Making Sense of Ethical Democracy in Nigeria in the 21st Century

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ABSTRACT

The practice of democracy without insisting on its ethical values is bound to fail in any part of the world. This is what is currently going on in Nigeria. Are the principles of democracy congenial to these values? If they are, why do Nigerian politicians who are operating democratic style of governance not reflect these democratic values in their actions and words? This research study sets out to examine the possibility of making sense of the existing ethical connotation inherent in the practice of democracy to its practitioners in Nigeria, Africa and the world at large. Does democracy as it is practiced in Nigeria induce or otherwise jettison ethical practices? The study adopts the socio-ethical method to critically examine the mutual interactive effects of the relationship between ethics and democracy. The study discovers that due to the high level of poverty in Nigeria and Africa, political leaders prefer to think, act, and work in order to satisfy their personal interest to the detriment of the interest of the public. The study concludes that at the moment, there is no mutual relationship between ethics and democracy in Nigeria. The achievement of this link is the beginning of development in Africa.

Keywords - Democracy, Ethics, Development, Equality, Nigeria, Poverty, marginalization

INTRODUCTION

A nation which desires to grow and develop must be able to work effectively on its ethical systems. A bad society will produce bad people, but human beings are not unchangeable so there is the tendency for a bad person to change from bad to good. The attainment of this desire is dependent on the kind of system in operation in a given society. It is only when these systems are changed that the leaders and those who are led will become accountable, transparent, and most often work through dialogue for the purpose of achieving an integral transformation and development of the nation. The attempt at actualizing the ultimate desire of man towards the building of a society that enhances human growth, development and dignity is most likely to be found in the choice and practice of democracy.

Democracy becomes a form of government and a way of life. In every way the practice of democracy encourages attainment of the good life. This is because of the presence of the basic operational principles; fraternal feelings, economic equality, equal rights of citizens to vote and present themselves to be voted for into any political office, periodic elections, freedom of speech, freedom of publication and freedom of association.

These rights and freedoms are integral to democracy because they facilitate free dialogical discussion and encourage the continuous participation of the people in the government, not only at the time of elections, but also throughout the life span of the regime (Areji 2007; Arinze 2007). Democracy, no doubt is built on the firm belief in the value of the individual personality. It creates the opportunities in which human rights violations and abuse of freedoms are highly condemned. The value of equal representation creates the desired room for every member of society to participate either directly or indirectly in the governance of the affairs of the state. The choice of Making *Sense of Ethical Democracy in Nigeria in the 21st Century* as a title for this study is informed by recent political happenings in Nigeria after the twelve years of the return of democracy.

During the period under review there are several cases of electoral malpractice like multiple thumb printing, ballot box snatching and other different activities and events which were carried out and are being done in the name of democracy, which on critical observation were ethically questionable, philosophically unintelligible and progressively disoriented. One, then, wonders if there are any mutual interactive effects in the relationship between ethics and democracy as practiced in Nigeria and if such a relationship actually exist, to what extent does it manifest itself in the words and actions of politicians who are vested with the task of making decisions or declarations, formulating public policies that should be in consonance with the basic ingredients of true democracy. Why is it that after practicing democracy for over a decade its impact is still not felt? What can be done to make the operators of democracy in Nigeria to practically draw from both the religion and ethical values to ensure the practice of genuine democracy? What is the moral value in adapting the practice of democracy? Can democracy in any form work in Nigeria bearing in mind the heterogeneous nature of the Nigerian society? These questions have spelt out clearly the challenges the researcher and his likes are facing in Nigeria.

It is expected that the findings of this study will motivate Nigerian politicians to adopt new approaches that will contribute to the growth and development of Nigeria as a nation, Africa and Asian countries who are undergoing the process of transformation in the political history in the 21st Century. In this way the burning desire for a viable and sustainable democracy in world would be achieved in the nearest future. The study in its philosophical nature revolves around the analysis of the ethical implications in the practice of democracy in Nigeria from 1999 to 2011.

FRAMEWORK

The practice of democracy in Nigeria has been built on various moral standards. Some philosophers and political theorists prefer to speak of viable democracy if built on moral

positivism. The maxim of the theory is: "So act that whatever you do is commanded by the law". The theory claims that all morality is determined by commands, rules, laws, conventions, and customs. This theory is the result of someone willing, commanding or forbidding certain actions. Morality springing up from this theory is not based on something intrinsic in the act itself. It is not dependent on the nature of man per se.

Though there are good aspects of the theory such as: its awareness of much contradiction and doubt about moral values in themselves. So the theory is able to introduce uniformity, objectivity and simplicity concerning that which can be done or avoided by a human being, experience has shown that commands and treatises are very powerful ways of engendering a consciousness of obligation and complains, awareness of moral obligations as a result of law has made people to conclude that moral obligation is nothing more than law.

Human beings act based on critical rationality. This is the point of lack in the theory of moral positivism. The theory is the product of the human being whose commands, words, and laws like his human nature are fallible. Though moral positivism contributes to effective attainment of desirable social goals, the external criteria or standards inherent in the theory do not provide the study with the kind of reason to base this thesis on, especially as it deals with democratic issues. Therefore, moral positivism as an ethical standard is faulty and must be discarded.

There are other moral theories like; ethical hedonism, Categorical Imperative of Immanuel Kant, and morality of human integration, but this study adopts the theory of utilitarianism. This theory holds that: "the moral end to be sought in all that we do is the greatest possible balance of good over evil (or the least possible balance of evil over good" (Imo *Ethics* 26). Generally, Utilitarianism holds that: whatever the good and the bad are, they are capable of being measured and balanced against each other in some way" (26). The Act-Utilitarianism deals with the actions that are likely to produce the greatest balance of good over evil in the world. Rule-Utilitarianism emphasizes on the centrality of rules in matters of morality. The rules in themselves are determined by their ability to promote the greatest general good for everyone.

The researcher adopts the utilitarian theory in order to examine the extent to which ethics and the practice of democracy are mutually interactive. This theory is most suitable for analysis of democracy that insists on the rule of the people for the people by the people. Here, it is the greater number of people that count when decisions are to be taken. This goes to agree with the theory of utilitarianism which seeks to judge the rightness or wrongness of an action based on the consent of the majority that stand to benefit from the consequence of such an action or policy. This is because democracy deals with the greatest number of people in the society. The researcher agrees with James Mill's writing on the significance of the theory that: "The greatest happiness principle would be promoted only if a coincidence between the interest of the governors and the interests of all could be achieved. This coincidence is only possible in a democratic government" (861).

The use of certain concepts in research study is usually clouded with vagueness. It is based on the above understanding that this section takes care of the obscure nature of ethics and democracy, which are the two key words in this study.

Ethics

The concept "ethics" is derived from the Greek word *ethos* which literally means custom. The use of custom implies an invocation of the way of life of a given people. The people in question use the codes in their society as guide for the justification of their actions. When an act is performed contrary to the way of life of a people, it is confronted with sanctions. Whereas, an act performed in conformity to the custom of a people is rewarded. It is based on this understanding that Lucius Garvin conceives ethics as, "the critical study of standards for judging the rightness or wrongness of conduct" (2). It is proper for this study to also consider ethics as a philosophical concept, in this context ethics is the ultimate source of good and why one thing is right and another thing is wrong. It is imperative to throw light on the use of the word "ethical" which forms the crux of this study. Ethical is derived from the noun "ethics". Ethical in this context deals with the morality of human conduct or what may be considered as the basic rules governing the morality of human actions. The task it performs in philosophical analysis is to ascertain the level a particular human conduct conforms to an acceptable standard.

In ordinary usage the term ethics has a close semblance with morality; but technically both words do not possess the same meaning. Morality comes from two Latin words *moralis* and *mores* which mean "custom or habits" (Grenz 1997). In its own right, morality is an essential quality of human conduct which actually directs the life of an individual or a group of people by pointing out the best-perceived way of life for them. Thus, making morality prescriptive in nature, it is only with this understanding that good knowledge of morality can enhance human dignity. Having come this far, it is not out of place to distinguish between ethics and morality. Ethics is a field of study of right and wrong, good and bad, while morality deals with the practical aspect of life. This kind of understanding by moral philosophers leaves out what one may believe to be good or right.

> Ethics is known to be a branch of philosophy that is concerned with what is morally good and bad, right and wrong; a synonym for it is moral philosophy. In this sense morality can be said to refer to actual human conduct viewed with regard to right and wrong, good and bad (Imo 2007).

From the above understanding, ethics is theoretically based and fits better as an academic discipline. It adopts philosophical methods of investigations to establish rational grounds for approving and disapproving human actions. The empiricists understand these terms differently as morality "deals with norms governing human conduct, while ethics is the effort to reason about or justify these norms" (14). For the purpose of making sense of ethical democracy in Nigeria, this study considers both ethics and morality as critical tools for evaluating the rightness or wrongness of human conduct, both for the individual and collective actions of members of the Nigerian society. The study adapts the description of ethics as a field of study of right and wrong, good and bad, while morality is understood as dealing with the practical aspect of life.

Democracy

Herodotus, the Greek historian and philosopher from the City-State of Athens, initially coined the word democracy. The word had its first appearance in 555 BC. Democracy is derived from two Greek expressions. Δεμος, is a noun which means *the people*. The verb κρατηιν means *to rule*. A combination of both expressions gives rise to democratia which literally means *the rule of the people*. This simple expression over the centuries has produced several definitions as a result of the ambiguity in the meaning of the people. For instance, the concept of *the people* mentioned in the definition is ambiguous because there is no further elaboration regarding who *the people* in question are. Indeed, the understanding of *the people* in one country could differ greatly from that of another nation. For the Athenians, the people could mean the free-born male adult citizens who usually gather at a particular place called *the αγορα* for the purpose of legislation on specific issues. Here *the people*, that is, those vested with the responsibility of decision-making and the exercise of governing power directly contribute to the discussions without waiting on others. This understanding draws strength and legitimacy from the assumption that democracy is the highest safeguard of individual freedom, a guarantee of equality, a provision of the best opportunity for political participation and the institutions for the expression of the supremacy of the popular will on basic questions of social direction and policy. When democracy is understood in this way, the slaves, artisans and those who are the minority with no special trait or expertise or economic resources are relegated to the background.

The term democracy is never static and its dynamism is identified in the way it is practiced today. Initially, democracy was built based on the fact that man is a social animal and as such it is in his human nature to freely interact and cooperate with others for his good. By this understanding emphasis is being placed on the principle of equality. Today, there is a shift from the principle of equality of man as a human being to equality of opportunities open to man as a truly human being. This means that citizens living in a democratic state must necessarily share to a large extent their political rights on equal terms. Today, democracy is built on two strong points; "the need for popular participation of all by way of representation and the emerging class struggle based on affiliation with party politics" (Aderibigbe 2004). The reason for insisting on adequate representation is derived from the need for the system to embrace and harness the various differences existing among the various strata of people in the society for the good of all. In a representative democracy, there is usually an element of indirect participation. Those who are experts and are capable of judging issues through critical reasoning process are elected to represent and decide for the majority in a community. In nations where this category of people cannot have access to political power, it is expected those who are in the corridors of power can make us of them as political advisers.

It is as a result of this thinking that I have provided an elaborate definition of democracy as: "A form of government in which those who are vested with the responsibility of directing and guiding policies and actions of their members remain upright and are accountable to the electorates and are periodically elected in an atmosphere of law and order". Here, some of the principles inherent in ethical democracy as a political system are brought out. For any form of

democracy to be considered authentic, such a democracy must find the people within it worthy to make contributions to the smooth running of the government. The hallmarks of a healthy socio-economic, political and moral system are inherent in the practice of true democracy whether in Nigeria or elsewhere in the world. This brings out clearly the objectives of this study which include; the kind of relationship that exists between ethics and democracy, the extent to which politicians who are involved in religion draw from the ethics of various religions in their attempt to practice democracy and to discover the extent to which ethical principles are considered in the country's democratic governance.

THE PLURALISTIC NATURE OF THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY

There is no society in the world today that is not pluralistic in nature. Nigeria is highly pluralistic; be it geographically, culturally, religiously, ethnically and socially diversified. The coming together of all these nationalities to form what is today known as Nigeria is human making. Indeed, it is the creation of the colonial masters. At different times Nigerians had tried to join the comity of nations as the world is globalizing democratically, but with minimal success. There are several reasons for the failure of sustainable democracy in Nigeria in before and after the attainment of political independence in 1960. African leaders struggling to win independence for African nations had to let go of their national identities. I say they let it go for the sake of gaining political independence. In their sub-consciousness, nothing was missing. The words the nationalist leaders spoke actually betrayed them. For instance, (Awolowo 1979) the Chairman of Action Group during Nigeria's first democratic regime described the country as a mere "geographical expression":

> Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere geographical expression… the word "Nigeria" is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within Nigeria from those who do not … The country is made up of a large number of small, unintegrated tribal and clannish units, who live in political isolation from one another. Each of which claims and strives to be independent of the other (47 – 48).

The contrary voice came from "Zik of Africa" who strongly felt that the unity of Nigeria as a nation should spring from "a strong feeling of racial solidarity, a bond that stems from long years of prejudice and derision" (18). He added earlier that taking such a decision amounts to "stamping out individuality in the name of national unity" (7). This project was not fully realized as the roadmap was distorted. According to (Schwarz 1983) cites Nnamdi Azikiwe as depending on the Igbos to liberate the Africans. Hear him:

> The God of Africa has specially created the Ibo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of the Ages. The martial prowess of the Ibo nation at all stages of human history has enabled them not only to conquer others, but also to adapt themselves to the role of preservation. The Ibo nation cannot shirk its responsibility (68).

The Igbos were not the only people to make the dream of independence actualized, everyone in the country was to be involved. So the federalism was chosen. Chief Obafemi Awolowo describes this system as: "A federation of all Nigeria's ethnic groups was the seemingly solution at the time. Each ethnic group should rule itself so that the barriers of tribalism and clannishness within each ethnic unit will be totally destroyed" (32). At this time, Obafemi Awolowo and other nationalists felt if they continue to hold tight to their individual interests, they would lose independence. They were not sure what kind of policies the colonialists would impose on them, so they decided to calm down their sectional interest for a common goal. The adoption of federalism, integration was not possible; rather ethnicity was perpetuated with unending ethnic wars between major nationalities. No one understood this pretentious unity more than Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa whom (Schwarz 1968), quotes as saying:

> … Some deceive themselves by thinking that Nigeria is one. This is wrong. I am sorry to say that this presence of unity is artificiality and it ends, outside this chambers … the Southern tribes who are now pouring into the North in ever increasing numbers … do not mix with the Northern people in social matters, and we in the North look upon them as invaders.

The skepticism portrayed by top Nigerian nationalists found stronghold in the first political parties in the country. From the inception of democracy there was no guarantee of equality among members concerning their social, political, economic, ethnic and religious interests. It was a matter of the majority carries the day. The minority groups were always neglected in times of decision making. Nigerian politicians are yet to make the right connection between democracy, the rule of law and ethical excellence. This can be demonstrated using the activities surrounding the first republic in Nigeria.

> During the First Republic out of the 312 seats in the federal parliament 143 which formed the plurality were won by the Northern People's Congress (NPC). The NPC decided to go into a governing coalition with the dominant party from the east, thereby leaving the dominant party from the West as the opposition party. Indeed, persistent refusal of the coalition to involve major element from the west contribute to the governing process led to the breakdown of the parliamentary system (Paden 1997).

All efforts to resolve this difference failed. This prompted the advent of the military into governance. The resultant effect on the lives and government systems were very harsh, yet "the rulers and the ruled have not learnt to use the ballot box to get the right people who can make or use the instrument of law to enhance social and political good" of the country.

The moment a fellow Nigerian does not belong to a particular political party, he or she is an anathema in the scheme of affairs. It does not matter whether the same person has the needed wisdom to make things move for the generality of the people in that society. The idea

of do or die in political affairs does not end with a political party winning election at all cost, it permeates the realm of human life. Those who are not political friends of strong politicians are invariably political enemies and must be eliminated at all cost. This is the reason why there are more cases of extra-judicial killings in Nigeria during the practice of democracy than when the country was run by military juntas. Some of the prominent innocent civilians who have been killed in Nigeria during the period under review are; Bola Ige who was a serving Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Harry Marshal who was Chairman All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) South South, Dikibo who was chairman Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Engineer Agom a friend to former Governor of Benue State, the 1999 Odi massacre and so called reprisal attack on Tiv people in Ukum, Katsina-Ala, and "the gruesome murder of Mr. Charles Ayede, Action Congress of Nigeria stalwart by unidentified gunmen" among others. In all these cases, it is clear that the rule of law in Nigeria has remained essentially theoretical and not practical. Hence, the state does not understand that it is not protecting the rights to life of her citizens. The ethical implication is that the refusal of state functionaries to protect, preserve and defend her citizens is an indication that this administration is an accomplice to the crime.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS: ETHICAL EVALUATION OF THE PRACTICE OF DEMOCRACY

In order to make sense of the ethical practice of democracy, this study has shown that the pluralistic nature of Nigeria calls for attitudinal change of any political office holder who initially wanted to satisfy his personal ego to desist from such ambitions to the path of honor and imbibe the culture of ethical values in both public and private life. This is not an impossible task, but it needs serious concentration by all parties involved in the game of liberating the nation from neocolonialism. The study also discovers that lack of critical appreciation of the sharing formula based on the following parameters; population density, equality of states, internal revenue generation, and landmass is causing great crisis of value in areas that are sustaining the nation with natural resources. Therefore, any national leader who wants to move the country forward must insist on the basic stipulations enshrine in the constitution at least as a stepping stone or beacon. The study reveals that majority of the representatives in almost all the assemblies are blameworthy on issues of free and fair elections. This has occasioned their inability to strongly respond to the clarion call for national sovereign conference that would provide the needed room for a rational deliberation on matters affecting the masses. If there are situations that call for amendment, the National Assembly in collaboration with the states houses of assemblies should be given ample time to deliberate on such changes as the situations warrant. The best way to enhance the ethical practice of democracy is to ensure that each case before the policy-makers must be treated based on its merit without prejudices and bias. This is where Nigerians are failing to get it right with the issue of resource control and in most cases before electoral tribunals. The refusal to get it right cannot be totally linked to ignorance on the part of these leaders. Those who are vested with the task of allocating resources know the intricacies involved but would always not abide to the formulae. In the electoral tribunals, the judges are not unaware of the facts, but because of the craze for pecuniary benefits, judgment is always given to the highest bidder. Poverty of ideology and poverty of the mind could actually add to their problems. One thing about Nigerians especially those who are in the corridors of power is that they never say a thing the way they perceive it.

They are always supporting policies of the government of the day even when such policies have no bearing on the lives of the teeming population. Such government officials are not able to convince corporate bodies and institutions to invest in their states and nations. The study wonders how such leaders want people of critical minds to associate with their high level of abject poverty of the mind. When the tactic of suppression cannot work on the people who are fast learning and increasing in their knowledge of world affairs, they resort to issues of marginalization on both ethnic and religious basis. Reflection on the marginalization of Niger-Delta (Nwachukwu 2004) and (Onyema 2004) in separate presentation spoke in the same voice. They regretted that:

> It is sufficiently pitiable that a community from where particular resources is derived and whose environment is degraded due to the mineral exploitation will be languishing in gross underdevelopment and poverty (236) while other places unaffected by exploitation reap the fruit of the victims' crisis (233).

Nigerians are not in the dark. They will never return to the dark days of colonial eras. Every event in the country stimulates a kind of revelation that catches the attention of the generality of the populace. The current crises in the petroleum sector revealed that the Niger-Delta region alone has continuously generated "about 90% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings and 80% of the Federal Government Revenue" (Izunwa 2008). But the people of the area are the most affected by underdevelopment. The need to look up to the Constitution for the formula of allocation is rather discouraging as stakeholders are no longer sincere with the issue of resource control. The stipulations enacted in the Constitution are no longer taking into consideration by the powers that be. A critical study of the situation in the country shows that even the position adapted in the Constitution was made based on clear political manipulations. The northerners who are not feeling the pains and frustration of the Niger-Deltans do not consider resource control as issue today, but what happened when agriculture was the main stead of Nigerian economy? This is the question every sensible Nigeria must ask, "When agriculture was the bedrock of the Nigerian economy … but when oil took the same position, derivation is scrapped" (Mbaegbu 2008). There is no way derivation would be discussed based on the virtue of equality. Talking about it based on fairness and equity might be understood and appreciated by those who are actually feeling the pains.

When the issue of resource control is discussed to its logical conclusion, the where about of resources already allocated to the region must be given priority attention, if the nation must move forward? It seems few prominent sons and daughters of Niger-Delta are feeding fat on the spoilt of the region to the detriment of the masses that are wallowing in abject poverty. It is based on this understanding that the study holds that the biggest problem of resource control in any part of the globe lies with the manipulative tendencies of the acclaimed representatives. Little wonder that when those in political offices advocate for resource control for the people they represent, it is only when their personal interest is at stake. In fact, the moment they get what they wanted the shouting stops. The insatiable nature of man makes it very difficult for people to stop crying foul cry with regards to fiscal allocation, but reason holds

that with high sense of integrity and sincerity by those in public office, the yelling will be reduced to its barest minimum.

On equal representation, section 147 (3) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria imposes on the President the obligation to "appoint at least one minister from each state, who shall be an indigene of such State?" the idea of equal representation cannot be met following the clause in the Constitution. This is because there are 36 states in Nigeria including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). This makes up 37 ministers. The president does not task himself concerning who is good for the ministerial appointment, in most cases they are considered as party jobs or offices which are strictly reserved for those who can pay up their way, the wealthy citizens who practically buy up the parties through enormous and incredible donations to the parties. The challenge such an arrangement would encounter is the inability to reach every group within a given state or to have a collection of mediocre in the cabinet that are good for nothing in terms of development. What am I saying? Nigeria is a nation with several ethnic nationalities. Providing statistical data (Okpeh 2007) writes that there: "are not less than 350 ethnic nationalities that have diverse socio-cultural and religious backgrounds" (3). So how long will it take each ethnic group to produce a minister? To be subjective in such a matter is to stimulate greater problems in Nigeria. If Nigerians want to be sincere to themselves, the idea of harnessing human resources would be the best option. Nigerians must learn to adopt the maxim of unity in diversity in order to succeed in the administration of this nation. Nigerian nationalities must sit at the round table for dialogue with the succinct question captured by (Schwarz 1983):

> The first political question for every African nation is whether it is a nation. Each country could be ripped apart by tribal jealousies, and all are weakened by them. Nigeria brings together more people and more ethnic groups than any other African nation. Much … is about ethnic jealousies and the manner in which they have molded and distorted her development (vii).

It is true that there was "no single person called a Nigerian" (Schwarz 3). It is also true that the different people were not living like beasts. They were rational beings. They knew when someone was right and when another person was wrong. No one was respected because he originated from a particular place. In fact, the dignity of the human person was not respected because he or she was the child of this or that person. There was a sense of value attached to every activity of man in the traditional African society. Traditional societies did not conceive the idea of separating ethics from religion. It is on this note that matters of politics in Nigeria cannot be discussed without ethical dimension added to it.

This is not to say that our leaders must depend on the idea of religion to be ethical or moral in words and deeds. This study does not take this position, rather, it holds that without religion ordinances and obligations people in all parts of the world can be moral, responsible, just and live good lives. Man's nature calls for a favorable atmosphere in which he can harmonious co-exist with other members of the human community. It is interesting to know

that in the near future, honest members of the Nigerian society would take up the challenge to be involved the practice of democracy. They would see it not as a dirty game but a clarion call to service God and humanity. Politics would then be rated very high in the world. People would not be involved because they want food for their family members. There would be adequate and fair distribution of dividends of democracy for those who are members of a political party and those who are not. This idea of leadership as service is not inculcated in the minds of politicians in Nigeria.

When the time comes, politicians would know their right from their left. Deflection from one party to the other on grounds of getting political appointment would be a thing of shame and disgrace. Changes would be made based on "ideologies and articulated manifestoes and programmes" (Torkula 2007) that would better the lot of the people. Leadership would be seen as a painful venture. No one would want to hire a thug, no one would want to snatch the ballot box, because it would not be there, no one would want to manipulate the computer to his or her advantage during voting, because your conscience would judge you as doing something wrong. Political godfathers would prefer to invest their money into industries rather than playing money politics.

CONCLUSION

One reality is ascertained in this study. The fact that liberal democracy has come to stay in Nigeria as the most appreciable form of government. The way democracy is practiced in Nigeria does not bring out the ethical values inherent in the very concept of democracy. Nigerian politicians are ready to jettison good moral values whenever such values stand in their way of self-aggrandizement. When the challenge of poverty is added to the problems confronting the nation, everything goes for the vulnerable youths in the society. Those who claim to be religious and democratic do not exhibit these characteristics in their words and actions especially when taking decisions on policies that would affect the majority in the country. The moment Nigerians begin to associate the practice of democracy with ethics, the roadmap to development will become well established.

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