



ECONOMIC MELTDOWN AND ITS EFFECTS ON RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

The paper examines some of the anti-religious practices caused by economic crisis in Nigeria. The paper viewed religion as an instrument for political and socio-economic gains, thereby making many politicians to hide under the big three for their achievements. It also examines the over dependent of

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Introduction

The economic meltdown is most of the problem facing the developing countries especially the African states in the world today. In attempting to discuss this topic we will begin by clearly defining our terms. A.S Hornby (2006). defines economic as something that is connected with trade, industry and development of a wealth of a country, an area or a society social economic and political issues economic growth/ cooperation/ development/ reform the government economic policy, economic history and current economic climate or process a business or an activity producing profit economic analysis is applied throughout society, in business, finance and Government, Law, Politics and religions Hicks, J.R (1999). A.S Hornby (2006) also defines meltdown as serious accident in which the control part of a nuclear reactor meets causing harmful radiation to escape.



Nigeria on revenue generation from oil and question. What would happen to moo-economics it assumed that Nigeria has no plans to meet the train wreck coming its way. It further gives an analysis of the effects of economic meltdown to Nigeria people and its possible solutions, conclusion, suggestions and recommendation are given.

Keyword: Economic meltdown, effects, religious practices, sustainable development, Nigeria.

Economic meltdown according to Brundtland commission (1983), in the financial life of every culture built upon faculty monetary policy their points at which the thin thread of economic faith, the thread that ties the entire failing system together, the thread made tangible by the hopes and sometimes ignorance of the general populace, finally snaps. From Ancient Rome to Weimar Germany to Argentina, to modern day America, no society fueled by unsuitable debt and flat inflation can duck the fiscal reaper for very long. The U.S alone has survived since the early 1970s after Vision removed the last vestiges of gold standard on nothing but questionable credit practices and baseless optimism, but, there is a limit the power of fantasy. Mainstreams economists rowed about the "invisible" rise of globalize and the unstoppable U.S financial judgment for years while more level headed and intelligent men tried to warn the public of danger. The initial derivatives collapse in 2007/2008 should have put all of those pathetic establishment cheerleaders to shame, not to mention out of work.

Yet three years later, amazingly, we are asked we expected, to continue to look to such sad and useless people for prediction on market stability that always turn out absolutely inaccurate and advice on savings and investment that they are not equipped to give.

Economic meltdown is bad to us common talk because it can lead to political, social, and economic instability on our nation. Religion according Yamsat 1997, generally has do with relationship with the one



believed to be the supreme creator of humanity, the universe and all that cosmos. Not only does it has to do with the demands of this divine being with regards to how humans should relate to one another and to be created world here and now.

Effects in this context refer to the negative implications of economic meltdown on the various structures in Nigeria (i.e. the super and infrastructures). Sustainable development according the Bruntland Commission (1983), is development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Ballara (1991), defines sustainable development as the human ability to survive by means of the rational use of renewable resources and by retraining from disrupting the ecosystem or over exploitation of natural resources and by retraining from activities that destroy cultures or society and instead allow reading their potential.

The object of this paper therefore, is the problem of religious malpractices that are found common among Nigerians even with the many religious institutions found in Nigeria. The country has, hundreds and thousands of churches, mosques and shrines everywhere. The paper wishes places of worship should use for religious practices for sustainable development in Nigeria who have turned to ethno-religious conflict and violence to backup their socio-political and economic needs that causes the economic meltdown.

Things have fallen apart and the centre cannot hold ... Chinua Achebe (1958) that our country, Nigeria is at a cross road, that the evil wind of religious hostilities unstoppable, that we have no leaders and the so-called self-style leaders are dead, blindfolded and heartless the resources of our land is the wealth of the so-called advanced countries. The paper examines the causes and effects of Economic meltdown on religious practices made suggestions and recommendations.

Effects of economic crisis on religious practices According to Karl Marx "Religious is the opium of the people". That religion is the moan of the oppressed creature, the heart of the heartless world, the sense of the



senseless conditions. Karl Marx said that religion makes a person to forget the pains of their poverty, suffering, oppression, exploitation and many other conditions that leads to frustrations. Religion makes them feel that everything is fine with them that they feel contented and satisfied with their poor conditions of life. The explanation is that everything happens according to God's will. So religion approves such bad conditions and therefore makes people unwilling to fight poverty and oppression in militant and revolutionary approach in which their initiatives, creativeness ' and handwork are important. Religion is an opium of the people why because our rulers have so impoverished the masses of our people such that people now turn to God to save them forgetting about their sorrow, suffering, exploitation, oppression etc. But because of poverty, Nigerian masses have been choosing wrongly because they have been polarized along ethnic, sexual and religious divides. The poverty level in our country and stupidity of the people in the helms of government exposed our innocent citizens to unnecessary and arbitrary bamboozling. The expanded poverty system and naturalized corruption legality is what we need to tackle.

Many Nigerians are using religion to hold back our collective advancement¹ as a nation! There are still others out there using different modus to impoverish our people while around in private jets, armed escorts, building universities only the rich can afford and so on. Religion is one of the Nigerians biggest problems. We must wonder what is happening to this nation, look around anywhere, you can now count die number of church sign boards within and number of mosques shrines within our country but you will be surprised that we do not have industries in this country again but church, churches everywhere, even mosque, mosques and shrine, shrines everywhere. Nigerians proves to be the most religious people yet Nigeria is one of the most corrupt countries in the world.

In chemistry, any water that is not neutral, but is colored is said to be impure. Any society in the name of religion whose operations are not straight forward is nothing but a lie. Is religion really practice in Nigeria genuinely or is simply a quick way for those smart ones to make money out of those weak minds? For example, Europe Christianity is different from the Nigerian



Christianity. The Christian activities, monetary otherwise are strictly control by the government in Europe but in Nigeria Fraud stars (419), criminals, rogue politicians use the name of God to brain wash innocent Nigerians for their own financial benefits, taking advantage of the government inability or not willing to protect his own people.

There is a coming economic breakdown in Nigeria, a crisis that may lead to political crisis. It may lead to the gratification of the desires of the various atavistic forces in Nigeria, those wishing for secession from the nation. They may finally get their wish, and if we may say regret it.

That crisis has to do with how to fund the Nigerian state. At present most of the revenue that funds the Nigerian state comes from oil. Nigeria sells its oil to the West and uses that money to prop itself in existence. Nigeria does not generate independent revenue to maintain the Nigerian state.

The West finally has resolved that it has to do something about its dependence on foreign oil. As of today, the USA sends \$700 billion dollars annually overseas to those countries it buys oil from, Nigeria included. That \$ 700 billion dollars is money that could have been spent on America. No country can sustain that level of wealth transfer to other countries indefinitely and survive. Thus, Americans have been spent on Americans have resolved to finally do something about their dependence on foreign oil. The coming of Obama's administration has promised that within ten years America would be weaned from foreign oil by developing a mix of energy alternatives, including solar, wind, nuclear, coal, gas, off-shore drilling, ethanol etc. if America makes up its mind to do something and throws its considerable intellectual power to doing it, it generally succeeds: an example was Kennedy's resolve to send a man to the moon by the end of the 1960s decade and its accomplishment in 1969 when Neil Armstrong landed on the moon. Russia had beaten America to space by sending Yuri Gagarin into space in 1958 and America will be freed of dependence on foreign oil.

The question is this: What would happen to mono-economies that completely depend on revenue from oil, such as Nigeria?



Here is the current situation; Nigeria has no plans to meet the train wreck coming its way. The leaders of the Nigerian state are incredible human beings. These people supposedly went to universities and studied the real world and one presumes, understand economics. They understand the nature of supply and demand, that if you have what folk want that they buy from you and if not they would not buy from you. At the moment, people in the West want oil so Nigeria sells oil. But we also know that in life nothing is predictable more than change. Change in what is demanded is always around the corner. Sooner or later, the West would not demand Nigeria's oil. It is as simple as that. When that happens then what would Nigeria be selling to generate revenue? It would seem that anyone with common sense would anticipate what would happen in the future and plan for it. Nations plan for this kind of thing by diversifying their economy. They produce many things to sell so that if one product is not demanded others replace it. But what has Nigerians done? They have put all their eggs in one basket. Like drunks they have gone on a party drinking, being happy (they are called the happiest people on earth); apparently, they believe that reality will not change and the gravy train would last forever.

Is this why they say that Africans live for immediate gratification, and that they do not plan for the future and do not defy eating today what could help them eat tomorrow?

Apparently, Nigerians believed that oil will always be demanded and easy money available for Nigerian politicians to steal from and with it buy chieftaincy titles and masquerade around as very important persons.

In the West, folks like Bill Gates actually produce a mouse trap and sell it to become wealthy while in Nigeria folks become wealthy not by manufacturing something, or working for wealth but by stealing it.

Is this what white men mean when they say that Africans are born unintelligent? Are Africans really unintelligent? If they are intelligent we would be talking about what they are doing to diversify their economies, grow the economy and like other people participate in economic development. Instead, like fools they go on dancing and believing that the West would be foolish enough to keep on giving them free money for



oil (Nigerians do not deserve the money from oil for they did not produce that oil, nature made it so it is really not theirs, never mind).

Are these people really unintelligent? We need to consider this as a real possibility. We know that in intelligence tests the score lower than whites and Asians so are they really born dumb and that is why they do the incredible things they do? We ought to not rule out anything for perhaps these people's incredible daft behavior is rooted in unintelligence. If it is the case that Africans are born less intelligent than other persons then let us consider it and make allowance for that fact, say that they are unable to manage their economy because of intellectual deficit. But if they are intelligent like anyone else then let us expect them to manage their affairs well and make no excuses for them when they do not do so.

What is currently called Nigeria is a joke, literally. The country's structure, for examples, seems like something only children could come up with and is not for real. Consider the thirty-six states of Nigeria, During the colonial era the administrators recognized that it took money to run governments and since there was little or no money, it was not willing to have more than a few regions in the country. Thinking about resources is not one of the problems that exercise the minds of the current airheads that rule Nigeria so they went ahead and created thirty-six states, none of whom can support it financially. These states have to depend on the central government who gets money from oil to survive. Left alone they cannot survive.

Solution to Economic Meltdown in Nigeria

What we need to do. and it is now. not tomorrow, is to scrap the so-called thirty-six states. We ought to start thinking like intelligent adults who think in terms of costs and benefits. It costs money to run governments and their bureaucracies and especially when those governments are unproductive.

Restructure Nigeria into economically self-sufficient states: Yoruba state. Igbo state, Edo state, Efik state, Ijaw state, Tivi state, Urhobo state, Fulani state. Hausa state, Borno state, and lump the smaller ethnic groups into the remaining



four states. Under no circumstances should Nigeria have more than fifteen states. Each of these states must have total control over its economic affairs, no money coming to it from the federal government, not a penny. Each state must do what it has to do to generate revenue to do what it has to do. Citizens of all states must pay federal taxes (anywhere from 20-34 percent of their annual individual incomes in taxes; as required by progressive taxation, unless we choose Togo the flat tax route) with which to run the central government.

Each state must be divided into no more than fifty districts (remove the horrible name, local government area). Each district composed of towns/cities.

In each state there should be a unicameral legislature comprising of one member from each district, that is, each state legislature should have no more than fifty members. The members of state legislators are to work art time; each must have a profession from which he makes a living and comes to the legislative council meetings, preferably in the evenings or weekends, to make laws but not expect to be paid. (In the USA state legislators are generally paid stipends when they are meeting, which is no more than four months of the year; they are citizen legislators; we must therefore stop paying our legislators, the kind of money the unless thieves are paid).

In each district should be a district council of not more than thirteen. In each town/city there should be a town council of not more than seven members. These councilors must have independent jobs and make their own livings and meet in the evenings to provide public service for the people. They should not be paid, not a penny.

Each state should have not more than three political parties, with the party having majority in the legislature forming the government with a premier and having not more than fifteen ministers (the premier should be a member of the legislator but the ministers should be selected from non legislators, professionals in the fields they administer). The legislative term should be five years, with six terms limit.

At the federal level should be a unicameral legislature comprising 265 members (five from each state), members elected for five years terms.



There should be no more than three political parties (a left, a right and a centre party; we do not need the present variety parties serving members' egos and pride). The majority party selects the national prime minister (who selects not more than twenty ministers, all from outside the Parliament, as in the USA). There should be a ceremonial president and ceremonial governors at the states to be the heads of states. The payment for federal legislators should not exceed twice the minimum wage for workers. One do not go to government to make money but to serve and if one do not have independent means to survive on you should seek it and leave government out as your career.

Finally, establish at each level of governance corruption courts and every public official suspected of corruption are brought to them and if found guilty should be sentenced to work for the rest of his life in some backbreaking work. Work ought to have some sort, of Gulag where these criminal are sent to and worked to death. One is sick and tired of always hearing of Nigeria in the context of corruption and other evil actions rather than in performing heroic acts that helped their people. We say let us take draconian measures to expunge from the Nigerian mind the habit of antisocial behavior.

Restructure the stupid political structure we inherited form our colonial master and make it realistic to our multi-tribal reality; elect leaders who dedicate themselves to seeking ways to industrialize the country, give every child education up to university level, give every child health insurance coverage, and improve the nutrition of all children.

For once the black race should resolve to do something and do it, they are not the monkeys other races think that they are, and they are human beings. Those aspiring to political offices must take two year courses in leadership and management which teaches public service and gives the education equivalence of MBA and MPA.

God, it is time we had leaders in Nigerian governments, not just thieves. It is really getting annoying to be always talking about thieves in Nigerian governments when one thinks about Nigerian governments.



Clearly, there will be a change in how the West powers its civilization, from fossil fuel to something else. When that happens the West would be less dependent on foreign oil.

Nigerian, at present, a mono economy would find no one buying its oil and would have to drink that oil. Nigeria would no longer have an easy source of unearned income. At that point the various governments in Nigeria would have no money to enable them pretend to be governments; they would collapse. The empire of thieves would implode. The thieves of Abuja would run to the West (and work as janitors and security guards for the white man). As a harbinger of things to come, the West has been experiencing economic difficulties and in response their demand for oil has fallen sharply; the price of crude oil has fallen from a high of 148 dollar per barrel to 60 dollar per barrel. This precipitous fall means less revenue for Nigeria and as such has thrown a monkey wrench into all the grandiose plans (that were never going to be carried out, anyway) made by the thieves of Abuja. If this is the case just imagine what would happen when there is no dime coming from oil? When there is no money to maintain the Nigerian state the various ethnic groups would finally satisfy their craving for secession from Nigeria. Many small states would emerge from Nigeria. But those would find that sometimes when you get what you ask for regret it.

The extent world is a world of large polities and small African states are irrelevant in world politics. It is therefore not necessary for Nigeria and other African countries and makes them politically and economically realistic. Each of the large ethnic groups ought to become a state within a real federal structure whereby each state is completely responsible of its economic affairs leaving the central government responsible for military and foreign policies. This is where we stand, anyway.

Alternatively, the thieves of Abuja can continue to not saving for the raining day and when the inevitable economic meltdown hits them in the face the country implodes and folk slush around as refugees in other African countries and destabilize them, and Africans continue experiencing their chooses fat, pain and suffering.



For those of us given the gift of foresight all we can do is state what is in the future for us and leave it to those who supposedly have the gift of leadership to try to do what is necessary to avert the predicted coming troubles or not do them and take the consequences of their behaviors.

We are responsible for our fate; we sleep on beds we made; we are not the victims of other person; yes all of us affect all of us but at the end of the day each of us is responsible for his life and what he does with it. If Nigerian chooses to continue denying responsibility for their fate and, instead, like children who have what psychologists call external locus of authority and control, as opposed to adults who should have internal locus of control, continues seeing white folk as responsible for their fate and blaming them, that is their choice. That choice, however, has a cost: it produces poverty.

In the meantime, will the Nigerian government, for once in its shameful existence, do something for the coming economic difficulties ahead? Or is it the case that they would behave like the ostrich and hide their heads in sand and not deal with reality and when that reality comes to bite them blame the white man for their terrible fate.

Blaming other person makes the individual(s) feel good about, him, while he retains bad behaviors, but does not alter reality. It is still Africans who are suffering and dying from Africans mismanagement of Africa, not alter reality. Not the white men they blame. The fact that it is Africans that suffer from their stupid behaviors says it all; they are responsible for their fate; other people are not responsible for Africans fate. True we live in a systematic world and are all adjusting to each other's' action and are affected by each other yet in the final analysis we are each responsible for our fate. We all take the consequences for our good or bad choices.

Effects of Economic Meltdown on Nigeria People

In the past Nigerians mostly made poor choices and took their necessary consequences; let us hope that they can turn the page and make good choices and take the consequences of their new found sense of realism.



Chinweizu tells us to blame the West but in the meantime the Nigerian state remains the abode of children. They do not plan for the inevitable rainy day; they take the oil money the white man gives reluctantly to them and uses it to seem to live well, -not cognizant that easy comes easy go and that sooner or later that oil money would disappear... and they would have nothing to show for the billions of dollars they made from that oil, no working factories, no reliable infrastructures; the money is gone, just like that! What men, these Nigerian rulers! The world ought to be celebrant these unusual men, these thieves!

In ten years there would be no more oil money. Nigerian's party would be over. The thieves of Abuja would have no more money to steal and with which pretend to be government officials, they would become what they have always been; common thieves, thugs, high way rubbers, brigands, criminals always do ... by the way, blaming others for ones antisocial acts is called criminal thinking, ask any criminologist about that one) for selling their people. Since they have not diversified their economy and, worse, have not taught the people to pay any kind of taxes the governments would have no resources to pretend to be governments.

In the West, governments generate revenue from income taxes, corporate taxes, sales taxes, property taxes, value added taxes licenses etc. In the USA governments make the citizens pay taxes and with that revenue fund public services. But that is not the case in Nigeria. In Nigeria folk expect manna to fall from heaven. Taxes must be avoided at all costs. The government does not generate revue from the people's taxes and the people do not generate income from their entrepreneurial activities.

So, what happens when oil money disappears? They thirty-six county governments stupidly called state governments are founded by the central government so how are those silly things going to found themselves? Without money coming from the criminals of Abuja the state governments would collapse as civil servants are not paid.

Federal government itself would have no revenue to continue pretending to be a legitimate government.



The empire of thieves is not predicated on public service but self-service so the empire's rulers would simply disappear from the scene (may be, run to the West). When the inevitable happens the house of thieves becomes what it really is, a criminal house. (Many white psychologists secretly believed that perhaps seem true by insisting that our country be a nation of thieves).

The poverty that is corning down the pike for Nigerians is so incredible that people would wish that they had not been born. The political structure would not be able to handle the people and they would slush into neighboring countries as refugees. Millions of Nigerians would be crashing the borders trying to steal into other African countries seeking food (and some trying to make it to Europe and the America soon, these would close their boarders to Africans for who wants to be inundated by starving African refugees? "It is gonna be nasty").

Some persons deceive themselves; know who they are pretending to be different face to the world to relate to. Some of us are constitutionally incapable of such self-deception and must insist on the truth we know. Here is how I see Nigerians. Nigerians are a self-centered people; each of them works for himself, and perhaps a bit for their children. Each of them seems motivated to become a very important person, a VIP (to mask his existential sense of nothingness). You do not find Nigerians working for the public good. It would be a day when a Nigerian actually sacrifices for the entire society. It would be a day when the head of state of the banana republic called Nigeria role to work on a bicycle or Volkswagen car and not limousine; and flew on commercial flights, as British leaders not go on private jets.

Nigeria is a surreal country, a country where the average person makes one dollar a day yet the leaders live as if they are governing Beverly Hills and Bell Air, Los Angeles, California (if those are still the riches "hoods" in the USA). It is amazing seeing a Nigerian leader in expensive cars when he ought to be in a cheap car. These people are not for real. They mortgage their country's meager monies to live like Indian Maharajas (apparently, also believing that the rest of the people are Sudras, untouchable born to serve



the Kastyas and Brahmin classes). Nigerians are something that comes out of Dante's deepest part of hell. Their self-centeredness is out of this world and unbelievably. Are Nigerians human beings, really? If they are human beings how come they go into government to steal money, rather than to serve the public? Consider that if one is dedicated to service, not just to stealing from the public sector one is considered a fool by Nigerians. We must not rule out that what we have here is a different variety of human beings perhaps, those that certain genetic mutation disposed to be criminals? It is very clear that Nigerians and other Africans have mismanaged their economy and that with the coming replacement of fossil fuel as the basis of Western industrial activity that the Nigerian economy would collapse and that the people would starve and die. The fact that this situation could have been anticipated and prevented with planning and such was not done raises the possibilities that Nigerians made an existential choice to suffer and die.

Conclusion

The government should be held accountable for the hopelessness created through mal administration, embezzlement, greed, rendered a huge percentage of the vulnerable population not resorting to questionable' beliefs until a lasting solution is found to the deplorable economic situation in Nigeria, innocent lives will continue to be lured into doom and disaster. With the declining oil revenue due to declining demand and glut in the oil market there will be more frustrations as government will be unable to meet its basic fundamentals like payment of wages and salaries and maintenance of infrastructure. With the current global economic meltdown, Nigeria faces a very bleak future and there will be more fake politicians, fake religionist deceptive succor and solace to vulnerable Nigerians.

Suggestions/Recommendations

- (1) Our departments of religious studies in Nigeria universities and colleges have a lot of offer in terms of research. A holistic study of shrines, cults, alters, Christian, and a Muslim movement is to be done.



- (2) Government should implement policies and strategies that promote sustainable adequate levels of finding and focus on integrated human development polices, including income generation, increased local control of resources, local institution strengthening and capacity-building and greater involvement of non-governmental organization and local level of government as delivery mechanisms.
- (3) Government should develop all poverty-striven areas through integrated strategies and programmes of sound and sustainable mobilization, poverty eradication and alleviation, employment and income generation.
- (4) Government should also create a focus in national development plans and a budget on investment in human capital with special polices and programmes directed at rural areas.
- (5) Nigeria must not solely depend on oil as the mainstay of her economy. It should diversity to other areas like Agriculture; other mineral resources like coal timber, columbine, and iron ore should be tapped.

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