WORKING FRONT BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

In the famous words of J.F. Kennedy in his presidential inauguration speech, “ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country”¹³. This statement is principally a call to service just as it is a call to good leadership. It is a call to action for public to do what is right for the greater good. There is a necessary connection between leadership and development. Like was articulated in the introduction of this work, development does not just come on its own but needs the driving force of a human agent or human agents. More still in our contemporary pluralist and populated society good leadership becomes a positive driving force to stir the organization,

community or nation towards target developmental strides in the various aspects of development, human and otherwise.

Prof, Nwadiakor becomes a typical lesson for contemporary African leaders. His undisputable developmental strides become a Critique of the present Political Leadership in Nigeria and the bad leadership that pervades some African nations today. But before a critical review of his leadership style, principles, skills and accomplishments, a review of bad leadership culture in Africa and its effects on development is paramount.

BAD LEADERSHIP, CORRUPTION AND HEGEMONY AS THREATS TO DEVELOPMENT

Bad leadership has been the bane of Nigerian underdevelopment. On paper, the Nigerian constitutional law provides the principle that could sustain good governance and ensure a just and egalitarian society following the libertarian democratic heritage from its British colonial influence. This has reflected in the subsequent constitutions to the present one the 1999 Constitution in which general will was established as the base for governance. If the dictates of the Nigerian constitution, is applied and implemented in all fairness, Nigerians will enjoy good governance. But the present crop of political leaders, strategically adjust the contents of the constitution to suite sectarian and selfish interests. There is constant disrespect to the rule of law, and the leaders convert the institutions that should protect the interests of the citizens to satisfy their own selfish goals. They submerged the general will to an individual class will or sectional will. The executives are draconian, corrupt and incompetent. Nigerian politicians are bereft of the idea of good governance. The just concluded Nigerian 2023 General elections serve as a good example in this case. The clear display of injustice by the existing power structure and lack of will-power in the judiciary to proffer justice have inflicted Nigerians with apathy and lackadaisical attitudes towards political institution and consequently eroded their confidence on the institutions of governance.

Corruption is another major factor militating African development. For Ehuasani, “Nigeria has been stripped naked by corrupt, greedy and callous elites. They have been humiliated, pauperized and reduced to a state of destitute by the combined forces of military dictatorship, political subterfuge, economic profligacy and moral degeneracy”.¹⁴ Unfortunately, most Nigerian and African leaders are corrupt and have made the “state” an instrument of capital accumulation rather than using it for the interest or for the development of the citizenry.

Political hegemony stands as another foremost constraint to meaningful development in Nigeria. By hegemony, we mean a social or cultural predominance by one group within a society or milieu, a group or regime which exerts undue influence within a society.¹⁵ Nigeria political culture currently thrives in a successive web of cabals who at each point in time do everything possible to remain in power and champion the hem of affairs. It is no news that the Hausa-Fulani political class believes that governance of Nigeria remains exclusively their right. And so their culture of corruption has always spanned through the election process that brings in a new government to hijacking government policies and activities to suit mostly their selfish interests, thereby leaving the country lagging behind other nations when compared with the basic developmental parameters. This political and cultural hegemony that has come to assume structural status in Nigerian's socio-political climate has been the bane to attaining good governance in Nigeria down the years. The “assumption” that power and the position of presidency remains the exclusive reserved of a few has seriously but negatively eroded all reasonable and constitutional efforts to enshrine good governance in Nigeria. Beginning from the political upheavals that enabled the commencement of the Nigerian-Biafran war, the military chiefs mostly from northern part of the country is a story too obvious to refute. The power politics has continued to rear its head in other discomfoting dimensions. The 1999 civil rule that ousted out the long years of military rule in Nigeria appears to have been a metamorphosis of the old cabal into new robes. The resultant political culture saw the rise of Political Parties' Cabals in a

rotational change of turns with the hitherto Hausa-Fulani Oligarchs. This has been the trend for years now thus negatively affecting the sacredness of the electioneering process, making democracy in Nigeria a caricature. For this trend to be effectively put to check, Erunke opines that,

To carry through a successful project of demonstration and sustainable democratic transition in the interest of good governance ... we need to go beyond the prevalent myths about immediate and remote causes of poor governance to projected solutions to arrest prospective socio-economic and political decays in Nigeria...¹⁶

Hegemony in its various dimensions, has been posing serious threat to enshrining good governance in the country, but is currently creating unrest and distrust among citizens and fear of the continued existence of the Nigerian state. Political Apathy is now the trend. The masses believe that their sincerest desires are to attain their basic needs and not to bother themselves with political games. The media has been used to brain wash the masses and make them see the politicians as gods. The power contention among the major political parties has assumed hegemonic dimension. The leading Party in the country (APC) believes they own the process in INEC, legislative activities and the fate of the country in elections nowadays. The worst is the swearing in of the new president (Tinubu) who has not gotten all the requirements needed to be the president (by the Nigerian constitution). Indeed, this is political hegemony to the fullest. In reaction to this daylight robbery as it was described, the judiciary was expected by the masses to serve the needed justice, but the outcome of the process has made the international community speechless as to how far this hegemonic power can go even to influence judicial outcomes. The political hegemony exhibited by All Progressive Congress party since it took over power in 2015 cannot be described. APC hegemony was not only experienced in presidential elections, it's also witnessed in primary and gubernatorial elections in some states like Ogun, Lagos and Imo and Ekiti and Osun states, in 2019, and even in 2023, to mention but a few. The APC election

hegemony has reached to such extent that people nowadays doubts if INEC is truly independent as the name suggests. Indeed, there are no fair playing grounds for healthy politics in Nigeria today. Now, one sees the need for human intellectual and moral development, not only for the electoral umpires, but for the whole Nigerian citizenry, and this is the first aspect of development.

LEADERSHIP WITHOUT SERVICE AND VALUE

In Nigerian's 4th Republic, since its inception in 1999, two major political parties have ruled Nigerian. The Peoples Democratic Party((PDP) started and ruled for sixteen years and their regime of course has hegemonic elements or character but on a lower pedestal for that was not felt as such owing to good and better economy. But, with the Buhari-APC led regime as from 2015-2023, political hegemony came to its highest point. The government was a draconian type, a terrorist government with every type of impunity owing to poor governance and economic recession was in play throughout the eight years of Buhari's regime, unspeakable electoral mal practice and all kinds of evil reigned, not minding the party's slogan of change. Though there were creation of many public and private universities by pronouncements, but the Buhari's government had really no interest in (western) education as the regime devalued education in Nigeria. With highest strike periods (by the university lecturers) ever witnessed in the country, the government still suppressed the university professors. A similar trend appears to happen with the present regime. The aftermath is little or no development for the country. There has not been much contribution to developments in the academic sector also. In the context of this write-up, then, I will tag this leadership trend as “leadership without service and value”.

In resume, the Nigerian democratic government since 4th republic is rid with corruption, bad leadership and political hegemony. It lacks discipline both in its citizens and as a society, declined in moral or ethical values, rapid decay of values, much recognition and esteem to riches and oligarchy, a conceptual debasement of leadership and lack of respect for life. Since Buhari's APC regime till now, Nigerians witnessed little or no development as the APC-

led government continues to reign, the citizens are yearning to the see the real change or transformations promised.

EVALUATION OF PROF NWADIALOR'S LEADERSHIP STYLE AND THE DEVELOPMENTAL SUCCESSES RECORDED SO FAR AS A CRITIQUE ON THE NIGERIAN SITUATION

Prof Nwadiolor, an Ichi (Ekwusigo LGA) born scholar has been in the prestigious Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu, under the department of Accounting and Taxation, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences. Stepping into Tansian University Umunya officially as vice chancellor, precisely during the 12th matriculation ceremony, 17th May, 2019, he did not waste time in building and upgrading the institution as he promised in his introductory speech. He made it known to all that he came to contribute positively to both the academic and infrastructure development of the university. As it is a private and faith based university, he faithfully adheres to the rudiments set by the Chancellor and the Chairman of the university Board of Trustees, late. Rev. Msgr. J.B Akam. However, with the untimely demise of the chancellor (5th, Feb. 2021), just barely one year of working together, Prof. Nwadiolor exhibited his leadership prowess to the fullest and this is seen in every sector of the university life and management. Excellence is now the order of the day in Tansian University.

Prof. Nwadiolor and Human Development

Before plunging into building magnificent edifice on his full control or management, he first sought for the wellbeing of the staff and students, starting with respect/dignity and value of human person. The meagre salaries of the staff, he tries to see it reaches to them as at when due and planned instantly for other advancements which we know are means to human development and not an end in themselves.

Prof. Nwadiolor and Infrastructure Development

In the area of infrastructure, he used four months to build a big edifice that now makes the institution very proud and this truly

enhanced teaching – learning in no great measure as it embodies lecture halls and lecturers' offices. He not only built, but he also put it into good use by equipping the building fans, and with modern student lecture seats and other instructional materials. ICT building was built and equipped and it is seriously being made to be functional nowadays as emphasis is now not only on theoretical knowledge but more on acquisition of skills. Among other infrastructures added in the university includes a giant transformer to enhance light supply and a better and mega sound proof electric generator and additional solar bore hole and mega capacity overhead water storage tank for distribution of water in the university and its environs, to mention but a few.

Prof. Nwadiakor and Academic Program Development

Again, within his short stay in this citadel of learning, Tansian University has become a fully accredited university with not only graduate courses, but post graduate courses were introduced as national university council (NUC) did not waste time in accrediting the university immediately for post graduate courses and this makes Tansian University a full or complete Institution. Nowadays, one sees many masters and Ph.D students in Accountancy, Business Administration, Philosophy, Political Science, Journalism and Media Studies, Broadcasting, Microbiology, Biochemistry and Computer Science. Also, faculty of law and faculty of Health Sciences were among areas that were accredited by NUC within his arrival. All this of course increased students' population as well as that of lecturers as more lecturing appointments were given.

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

All these accolades of praise and commendations should not just be show of personal aggrandizement to Professor Nwadiakor as a person but reflections of the leadership personality he represents. In light of Weber's notion of Charismatic leadership, where authority resides or derives from the charisma of the leader¹⁷, we likewise say that Professor Nwadiakor radiates spectacular charisma as a leader. His uniqueness buttresses the fact that every leader has something unique to contribute to the process of

development and should not refrain from doing the needful. His sense of duty assumes a Kantian deontological attribute of the exemplary leader. His “goodwill” to promote good projects and effectively work towards them to attain the common good is a reflection of the Kantian Objective moral paradigm (borrowing Platonic semantic parlance) of the “Goodwill” as guide to action. In all what we have is an unassuming man who displays admirable leadership qualities in style and action towing a unique leadership profile that can serve as critique to the current Nigerian Political Leadership culture and guide for affirmative action and overhaul of the present system.

We therefore commend Professor Eugene Nwadiakor as a goodhearted leader but also as an epitome of “Leadership driven Developmental-force” who lives and acts as a Self-conscious being spearheading the day-to-day existential developmental needs of the Tansian University Umunya. He thus can be said to be in Heideggerian terms a “being-onto-progress”. And so should this course should be the daily aspirations of all leaders in their various existential functions. If this submission is accepted by the current Nigerian leadership and set into play, Nigeria and Africa in extension will be on the sure route to robust development.

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