

Value Orientations in Militancy and Corrupt Attitude Formation and Change, Apanacea Fornational Development

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Abstract: *Objective:* Corruption, militancy, religious and ethnic conflicts have continued to be the major obstacles to political, social and economic development of Nigeria. This paper explores the role of harmony and security value orientations and attitude linkages towards corruption and militancy in Nigeria and their role towards economic development and national unity. *Methods:* This is a descriptive analytical essay paper that explored previous research findings as basis for the conclusions reached. *Conclusions:* there is need for the political leaders and policy makers in Nigeria to strike a balance between harmony and security value orientations to bring about reduction in corruption, militancy, and foster national unity and development.

Key words: Value Orientations • Militancy • Corrupt Attitude Formation • Change • National Development

INTRODUCTION

The theme of the 206 National Congress of the Nigerian Psychological Association Promoting peaceful and inclusive Societies for sustainable Development through Psychology” is to say the least, very appropriate, and in this period in time that Nigeria is passing through harrowing economic experiences. The President, General Mohammadu Buhari has severally, since assuming office, painted a picture of the plummeting economic condition of the Nation. Almost all the state Governments have decried the dwindling revenue allocation to the states which has made it difficult for payment of staff salaries, even when salaries are paid, the Federal and state treasuries are depleted to the level that no other economic development like provision of basic amenities could be carried out. The power sector is in crisis, thus, epileptic power supply all over the Nation. The hospitals and health sector is in shambles, roads are not maintained, except in few states like Enugu, and Anambra, where the past government did much on road construction, and the current Governor of Ebonyi state is doing his best to lift the face of the state roads. The educational sector is almost collapsing. Armed robbery, thuggery, kidnapping and all forms of social vices are on the increase. Food and

agricultural productions are scarcely enough. These and more are indicators of the state of economic crises in the Nation.

The crises in the National economy did not just come in a day, nor is it the outcome of one cause. Leading in this situation is corruption. Mostly fingered by experts, scholars and well meaning Nigerians is that corruption is the bane of the Nigerian society. Corrupt leadership since independence, has mismanaged the Nigerian economy, thus, bringing the country on her knees. Also militancy, religious crises, struggle for leadership and tribal and social disharmonies are all creating obstacles to National growth and development. Masked in all these is the monolithic Nigerian economy.

The monolithic nature of the Nigerian economy did not help matters. the Nigerian economy which in the onset was designed to be a diversified economy, basing on agrarian products, high deposit of minerals and natural resources for the raw material supply for her industrialization, suddenly drifted to reliance on crude oil as the major source of her income, starting in the early 70’s till date. Immediately petroleum was discovered in the later part of 1960’s, when oil exploration started, the successive Nigerian Governments devoted all attention and relied heavily on the money accruing from exportation

of oil to the neglect of the agricultural products and other natural resources that hitherto, had been the mainstay of the economy. Because during the oil boom in the mid 1970's, the Federal Government was realizing much Petro-dollar income and the states were receiving more than enough allocations from the Federation account, their internally generated revenues (IGR) like taxation were abysmally neglected. Since governments did not care much, those operating the IGR for the governments, started to help themselves with what they were able to generate without remitting them into the government's treasury. Again, this created loopholes for people to evade tax, especially the corporate property rates were evaded because those who do the tax drive were ready to compromise and bargain with the individual owners of the properties to accept the much they were not paying to the government coffers.

The current trend in the economy of the Nation has brought about all the crises, the ethnic struggles and conflict found in Nigeria. The reliance on oil has brought about the crises in the Niger-Delta area where the people and teeming population of youths are facing abject poverty and squalor. Their feelings of deprivation and criminal neglect by the Federal Government whom they believe is forcefully taking the resources from their area to develop the Northern and Western states, while they suffer oil spillage. Pollutions have forced the youths to take to armed struggles to counter this neglect. This has led to the emergence of groups like the Niger-Delta Avengers (NDA). While the Independent People of Biafra (IPOB) and Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) are fighting for the liberation of the people of the South East of Nigeria who feel they are also criminally marginalized in their shares of both political and economic fortunes of the Nation. Due to those who get the political power distribute the resources and amenities in lopsided manners that favour them.

Up North, a militant group, Boko Haram took up arms, starting from the immediate past regime of Goodluck Jonathan, causing a very disastrous havoc on both humans and properties in the North Eastern states of the country. Though their grouse is hardly known, they claim they are fighting against Western education and Christian religion and to enthrone Moslem fundamentalism. The activities of Boko Haram and other militant groups like the Fulani Herdsmen have caused a great blow to economic growth and development of the Nation.

The past administration of Goodluck Jonathan was brought to a standstill by the activities of Boko Haram, and corruption amongst the members of the successive

regimes depleted a good part of the National resources that would have been harnessed for the development of the nation. Presently, President Mohamadu Buhari is fighting corruption and insurgencies of Boko Haram, Niger-Delta Avengers, MASSOB, etc. in four fronts, thereby stretching the military capability so thinly. Though the fight is bearing some good effects, but Nigerian are yet to get the desired result. The basic questions to be raised are what are the human and behavioural factors connected with these social maladies in the Nation and what could Psychology contribute to the fight in keeping Nigeria safe to achieve meaningful development.

Value Orientation Towards Economic Development:

Economic development in Nigeria and states like Ebonyi with poor communities is not solely a matter of conducting market analysis, identifying needs, making rational decisions. Just as important, perhaps even more important than the city's economic profile and market analysis, is an assessment of the state's value orientation towards economic development [1].

The value orientation of leaders and the citizens are quite critical to these boiling issues that are detrimental to National development. Values determine what one sees, what one considers relevant, and what one believes is true, what one is willing to do, how much time, and how much money one will invest [1]. Accordingly, the Value Orientation of the national and state and even community leaders and policy makers is likely to be the determining factor for the policies adopted and implemented in their various states and Local Governments.

A rational scientific method would assume that objective data will determine the policies leadership adopts and the actions leaders take. Rarely, this is so [1]. According to him, Value Orientations determine developmental policies. Therefore, it is very paramount to understand the value orientations of the National and state leaders, the law makers and the citizens towards economic development of Nigeria. Understanding Value Orientations of both the leaders and the led in a multi-cultured, ethnic and economic society like Nigeria is a complex task. Few studies, if any, have been conducted in this wise. A good starting point for proffering solution to the Nigerian politico-social and economic crises would be to study the Nigerian Value system. Therefore, the need arises for this present paper.

Attitude Formation and Change: Another key element of Psychological analysis that would play significant role in solving Nigerian economic, social, political and religious

crises is the understanding of the processes of attitude formation and change. Basically, it would be necessary to understand how Nigerians formed their attitudes towards these issues of national discuss.

The Attitude Construct: An attitude is a predisposition to act in a favourable or disfavourable manner towards an object. It is a psychological tendency or mental predisposition that is expressed by evaluating an object or entity with some degree of like or dislike, favour or disfavour [2]. According to her, attitudes are affective, reflective emotions or feelings attached to categories or objects, (People, things, place, issues, ideas, etc). Attitudes have three components; cognitive, affective and behavioural.

Theorist who favour a cognitive base for attitude formation assume that belief are formed about the attitude object (e.g. corruption, militancy etc), through a cognitive learning process. As people gain information about the attitude object – “corruption”, new or altered beliefs may result as a result of that exposure [2]. If altered or new beliefs develop, they will be followed by changed attitudes. The cognitive basis for attitude change implies that beliefs and attitudes are formulated through the process of reasoning. In contrast, theories that postulate either affective or behavioral antecedents to attitude formation give precedence to stimuli-response mechanisms over cognitive mechanisms in explaining this process.

From State of Innocence to Fantastically Corrupt: To illustrate the cognitive base for attitude formation, [3] in his write up “from state of innocence to fantastically corrupt”, used character portraits in Chinua Achebe’s novels to explain four broad stages in the development of corruption in Nigeria. These are the stage of innocence or unawareness by natives that they were taking part in corruption; the stage of awareness but reluctance to participate; the stage of active participation, and the stage of internationalization. [4]

Security and Harmony Orientations and Their Roles in Attitude Change and Formation The affective or emotional experience as the formative base for attitudes is in line with early theoretical accounts of classical conditioning, which connotes that attitudes result from the pairing of an attitude object with a stimulus that elicits an emotional response. The third alternative is to posit consistency between prior behavior and attitudes, arguing that individuals will express attitudes consistent with their memory of past behavior. In Nigeria contest the two forgoing explanations of attitude formation for

attitudinal object like corruption is very dramatically true of the Nigerian political leadership whose corrupt practices are encouraged by the affluent life style of those in power who loot the public funds and brandish them in flashy cars, expensive buildings etc. and these go about encouraging them and others who come to position of authority to join the bandwagon. Due to the fact that corrupt leaders are rewarded by the lootings they make, corruption get imbued in them. Some comments made in social media by young Nigerians on the war against corruption by the present administration illustrate this view. “We are born in corruption, grew up in corruption, so corruption is now part of us”. So, Buhari leave us.

For the present fight against corruption to succeed in Nigeria, there must be a thorough overhaul of the value system and orientation in order to be in consonance with attitude formation and change. A few studies reflected this view point. [5] noted that the influence of security and harmony value orientations on attitudes and attitude change depends on;

- the degree to which imbalance exists in the importance placed on security and harmony values, i.e. the degree to which individuals are predominantly security oriented or harmony oriented.
- the degree to which individuals place equal importance on harmony and security values, (i.e., the degree to which individuals are dualist as opposed to relativists), and
- the degree to which individuals perceive the attitude object, for example, corruption, militancy etc) advancing or hindering the pursuit of prized values (i.e. the degree to which individuals make value attitude linkages). Through examining research findings relating to each of these factors, [5], demonstrated that security and harmony orientations are implicated in both attitudinal stability and change, though not always directly.

He stressed that stable value-attitude linkages are most likely to be found when Psychological processes (cognitive styles) lock in a particular way of thinking about the attitude object. Cognitive styles have been associated with value imbalance, i.e. dissonance, particularly the kind of imbalance that favours security over harmony values. For the population overall, the harmony value orientation tends to be stronger than the security value orientation. Even so, [6] contended, where harmony values dominate notably, evidence of resistance to change has been found.

It is impressive to note that despite evidence of cognitive styles tying values to particular attitude, the security and harmony value orientations are most useful for explaining movement in attitude when value importance stays the same. Understanding this phenomenon involves shifting attention away from value importance and on to the question of whether the attitude object is perceived to strengthen or weaken the chances of realizing prized values. Reflection on value-attitude linkages may occur within an individual's value-attitude belief system with the experience of cognitive dissonance. Dissonance can motivate attitude change with value importance remaining constant [6]; [7]. Literature revealed that political discuss in democracies operates at another level as well, opening value attitude linkages to public scrutiny. Social and political changes in the external environment such as the global recession, climate change, international conflict, and homelessness, access to health care, and education and migration of refugees touch people's lives and create new value-attitude linkages. The sharing and comparing of experiences, information, and opinions challenge people's perceptions of how attitude objects affect value attainment. When value attitude linkages change as a result of public deliberations, so do attitudes [5]

Previous studies by [5] linked security and harmony value orientations to cognitive styles of conservatism, right wing authoritarianism and social dominance. Conservatism was conceptualized by him as far as uncertainty and was measured using [7] C scale. Result showed conservatives were most likely to embrace two value clusters, one dedicated to "religiosity and personal restraints," the other security through order, status and adherence to conventional norms (incorporating the security value orientation). Additionally conservatives downplayed values that represented "humanistic and expressive concerns" incorporating the harmony value orientation). Value imbalance that prioritized security over harmony was part of a set of values preferences that distinguishes those who feared uncertainty from others and they were negatively disposed to social events signifying greater equality and freedom.

In their study, [4] provided further insights into the relationship between value orientations and cognitive styles. They linked right-wing authoritarianism with security value orientation, and social dominance with low regard for both security and harmony values. Heaven, Organ, [3] went further to prove that cognitive styles mediate the relationship between security and Harmony value orientations and attitude. The stronger an

individual's security value orientation, the greater the propensity for right-wing authoritarianism. Accordingly, social dominance was best predicted by low regard for harmony values, and to a lesser extent, support for security.

Value-Attitude Linkage: [5], showed that early models of the relationship between values and attitudes identified two determinants of attitude. The first, he stated, was the importance of the value in question. The second was the degree to which the individual perceived the attitude object advancing pursuit of this value. If the value was highly prized and if the attitude object aided value attainment, a positive attitude to the object was expected. If on the other hand, the attitude object would hinder pursuit of the value, a negative attitude to the object might be expected.

Evidence has shown, example, [5] that when security and harmony values attain a state of balance and highly regarded as is the case for most people, the importance of value alone is unlikely to drive or motivate attitude. Taking a look at the Nigerian situation for most people, the value prevalent now is wealth. Get rich quickly attitude has become part of the national psyche.

Having a strong security orientated leader like the current President Buhari of Nigeria, or a President that is harmony oriented, like the immediate past President Goodluck Jonathan, alone cannot motivate a behavior change or attitudinal change towards corruption. This is explained as earlier stated that having a strong security value orientation without a strong harmony orientation is a risk factor for embracing cognitive styles that are associated with bias and rigidity in formulating political attitudes. Value alone is unlikely to drive attitude of Nigerians away from "grab grab" attitude.

This is why the fight against corruption of the present administration, in the long run, may not achieve the desired goal if only security values are adopted by the government, but adopting both harmony and security orientations will. Adopting both harmony and security values by the governments, will drive attitudes of Nigerians away from corrupt practices, reduce militancy, political and religious crises.

Militancy and the Niger Delta Crises: Adopting harmony value orientation by the leadership of the Nation would bear more positive results in dealing with the militants in the Niger- Delta areas and the Independent People of Biafra (IPOB) than being security oriented. Leaders who have strong security oriented values are predicted to have

a greater propensity for right wing authoritarianism. Right wing authoritarianism and social dominance predict attitudes in favour of war and prejudice towards Niger-Delta people and the Igbos.

[5], postulated that having a strong value orientation without a strong harmony orientation is a risk factor for embracing cognitive style that are associated with bias and rigidity in formulating political attitudes. This may inform why most of the political appointments made since the inception of the present Buhari administration seem to be lopsided in favour of a particular section of the country. This could explain why the militant group, the Niger-Delta Avengers (NDA) has taken to arms to fight what they may perceive as injustice and marginalization.

CONCLUSION

Expectedly, strong security value oriented leadership is more conservative in their cognitive style and downplay values that represent humanistic and expressive concerns that does not augur well for democracy. This is why it is necessary that the present administration must incorporate harmony values that are humanistic and put the expressive concerns of the people into considerations in formulating government policies rather than being rigid. If the expressive concerns of the people fighting the government at various fronts are looked into, the wasteful resources used by government in fighting them will be harnessed into more productive sectors of the economy. This will bring more development and ensure a strong and united country.

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