Reasoning and the Spirit of Leadership: Pathway to Development of Africa

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Abstract

Nobody is born into this world with immunity to problems and needs, neither has any man been born without the problems-inducing and tempestuous human nature. Man is an embodiment of needs, and that progressive, exciting, entertaining and challenging understanding is a prerequisite and panacea to the existential burden of man. Interestingly, the processing of the character and intellect of Africans is the sponsorship and promotion of quality performance of governance in the continent. Transformation of lives and living conditions is easily demonstrated and impacted by the personification of the virtues of leadership, for it is the greatest mystery for Africans to dramatize development and enter into the new world order of qualitative living.

Situating leadership with its "offspring" of virtue within the context of profound reasoning actuates good and objective investigations, interpretations and solutions to the intriguing socio-political intricacies and needs of Africans, thus, making them to experience and love happiness and peace. This scholarly investment is a redirection and guidance of mental resources into profitable and excellent performance in leadership in Africa and to dawn a new beginning of fresh and new thinking patterns and living conditions oriented in problem-solving and happiness centeredness.

Key words: Reasoning, Leadership, Virtues and Development.

Introduction

Reasoning, in the historical, empirical and normative conceptualizations, carries some forms of abuse which show notifications and much more in experiences. The history of philosophy which is primarily the historical, accumulative and progressive body of reasoning distilled into knowledge, understanding, ideologies, concepts, systems, methodologies, techniques, mechanisms, instrumentations, institutions, structures, laws, values, behavior, etc, in the generational quest to address the human and societal questions is still grappling for the attainment of those noble and notable ends. An historical progression of philosophy.

But the philosophy of history is the accumulative and progressive body of reasoning of history that manifested in knowledge, understanding, ideologies, concepts, systems, methodologies, techniques, mechanisms, instrumentation, institutions, structures, laws,

values, behavior, etc, that addressed human and societal ends in a given epoch. A philosophical progression of history. While history progresses philosophically, philosophy also progresses historically and fruition into one another symbiotically in the noble business of life for man and society. Both the historical progression of philosophy and the philosophical progression of history are a body of reasoning for the attainment of ends for humanity and society. Whereas the former professes teaching and learning experiences in the philosophical context, the latter professes teaching and learning experiences in the historical context, but in unanimity in the disposal of the human and societal problems.

Interestingly, both the historical progression of philosophy and the philosophical progression of history unveil the phenomenology of the spirit of leadership as one of the noblest and supreme weapon in the generational quest of humanity and society for happiness and peace. In the body of reasoning across time and space, among the competing responsibilities of man, and the competing importance and notability of responsibilities, the spirit of leadership distinguishes itself as the "Primus inter pares" in the noble and great exercise of development of mankind and society. Infractions on reasoning infringe on the spirit of leadership and places development in captivity. Reasoning could be innocent, being free from abuse or culprit, being victim of reckless abuse, depending on the disposition of the individual and the degree of knowledge or ignorance in the dictation of volition. Volition speaks of individual independence in subjectivism or objectivism - the great human prerogative. Purity of reasoning is derived from objective reasoning in contrast to subjective reasoning, but African leaders have showed an unbridled appetite for subjective reasoning, hence, the misfortune of Africa. This discourse is to negotiate a new trajectory of reasoning in the African continent. Reasoning in the distillation of the spirit of leadership is the mystery of the development of Africa. Reasoning must distil African leaders, African leadership and African followers. African leadership and African followership must experience the furnace of the spirit of leadership to birth transformation in the continent of Africa.

Understanding the Concept of Reasoning

Interrogation of reasoning is essential for the peace of mental life; the evolution of mental life of mankind, the world of reasoning or abstraction is traceable to the creation of man. Locke (2013) observed that the knowledge and veneration of God is the chief end of all our thoughts and the proper business of understanding. Thus, reasoning is a gift from God to nourish life from the beginning of human creation.

Allen (2010) cautioned that:

we have heard, it is said that reason is a blind guide, and that it draws men away from truth rather than leads them to it. If this were true, it is to remain, or to become, unreasonable and to persuade others so to do. We have found, however, that the diligent cultivation of the divine faculty of reason brings about calmness and mental poise and enables one to meet cheerfully the problems and difficulties of life (p. 460).

But the history of the emergence of rational reasoning or thinking is the hallmark of the earliest western Philosophers before Socrates. Indeed, Magee (2010) expounded that "rational thought emerged for the first time in the western world around 6th century BC in the Western Mediterranean. Socrates and Plato made Athens the first world centre of philosophy". Rational reasoning or objective reasoning formed the foundation and launched an unparalleled rate of growth in human knowledge and understanding, and has been the secret of human transformation and societal development.

For Socrates (as cited in Magee, 2010) reasoning is to get at truth through persistent questioning. He was mastery of interrogation and deployed it for understanding of the natural world and mankind. Reasoning has different significations: sometimes it is taken for true and clear principles; sometimes for clear and fair deductions from those principles; and sometimes for the cause, particularly the final cause. According to Locke (2013), reasoning

consists in a perception of the agreement or disagreement of our own ideas, and the knowledge of the existence of all things without us (except only of a God, whose existence every man may certainly know and demonstrate to himself from his own existence), what room is there for the exercise of any other faculty, but outward sense and inward perception (p. 362).

Locke (2013) Construed that reasoning is in four degrees or categories:

the first and highest is the discovering and finding out of truths; the second, the regular and methodical disposition of them, and laying them in a clear and fit order, to make their connexion and force be plainly and easily perceived; the third is the perceiving their connexion; and the fourth, making a right conclusion. (p.363).

Adeniyi (as cited in Azenabor, ed. 2010) agreed with Locke that experience (outward sense) and mental activities (inward perception) stimulate reasoning to produce knowledge through the blade edge onus of curiosity. He revealed that:

curiosity has been the motivating factor in human activities. Man is curious to know what is there, what he perceives, what exists. He wants to understand the world around him as well as himself. We need to agree that man's contact with the reality of the world is through his consciousness. He is aware of the world through sense experience. He makes use of the concepts abstracted from his experience or the information he gathers from the experience of others. So, it may be said that whatever man knows and thinks about the world reveals itself through experience or his mental activities (p. 209).

A fuller development of reasoning leads away from the selfish nature, and ultimately allies the soul with the highest divine power, which enables reasoning to apprehend truth and attain purity and excellence without an enslavement from prejudice.

Plato (as cited in Magee, 2010) employed reasoning to understand that "everything comes into existence and passes away, everything is imperfect, everything decays. This world in space and time is the only world that our human sensory apparatus can comprehend". When Plato observed that the mind engages in inward debates with itself, it implies that there is an intelligible inward life that reasons, argues, whispers, controls, enforces, insists, fights, judges and commands operations according to its preferences in the heart before the manifestation of the outer life. Reasoning is a spiritual exercise, for without reasoning or thinking, there is no life because ideas or thoughts are spiritual entities. And the departure of the human spirit terminates the existence of reasoning or thinking which is the expiration of life or human nature - death.

Ekekwe (2008) made a resounding declaration that:

it is the spirit, in whatever state it might be, that expresses itself through the activities of man, since the physical body, as matter, has no life of its own and is useful only as the tool, which the spirit needs to work in the world of matter (p.13).

The spirit is the fountain of mental life, and the integrity of mental life is the greatness of the spirit of man because the greatness of man is the greatness of mental life. And the rich supply of mental life in the inward hidden parts of man is the power of reasoning. African leaders need the power of reasoning to escape from the periphery of their reasoning and enter into the deep of reasoning which is a precondition for the spirit of leadership.

Akanni (2008) calls this reasoning personality that dwells within the heart to controls the mind of man as self. Plato (2003) assertions expounded that:

making judgment has been loosely used by scholars for reasoning or thinking of any sort that goes on in the mind by itself. Judgment is more precisely defined as the decision terminating the mind inward debate with itself.

Locke (2013) defines ideas as the object of reasoning or thinking. Every man is conscious of himself that he reasons or thinks and that which his mind is applied about whilst reasoning or thinking being the ideas that are there, men have in their mind several ideas, thus, reasoning could be construed as the active body of ideas or knowledge that is rationally, logically and consistently with itself in a relish or solving problem(s) of human existence. Reasoning is the illumination of the mind by the human spirit, for the pleasure of itself or the honour of addressing human and societal problem(s). Reasoning or thinking is a natural phenomenon and is private, for man reasons or thinks but at different levels and patterns. Indeed, the degree of mental exertion determines the degree of intellectual productivity and its praxis. Reasoning is man and man is reasoning; but unguarded and subjective reasoning is dangerous and this has been the hallmark of Africa, hence, the leadership crises. It is the calculation of this discourse to guide and reorient the reasoning of Africans into objective and deep rigorous reasoning for the spirit of leadership to manifest extraordinarily for excellent performance in governance within the African space.

Understanding the Spirit of Leadership

The spirit of leadership or leadership at its best is construed differently by different scholars, largely depending on the intellectual or ethical bent of the scholarly searchlight, the prevailing context and the percipience of the scholar. Whether prescriptive as normative or descriptive as empirical, the spirit of leadership or leadership par excellence takes captivity of frailties, human or otherwise that are fundamental inhibitions, and converts them into building blocks and advantages in the furtherance of attainment of purpose, meaning and fulfillment for mankind and society.

In the Book of life (Holy Bible, Gen. 1:27-28):

God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth (p.4).

Plato, Aristotle, Socrates and a host of philosophers considered and explored the dynamics of human behavior and the nature of humanity in their investigative contemplation on the art and dynamics of human relationship as they relates to governance (as cited in Munroe, 1993).

It is noteworthy to observe that God did not command any man to dominate another man, for all dominion is over things and not humanity. God created the spirit of leadership to rule, govern, control and influence the earth and its components for productivity, prosperity and fulfillment of mankind and society.

Munroe (1993) averred that the spirit of leadership is the capacity to influence, inspire, rally, direct, encourage, motivate, induce, move, mobilize and activate others to pursue a common goal or purpose while maintaining commitment, momentum, confidence and courage. Leadership is the organizing and coordinating of resources, energies and relationships in a productive context for an intended result. Haggai (as cited in Newman, 1997) asserted that "leadership is the discipline of deliberately exerting special influence within a group to move it towards goals of beneficial permanence that fulfill the group's real needs," and in the same platform, Hendricks construed leadership as "causing people to take effective action." leadership is the highest and greatest occupation and value of man and society.

Newman (1997) asserted that:

the greatest satisfaction in leadership is that of building people; not using people to accomplish your goals. To see someone grow and develop as you guide them will be so satisfying as you look back with the perspective of years (p. 175).

Harris (as cited in Newman, 1997) averred that:

People want to be appreciated, not impressed, they want to be regarded as human beings, not as sounding boards for other peoples egos. They want to be treated as an end in themselves, not as a means towards the gratification of another's vanity(175).

Leadership is commonly or generally defined as the ability of an individual or group of people to influence and guide followers or members of an organization or society to achieve a common purpose. leadership is risk taking and challenging the status quo to achieve something new and better. leadership is derived from deeply rigorous character and intellectual engagement, but not an end in itself, neither an intrinsic end in the luxury of relish, but a means to attaining purpose, meaning and fulfillment of man and society. African leadership needs a reengineering in deep reasoning and quality reasoning patterns that will engender sound leadership virtues and new reasoning or thinking patterns that will transform the continent of Africa.

The spirit of leadership is a peculiarly definitive and normative prescription in the demonstration of most quality performance in the supreme exercise of attaining purpose, meaning and fulfillment to humanity and society. Interestingly, the spirit of leadership is the

processing of character and intellect for the redemption of quality and happy life within the context of time and space. Indeed, the spirit of leadership is the engineering of the quality or state of excellence in character and intellection that redounds to prompt solution to needs and problems of a people, organization and society. All leadership possibilities and attainments is a function of character and intellect, and this is the noble intention of this discourse to initiate African leaders and followers into the practicality of this glory for a continental bliss. The spirit of leadership is the most important quality or state of excellence in leadership or the greatest and highest purpose or ends of leadership, significantly statecraft, and African leaders must live and walk in this reasoning as a catalyst to birth excellent performance of leadership in the continent.

Reasoning as a Catalyst to Birth Excellent Performance of Leadership in Africa: Nelson Mandela Leadership Model

Interpretations of reasoning speaks of the spirit of leadership and the interpretations of happiness speaks of the objectivity of reasoning. Hegel (as cited in Mukherjee & Ramaswamy, 2007), expounded that:

if things in themselves were beyond the scrutiny of reason, then reason remained mere subjective, without control over objective reality, leading to an unacceptable division of the world between subjectivity and objectivity (p. 294).

This discourse is to do justice to the intellectual argument of the role and driving force of reasoning in capacitating the productivity of excellent performance of leadership in Africa. The chronological and logical procession of history and philosophy had unveiled incontrovertibly across time and space that, excellent performance of leadership is a function of reasoning; and in the home of Africa, Nelson Mandela of South Africa dramatized an excellent performance of the spirit of leadership that held the whole world spellbound. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (born 18th July 1918) was the first president of South Africa to be elected in a fully representative democratic election, and served in the office from 1994 – 1999. Before his presidency, Mandela was an anti-apartheid activist, and the leader of the African National Congress (ANC) armed wing Umkhonto we sizwe. He was very aggressive and profound in his reasoning against apartheid. The South African courts convicted him on charges of sabotage as well as other crimes committed while he led the movement against apartheid in a thunderous ovation. In accordance to his reasoning and conviction, Mandela served 27 years in prison, spending many of these years on Robben Island (Anagwonye, ed. 2008).

Mandela was in profound reasoning and deep penetrative meditations that accumulated in choices and actions that progressively influenced him to become a global colossus as a freedom fighter and icon of liberation, as it opened the floodgate of the spirit of leadership. He averred that he cannot pinpoint the particular moment of decision making to spend his entire life in the liberation struggle, but contented that the average South African is politicized from the moment of birth, whether one acknowledges it or not.

Mandela (1995) loudly and sadly declared that:

an African child is born in an African only hospital, taken home in an African only bus, lives in an African only area, and attends African only school, if he attend school at all. when he grows up, he can hold Africans only jobs, rent a house in Africans only township, ride Africans only trains and be stopped at anytime of the day or night and be ordered to produce a pass, failing which he will be arrested and thrown in jail. His life is circumscribed by racist laws and regulations that cripple growth, dim his potential and stunt his life. This was the reality and one could deal with it in a myriad ways (p.95).

These prevailing life experiences made black South Africans to reason and imagine essentially on the utility of and need for freedom, and made choices and actions congruence to the abrogation of apartheid. Mandela found himself in deep and aggressive reasoning, and engaging ferocious thoughts, choices and actions precipitated by the obnoxious apartheid regime.

Mandela (1995) espoused that:

I had no epiphany, no singular revelation, no moment of truth, but a steady accumulation of a thousand slights, a thousand indignities, a thousand unremembered moments, produced in me anger, rebelliousness, a desire to fight the system that imprisoned my people (p.95).

For Mandela, the repressive and oppressive apartheid regime actuated profundity of reasoning and strong passions in him that necessitated countless deep political thoughts and meditations that climaxed in strong choices and actions that engineered high quality vision, knowledge, wisdom, diligence, courage, discipline, humility, honesty, love, inspiration, resilience and doggedness strategically captured and focused for the attainment of freedom, and ensure happiness, peace, justice and progress for all south Africans. Mandela demonstrated these virtues of leadership in the highest dimension.

Ekekwe (2015) expounded that in his interrogation of the nature of man (reasoning about man), he increasingly finds that man is intricately related to the concept of power and politics. He averred that spirit and freedom were inseparable, and the freedom which necessarily also implied responsibility was inseparable from accountability and politics. Ekekwe also then implies that life is a responsibility that is inseparable from accountability and politics, so politics without accountability is abuse of life. Mandela demonstrated the inseparability of freedom and accountability as one of the mysteries of the spirit of leadership. The spirit of leadership manifested the virtues of leadership in Mandela to battle and change the subjective reasoning of apartheid government and initiate credentials in objective reasoning and sound mental sensibilities of South Africans and permeated the continent of Africa.

Mandela exemplified freedom in the normative and empirical conceptions in the demonstration of self-sacrifices and self denials (prerequisites and potent for solutions) which enabled him to personified freedom in order to dramatized freedom. You cannot dramatize what you have not personified. Mandela became a living concept of freedom and a living practice of freedom in the embodiment of his personality. His personality unveiled and manifested the theory of freedom and the practice of freedom, so South Africa had no choice but to blossom in freedom and excellent leadership. And the glory of freedom and excellent leadership reign normatively and empirically in South Africa and in the global space by his personality.

Allen (2010) revealed that:

the natural world is the mental world made visible. The seen is the mirror of the unseen. The material and the mental are not two detached arcs in the universe, they are the two halves of a complete circle. The natural and the spiritual are not at eternal enmity, but in the true order of the universe are eternally at one... Every process in matter is also a process in mind. Every natural law has its spiritual counterpart... Consider, for instance, the germination of a seed and its growth into a plant with the final development of a flower, and back to seed again. This also is a mental process, thoughts are seeds which, falling in the soil of the mind, germinate and develop until they reach the completed stage, blossoming into deeds, good or bad, brilliant or stupid, according to their nature and ending as seeds of thought to be again sown in other minds (pp.129-130).

Thoughts of freedom in Mandela through reasoning blossomed to become deeds of freedom and excellent performance in leadership which were sown in the minds of other South Africans to actuate transformation in South Africa. Mandela rigorously processed his character and intellect to birth the spirit of leadership (virtues of leadership) that set in motion a qualitative leadership engineering which ultimately abrogated apartheid in South Africa and offered the people quality political life and happiness. African leaders need this special baptism of processing their character and intellect to produce excellent leadership virtues which are preconditions for the development of the continent of Africa.

In the history of philosophy and philosophy of history, the body of reasoning that solved problems or the body of reasoning that is attempting to solve problems is merely an attempt or demonstration of the spirit of leadership, or perhaps, in a simplification, virtues of leadership. Across time and space, the glory of leadership is simply the glory of the virtues of leadership. The fundamental dominance of power and influence in leadership, if not immune to corruptibility will suppress and devour the germination of the seeds of the virtues of leadership and tends towards personalization and group attachments at the expense of the populace and society. Accordingly, the cultivation of the virtues of leadership for African development is a sine qua non for the continent and the global hope for Africa to connect into the positive realities of the developed nations of the first world.

Virtues of leadership shining in strength of character is not only significant but potent to the destruction of the deadly twin problems of corruption and idolatry in African leadership. Whereas the "exogenous epidemic" of corruption of mental lives or thought patterns of Africans, importantly African leaders, is perilous enough, the compounding evil of idolatry of leadership, were Africans pour out overwhelming love and admiration for their corrupt and bad leaders and leadership is shocking and necessitates an urgency in the cultivation of the virtues of leadership for a redemption of Africa. The idolization of African leaders is the highest and greatest mental debasement of the African populace. Notwithstanding the "viruses' of corruption and idolatry, Africa is also growing immoral in thoughts, choices and actions, and worsening the corruptive and idolatrous tendencies of Africans for which the antidote is virtuous leadership which builds positive and transformative attitude.

Maxwell (1997) defined "attitude as an inward feeling expressed by behavior" he expounded that:

we live in a world of words. Attached to these words are meanings that bring varied responses from us. Words such as happiness, acceptance, peace, and success describe what each of use desires. But there is one word that will either heighten the possibility of our desires being fulfilled or prevent them from becoming a reality within us (p.25).

Virtues of leadership develops positive attitude of strength of character, in a mutually complementary reinforcement that sets aflame leadership potentials that see needs and problems as opportunities and advantages to delightfully explore for accomplishment and fulfillment for the good and happiness of humanity and society. Realistically, the potency of the virtues of leadership is in their attainment of personification as in the epitome of Nelson Mandela. African leaders must personify the virtues of leadership in order to manifest the glory of excellent performance in governance in the continent of Africa.

Conclusion

When the sword has left its sheath, the contempt of the proud is subdued, because it is the announcement and readiness of the sword to devour every arrogance of challenges, difficulties, needs, circumstances, conditions, appetites, vanities, etc. In the same vein, when the virtues of leadership are let loosed and deployed adequately and appropriately under the sponsorship and guidance of reasoning, the spirit of leadership has no choice but to aggressively cultivate and advance development in Africa. Rousseau (2001) declared that the wise man is free of vices, but has all the virtues. Governance is to make people happy by being constrained to be so, and the people have to be made to experience happiness in order to be made to love happiness.

African leaders must doggedly dig into the far recesses of their hearts to discover and experience their rich mental perceptions and sensibilities in personification for the flourishing of the sterling virtues of leadership to provide Africa with excellent developmental trajectory to the awe of the global community. This is the scholarly onus of the discourse. African leaders need to grow into having adequate and appropriate understanding of the existential mysteries of mankind in order to manage the complexities and intricacies of development in perfection and husband its opportunities within the continental space.

Suggestions

- 1. A new culture of deepening reasoning and meditations in social life and governance in Africa must be emphasized and sustained for a mental revolution of electrifying and purifying sensibilities, and developing new and sharp thinking patterns.
- 2. Aggressive cultivation and sustenance of the transforming virtues of leadership must be the common and compulsory practice of all Africans, essentially the African leaders for the baptism of virtues.
- 3. All informal and formal institutions in training or production or otherwise must have the baptism of virtues as guiding mantra to reposition the citizens of Africa for the glory of leadership.
- 4. Government across the nations of Africa must declare a state of emergency over the declining moral and intellectual behavior of Africans, and set in motion mechanisms to arrest the aggressively growing immoral and corruptive attitudes and tendencies of Africans.
- 5. Labour is life, and the labour to understand man and his reasoning potentials is not only profitable and productive but the mystery of the solutions to the problems of man and society, thus the need to learn and understand the human spirit, soul and body is essential for the development of Africa.
- 6. Unique and peculiar leadership training institutions that demonstrate the personification of leadership should be established. Leadership schools that could birth the epitome of Nelson Mandela to raise a new crop of sterling leaders in the continent should be the pathway.
- 7. Institutionalization of Nelson Mandela leadership culture and the promotion of the sons and daughters of the hub of Mandela with prizes and honour awards to sensitize Africans across the continent.
- 8. Promotion of the culture of godliness.

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