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**CULTURE: SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN
EMERGING ECONOMIES: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines the relationship existing between culture, security and sustainable development in an emerging nation such as ours. The question is, how is culture, security and sustainable development relevant to a nation? The answer lies on the fact that culture is the nucleus of the existence of a nation whether emerging or developed nations. Culture determines the need and nature of security. Culture equally shapes sustainable development. Culture determines and shapes the socio-economic standards of the people which directly or indirectly determine the kind of sustainable development within the economy. The paper discovers that in an emerging nation such as ours and by her plurality there is always culture clash which in turn generates friction and create room for ethnic tension and suspicion. Security therefore becomes a supporting instrument for the survival of the culture and by extension sustainable development which therefore, depends on the survival of a culture. The paper concludes that security and sustainable development are anchored on culture. It recommends that those aspects of culture that aids development be encouraged to grow but those that retard growth and development be done away with in this age of globalization.

INTRODUCTION

Nigerians are culture loving people. Indeed, even before the UN declaration of 1988-1997 as the decade of culture development, Nigeria has increasingly acknowledged the importance of culture and sustainable development. She is always prepared to project, protect, secure and sustain her rich culture. For instance she showcased her rich culture when in 1977 she hosted the World on what was popularly referred to as Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC). Since then festival of Arts has been a recurring decimal in Nigeria. However, of the about 250 ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria, each is loosely separated by culture. And each of these ethnic groups wants to preserve her culture for her generations, and that aptly explains the reasons some ethnic groups and communities periodically celebrate their culture. Celebrating one's culture is a process of advancing and showcasing its civilization within and outside the country especially at this era of globalization. The culture of a people cannot be advanced or celebrated without security. Though security may mean a lot to so many people, on the face value it relates to non-threat to lives and freedom — an aspect of people's culture. If culture is about the life of the people, advancing the peoples culture through security leads to its sustainability. It is important to see culture as the pillar of the society and security in relation to human freedom to life, exercising such freedom within the confines of the law without molestation. Sustainable development is bequeathing what is worthwhile within the culture to others after. But first, one shall attempt to give conceptual meanings of culture, security, sustainable development and emerging nations.

Concept of culture:

The term "culture is an over-used concept and has been defined in various ways by different people to suit their needs. For instance historians, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists and even

scientists have their own concepts of culture. Here the concept is defined generally. In this connection, shall give few attempts by some authors in their fields. In their explanation, Eboh and Ukpong (1993) view culture as the entire way of life of members of a society, learnt and passed on from generation to generation. They added that, culture comprises of rules and behaviour relating to the economy, government, belief and social interactions of the people of a particular society. It means that culture must be accepted and passed on from one generation to another.

However, the often quoted definition of culture is the one credited to E. B. Tylor and adopted by Inyang which states that culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, laws, morals, customs and all other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society. (Abasiattai, Ukpong & Esenowo, 2004) by this definition culture is made up of material and non-material culture. It means both the material and non-material are acquired by every member of a society.

Dukor (2003) sees culture as consisting of guidelines for life instituted by a people's predecessors and monitored by the living custodians of the cultural heritage for posterity — with well-being as its objective. This well-being in turn depends on peaceful co-existence. In his conception, cultural heritage is the passing of values from one generation to another and that it must be sustainable.

Culture, therefore, is the way of life of people in a particular society or community. It espouses the behaviour of the people, beliefs, the language they speak, the types of dress they wear, the way they greet people, marriage they contract, the tools they use and how they interact and organize their lives and activities within the confines of laws.

Culture therefore is divided into two parts

Material Culture: It consists of products by man's industry, and these products are often referred to as art. They include tools — implements, utensils, tables, baskets, hoes, spears, axes. However, these have been complemented by modern products such as cars, television sets, mattresses etc. due to influence of modern science and technology (Eboh and Ukpong, 1993).

Non-Material Culture: Non-material culture consists of what we cannot see but have learnt as part of what we live with and in this case, language we speak is one. Others include morals, music, songs, customs, behaviour, taboos, drama, dance, prohibitions, religion and traditions. In all non-material culture deals more with spiritual values than mere physical ones.

Conceptualizing Security:

The term security lacks a precise definition although it is a word commonly used by all manner of persons. It is so because when human life is not threatened in anyway either through forces of nature or man it is assured there is security. Thus, security implies a state of mind not necessarily an objective state of being. It describes the peoples feeling, not whether they are justified in feeling that way. It depends on the perceptions that people have of their environment, not necessarily on an objective view of the environment. Imobigbe (1985) perceived security as a feeling of being protected and a feeling of freedom from danger, fear, anxiety, oppression and unwarranted violence. Nnoli (2005) perceived security as a cherished value associated with the physical safety of individuals, groups or nation states, together with as similar safety of their other most cherished values. It denotes freedom from threats, anxiety or danger. Therefore, security in an objective sense can be measured by the absence of threat, anxiety or danger will materialise. In other words, it is a value associated with confidence in physical safety and other most cherished values. No matter how much safety exists or will exist, there is no security. Even when no safety exists in objective terms but there is confidence that it exists, then there is likely to be security, at

least in the short term. In this latter, one may speak of false security. One person's security may be another person's insecurity.

Concept of Sustainable Development

The 1970s saw the beginning of international summits on environment and a proliferation of international agreements on environmental issues. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (itself established in 1972), there are 144 regional and 97 global environmental agreements relating to the environment, more than three-quarters of which were signed after 1972. The first major global environment summit was the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) held in Stockholm in 1972. It initiated a number of intergovernmental investigations, meetings and agreements on global environmental problems. These merged with life, and where some people are becoming very rich (Krugman, 2000:84-85). The production and expansion of goods and services beyond the domestic market through private or non-governmental actors, eliminating (or at least minimizing) government interference linking her market beyond regional to international levels. It means liberalization of production, distribution of goods and services beyond the domestic market thus leading to job/wealth creation (Viotti & Kauppi, 2009).

Emerging nation describes an economy which progressively moves from a weak industrial or subsistence level to a more advanced level of economic development with a dynamic and sustainable industrial sector having close links with advanced market economies in finance and investment system (Akpan, 2011).

Cultural values or mores are by people — mainly youths. Thus, youths are the torch-bearers and prime movers of cultural values in all societies the world over. Sustainable developments become relevant if the movers of values have roots — in training, health upon which other developmental processes rest. It is on this pedestal that one focus on education, health and leadership as a way of bequeathing something for the next generation.

Unemployment

Unemployment is commonly understood as a situation where individuals actively seeking jobs remain unhired (Hussain, 2014). Mayhew sees unemployment as involuntarily out of work. Structural unemployment occurs when the labour market no longer requires a particular skill.

Unemployment is everywhere both in the developing and developed economies. The significant thing is what is the rate between them? It is difficult to say the number of unemployed Nigerians. Unfortunately, neither the Manpower Board nor Ministry of Labour nor Federal Office of Statistics has accurate data on the unemployment rate in Nigeria. However, about six years ago, the Federal Office of Statistics claimed that the national unemployment figure was 3.6 percent outside those who have not registered with Labour Exchanges. Comparatively in countries such as USA and Britain it is only one digit ranging between 0.4 and 1 percent. The number is much higher since Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and Allied Institutions are turning out graduates in thousands into already saturated labour market. The other pool in the rural areas who did not attend higher school are part of the system. Recently, Chief Kola Jamodu, the President of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) estimates that in 2009 alone, 834 businesses, mostly small and medium enterprises, closed shops due to the hostile and uncompetitive operational environment, with an estimated 83,400 redundancies. One can imagine the figure today (Manuaka, 2010; Kogbara, 2010; Oshiomole, 2011).

Besides unemployment, many Nigerians are underemployed, or better still exploited because they lack an alternative for a basic living. It is not uncommon to see even master's degree holders earning ten thousand naira a month against their real worth. It is also not uncommon to see Nigeria University graduates becoming bus conductors — all because of frustration and perhaps to maintain family names. Some, too, are "Okada" drivers. It is because of these odd jobs engaged by

this group of Nigerians that Adesina and Ayodele of the News Magazine described them as "The Wasted Generation" (Adesina & Ayodele, 2011).

Unemployment has forced the youths into many illegal businesses — many are used for drug trade in overseas countries; some as political thugs, and some as prostitutes both locally and abroad. Apart from greed, unemployment has led many young Nigerians to be sentenced and serve jail terms abroad. According to a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 52 Nigerians were on death row in foreign countries; 3, 132 in foreign prisons, 1,640 in detention 5,145 (mostly young girls) estimates as trafficked victims; while 3,719 were awaiting deportation (Umukoro, 2009). There are other youths who are trying to cross the Sahara Desert to Europe in search of jobs, but many perished in such attempts. Apart from environmental degradation that gave birth to militancy in the Niger Delta, frustration caused by lack of employment or underemployment were responsible for kidnapping and hostage taking of company workers. Today kidnapping and hostage taking for ransom have become part of Nigeria's youth culture.

However, the important thing is that youths are part of the society and progressively turned to its development. Good or gainful employment has a linkage effect on the health of individuals. Good health translates and in turn gingers or motivates one to contribute positively to the economy. So when a large pool of youths finds themselves in the swamp of unproductively, where lies the hope for Nigeria's future?

Poverty

Poverty is a pronounced deprivation in well-being. It is when individuals or groups are deprived of access to food, shelter, clothing, education, security, and good health. The world Bank uses \$ 1 and \$2 per day spending, it is as the two poverty lines in its international poverty comparison, when one spends less than this poverty comparisons he is poor. This perhaps falls under absolute poverty as against relative poverty measured by economists (Hussain, 2004; Mayhe, 2009).

Education

Education is the power for development. It liberates the mind. It is a tool that prepares manpower to meet the requirement for the modern world in areas such as agriculture, health, security etc. Research indicates that about 45 percent of Nigerians do not have access to basic education, and out of this number young women are the most affected. The ratio of persons acquiring education has nothing to do with population. The percentage of people accessing education is an indication that when people are educated it is a plus because they would know the value to themselves — care for themselves and the environment which they live. They would also contribute positively to the economy thereby stimulating development. This means that education is the most potent instrument for alleviating and educational abolishing poverty. Indeed Nigeria's education system is in Shambles. Education policies are somersaults (today 6 years primary and 5 years secondary; the next 6.6.4.4 system and the next moment something else).

However, within the sector many youths do not have access to tertiary education either as a result of poverty, or as a result of inadequate facilities in our tertiary institution. Nigeria has about ninety-five universities, and well over thirty polytechnics, over forty colleges of education, institutes are many varied, and still it is difficult to secure a place in these institutions for higher education. It is from these frustrating groups that fall easy prey and become willing tools in the hands of dubious politicians and drug peddlers. The poor state of education has been responsible for migration of able Nigeria youths to seek for educational opportunities overseas. The number of universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education should not give an impression that Nigeria has a good standing in education attainment. No, this is wrong. In 2008, the Times Higher Education ranked the universities in the world, no Nigerian Universities made the list of the top 500 Universities

Worldwide. No Africa country made the hundred best Universities (Akintunde, 2009; Osuagwu, 2011; Ekpo, 2011).

Nigeria over the years has not funded education properly and has not adhered to the international standard recommendations for countries the world over. For instance UNESCO recommended that 26 percent of the Nation's budget as a global benchmark to fighting illiteracy especially in developing economies (Asiru, 2011). The United Nations recommend that developing nations set aside at least 2 percent of their GDP on Research and Development. In the same corollary, the organization of African Unity (O.A.U) now African Union (A.U.), in its Lagos Plan of Action of 1980 recommended that member states commit at least 1 percent of their GDP to Science and Technology. Between 1985 and now Nigeria's percentage of GDP commitment to Research and Development lingers between 0.1 percent and 0.6 percent. Comparatively, industrialized countries such as Britain, Japan, Germany, U.S.A that have attained development devote not less than 2.5 percent of their GDP to R & D. Nigeria hoping to belong to the clique of developed economies by 2020 is still lalloping behind in Science and Technology (CBN, 1994; Akpan, 2005; Akpan, 2008). The youths therefore are in position to watch the nation.

Health

On the health sector, Nigerian youths also face some challenges. Many youths do not have access to affordable medical treatment because of its high cost. Often times, one may misconstrue the fact that one is well, when in actual fact or with examination one is very sick. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (Achalal and Achalu, 1999). From the above corollary how many Nigerians or indeed youths are healthy taking into consideration the earlier used indices.

For more than two decades, Nigerian health care system was and still in coma, and was attributed to the country's poor governance and leadership of the military era. With the advent of democracy in 1999, it was expected the situation would change, that was not to be. Between 1990 and 2003, the federal government for instance budgeted between 0.2 and 2.7 for this sector (Ali-Akpajiaka, 2003).

Apart from the migration of qualified medical personnel abroad for greener pasture, the major challenge to Health Care in Nigeria is underfunding as mentioned earlier. It is estimated that over 40,000 Nigerian medical doctors are based in North America and Europe, leaving the country with rising dearth of qualified medical doctors (Omoragbo, 2011). Indeed, Nigeria has been ranked poorly in major health care indices globally. Nigeria is persistently challenged by diseases and ailment such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, typhoid fever, cholera, guinea worm, meningitis etc. Poverty, poor health system, hunger among others have driven Nigerians to a lower standard of life thus recorded a dwindling life expectancy which currently stands at 47 years. If life expectancy is 47, how many years of productivity would the youths put in for the development of Nigerian economy? Very little. Good health is a pivot for increased productivity. When the youths and indeed the working population are healthy, other things being equal such as adequate manpower and security, there is expansion in economy and that too affects the wellbeing of her citizens.

Leadership

Nigeria since independence has been a victim of poor leadership and it would appear the scenario may stay for a long of time. The term leadership is derived from the meaning to occupy the first position. It translates to mean guiding, motivating, persuading and exemplifying. That we have been missing for years.

A cursory look at Nigeria, reveal that there are more than a million youth organizations or associations scattered all over. But none of these groups has been able to nurture someone to lead them positively. Going through history, it would be recalled that Nigerians youths organization led

by Solanke fought alongside with the forebears to obtain independence for Nigeria; it was a youth group which battled Tafawa Balewa's government to abolish a military pact Nigeria signed with Britain at independence.

However, in the 1970s National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS) used to be a force to be reckoned with especially during Mr. Okewo's days as a leader. Since then nothing is heard except that they belong to 'settlement' camp. This means that they are supposed to be leaders who should defend their actions but become pawns in the hands of dubious politician who pillage our economy and render Nigeria useless among comity of nations. Today Nigerian youths have no leader — very bad and unfortunate that expresses the reasons they are sidelined in the Nigerian project.

Issues such as corruption and greed are products of poor or bad leadership. Nigerian leaders are not transparent; they are corrupt reckless and poor managers of the economy. Because they are corrupt, and greedy that explains why public functionaries are corrupt and have no respect for the rule of law and accountability. Corruption hamstring the economy. The youths know this, but how many of them can really voice it out. Some of them are the beneficiaries these corrupt practices through dubious means. Insecurity in the Nigeria state is planned by the elite class and executed by the youths for a fee. Militancy, and other vices are carried out by the youths.

In the last general election in Akwa Ibom for instance, Nigerian youths (mainly National Youth Corps members) were used to rig elections by extending peanuts to them by mean politicians. That was greed, it was hoped, since they are the future leaders, they would lead by example, but it turned out to be a failure, meaning the youths have lost their future.

Summary and Conclusion

The paper examined the relationship existing between culture, security and sustainable development and saw that culture is a way of life of a group of people or communities. It maintains that security is an aspect of culture. Security is an aspect of governance and governance evolved from culture. Insecurity within nation states such ours is caused by national government to address the special needs of its citizens. Such needs may include hunger, poverty, unemployment inequality and justice. For, security and development to take root within a cultural setting, strong political, economic and social institutions must be put in place. All these have a strong correlation with sustainable development. It is also discovered that youths of a given cultural setting are the torch bearers for development, their good upbringing and training in all perspectives would enhance development. By conclusion, good leadership, provision of educational facilitates and good health services would add value to human life and lead to development. In the process, they would be bequeath something for posterity.

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