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**POLITICAL LEADERSHIP CRISIS AND FAILED STATES: THE FUNCTION OF  
FAMILY IMAGINATION**

**Omale, Simeon Achonu, Ph.D.**

Kogi State University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

**Amana, O. Damian**

Kogi State University, Department of Mass Communication

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**ABSTRACT:** *The penury in the midst of plenty that pervade the walls of many African states is a perplexing paradox that begs for a critical evaluation. That most African failed states are richly endowed is a common cliché albeit a truthful one. But that penury is highest in Africa is indicative of the impact of corruption on the plenty present within the state- 'with an average per capital income of roughly US one dollar a day, part of Africa remains the poorest in the world.' Cursory survey reveals that the tempo of corruption in Africa is becoming a cultural phenomenon. In a country like Nigeria, it holds true that the spread of corruption extends to even the little infants in primary school. This paper postulates that even the most primary agent of socialization the family is not spared the marauding finger of corruption. Could Nigerian family system socialize the infant into a corrupt mentality? This paper therefore, interrogates the relationship between the family pattern of behavior especially with regard to sharing of resources and communication to pattern of leadership in some African countries (especially Nigeria) and how this debilitating framework has often been transposed as paradigms for the state leadership. More often than not, the breadwinner enjoys the best part of the share; could such pattern translate to a leadership pattern of demagogues? Operating through the prism of George Larkoff, Albert Bandura and Jean Piaget, the paper proposes that the family pattern of sharing and communication prepares the child for a pattern of leadership that is highly self-serving. Therefore, the fight against corruption in Africa must go back to addressing pattern of family sharing and communication.*

**KEYWORDS:** Political Leadership, Crisis, Family Imagination,

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Africa is currently experiencing the paradox of her being. Poverty and squalor are but hallmarks of a great continent that has richly being blessed by nature. A continent that often has been spared of untold natural disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes (except for few landslides in pockets of places) and the likes. In various states of the continent, there are myriads of natural endowment, oil, coal, Gold, Iron- ore, precious stones and others too numerous to be mentioned. Yet in the midst of these endowments, persist also mismanagement, self-interest and unimaginable forms of corruption. In fact, some have commented that these resources have often become a curse rather than a blessing to the continent. This obvious gap between the God given opportunities and its meaningful utilization in a purposive manner, calls to the question the problematic nature of leadership and its centrality to the discourse on development.

One must acknowledge that praxis of democracy and the fundamentals of rule of law is universally difficult considering the number of years it took developed nations to arrive at their current stage. As Mike Igini argued “the process of democracy building took between 27 and 256 years in Britain, between 78 and 168 years in France, between 30-80 years in Germany, between 30 and 70 years in the USA and about 50 years in Japan” (The Nation, 2012). Considering these number of years, we may perhaps appreciate the efforts of the different states in the continent. Be that as it may, we must still remark that the overall task and vision of democracy aimed at ensuring a prosperous and secured continent with her citizens being given opportunities for self-actualization is still a far cry in many African nations. Democracy may not be achieving its full fruit in many nations of the world but the African case is still a more problematic one owing to the character of leaders. It is within the plethora of yet to be achieved vision that the inevitability of leadership is thus projected.

The inevitability of the role of leadership in driving the process of development is seen from the perspective of agenda setting, resource mobilization and utilization as well as political action. History is often marked with the stories of the revolutions engineered by great political figures often addressed as “Heroes of History” for those that have positively influenced development or ‘Evil Men’ for negative drivers of history. Names like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Alexander the Great, Alfred Nobel, Josef Stalin, Adolf Hitler, Mobutu Sese Seko, Idi Amin and the like elicits different reactions from different people.

The centrality of leadership to development in Africa is a major key in that leaders define the context and development pattern by policies and allocations of resources. Upon independence African states anticipated a better and a prosperous continent. For the various nationalist leaders, Kwame Nkrumah of the then Gold Coast (Ghana) to Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo of Nigeria; Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia to Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, one vision held them bond-development and economic recovery of their people. Their struggle was namely liberation from a grossly limiting bondage of the colonial rule and to launch their nations into a new era of development. This struggle for development was not to be compromised but was to be given ultimate attention. For instance Kwame Nkrumah upon the independence of Ghana said “we must achieve in a decade what it took others a century” (Nkrumah, 1973:401). Their urgency and haste for development of Africa has been described by Ayittey as “the need to ‘catch-up’”(Ayittey, 2005:58). Ayittey (59) further argued that even though that need was understandable, but the impatience that underscored their action led to “haste, which made waste.” However, years after the attainment of independence, the continent is still bereft of the core necessities and it is gradually drifting into failed state situation with most of her nation states faced with the challenges of survival. There is obvious and noticeable abysmal failure of leadership style all over the continent. Hence the multiplicity of crisis being experienced in most African states that is thus degenerating into a failed state crisis for the continent is first of all a crisis of leadership. As the Nigerian novelist rephrased William Yeats, “...things fall apart when the center cannot hold...”

## **LEADERSHIP: ISSUES AND CRISIS**

The very notion of leadership connotes the presence of a leader. As a term, a leader is one who leads, plans, organizes, controls communication, delegates, accepts responsibility to reach the

societal goals (Ogunbameru 2004:233). The leader thus provides leadership style and pattern for a given sphere of human endeavor, be it family, society and or state, the presence and inevitability of leadership is real. Lynch (1997: 433) argues that leadership means the influence of a leader, the ability, the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of the group's mission.

Following this basic understanding, it is however pertinent to note that the continent of Africa over the years have being short of this ideal leadership and leaders as exemplified by her Human Development Index (HDI). African condition is low on the HDI ratings due to economic underdevelopment, conflicts, crime, militant non-state actors with international networks, resource depletion, the rise in Islamic fundamentalism, high levels of debt, endemic corruption, unemployment, political alienation and exclusion, large numbers of internally displaced persons, structural poverty and cyclical food insecurity (SAIIA, 2002: 12-15). Africa's obvious status is a resultant effect of her style of leadership as well as the interest of these leaders.

The leadership style of the greater part of the African continent has been described as that of Personal politics, personality politics and *politics by leadership* are distinguishing features of contemporary African politics (Seligman, 1950: 904-915). It refers to the centralization of all political power in the executive, i.e. the institutionalization of executive political leadership. In Nigeria, for example, the personalized nature of the political arena is evident in the domination by a powerful "godfather" at the apex of a vast patronage network at federal, state and local level. Political outcomes are the function of intense competition between these godfathers, often at the expense of the population (Sklar, 2006: 100-115). It all goes to show that despite the various attempts at the practice of democracy by different states of Africa, the fundamental tenants of democracy has not taken root. Adopting democracy therefore has not being an easy task for the continent given her traditional native cultures which often tilts towards a patriarchal and hierarchical structure.

Describing this state of affairs, Mazrui refers to the African political system as patriarchal, i.e. a political father figure emerges as the symbol of the venerated elder and patriarch. This often resulted in personal rule and personality cults (such as Touré, Banda, and Mobuto), and the phenomenon of "long distance men". African political (state) leaders are, on average, older than leaders elsewhere in the world. Namibia's president, Hifikepunye Pohamba, for example, turns 70. His predecessor, Sam Nujoma was 75 when he left office. The Cameroonian president, Paul Biya, turns 74, his Egyptian counterpart, Hosni Mubarak, was 79 in 2007 while Mwai Kibaki of Kenya is 76. Some of these "long distance men" declared themselves presidents for life (like Zaire's Mobuto Sese Seko), Emperors (like Jean-Bedel Bokassa of the Central African Republic), God (Ali Solihi of the Comoros), Brother Leader (Muammar Al Qaddafi of Libya). Others amended constitutions to stay on (like Namibia's Sam Nujoma and Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe). In Ethiopia, the emperor was called *Seyum Egziabher* (Elect of God). Nkrumah of Ghana was also accused of actively promoting a cult of his own personality, i.e. the Cult of Nkrumahism (Mazrui, assessed 2013). Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya was almost 60 years old when he assumed power in 1963. Another patriarchal African leader is the Ivory Coast's Félix Houphouët-Boigny who ruled from 1960 until 1993. More recently, Bakili Muluzi of Malawi referred to himself as "the political engineer" of his country. Muluzi introduced his successor, Bingu wa Mutharika, to Malawians as

“the economic engineer”. In Swaziland, Africa’s last remaining absolute monarch, the traditional title for the king is *ngwenyama* (The lion), whereas Mathieu Kérékou of Benin referred to himself as “The Chameleon” (Clapham,2006:69).

In this sense therefore, political leadership in Africa is often short of nationalism but have over the years become a patrimonial system aimed at dispensing patrimony, the recycling of elites and the use of state power and resources to consolidate political and economic power. This has led to a redefinition of the meaning of politics and political powers in Africa- politics is construed as typical extra-legal contest for political and economic domination between elites and politicians (Good, 2005: 460). This best explains the noise and willingness to kill and destroy during elections in most African states all in the bid towards the controlling of national power and the resources of the state (Kew, 2005: 149-161). The story or scenario has not changed much even in contemporary African political leadership. As Kebonang describes it, it is a situation of neo-patrimonial featuring presidentialism, clientelism, the use of state resources, and the centralisation of power (2005: 3-13).

While there are enormous opportunities provided by the natural resources on the continent, appropriation as well as the application of these resources to the advantage of the continent has remained a perennial problem. This failed situation Ayittey has located within the context of inferiority complex. His analysis of technology importation without adaptation and contextualization is instructive in this regard. For him, African post-colonial leadership style was simply a copying mentality which he called the ‘so-too-must-we’ syndrome (2005:84). This shows a lack of innovativeness, creativity and originality in thought, a continental leadership bereft of creative imagination such that authentically African solutions could be sought for African problems. In this confused state, the leadership crisis thus generated is one that has lost the spirit of its traditional leadership and one that in the post-colonial era presented the continent with questionable leadership. The obvious implication of this is the contemporary leadership crisis as experience on the continent.

### **FAILED STATES: DEFINITION AND INDICES OF A FAILED STATE**

The failure in leadership and the lack of the spirit of nationalism amongst various African leaders have led to the crisis of leadership and thus the situation of failed or failing states in Africa. However, beyond the fact of the impoverished situation and other explanatory theorems proposed by other scholars, it is pertinent to offer some deeper and cultural explication of the problem. In this wise, using Jean Piaget’s developmental theory, this paper focuses on family pattern and communication and the stages of a child’s growth and development of personality (Family Imaginations) and the consequent unintentional modeling of negative leadership paradigm as a major causal agent. It is however, pertinent to give a good understanding of the meaning of failed state and some of the given reasons why states have failed or are failing. In this wise, we can better appreciate the position of Jean Piaget and his explanation. Be that as it may, it is equally important to remark here that there is often a lack of unanimity as to a concise and all-embracing definition of a failed state. Often what people have done is to define it from the functionalist perspective, namely a review of the supposedly state functions vis a vis her ability to provide pragmatically functional environment.

Various state formulation and creation theorists like Thomas Hobbes, Jean Jacques Rousseaues and their likes envisioned the foundation of states for the peaceful co-existence and security of people. The need to protect the rights of people as well as their properties led to the formation of states. Thus wise, they have projected the fact that states were created and saddled with the responsibility of delivering political goods. These political goods include security, health and education, good governance, economic opportunity, law and order as well as basic infrastructures. The inability of states to perform these functions for her citizens amounts to failure of such state. This inability could either be the resultant effect of her action or it is an imposed one. Donald Potter introduces a new approach to understanding state failure. He said that it is not only limited to state's inability to provide the political dividends but also 'to be understood as a process involving the weakening of a state's capacity to meet its responsibilities' (Potter, 2004: 2). It then could be said that state failure is a phenomenon covering a whole wide spectrum which includes a situation of complete or partial collapse of state mechanism via civil war or a situation of lawlessness or anarchy to such things as a weak state administrative mechanism, such that the state is unable to function effectively. Keys to this understanding of failed states therefore are the two concepts- namely 'sovereignty and responsibility'.

The issue of sovereignty and responsibility as definitive concepts of the status of state entails the delivery of public and political goods as well as services to the citizens. Rotberg in emphasizing these concepts as definitive of a state, sought to establish a criteria for enlisting states either as failed, weak or strong (Rotberg, 2003). In his listing, provision of security was upper most and this entails the ability of the state to ensure that state is safe and secure for her citizens' self-actualization and affirmation. In this sense, territorial safety against border invasions, crime prevention, prevention of domestic threats or attacks are all core for a sovereign and responsible state. It is only with this frame work that a state can work towards the actualization and realization of other political goods such as health and education, monetary regulation, social infrastructures and amenities and the likes. It is thus safe to align with Rotberg to say that indicators for measuring the status of the state as strong, weak or failed could safely be grouped into: Governance, Corruption, Economic and Social Wellbeing (2003:5).

Governance as the World Bank would define it, entails the legitimate exercise of authority through formal and informal traditions and institutions for the common good. This entails the capacity to formulate and implement sound policies and public goods; the process of selecting and replacing and monitoring government; and the respect of the citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them (Thakur, 2003).

The second indicator has to do with the status or the level of corruption inherent in such a state. Corruption entails the abuse of public trust and confidence reposed on public officers. This abuse entails the use of public opportunities for the interest of the self to the detriment of the public common good. The economic indicator which is the third has to do with the level of openness of a given state's economy for investment and business opportunities. The social wellbeing that is the fourth indicator concerns the provision of social amenities such as education, health and social infrastructures.

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY COMMUNICATIVE ACTION AND POLITICS**

Thus far, this paper has tried to establish the link between leadership lacuna and the plight of poverty in Africa. From country to village, from the learned to the illiterate, from the military to the civilian, the debacle of dastard dictators on the soil of Africa is quasi a continental epidemic. The pervading presence of the leadership lacuna on the soil of Africa has often been explained away on the grounds of corruption. But a corruption so ingrained and pervasive that is quasi a natural character to a lot of Africans with few exceptions to the rule implies it is deeply embedded in the popular psyche of a lot of Africans and African leaders by consequence.

Popular theories of personalities running across a plethora of field of studies propose that personalities are built of two basic ingredients: nature and nurture. Could corruption be inherent in the nature (gene and chromosomes) of the African person? By no means, the performance of a lot of Africans outside the domain of Africa and of many Africans within the land Africa prove positive that corruption is not one of the genes bequeathed to the African man. Tales of the heroic governing style of persons like Nelson Mandela and others sounds like fairy tales on the convoluted chronicle of African politics.

If nature is ruled out, another probable arena that opens up for consideration is nurture. Still one could make bold to inquire, is the African tutored and nurtured only in old age and within the corridors of power as a self-serving leader? But African leaders of varied years have displayed poor and wanting leadership quality. So that the presupposition that corruption of those in the echelon of power on the African soil is a game learnt high up on the ladder of positions itself becomes an absurd fallacy and neither is corruption a prerogative present only in the camp of politics as in elsewhere. It is not far from the truth to assume that corruption is endemic in most segments of the society of a country like Nigeria.

Arguments and propositions that corruption is a factor of the public office is simply *non tenet aqua*. The private sector is not spared the siphoning finger of corruption. On the same thesis, the prevalence of corruption across the various intervals of ages impels this paper to posit that corruption maybe thought within the current Nigerian scenario unconscious and unintentional. Unconscious is not employed here in similitude to the unconscious category as employed in the Freudian sense of that which is suppressed, repressed but sifting through consciousness to impel actions. Unconscious is utilized in this context to define that which we are not attentively aware of, which is a taken for granted assumption guiding thought and action.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF FAMILY IN POLITICS**

Cognitive practice and philosophy inform us on the importance of conceptual systems vis: conceptual metaphors and categories in shaping the actions of modern man. Conceptual metaphors implies “conventional way of conceptualizing one domain of experience in terms of another often unconsciously”(Larkoff, 2002:4). Most persons may not articulate it succinctly to themselves nor voice it to others, but most human actions have conceptual paradigms and prototypes that underscore and define its ‘unthought’ out syllogism of action. It is not false to note that most of us

conceptualize favour in mental metaphors of transactions. For instance, if you come to my father's funeral, I am indebted to you and I owe you to repay you on your day of need. In other words if you stand by me in my time of need, I am obliged and morally impelled to stand by you on your day of need. While all common concepts are not metaphorical, however, Larkoff (2002:5) concludes in his philosophy of moral politics that "much of moral reasoning is metaphorical reasoning... but morality is not all metaphorical and that non-metaphorical aspects of morality are what the system of metaphors for morality is based on. Non-metaphorical morality is about experience". The metaphors guiding moral actions are imbibed from the context of lived experiences. What experience of leadership and sharing does the Nigerian father figure paradigm for the family and what are the implications for generality of public office leadership?

Cognitive construction of mental metaphors either moral or otherwise is a selective process involving the adoption of radial categories. Radial categories are the most common class of categories employed in the construction of moral metaphors and concepts. Radial categories are not all-attribute inclusive categories: 'they are not definable in terms of some list of properties shared by every member of the category', rather they are accepted by the presence of major attributes and variations on a central mode. The assumption of the category 'mother' could be based on four sub-models. 1) The nativity model: the mother is the one who birthed. 2) The genetic model: the mother is a female from whom the progeny acquires half of his genetic traits. 3) The nurturance model: the mother is the person that cares for and nurtures the progeny and the 4), the marriage model: the mother is the female partner of the father, his wife (Larkoff:2002:9). Whenever people use the category 'mother' most often than not, the above four sub-models underscore its use and are thus employed. This does not imply that the category mother satisfies only the above listed sub-models and defines motherhood in its entirety. The mother can be the one who kills the child. The mother may not, under certain conditions of genetic engineering be the wife of the father etc. however; the central model of mother is often premised on the above four sub-models.

It is worth noting that the 'central members of radial categories are one subtype of a general phenomenon called 'prototype'. A prototype is an element of a category that is used to represent the category as a whole in some sort of reasoning. Prototypes need not be 'objective features of the world as they are cognitive constructions used to perform certain kind of reasoning.' Prototypes could be central subcategory, typical case, ideal case, anti-ideal case, social stereotype, salient metaphor, salient exemplar, essential prototype. (Larkoff, 2002:9).

Utilizing the aforementioned frames, Larkoff has brought light and understanding to the perplexing and perturbing eternal diatribe between the liberals and the conservatives, between the democratic political perspective and the Republican political principles in America. In the optics of Larkoff there is an inextricable link between the family ideology and typology and the public politics of American life. The problem of misunderstanding between the American Democrats and Republicans, conservatives and liberals could not and would not be comprehensible unless one returns to a pristine place of prototypical exemplification of models, sub-models and types of leadership. As he wrote:

*"the map of red states and blue states from the 2000 presidential election night showed more than a geographical split of the two coasts and great lakes region versus the*

*heartland, more than a division of parties or of interests. It showed a division between two ways of understanding the world...Deeply embedded in conservative and liberal politics are different models of the family. Conservatism is based on a strict father mode, while liberalism is centered around a nurturant parent model. These two models of the family give rise to different moral systems and different discourse forms that is different choices of words and different modes of reasoning” (Larkoff, 2002:12).*

George Larkoff operating through the prism of cognitive categories and its implications took off his analysis of American politics on the pedestal of the paradox of the lack of understanding by the Republicans and Democrats in America. The public politics in America was dichotomized on viewpoints and lines of expedient action to be taken or was taken by the Democrats and Republicans. His studies trace the difference of political stance to the leadership figure and parental type prototyped in the family and how such prototype paradigms political leadership positions. He distinguishes two family formation and parental models: The strict father model and the nurturant father model. The strict father model, he discovers translates into the conservative politician and administrator, while the nurturant parent model transits into liberal politician and administrator.

The strict father metaphors for the conservative moral politics is characterized by:

1. ‘Promotion of strict father morality in general.
2. Promotion of self-discipline, responsibility, and self-reliance.
3. Upholding the morality of reward and punishment.
4. Protecting moral people from external evils.
5. Upholding the moral order.’

While the nurturant parent metaphors for liberal moral politics includes:

1. ‘Empathic behavior and promotion of fairness.
2. Helping those who cannot help themselves.
3. Protecting those who cannot protect themselves.
4. Promoting fulfillment in life.
5. Nurturing and strengthening oneself in order to do the above’ (Larkoff, 2002:165).

George Larkoff brings to the fore from the field of his research the inevitable bond between the family idea and image of parenthood and the plausible political style that would be promoted in the public arena. In his work, the strict father images for himself and the family the tendency towards conservatism in the public for a while the nurturant parent, do same for his progeny. Other social theorists have buttressed the relationship between what the child perceives in the house as the right *modus Vivendi* and what he or she does.

Albert Bandura in his social theory highlighted the implication of modeling in the social arena in what he defines as social learning. Social learning implies the type of learning especially in the social arena where an organism watches, observes and imitates the behavior of others of the same kind. The learning individual observes and imitates the action of the other in order to be like them or to reject them. A child may learn and imitate the style of his father as a student may imitate that of his teacher. The basic thesis of the Bandura’s proposition is predicated on the stance that “behavior results from a continuous interaction between significant factors” (Nnachi, 2007:173).



Imitation of pattern of behavior comes after observation of others, the benefits of such actions and the losses.

The process of imitation and adoption in Bandura does not in any way closes the gap of individuation so that all who observe the same behavior must necessarily imbibe such. Not all the children of a criminal do become criminals and not all children of pastors are good Christians. The old dichotomy between effects and self-gratification theories in communication studies is resolved by Bandura's notion of active learners. The active learner observes, judges the gains and losses and imitates accordingly. The learner goes through 'attentional' process of observation, through retention processes of choosing behaviours and motor reproduction processes. It is worth highlighting and very strongly too, that while the active learner may choose based on his judgment, pattern of behavior to copy. The onus of argumentation cannot entirely be hinged on the active learner. The popular criticism of uses and gratification theory comes readily to the rescue. The active learner cannot choose from what is not available. It is highly improbable that the active learner would choose to speak English with an Indian intonation he cannot imagine. So that in the long run the presence of the learnt behavior is a boost to the potential of it being absorbed by others.

If as Larkoff has proven, the family imagination of parenthood creates metaphor of public politics and Bandura from his research proves that the people learn from the behavior of significant others as a child may learn from parents and student from teachers, the question therefore is what type of leadership does the Nigeria father paradigm by sharing pattern in the family?

### **Family Life in Nigeria and Management of Common Affairs**

In order to verify the proposition that corruption may and could be paradigm and passed on unconsciously, this paper chooses to x-ray the nature of leadership practiced within the natural context of the family life in Nigeria, the leadership type and sharing of common resource within the family ambit especially meals. Such a study can be fruitful in eliciting implicit pattern of behavior that is hardly looked at. This type of analysis from the practical field of life especially with eating habit generated for Scot Peck in his *Road less Travelled*, the lacuna of the diminishing level of delayed gratification in modern times by the youth.

Choosing to study pattern of family leadership in Nigeria and the pattern of sharing poses a problem in the first instance. There is the necessity of common arena of sharing because a lot of aspect of the family life in Nigeria does not give room for sharing. While the mother's love is for all in the family, the love of the mother for her husband and the love of the mother for her children necessarily differ. One area of common living is the area of food sharing in the family. At least all the members of the family are entitled to good feeding.

With regard to headship in the family according to the variety of its presence on the Nigerian soil. Headship is highly patriarchal. Almost all of the religions in Nigeria promote the patriarchal system: from Islam to Christianity to African Traditional religions. The Bible states categorically that the man is the head of the family. Most times too, the head of the house, the man is the breadwinner of the family even though in recent times too women are doing excellently well in

the provision of resources for their families. Decision making more often than not is the prerogative of the head of the house. It is not uncommon that even in instances where decisions made by the man and the head of the house are unreasonable, they have been enforced.

With regards to common sharing of meal, the breadwinner and head of the house most times is also the minister of supply of resources while the woman is the minister of the kitchen. In order to evaluate the sharing pattern of meal in the family, the researchers conducted a simple focus group discussion with 50 young Catholic Students on a seminar at Idah between the ages of 12 to 18. Among other issues, two simple questions were presented to the young students: one does your opinion count in matters affecting you? Two: how are things shared in the family?

With regards to decision making concerning the teenagers, the focus group discussion registers a high level of dissent to the probe whether their opinion counted in matters concerning them since they attained the age of reason. For most of the participants, their opinion does not count in most issues concerning them in their families. A series of other questions were asked leading to a question on how meal is shared in the house? Both boys and girls participating in the seminar argued that sharing of things like meal was the prerogative of the mother and 100% of times the best part of the meal was an exclusive reserve of the father, then the mother, then others. It is a truth of biology and sound advice of anatomist, that the young ones growing up need more meat but sharing pattern in the family gave the thighs and chest of chicken to the father and the meatless legs to the growing lad who otherwise needed more. The head of the house often had the best room etc.

Same pattern of ownership and sharing is replicated in mega style for heads of clans, traditional leaders and chiefs. Kings and chiefs receive royalties and have the prerogative to choose the best of brides, most fertile and fecund lands to best of other resources in the land. It is no wonder that the bid for the chieftaincy title at times is bloody and violent.

Under the sharing pattern of the family imagination in Nigeria, the head takes the best part. Is it any wonder that the elected officials tend to assume the best part and portion for themselves of every 'goodies' in the land? The governors must take a bite of the best portion of the budget and persons in the corridors of power must cut 'thighs' and 'chest' of the common resources not minding whose ox is gourd?

The virulent violence that surrounds the bid for political officers in Nigeria betrays an often hidden agenda in the persons. If the public offices are conceived as a place of service taking into cognizance the root etymology of ministry as service, few persons would indeed vie for such posts.

In the fight to end the presence of corruption in Nigeria, a very probable and often forgotten arena for consideration is the family. Time may have come for the state of Nigeria to critically begin to look at the holistic education and formation of the future leaders of Nigeria.

More often than not the education problem is limited and defined in the context of formal education in schools from nursery upward. Predispositions that persist in the child and have been formed long before the child comes to school and even continues to be formed concurrently with formal

education at least at the primary school level are often treated with levity. In theology of Catholicism, the *ecclesia domestica* determines to a large extent the presence and spirit of the faith in later life.

The social psychologist Jean Piaget work reveals the level of impact of the child's environment on the personality of the child. According to Piaget, "children develop knowledge by inventing and constructing reality out of experience and thus mix their observation with their ideas about living" (Nnachi, 2007:160). The first three stages of Piagets formative flow are often spent in the family. The sensorimotor stage (0-2yrs) where the child is basically bound by action and sensations of the world around. 2) proportional Stage( 2-7) marked by the emergence of symbolic thought, at this stage children learn use of language, developed mental imagery and categories of representation. Concrete operational stage (7-12) marked by 'mastery of various logical operations and formal operations begin from around 12-16). In Piaget as it is true of life, the early stages of the life of the infant are a momentous occasion for the transfer of imaginations, values and ideals of life.

Hypothetically therefore, could the sharing style in families that allocates the best and choicest to the table of the head and leader paradigms for the future leader a model that would be tantamount in the long run to corrupt political policy?

## CONCLUSION

Our point has being that the transposition of the cultural practices have greatly influenced our mentality especially in the sphere of political leadership. Even though there have always been the projected communitarian life of the African States and the great cliché of J.S. Mbiti 'we are therefore I am' it must be noted that 'I' in the 'we' have often manifested the ego tendencies. A (mental) decolonization of the mentality is required and the culture that seeks to perpetuate this mentality must be done with in the fight against corruption.

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