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The Need for Curriculum Modules for Political Socialization of Nigerian Youths

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ABSTRACT The study examined perception of youths on the desirable emerging political culture of political office holders in Ekiti state. Considering the content of the universe of the variables of citizenship, statesmanship, stand on democratic ideals, nationalism, political knowledge, tolerance and sublimation as the measure of political sociability, maturity and sophistication. Descriptive research design of the survey type was used. The authors developed a set of validated questionnaires for a survey on the perception and predispositions of youths. The population consisted of all youths in Nigeria. The sample comprised of 500 Nigerian youths in Ekiti State. The sample was purposely and randomly selected. The results show no significant difference in the low ratings of the sample on political sociability, maturity and sophistication along the statistics of age, sex, educational status, socio-economic status and their residence/location. The findings were discussed in terms of a need for political education and socialization of the youths that would help eliminate the intrigues and violence that had ever trailed the political history and development of Nigeria. The paper thus, concludes on some of the modules that would fulfill the purpose of the youths' enlightenment on political developments in the country.

INTRODUCTION

Literature on Nigerian political developments usually describes the forefront nationalists as fighters for freedom and emancipation of the citizens through their protests of domination and high handedness of the colonial masters. In these, they usually adopt and use seasoned arguments with support from local and foreign logic, thesaurus and wise sayings. The nationalists employed public enlightenment and mobilizations against colonial domination and subservience, but there was never violent or blood letting in the historic acts. But with the description of these heroes as fighters, one is left to think to be leaving a wrong impression on the youths of the modern day Nigeria.

Though, the Nigerian youths of the present days too, need be said, desired and wished to become heroes of national status, and as it appears, the youths have taken to fighting for further freedom and independence of Nigerians. This is where the similarities between the older generation of nationalists and the youths ends.

As it is today and with Nigerian youths, fighting for emancipation means and involves floating ethnic militia group with separatists' ideas. The youths are using abusing words on people in authority, creating violence and civil disobedience. They are threatening to make the country ungovernable unless their uncoordinated wishes are granted. The ethnic militia groups are adopting guerrilla tactics that often involved hostage taking, assassination, thuggery and cold murders in daylight of their supposed opposition group members in a 49 year old republic! (Front page comment: Sunday Punch, February 26th: Sunday punch March 19th).

Youth come in for mention here because they are presented as the catalyst in the process of political changes of any nation (Soyinka 2006). But the mode of acting as catalyst in the global village that the whole world now is summarized in the global education curriculum as; working for unity of purpose among the several divides in the world. Emancipation of peace among the people and nations of the world, conservation of the depleted natural resources that would sustain the world population and improving on the inter and intra personal relationships status of the world citizens (Vulliamy and Webb 1993).

While the forefathers of freedom and independence adopted dialogues, debates and other civilized methods in their fight for independence with the colonial masters, the present day 'fighters' (especially the youths), use guns and other offensive weapons, for destruction of lives, public and economic properties to prove

their points to no other persons than their own leaders and elders.

What, thus, aptly describes the present state and political developments in Nigeria is a jingle on the Voice Of America radio that usually runs before the top of the hour news cast that runs, thus, "if political freedom as it has been in most African and developing countries speaks of wars, intrigues, diseases, underdevelopment and miseries, when would it end?"

Buttressing these claims are many feature writings in the Nigerian dailies, weeklies and tabloids (Tell Magazine, The News, The Tribune, The Daily Independent, The Westerner). Most of these writings often indicate or end on the note that the present democracy (the 4th republic) that Nigeria is practicing, may soon lead to the fragmentation of the country unless a number of corrections are made. The political ignorance of important sections of the populace are put in place. These corrections must and need to emphasize citizenship, statesmanship, politics without acrimony and nationalism training and divine intervention in the course of the developments. The former Nigerian President and commander-in Chief of the Nigerian armed forces, Chief Obasanjo aptly subscribed to these claims when he sent a passionate appeal for prayers against the forces of evil operating over the social and political terrain of the nation which threatening peace and stability in the society to the meeting of the World body of the Full Gospel Business Men Fellowship held in Nigeria in the year (2006).

Arguing that politics is about focusing the collective will of people towards nationalism and the advancement of a people towards a state of utopia or their dream, Weiss (1995) cited the Biblical account of the people of Israel and explained how this nationalistic orientation of being God's anointed and chosen people who would bring heaven to dwell on planet earth had remained the Jews' focus, desire and pursuit even till the present day. Among the Jews, one would be able to draw and compare some of the expectations of citizens of nations, especially the present global world. Nationalists and political change catalyst are supposed to focus on and generate ideas. Not only that, they should take action and find solutions towards solving the common problems and challenges facing this and the future generation. Nationalists and political change catalysts should endeavour in limiting activities that may lead to nuclear war, controlling environmental degradation, seeking to eradicate the division of North-South. In addition, advocating for a return to modesty and morality in a world that appears to emphasize excesses among the rich and the powerful, rather than solving local problems, like youth unemployment, housing, urban-rural population drifts, adequate and substandard health provisions and improving the citizenship behaviours of the citizens of the nation (Ogundare 1991; Vulliamy and Webb 1993; Bennet 1998; Helprin 2001; Forbes 2003).

The foregoing clearly speaks of the need to re-educate the youths along the often hailed several social-economic reforms that are presently going on in the country. This is because the on going fifth republic in Nigeria's nancient democracy runs on a constitution that gave people in the youth age categories of 18-55 years, a large room to occupy, also allows the youths to function in the task of nation building especially that of evolving actions and programmes that would generate solutions to the pressing prob-lems of not only Nigerian but the citizens of the world (Ekong 2002).

Quite a large percentage of the present political office holders in the nation fall within these categories, especially as executive governors in the 36 states, senators, members of the house of representative, state legislators, local government chairmen and councilors in the 774 political wards in the nation. The experience and media reports of their functioning on the criteria for nation building and statesmanship however, leave much to be desired. One is left to ask these questions, how do the present day Nigerian youths perceive politics, and holding political offices? Do they consider many of the speeches and actions of the present crop of political office holders agreeable? The question then is that are these youths the hope of change? Could one say that their actions are a reflection of their predispositions? When are the youth finally and eventually finding themselves in these elective positions or high public offices?

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is aimed at evaluating the perception of the youth of the behaviour and actions of elected political office holders and hence infers the youths' predisposition to act were they to be in the same position as the elected offices. Also, the problem

of this study is to provide data on the perception of Nigerian youths on the experienced irrationalities in the thinking and actions of many Nigerian politicians and statesmen.

Research Questions

The following questions that would need empirical answers were focused:

1. How would a representative sample of Nigerian youths perceive or predisposition to act and behaviour of political leaders as often reported in the media
2. Do the youths consider political offices for self or public service
3. What are the perceptions of youth concerning the "winners take all" ways politics in Nigeria in being presently run?
4. Are Nigerian youths satisfied with their political leaders?
5. How much accountable and respectable do the Nigeria youth consider their political leaders.

The Null Hypothesis

There would be no significant difference along the 5 statistics (sex, age, residence, employment status, and level of school attended) of the selected Nigerian youths in their perception of and predisposition to many of the unacceptable political acts and behaviours of the present political/leadership office holders.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to highlight the thinking and predisposition of Nigerian youths to issues relating to and affecting the conduct and behaviour of political and public office holders in the nation. Also, the study attempts, to provide data on the perception and predisposition of Nigerian youths on the experienced irrationalities, in the thinking and actions of many Nigeria politicians and statesmen

Significance

The manifestations of underdevelopment and failure of many of the instituted programmes to ameliorate the social problems they have generated in Nigeria since her independence 49 years ago, had been traced to lack of relevant and needful data and information on the possible causative factors. The threat to political stability and hence the survival and continuity of the Nigerian nation by the untutored and violent politically motivated acts of Nigerian youths may be due to lack of relevant and useful data that may help develop the needful teaching and enlightenment materials and modules to revert the unpleasant trend. Nigerian youths had been shown to be very clever, but this appears not to be sufficient in fulfilling their roles in the political development of the nation. They need character, i.e. initiative, perseverance, sublimation, determination and honesty to be able to fulfill their roles in a peaceful environment. This study, therefore attempts to solve part of this problem via the data provided and the suggestions that the data appear to generate.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design of the survey type was used. It aims at describing the state of the perspective and predisposition of a selected sample of Nigerian youth perception and predispositions to conduct of political and high office holders as being responded in the Nigerian media.

Population: The population of the study consisted of all Nigeria youths that are above 18 years and below 55 years.

Sample and Sampling Technique: The sample for this study was five hundred youths that are in the age range of 18 -55 years. They comprised of 277 males and 223 females residing in the urban and rural areas of 6 local government out of the 16 local government areas and across the 3 Senatorial districts of Ekiti State. The samples were purposively selected. Out of 16 local governments the researcher purposely selected 6 L.G. from 3 senatorial distributors and 500 subjects were randomly selected from the population.

Instrument: There were set of questionnaires constructed for the study. The questionnaire had items that were framed in the manner to determine whether the respondents were agreeable to the ways that the present crop of Nigeria politicians and public office holders appear to address issues of collective existence of the Nigeria people that appears threatened (Obsanjo 2006). The items were based on the content of these variables.

Being in politics is essentially to enrich oneself?

Politics is about setting personal scores with one's enemies and deractors?

One should never be seen with members of the opposition parties no matter the ties that may be between the two?

Elections could be rigged in favour of the richest candidate?

Living flamboyantly is very necessary for any one who would be an influential politician?

Popularity is more important than competence is the main issue of consideration when it is the time to select people for offices occupation?

Violence is needed when contesting elections?

All political ideologies have positive contributions to make in all societies?

Preferred arguments and political ideological position often change in all societies?

It is needed to adjust one's political stand in the face of superior arguments?

It is alright to work to stay put in political offices whether it is popular or not.

Government of the day, must be ready to "buy" or pay the law makers to put their needed legislations through courts and must support the party in power at all cost.

Validity: The instrument for the study was subjected to face and content validities The items on the questionnaire format were scrupulously screened by research experts in the areas of guidance and counseling and tests and measurement within and outside university of Ado-Ekiti. The expert were consensual as to whether the items measured the intent of the researcher.

Reliability of the Instrument: Test re-test method of reliability was used for the instrument. A pilot test was carried out on 25 youths and this exercise was repeated on the same youths after two weeks. The scores from the two test were correlated. Pearson product movement correla-tion was used to determine the reliability coeffi-cient. The coefficient of r=0.46, was derived and was considered high enough for the intent of the research.

Scoring: The 500 properly completed questionnaires returned, were codes and processed for statistical analysis. The results are presented below.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the composition of the sample along the divisions of the five statistics of sex (male/female), age (18-35 / 36-55), residence (rural /urban) employment status (employed/unemployed), educational status (Whether they attended school or not /whether they dropped out, completed secondary schools and those who attended tertiary institutions).

Two hundred seventy-seven representing 55.4% were males scoring 60 on the instrument of data collection while 223 representing 44.6% were females scoring a group mean mark of 53 on the instrument of data collection.

Three hundred four, of the sample representing 60% were in the age range of 18-35 and had a group mean score of 58 while 196 representing 39.2% were in the range of 36-55 scoring 46 on the instrument of data collection.

One hundred ninety-one representing 38.2% reside in the rural areas scoring 51 while 309 representing 61.8% were employed and had a mean score of 53.

Two hundreds seventy nine representing 55.8% were not employed and had a score of 54 while 221 representing 44.2% were employed and had a score of 53.

All the respondents have had a measure of schooling as only 35 representing 7% dropped out of school and had a score of 58. Those who completed secondary school were 261 representing 52.2% and scored 51 while those who are still in or had completed tertiary institutions were 204 representing 40.8% and had 48 as their group mean score.

Table 1: Demographic data and the mean raw scores of the sample (N=500).

			%	*N*	*X*	*S.D*
1	Sex	Male	55.4	277	60	1.33
		Female	44.6	223	53	2.68
2.	Age	18-35	60.8	304	58	2.41
		36-55	39.2	196	46	1.61
3.	Residence	Rural	38.2	191	51	2.11
		Urban	61.8	309	56	3.04
4.	Employment status	Employed	44.2	221	53	1.04
		Not employed	55.8	279	54	1.17
5.	Schools attended	(a) Non	7	35	58	1.16
		(b) Completed secondary school	52.2	261	51	1.83
		(c)Tertiary institution	40.8	204	48	1.08

In all of these descriptive groupings and performances on the instrument of data collection one notices the score range on the instrument of data collection to be high indicating the sample's classification as politically immature, crude and ignorant.

Further, it reflects their low tolerance for opposing political views, unwillingness to cooperate with the opposition parties when they are in power and an indication of lack of ability to sublime when their needs or wishes are delayed.

Table 2 shows the perception of youth about leaders in Nigeria. The youths were not satisfied the way the political leaders had been performing. The youth had rated the political leaders very low. In area of development, 90.2% of the youth emphasized that the leaders had done nothing.

Table 3 shows the youths' views about the political activities in Nigeria. The ways the youths think, interpret was bad. The hopes and aspiration of the youths had not been met.

Table 4 shows the ways the youths perceive the politicians in the development of the youths. The youths believed in the Nigerian politician in the development of the youths. The youths believed that Nigeria politician enriched themselves instead of development of the youths. Instead of development of the communities, the politicians were enriching themselves.

Table 5 shows the perception of Nigerian youths on political official leaders. Four hundreds forty three (88.6%) of the respondents had negative perception of the political office holders. Thus, indicating that majority of the youths perceived the policitical office holders negatively on development of the community, sharing of political posts and in accommodating other parties.

Table 6 shows the perception of youths about accountability and respectability of Nigerian politicians. The perception of youths about political leaders was bad. Four hundreds one (80.2%) of the respondents responded that the political leaders were accountable for their deeds or stewardship but the political leaders were not afraid of nemesis after their tenure. The youths believed that the leaders should not be emulated.

Table 2: Perception of youths on political leaders in Nigeria

		Yes		*No*	
		Freq	*%*	*Freq*	*%*
1.	Are the youths satisfied with the activities of Nigeria political leaders	416	83.2	84	16.9
2.	Youths are used as thugs, youth are pantand pancel of political activities?	309	61.8	191	38.2
3.	The new trands in Nigeria politics are handiwork of the Nigeria youth	176	35.2	324	64.8
4.	Youth are satified with the new development of poloticial leaders in Nigeria	49	9.8	451	90.2
5.	Political leaders in Nigeria are youths and youth are carried along with the development	159	31.8	341	68.2

Table 3: View of Nigerian youths on political activities.

		Yes		*No*	
		Freq	*%*	*Freq*	*%*
1.	Do you perceive Nigeria politics as a way to liberate down trodden?	418	83.6	82	16.4
2.	Is politics in Nigeria towards nationalism?	389	77.8	111	22.2
3.	Do you believe that democracy is politics of liberation the youths	436	87.2	164	12.8
4.	Winning of election in nigeia is through using of youths as political thugs	456	91.2	44	8.8
5.	Electioneering campaign in Nigeria is basically of youth affairs.	362	72.4	138	27.6
6.	Do you perceive emancipation of populace through tension and action?	469	93.8	31	6.2
7.	Do you perceive politicians in Nigeria are deceiving the electorate?	391	78.2	109	22.8

Table 4: Perception of youths about Nigerian politicians on development of youths.

		Yes		*No*	
		Freq	*%*	*Freq*	*%*
1.	Political offices in Nigerians to grasp money and settle their friends ?	408	81.6	92	18.4
2.		302	60.4	84	16.8
3.	Do you perceive that the development of youths should be paramount in the mind of Nigeria political offices?	416	83.2	84	61.8
4.	Do you perceive political offices are for community development?	388	77.6	112	22.4
5.	Are you satisfied with the ways political leaders had treated the masses	105	21.0	395	79.0

Table 5: Perception of Nigerian youths about politicial office holders

		Yes		*No*	
		Freq	*%*	*Freq*	*%*
1.	Do you view the winner takes all as the causes of political unrest in Nigeria	371	74.2	129	25.08
2.	Winner take all had not helped in developmentof certain areas.	309	61.8	191	38.2
3.	Are you satisfied with politicaians in the ways of selecting politicial office holders in Nigeria?	207	41.4	293	58.6
4.	Would you prefer sharing of political posts among all parties?	443	88.6	57	11.4
5.	Do you view the political leaders could accommodate opposition leaders	289	57.8	211	42.2

Table 6: Perception of youths about accountability and reasonability of Nigeria politicians

		Yes		*No*	
		Freq	*%*	*Freq*	*%*
1.	Do you believe that political parties are accountable to all their activities	401	80.2	99	19.8
2.	Each leader has to account for his stewardship	379	75.8	121	24.2
3.	Do the Nigeria leaders need to be respected and honoured?	265	53.0	235	47.0
4.	Do you perceive that Nigeria leaders would change positively in the nearest future?	108	21.6	392	78.4
5.	Should the youths emulate the virtue of present political leaders	184	36.8	316	63.2

Table 7: One way ANOVA on the perception of the sample on politics and political participation

Source of variation	*Ss*	*df*	*Ms*	F_{ca}	F_{table}
Between groups	467365023.83	4	11681255.96	2.136	2.37
With groups	112446874.04	496	45068.89		
Total	579811897.87				

Table 7 depicts f calculated for five statistics of the sample showing no significant difference in the view of the sample on the issue of research. P < 0.05 f calculated < f table => no significant difference in the views and dispositions of respondents despites the age, sex, location. Null hypothesis was not rejected.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveals that Nigerian youth are favourably disposed to and appear to approve of many of the indecencies, irrationalities and uncomplimentary actions and behaviour of political leaders and political office holders. The finding reveals that the youths are not happy with the political leaders who enrich themselves, rig elections, disrupt the peace when one wish is jettisoned in favour of a superior argument. The youths have found patronage with many of these corrupt politicians. They had been hired for their political campaigns and harassment of opposition parties or perceived enemies. The behaviour and actions these politicians and even the youths have been corroborated by the elec-tronic and print media reports of the several militant behaviour to checkmate governmental decisions as they wish. Adegoroye et al. (2004) were of opinion that many of the Nigerian youths are corrupt and unwilling to take up jobs that are decent and respectable. Some of the youths according to Adegoroye et al. are being signed on for apprenticeship for some of the pattern of actions and behaviour of the Nigeria politician and other high office holders in the nation. They seem to leave the nation in perpetual state of tension (Obasanjo 2006 and Akinkuotu 2006) According to Reed (2001) this is not the way politics is being run. The youths who responded considered the behaviour and actions of politicians as inappropriate. The welfare of the people and survival of the larger society come uppermost in the consideration of those statesmen and seasoned politicians. We need to remember that he who plays the piper dictates the tune. If Nigerian politicians' tune would change would change then the present crop of youths need to be taught a set of new notes to play to the politicians who appear to have a hold on the soul of the of the Nigerian youth. Akinkuotu (2006) was of the opinion that these youths need to be taught the act of sublimation when their wishes are delayed

CONCLUSION

The Nigerian Youths are being bamboozled by these statesmen and politicians. The youths have not been educated politically. The present youth need political education and socialization that would help to eliminate the intrigues and violence that had ever trailed the political history and development of Nigeria. The politicians should not use political office to enrich themselves, and rigging elections in favour of one's preferred candidate.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the data in this study and the unfolding drama in the political scene in the nation, indication is rife that if Nigeria would meet her expectations in developing her youths towards the ideals of democracy, her effort at re- educating her youths towards imbibing the character content of the citizen in advance democracies need to be geared up and given more attention than is presently been done. Issues like political tolerance, sublimation, curriculum to educate both the present political office holders and the ones that are coming after and are presently at the different levels of schooling need to be looked into.

The content of the general studies curriculum in the tertiary need be reviewed to contain modules of these intent in the higher institutions, a simplified version of which need to be at both the primary and secondary schools. This needs to be reviewed to reflect emphasis on the recipients in not only gaining the knowledge of the universe of the modules but having exercise to demonstrate its essence. These may come in their demonstrating these in giving them the opportunities to elect their class monitors as against teachers impositions for them to come up with ideas of innovations they would wish and how to go about meeting these honestly and peacefully, no matter how long it would take the class.

The role of the electronic media, especially the television and radio in popularizing these modules, via creating specific times on their channels, sensitizing community development associations (CDAs) to make their members listen and participate in such programmes, inviting professional and credible teachers as could be found among sketches to drive home the points being advocated, is also very needful. It need be offered too that counselors at every level of the society need be made ready to fully participate in this great national task.

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