

Tupocracy in Democracy: The Way Out of Nigeria's Leadership Quagmire

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Abstract: Leadership takes place when a person or a group of persons exercises authority over other people with a view to achieving organizational goals. A leader is a person who knows the way and has the ability and capability to influence other people to follow him, whether they are willing or not, but at the end they will be happy they did. Nigeria is a democratic nation but bad leadership has been her problem which is the cause of her backwardness in many areas. Nigeria claims to be practicing Democracy, but what is currently in existence can aptly be described as "Dem all Cracy" or "Demo Crazy," which may be defined as "Government of insane people, by insane people, and for insane people." This is Democracy without character and moral values. It was in search of effective leadership style and political culture for our dear nation and the world at large that Tupocracy was born as a veritable ally and underpin of pure and unadulterated Democracy for a prosperous and peaceful society. This paper will look at tupocracy as the way out of Nigeria's Leadership quagmire to birth a new nation of prosperity, safety and security of lives and property of citizens.

1. STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

Quagmire here is defined as a difficult, precarious, entrapping position or predicament. Nigeria is one of the nations which are richly blessed by God in terms of natural resources, namely, solid minerals, water resources, good climate, fertile land for arable and pastoral farming, forest products, crude oil gas and a large population to participate gainfully in socio-economic and political activities and contribute to national development. Sadly, she has remained one of the poorest nations due to perennial experience of bad leadership. One is always left to wonder why the nation cannot generate enough electricity for domestic and industrial concerns in spite of the presence of many water falls for hydroelectricity, good climate for solar energy abundance of waste for bioenergy and other industrial purposes, instead citizens will depend on Generators for power. One also should wonder why citizens have to depend on personal water boreholes to get water amidst so many rivers in the land which can be harnessed for public water supply by the Government. Bad leadership at all levels has also been responsible for the death of industries and factories, poor quality of education, high rate of unemployment, restiveness, insecurity antisocial activities and brain-drain. This situation has been the cause of Nigeria's quagmireS of stagnation, poverty and instability, among others. One major index of bad leadership is corruption in all its ramifications, which successive governments have been promising to fight but without success, Amaowoh, (2010: 173-175).

1.1. Definitions of Tupocracy

According to Urban Dictionary online and other Online sources, the word, Tupocracy, is generated from the Greek word "Tupos" which means, an example, pattern or model to be imitated; urban dictionary, (2023) and Kratia, which means government or administration. Tupocracy therefore is a system of government involving people who lead by positive example based on integrity, transparency, patriotism and godly character which is worthy of emulation by followers. According to the Dictionary, compared with democracy, oligarchy, bureaucracy and monarchical system of governance where character is often not the basis for governance and administration, Tupocracy exercises its power more in an image reflection and imitation style of ruling. This definition has been corroborated by Definitions.net; Gyaanipedia and everybody wiki, etc.

1.2. Definition of Democracy

Democracy has been defined as Government of the people by the people and for the people. It can also be defined as a Rule by the people through their elected Representatives, from the Greek word "demokratia," "demos" people, and kratia, government or administration. It is both a system of government and a style of leadership. Democracy is a world acclaimed political doctrine though it does not place emphasis on character and moral values. If combined with Tupocracy, the Democrat will be able to say "Do as I do." Without tupocracy, Democracy becomes "Democracy." This is why true dividends of Democracy may continue to remain elusive in most nations, including Nigeria. Hence, Tupocracy is meant to add moral value of exemplary conduct to Democracy. Nigeria's Democracy will continue to be branded as "Democracy" as long as it is characterized by corruption, lack of transparency in electoral processes, lack of integrity in mentorship and god-fatherism which has produced thugs and ballot box snatchers instead of patriotic and responsible citizens, as well as lack of veritable role models who should show positive example in all areas of life. Politics which is the art and science of governance has often been described in Nigeria as a dirty game because of the dirty activities of the Politicians. The effect is that the country has become dirty in every sense of the word. Where this persists, Nigeria will not enjoy the respect of other Nations. So far the branding of politics in Nigeria as a dirty game has unnaturally kept away people of integrity from the system.

2. THE KEY TENETS OF TUPOCRACY AS A POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP STYLE

Godwin Amaowoh, (2021) has stated the tenets of Tupocracy as follows:

- a. It is predicated on the age-long axiom that "example is better than precept", because what the leader is in terms of negative conducts may thunder so loud that people cannot hear what he says.
- b. It is meant to bridge the credibility gap that exists between leaders and their followers. If a leader says one thing and contradicts it by what he does, followers will lose faith and confidence in him. Followers need to be convinced that their leaders are true.
- c. Unlike other political doctrines and styles of leadership, Tupocracy emphasizes character of the leader, to lead by positive example, so as to become a role model for his followers to copy, emulate, imitate or mimic (John 13; 1 Cor. 4: 16; 11:1 and I Tim. 4:12).
- d. Tupocracy recommends an amalgam of both the Character Ethic Paradigm and the Personality Ethic Paradigm, the former being principle or moral centered; while the latter sees successful leadership as a function of personality, skills and techniques that lubricate human interactions without emphasis on moral values.
- e. Tupocracy is all about walking one's talk, being a role model of rectitude, integrity, decency, altruism, respect for the Golden Rule and the Rule of Law. In Tupocracy, the leader at any level or institution, including the Home, says, "Do as I do" and not merely "Do as I say."
- f. Tupocracy emphasizes integrity as the hub of all aspects of Governance. In view of this, it should reflect on the conducts of all stake holders in Democracy, namely, the electoral candidates, who may become elected into various organs of Government, the electorate, the electoral umpires security agencies and the Judicial officers.

3. RAXIS AND CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF TUPOCRACY IN NIGERIA'S DEMOCRACY

Tupocracy has contemporary relevance in the following areas in Nigeria:

- Honesty. The leader should be exemplary in honesty and altruism.
- Humility. No civilized society endorses arrogance or pride in any leader or people in general. Yet, humility is a scarce attribute among Nigerian leaders, most of whom are ostentatious in their lifestyle. One way a leader can show example in humility is to admit his mistakes, apologize to his followers, and if necessary, resign from that office in the interest of the nation. However, this has never happened in Nigeria.
- Integrity: This virtue is needed in governance and public service, with no trace of corruption in the award or execution of contracts, employment, promotion and administration of justice.

Sadly, nepotism, favouritism, self-aggrandizement, ethnic and religious chauvinism, as well as other forms of corrupt practices have been the identity of most Nigerian leaders in all the civilian Governments and Military interregnums. Leaders who claim to fight corruption are often those who lack the integrity for the fight.

- Rule of law and submission to the supremacy of the constitution by the leader: Tupocracy will ensure that the leader is a role model in terms of obedience to the laws of the land, including traffic rules.
- Tupocracy will ensure transparency in financial matters, with no skeleton in the cupboard, including declaration of assets. There should be no fear in the declaration of assets if they were genuinely acquired by any leader.
- Tupocracy will ensure respect for all symbols of authority by our leaders, e.g. the National flag, National Anthem and the National Pledge, to be emulated by others. This does not mean mere recitation of the Pledge or singing of the Anthem, but to practice the wordings of such national symbols as role models.
- Punctuality to duty and official functions. A lack of these virtues has been a bane to national development. Younger people have copied the bad example from our leaders.
- Patriotism (love for one's nation): This is seen in the way and manner the leader serves, placing the needs of the nation above personal needs. Lack of patriotism among Nigerian leaders has been the reason for vandalism of public infrastructure and embezzlement of public funds which young people in particular have copied from the leaders. A patriotic or true leader will sacrifice personal comfort and pleasure for the happiness of his followers. He will not do those things that are harmful to national development.
- Love for fellow men: This is predicated on the Golden Rule. Kidnapping and killing of fellow citizens for money and ritual purposes are the consequences of lack of love for one another. It is sad that some Nigerian leaders have been associated with these heinous activities and often recruit young people to assist them. Tupocracy is a panacea for this, leaders should show example in love.
- Tupocracy will ensure contentment, avoiding covetousness, greed and avarice or cupidity for inordinate wealth among public servants. This attitude will prevent embezzlement of funds which has been the major identity of most Nigerian leaders, and encourage self-sacrifice for national development.
- Accountability as required in stewardship: Tupocratic leaders ensure accountability and transparency in all they do, based on due process.
- Tupocracy lays emphasis on sound speech and communication which do not destroy but build the nation, institution and people. Unguarded speeches can destroy our nation. Leaders should show positive example in speech and communication which is a critical element in leadership and governance.
- Tupocracy will ensure transparency in all stages of electoral processes, no rigging, thuggery, selling and buying of votes, etc. Thuggery has been known to be sponsored by unscrupulous leaders which sometimes claim the lives of people.
- Tupocrats will show disapproval for corruption and corrupt practices in ways that are observable to the followers, so that they can emulate them.
- Tupocracy will ensure justice and fairness in handling all matters affecting followers without being nepotistic or unjust because of personal interest or vindictiveness. Judicial officers will be role models in the dispensation of justice. Those who punish law breakers should not be breakers of such laws themselves. Tupocracy is against this practice to ensure equality before the laws of the land. Judicial officers will judge cases with integrity based on the evidence before them and not based on the gifts or persons before them. Prof. Dorothy Umotan's article is elaborate on this topic; Tupocracy in the Judiciary.

- Tupocracy will ensure loyalty to the system, institution or nation, to be emulated by others. Nigeria needs loyal and faithful citizens for national development as stated in the National Pledge.
- Courage in the face of numerous challenges: Leadership has many challenges. The Tupocrat will be exemplary in courage, especially if they are doing the right thing and are facing opposition from detractors.
- Accessibility: It is only dictators who make themselves inaccessible to followers by all genuine means of communication. Most Nigerian leaders have shown themselves to be demi-gods. Tupocracy will correct this quagmire.
- Forgiveness of political opponents: Lack of forgiveness of political opponents will lead to vindictiveness and marginalization of opponents. We should learn from Nelson Mandela. He will remain a highly respected person in history because he forgave those who persecuted and jailed him for many years. Some political leaders in Nigeria would not like to carry out infrastructural developments in the areas where their political opponents come from. This is baneful to national unity and development. Our leaders should show example in forgiveness and tolerance.
- Those who preach unity in an organization should not overtly or covertly, by their body language, contribute to disunity in the nation or organization. Leaders should show example of promoting unity based on justice, equity and fairness. Respect for zoning arrangements among politicians will foster unity in the nation. Failure to do this will bring about disunity.
- The language used by Politicians during campaign should be decent, devoid of denigration, innuendo, character assassination, lies, violence or abuses. They should not denigrate their Predecessors. This is one area where "Democracy" is being practiced in Nigeria, madness in abusing one another.
- Compassion and empathy towards followers: The absence of compassion and empathy towards followers is another quagmire in Nigeria which Tupocracy seeks to address for patriotism to thrive. Our leaders should show example of compassion as seen in the life of Jesus Christ. Has the Nigerian Flag ever been flown at half-mast because of the untimely and brutal deaths of citizens killed by terrorist?
- Accepting the outcome of an election in the spirit of sportsmanship, whether favourable or unfavourable, without recourse to destroying the nation or people: Nigerian leaders should take a leaf from politicians in civilized nations who show good example in this area by embracing those who defeat them in elections.
- Not hiring people to do dirty jobs of assassinations, murders, etc: Tupocrats are not mentors of evil or sponsors of evil but mentors of good deeds
- Parents should be role models at home because children learn by observation. Dr. Gloria Essien has written on the Roles of tupocratic mothers on the wholesome development of the girl-child.
- School teachers should be role models to their pupils or students, so that they can produce graduates who have been found "worthy in character and learning." Most students want to be like their teachers.
- Religious leaders should be role models to their followers as symbols of peace, unity, righteousness, justice, godly fear, religious tolerance and not to use violence or killings in spreading or defending their religion.
- The role of god-fatherism has been abused in Nigeria. Tupocracy will ensure the positive side of god-fatherism in leadership, according to Barida Ereba.

4. HOW TO ENTRENCH TUPOCRACY IN NIGERIA'S DEMOCRACY

As Democracy is being threatened by the activities of Machiavellian, unscrupulous and unconscionable Politicians in Nigeria, Tupocracy needs to be entrenched in governance and leadership in order to maintain and deepen pure Democracy for a better nation. This can be achieved in the following ways:

- Teaching Tupocracy in all institutions of learning as a political culture and leadership style, e.g. Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, Administrative Staff College, Institute of Democratic and Leadership Studies and from primary to tertiary institutions.
- Teaching at conferences and seminars.
- Professional bodies should emphasize it.
- Those who lead by positive example should be adequately rewarded.
- Building Institute of Tupocracy/Tupocratic Studies in the nation.

5. BENEFITS OF ENTRENCHING TUPOCRACY IN DEMOCRACY, LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC SERVICE IN NIGERIA

- Good leaders who lead by example will emerge at all levels of governance.
- Tupocratic leaders will earn the respect and confidence of their followers.
- It is the most effective way of mentoring and leading people. Young people are incurably looking for positive role models in morals, sound conduct and integrity in all professions. The Tupocrat is the answer to this quest.
- Peace, stability, security, progress and prosperity of the nation. There will be no disgruntlement if people are satisfied through good governance, and no government can be better than leading by positive example.
- Criticisms and insurrections will be reduced to the barest minimum when Tupocracy is entrenched in leadership, because of its emphasis on transparency and integrity.
- Tupocracy will deepen and sustain Democracy based on exemplary conduct by Politicians and other stakeholders. Dr. Amanim Akpabio has written extensively on this topic.
- Tupocracy is the most effective and formidable weapon in the fight against corruption. It is saddening that some leaders in various sectors and levels of governance have been jailed for corrupt practices while in office. It is difficult, if not impossible, to eradicate what a person is guilty of. It is impossible for leaders to steal public funds without the collaboration of their staff, whether senior or junior, and by doing so, these collaborators also learn to steal. You can read more on this in Dr. Mkpayen's and Dr. Okon Udoh's write ups on this topic.

6. CONCLUSION

It has not been anything to really celebrate wherever there is bad governance characterized by insincerity, negative example, lack of trust, insensitivity and lack of integrity and Nigeria has been the worst for it. However, Tupocracy has been birthed to change the current narratives of insincerity, despondency, poverty, stagnation, high crime rates, etc, in our dear nation. The sad commentary is that one bad government in Nigeria is bound to be succeeded by another bad government, and the vicious circle will continue with its attendant consequences of under-development unless God intervenes. Tupocracy is an auspicious development to intervene and raise a new generation of leaders who will change the undesirable narratives through leading by positive example in the home, religious institutions, schools, politics and public service. Tupocracy in democracy is the way out of Nigeria's leadership quagmire as stated in this lecture. All hands should be on deck to entrench Tupocracy in the entire fabric of our national life, particularly, where leadership is involved, to address the inherent deficits and give birth to a new nation. Nigeria can be a paradise on earth if this is done.

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