CAN NIGERIA IN HER TURBULENT TIMES FIND A MODEL IN MARK 10:45a?: A DISCOURSE ON LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract
Starting from the days when African Traditional Religion thrived immensely to the emergence of modern western religions, the continent of Africa which Nigeria is significantly part and parcel of has always been saturated with religious beliefs and principles. Thus, it is not surprising to see scholars like Mbiti who clearly observes that the African people are notoriously religious. Hence wherever the African is, there is religion and the consciousness of religion. An African weighs his/her success and progress in accordance with his/her mutual cordial relationship with his or her *'chi'*. In fact, it calls for a critical religious scrutiny whenever a religious African starts to experience strings and series of misfortune in life. Meanwhile, since the end of colonial rule in Nigeria, the country has continued to experience political and leadership instability which is even at its peak in recent times. The more hope is nursed for a better tomorrow, the more things keep deteriorating. This paper, through an exegetical lens as well as the consultation of some relevant research and written works attempts a wake-up call to all Nigerians and Africans at large both the leaders and the led to the religious/scriptural injunction in Mark 10:45 which deals with Christ's submission on his vocation to serve and not to be served as a leader. It is of the candid opinion that if this scripture and its injunction could be taken to heart, meditated upon and rightly implemented, it would go a long way in rendering a very long lasting solution to our leadership quagmire where so many other remedies have proved abortive.

Key Words: Turbulent, Model, Leadership and Transformation

Introduction

It would not be an overstatement to maintain that there is virtually no nation without leadership problems or challenges. But then, the challenging question here is this; when the leadership problems or challenges of a nation or country are the leaders themselves, how can the problems be solved? Nigeria, apparently without doubt is richly blessed with innumerable resources which should make her citizens live comfortably and happy. Thus, one can confidently state that the problem with Nigeria is not the unavailability of resources to sustain human life and its existence but on the distribution and administration of these resources which lie in the hands of those in leadership positions; the political leaders. The caliber of leaders we have in Nigeria today are people who see their position as a position of massive profit making and no more a position of service to the masses who voted them into power. According to Ezeanya (2009), "Once a person has no fear of God, the person loses respect for humans. Nigerian leaders had sent God on vacation in several ways and therefore plunged the country headlong into endless woeful descent to a bottomless pit" (p. 197). This is to show that religion with its principles can actually influence the decisions and policies of our leaders if adhered to. Similarly, Asaju, Arome and Mukaila (2014) rightly note that leadership is undoubtedly a very big challenge in Africa, and Nigeria in particular. In their words:

> Having a competent, effective and purposeful leadership that is capable of turning its highly chorused great potentials into real economic and political power has been quite elusive for over five decades of her independence…The leadership challenge in Nigeria has degenerated into a crisis situation, which is now a clog on its wheel of striving for development (p. 117).

From the above view, it is obvious that the high rate of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria is not as a result of lack of economic resources but a clear resultant effect of leadership crisis. This also must have been what Babalola (2010) saw when he opines that leadership deficit is the root of the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty. He thus goes on to argue that when you see a poor country, look out for the form of governance there, then you will observe leadership challenges. This paper attempts to bring transformation to poor leadership standard in Africa with special emphasis in Nigeria where the leaders have deleted one of the most vital ingredients in leadership which is 'service'. Present day leaders no longer wish to acknowledge the fact that a leader is called first and foremost to serve and not to be served. Kgatle (2012) maintained a similar opinion when he dictums that Africa is not in financial crisis but a leadership crisis because in most African countries, the political leadership does not have the interest of the people at

heart but are only hungry for power and positions. In other words, focus here is mainly on what could be termed a 'servant leadership' as seen in the words of Jesus Christ himself who remained a typical example of what a true leader should be and look like.

Hence, the researchers here still believe that with proper exegetical analysis and exposition on Mark 10:45a, coupled with other secondary sources, enough awareness could be created on what makes up a positive change oriented leadership and thereby provide the required succor to the country Nigeria in her present turbulent times. However, to ensure a comprehensive discourse, succinct explanation of some of the key words would be undertaken as follows.

Clarification of Concepts

Turbulent
The word 'turbulent', is an adjective from the noun 'turbulence'. Hornby (2010) explains the word 'turbulence' as a "situation in which there is a lot of sudden change, confusion, disagreement and sometimes violence". Its adjective 'turbulent' is therefore usually placed before whatever noun it modifies. In this work, 'turbulent' is placed before the noun 'times' and from the clarification thus far, a true observer can hardly deny the fact that Nigeria is facing and experiencing times of utmost confusion and disagreement which is seen among the different regions and ethnic groups. To use the word 'violence' to narrate or describe the rate at which lives and properties are being wasted in the country would be an understatement. The times in present day Nigeria are without doubt very difficult to control.

Model
The term 'model' is both a noun and a verb. In this paper however, it is used as the former. As a noun, model, according to Hornby (2010), is like a copy of something or a design. In other words, he presents it as something such as a system that can be copied by other people. It could equally be a person or thing considered to be an excellent example. Undoubtedly, the nature of leadership in Nigeria indicates that our leaders have lost sense of what a true leadership entails or that they have refused to follow the right model of leadership and have chosen the wrong one. The problem we have in Nigeria is beyond multiples and as such requires the quest for a quality and unique solution. This is what this research work attempts to render or procure.

Leadership
This is the major concept in this research work and therefore requires a little bit of an in-depth clarification. The concept of leadership is without doubt one of the most frequently discussed and yet less comprehended even amongst

scholars. Thus, many scholars as Asaju et al (2014) observe, have ended up defining it to suit their discussion. For Killerman (1984), leadership is an interpersonal process that can take place between two people. The two people here are apparently the leader and the led. In the words of Gardener (1990): "leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held or shared by the leader and his or her followers" (p.1). However, the most suitable definition of leadership for this work is seen in the work of Jones (2002) who renders leadership as an "activity which produces progress, rather than stagnancy" (p.45). In his view, progress is achieved through establishing direction, aligning and motivating people. Meanwhile, in the model of leadership we have in Nigeria today, the reverse is the case. Our leaders, instead of motivating and leading us into progress, only succeed in getting us deeply rooted into something uglier than stagnancy.

Nahavandi (1997) also notes that in the process of leadership, there can never be a leader without followers. He thus insists that leadership always involves interpersonal influence or persuasion. It is then quite unfortunate to note that in Nigeria, our leaders only maintain interpersonal relationship with their followers during election /campaign period after which they face only themselves.

Transformation

Hornby (2010) presents the word or noun 'transformation' as a complete change in somebody or something. The researchers in this paper, so much hold the belief that even a layman in Nigeria today, having been experiencing the ordeal ongoing in it, need not much convincing to accept a positive complete change towards a better Nigeria. This transformation should start from the top because when the head suffers, it affects the whole body. It is therefore the belief of the researchers that once our present day leaders can see their position as position of selfless service, Nigeria would definitely be transformed for good.

Theoretical Framework

Attempt is made here to present a suitable and workable theory for this research work. This would go a long way in giving the work more coherence.

Nawaz and Khan (2016) opine that numerous explanations, classifications, theories and definitions about leadership abound in contemporary literature. They however conclude that despite the multiplicity of these theories, none of them is completely irrelevant to modern scholarship. Meanwhile, for the sake of conciseness and convenience, this paper would not go into outlining all the theories of leadership in existence but would rather go straight to the

one must suitable and fitting for the research. Hence, the researchers here submit to the 'Transformational Theory of Leadership'.

Transformational Theory of Leadership

House and Shamir (1993) who are amongst the proponents of this theory posit that transformational leadership distinguishes itself from the various other theories of leadership. This is because of its alignment to a greater good as it deals with carrying the followers or the led along in the processes and activities of the organization involved. Nawaz and khan (2016) therefore submit that "transformational leaders engage in interactions with followers based on common values, beliefs and goals". They further claim that the theory births a leader who "attempts to induce followers to reorder their needs by transcending self-interests and strive for higher order needs". In their view also, the transformational theory conforms to Maslow's 'higher order need theory'.

Transformational leadership is a course that changes and approach targets on beliefs, values and attitudes that enlighten leaders' practices and the capacity to lead change as suggested by MacGregor Bums (cited in Nawaz and Khan, 2016). He is also of the opinion that "the transformational leaders are considered by their capacity to identify the need for change, gain the agreement of others, create a vision that guides change and embed the change" (p.4). In the words of Nawaz and Khan (2016), they are "visionary leaders who seek to appeal to their followers' better nature and move them towards higher and more universal needs and purposes". This is the exact form and nature of leadership required in Nigeria today.

The Turbulent Nature of Leadership in Nigeria

Decades of both military and civilian government (post-independence) only left Nigeria grossly backward in terms of development. Series of military coups and counter coups by the young khaki boys frustrated the fragile political and economic situation of the country. Ezeanya (2009) remarks that:

> Since the military govern with decree which they arbitrarily fabricated without hindrance from democratic checks and balances, they dish out authoritarian, totalitarian and dictatorial government which satisfies their selfish desires to neglect the wishes and aspirations of the people (p. 186).

Apparently, as a result of this, many sectors of the country were massively drained and the cost of living became stupendously high. Even when the civilian and democratic rule came into play, instead of things getting better, a new era of corruption began and within a short while, we saw the old khaki

boys translating into civilians to once more emerge as civilian leaders. Thus, beginning from then till now, gross impunity, irresponsibility and wastefulness of resources have been the hallmark of leadership in Nigeria's post-independence era. The country was met with leaders who are always violently ready to retain power by all means. Second tenure for many of them, became a must and whether by hook or crook, they will always emerge leaders, carrying on their charade.

Agbodike (2002) rightly notes that "it is also a common knowledge that Nigeria's political leaders have failed over the years to be guided by the principles of egalitarian political philosophy which places primary concern on the interests of the common man" (p.104). The attendant outcome of poor leadership in Nigeria reflects on every strata of the Nigerian society. This is because these self serving men and women keep on recycling and posing themselves as leaders. They clearly see these public and administrative offices as business investments. Oguejiofor (2009) must have observed all these for him to have boldly stated that "there are obviously things wrong with the system of governance we choose to describe as democracy in Nigeria" (p.21).

Furthermore, it is not surprising to see that these calibers of leaders do spend heavily to see that they rig their way into the offices they are vying for. The gross electoral violence and misconducts at almost every region of the country would only reveal their real motives. Chronicles of death, thuggery, kidnapping, destruction of election materials and other valuables have become a significant part of every general election. Apparently, selfless service, equitable representation and true leadership have all been nailed on the altar of self interest.

Also contributing to the turbulent and poor nature of leadership in Nigeria especially in the political sphere is the poor attitudinal orientation of the led. These set of people due to different biases actively and passively encourage the continual duplication and election of these selfish leaders. Hence, transformational leadership is very needful if we must go beyond our present state to truly become the giant of Africa indeed.

However, in as much as every progressive society is a combined effort of both the leaders and the followers, where the governing elites willfully sabotage the government and society, then it may not be possible for the led to thrive adequately. Leadership remains a necessary key to the success story of any nation or group. On this note, Nnamani and Anyamele (2013) noted that "the character and conduct of leadership would determine the level and degree of sacrifices made as well as the level of honesty exhibited by citizens" (p.317).

It is therefore very pertinent, imperative and urgent to establish a working and people oriented leadership in Nigeria. This leadership style would cut across all levels of leadership in the country. The aim in not just the transformation of political leadership, but all forms of public, administrative, religious and other organizational units in Nigeria. Chukwujekwu (2011) comments that "this situation is very pathetic and worrisome whenever one thinks of the very abundant natural, human resources with which God endowed Nigeria more than most countries in Africa and even beyond" (pp.1-2).

Nevertheless, restoring selfless and responsible leadership is not a lost course. It only calls for serious efforts which must be made to ensure that the re-orientation of the people becomes concrete. Now, more than ever, Nigeria needs sound and selfless leaders to restore and take the nation out of the quagmire that has since eroded the joy of the common man in Nigeria.

Finding a Model in Mark 10:45a

Thus far, with the brief discourse on the problematic nature of leadership in Nigeria, one need not much convincing to accept that fact that the country truly needs help in times like these. Hence, this paper here, presents this text which if properly imbibed can actually render the help required for the transformation of the concept of leadership in Nigeria.

The Nestle Aland Greek translation presents Mark 10:45a as *kai. ga.r o` ui`o.j tou/ avnqrw,pou ouvk h=lqen diakonhqh/nai avlla. diakonh/sai*
There is apparently not much variants in the text when compared to other Greek manuscripts. Hence, we go straight into parsing the few conjugated verbs and the analysis of the text.
ui`o.j is a nominative masculine singular noun 'son'.
avnqrw,pou is genitive masculine singular noun 'man' but in the text, it is 'of man'.
h=lqen is conjugated in the 3rd person singular form from the aorist indicative, active voice of the verb *evrcomai* which means 'to come'. In the text, it is presented in the negative aorist form meaning 'came not' or 'did not come'.
diakonhqh/nai is conjugated in the infinitive aorist passive from the verb *diakonew* meaning 'to wait upon' or 'to serve'. Its nominalization is rendered as *diakonoj* which means 'a minister' or 'one called to serve'. In the text, it is rendered as 'to be ministered to'
diakonh/sai is equally conjugated in the infinitive aorist active form from the verb *diakonew* which translates as 'to serve' or 'to wait upon'.

We take our working translation of the above as; "For the son of man also came not to be served but to serve". Thus, from the analysis so far, one can easily deduce that a minister who is also a leader is called to wait upon others

in terms of service and not others waiting upon him/her. A minister functions as a servant. In other words, he/she is called to serve.

Meanwhile, one must not forget that *kai. ga.r o` ui`o.j tou/ avnqrw,pou ouvk h=lqen diakonhqh/nai avlla. diakonh/sai* is only but a part of Mark 10:45. It must be viewed within its context to understand it. Reading the text from V. 37, we see two brothers, James and John, who are among the Disciples of Christ approach him. Here, they made a request which Christ himself, said he cannot grant. These two brothers demanded that Christ should permit them to always sit, one at his right side and another at his left which in other words are leadership positions. A careful reader would even observe that from the moment of making this request, the other disciples were said to have started to be indignant at James and John (Mark 10:41).

Stein (2008) is of the view that Jesus Christ, in response to these brothers' request, "offers a model of leadership that stood in stark contrast to the leadership models of his day and to those of our day as well" (p.489). Here, Jesus taught that instead of seeking power and greatness or status, his disciples who wish to be great, should strive to serve others. Unfortunately, however, the history of leadership in Nigeria today is a direct opposite of what Christ presented here. Our form of leadership is coloured in selfish ambition and low or no amount of sacrifice. Our crop of leaders finds it hard to balance between power and service. The model presented by Christ here remains the ultimate model of leadership for our country Nigeria.

The Servant-leader Position
One the major problems facing leadership in Nigeria today is what we call in this paper, 'the notion of self-ordained leaders'. With corruption and other social ills going on the country, present-day leaders always have this notion that it is their struggles and smartness during campaign that ushered them into these positions of leadership. Part of Jesus' response to James and John over their request indicates that leadership position is granted by God the Father (Mk 10:40). If our leaders would imbibe this mindset, serving as a leader, would not be an issue. Kgatle (2016) has this conception when he opined that:

> Jesus is only recognizing the Father as the supreme authority. He is recognizing the sovereignty of God the Father. Jesus is not delegating upwards, but observes protocol. 'It shall be given to them for whom it is prepared'. Who are the lucky ones? Who are the pre-selected, pre-elected or pre-destined? James and John may feel sidelined here, but Jesus' explanation about the prerequisite makes it

> possible for anyone to take part or be the leader
> (p.110).

Furthermore, both the present and upcoming leaders in Nigeria should be properly groomed and schooled on what true servant-leader should be. Greenleaf (2008) explains a servant leader as "one who influences others towards the accomplishment of group goals primarily by making sure their highest priority needs are met" (p.7). With leaders who possess and apply this kind of knowledge in government, Nigeria can actually become the best country in the world. We need leaders who place the need of the masses before theirs. This must be why Chu (2011) equally presents the phrase 'servant leadership' as "a style of leadership that places the good of the organization above self-interest of the leader" (p.15).

Donahue and Harrington (2002) observe that the New Testament letters diakonoj is often used to refer to a church official (deacon), but in the context of Jesus and the twin brothers, it carries the more basic sense of 'servant'. By recommending that his followers become the 'slave to all', Jesus underlines His ideal of universal service towards others. In the words of Kgatle (2016),

> Jesus is asking his disciples to be different from the worldly system of leadership. 'It shall not be so among you', in other words, the disciples should not be like the Gentile Leaders. They should not lead by exercising authority or by lordship over others. Jesus introduces another style different from what the disciples already know as the norm. In contrast to exercising authority and exercising lordship, they should minister and serve others (p. 113).

The above should serve as a leadership guide and manual to contemporary leaders in Nigeria and Africa at large if there must be a positive transformation in our present nature of leadership. France (2002) is not of different view when he suggests that "When Jesus said it shall not be so among them, the natural expectation of society is reversed and leadership is characterized by service, by being under authority of others instead of being in authority" (p.19). Kgatle (2016) then sums up the whole argument by stating that "Leadership is not an ambition to occupy the highest rank within a recognized hierarchy, but to become like a slave and serve others". Here, we join him in calling on the James and John of our time and anyone who aspires to be a leader to make an adjustment to what they had already conceived as leadership and become servants of all.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is often said that when the purpose of a thing is not known, abuse is inevitable. It should not be taken for granted here that majority of the so called leaders in Nigeria today and Africa at large knows little or nothing as to what pertains to true and transformational leadership. If actually they know, a big doubt remains as to whether everyone would be aspiring to be in leadership position especially at the political sphere in Nigeria. Modern day leaders in Nigeria have to come to the knowledge of rendering selfless service while in authority. Just as one of the authors cited in this work rightly said, "leadership is not an ambition to occupy the highest rank in hierarchy" and until our present-day leaders acknowledge this, Nigeria will continue to crawl when it comes to development in all sectors of its existence.

By way of recommendation, this paper is echoing a 'yes' to the question presented in its topic on whether Nigeria can find a model in Mark 10:45a. Multiple solutions abound in this text if all, both the leaders and the led should unit and understand that:

1. Positive transformation in leadership is pivotal to the progress and development of Nigeria and should be wholesomely welcomed by all.
2. Nigeria and other developing countries in Africa need to adopt servant leadership as their leadership style.
3. Finally, our religious leaders should not fail to always use the pulpit to remind congregants that it is God who puts people in authority, hence anyone whole mounts the leadership post should serve in love and humility and not be bossy and autocratic expecting to be served and worshipped by the masses.

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