# VALUE RE-ORIENTATION: POLICY OPTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGER DELTA

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**ABSTRACT**

It has been argued by scholars that studies on the Niger Delta have not adequately captured and addressed the negative consequences of infrastructural and human capital underdevelopment and decaying value system manifested in indiscipline, corruption and low productivity. The phenomenon can no longer be ignored. This paper has applied a combination of participant-observation and secondary methods within the framework of 'failed state' to examine how underdevelopment has impacted negatively on four cherished core values that are still relevant i.e., discipline, resilience, accountability, and productivity (hard work) (DRAP) in the region. The aim is to revive them to become building blocks for sustainable development in the region. The paper observes that there is an urgent need for the people to be systematically re-oriented towards sustenance of the core values; and concludes with suggestion of formulating a 5-year policy for an intensive massive value-reorientation campaign (MVRC) programme.

**Keywords:** Change Agents, Elite Core of Corruption, Mentoring, Moral Decadence, Sustainable Development, Value System.

## INTRODUCTION

The central argument of this paper is on the general breakdown of erstwhile accepted socio-cultural values in the Niger Delta region and Nigeria. These values are discipline, productivity (hard work), accountability, honesty, humility, resilience, character and learning that once knitted together over 3,000 communities, and 250 ethnic nationalities in the region and country (Nnoli, 1978:97-102). The breakdown took a gradual process, especially from the collapse of the First Republic in 1966 through the Second Republic in 1979-1983. It became highest during General Ibrahim Babangida (IBB) military administration in 1985-1993. The period witnessed an upsurge in anti-social behaviours, as well as traditional and white collar crimes in the region and country. Subsequent governments after IBB have not reversed the declining value system; and the negative consequences have manifested in different ways and manners to further undermine the sustainability of development effort in the Niger Delta Region and country.

Development within the context of this paper means a qualitative change and thus improvement on the lives of the people and their environment. It involves man and man alone. It requires skills, techniques, tools and resources which collectively can be put together by man to help attain the desired transformation.

Now, what is sustainable Development? How can development be said to be sustainable?

According to the BBC English Dictionary, A Dictionary for the World (1992: 1183), sees sustainable as a condition:

> ... If a plan, method, or system is sustainable, it can be continued at the same level of activity or
> pace without harming its efficiency and the people affected by it ... the creation of a sustainable
> health programme …

This corroborates Okolo (2012) position on community development where felt - needs, self-help and popular participation is said to be a necessary precondition for the attainment of community development, which in turn permeates the sustainability of development projects and programmes.

Forty - Two years ago, in Stockholm in precisely, 1972. The international development and environment summit was held- "UN conference on Human Environment" Incidentally, twenty years later 1992, it was followed by the Earth summit, at Rio- Dejerio. Where conventions on biodiversity, climate change, desertification, and of course the jewel in the crown Agenda 21, 40 chapter programme of action for sustainable development at local, national and global levels was conceived.

This explains the process that characterized the adoption of sustainable development as a major issue in global perspective. It is however necessary to observe that, the term Sustainable Development gained prominence in 1980 when the international union for conservation strategy succinctly emphasized

> ... Sustainability in ecological terms and was ... less concerned with economic development. It
> argued for three priorities to be built-in to development policies, namely, the maintenance of
> ecological process, the sustainable use of resources, the maintenance of genetic diversity.

The above suggests that sustainable development as implied, sought to protect the physical environment, and largely concerned with the impact of man's activities on the environment. This impact according to Ibaba, 2004, "was seen in negative terms and it ignored the cause and effect relationship between the environment and development". Hence, for him, the link between the environment and development took the centre stage when the world commission on environment and development (WCED) repositioned the concept.

In this vein, the WCED, stated that "if needs are to be met on a sustainable basis, the Earth's natural resource base must be conserved and enhanced ". Accordingly, sustainable development for WCED can be achieved by national governments where they address the following issues critically:

a)     Receiving economic growth;

b)     Changing the quality of life;

c)     Meeting essential needs for jobs, food, energy, water and sanitation;

d)     Ensuring a sustainable level of population;

e)     Conserving and enhancing the resource base;

f)     Re-orienting technology and management of risk; and

g)     Merging environment and economics in decision-making process.

Thus, the requirement is for non-negative change in the stock of natural resources and environmental quality. Sustainable Development in the words of Roberto Reperto, is

> ... A development strategy that manages all assets, natural resources, and human resources, as well as financial and physical assets, for increasing long term wealth and well-being. Sustainable development, as a goal rejects policies and practices that support current living standards by depleting the productive base, including nature resources future generations with poorer prospects an greater needs.

Apparently, this further highlights the WCED's view on sustainable development we earlier cited, meeting the needs (political, economic, social, cultural and health needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations.

This suggests that; sustainable development seeks to maximize the benefits and contributions of the environment to development; by promoting the enduring exploitation of natural resources.

The South Commission Report, posits that;

> ... Sustainable development serves to draw attention to the need for compatibility between growth and the preservation of the environment ... warns against a narrow-minded and short sighted approach to development and economic modernization.

Therefore, sustainable development as shown above implies to mean a balance in the enthronement of development in the society. But whether or not this is achieved in the Niger Delta is yet another matter to interrogate by scholars.

This paper finds that sustainable development is anchored and measured in varied dimensions, and these include - political development; economic development; environmental development; social development; intellectual development and even women's development. However, these measures are often intertwined and therefore interlinked and seriously rooted and situated on the environment. Thus, the success of any of these variables leads to a significance progress towards the enthronement of sustainable development in a given society. The value decay which successive governments after IBB failed to address frontally has continually resulted in the negative consequences on the value systems in the Niger Delta and the country.

The premises of the argument are that, first, moral decadence was not an issue of serious public concern in Nigeria both in the colonial, as well as, the First and Second Republics. During these periods, moral/social values were laid down and enforced by the entire community. As Akintoyo (2009: 7) puts it, "then, children belonged to everyone and any parent could discipline any child. Children were flogged by either teachers or parents for offences. The picture of discipline and order at that period is a far cry from what we see now."

Second, it is not possible to revive and/or resuscitate all the values as some of them, such as, female circumcision, widowhood practice, ostracizing members of the community for civil offences, and oath taking before a *"juju shrine"* would not be fashionable in the contemporary Nigeria. Thus, we have to be careful in "picking and refining" those values that would easily be adaptable. Those who adhere to this school of thought contend that the following values should be revived, refined and adapted for a start: honesty, productivity (hard work), courtesy and companionship, respect, for life, peaceful co-existence and accountability.

Third, the emphasis for value re-orientation should be on resuscitating the collapsed family structure, school system, civil and public service, political class, traditional and legal institutions for them to continue to serve as change-agents. The family structure/system is particularly important because it is the building block for the transmission of the "new message" to the present and future generations. This issue formed the agenda of the *9th National Women Conferences* in Lagos, Nigeria in October 2009. The conference reiterated that the "success of mankind in confronting and overcoming contemporary challenges of life, especially sustainable development and moral decadence will depend significantly on how mentally, physically and psychologically prepared the women are in championing the re-establishment of moral values." In supporting this position, Adamu (2009: 39), the Director-General of *Citizenship and Leadership Training Centre* (CLTC), Lagos, emphasized that "we need moral values to move this nation forward. These are values that existed in the sixties and seventies. Unfortunately, we no longer have them. This is why development is in the present form in the country.... And the decline we see today started in the eighties (in IBB's era)."

The federal government has not been unmindful of the problem. It has, for a matter of fact, addressed the problem by establishing the *National Orientation Agency (NOA)* in September 1993, and *CLTC* in 2000; but these measures have not been far reaching thereby raising several questions, such as: Is it the individual, society or both that have violated the socio-cultural values? Do we consider all acts of deviant behaviour as breach of the value system? What are the components to look for when analyzing a decaying value system? And who are the victims of these violations in the Niger Delta?

In addressing, these and similar questions, the paper is divided into five parts, including with this introduction. It is followed by an in-depth analysis of the problem, theoretical, and methodological challenges of value decay in parts two and three. The part four is a policy recommendation to adopt an "intensive massive value re-orientation campaign (IMVRC)" programme to reverse the patterns and trends. The paper concludes with a suggestion for government to demonstrate political will to successfully execute the IMVRC programme and put the region on the path of sustainable development.

**ARGUMENTS FOR VALUE RE-ORIENTATION**

Several scholars (Quinney 1975; Okesholar 2008: 2, and Adeoye 2009: 47) have offered different explanations of what constitutes socio-cultural values, how they are violated and who are the victims. This is important because the act of violation, and gravity of the offence varies with time and place in the region.

Associated with it is the difficulty of interpretation since each socio-cultural value has a history of how it evolved in the region, and changed from time to time, and place to place. This must have informed Durkeim in 1933 to describe "value as a principle or standard considered worthwhile or desirable by the people of a community or society for purpose of fostering orderly living, mutual growth, and positive development." He went on to state that any violation of the value system should be treated within a particular social context. As he puts it, "violation or crime is a social product, determined by social conditions, capable of being controlled only in social terms."

Durkeim argues that moral decadence is a normal phenomenon in the society, a natural and inevitable product of collective life and social evolution. In a similar vein, Bohn and Haley (2002) look at values as "products of human experience that regulate not only what is, but also what should be an acceptable conducts…." In sharing his experience, Barrack Obama (2006: 55), the 45th President of America, said the regulatory aspect of values often creates conflicts, and "… we cannot avoid these tensions (conflicts) entirely. At times, our values collide with each other, and in such circumstances, finding the appropriate balance between our competing values (in society) is difficult. This reminds us that tensions occur not necessarily because we have violated the value system, but simply because we live in a complex and contradictory world."

In tracing the problem and pattern of value-decay in Nigeria, Jones (1963), Jibo (1993), and Adeoye (2009) argue that in the pre-colonial period, the relationships between people in the Niger Delta communities were guided by cherished socio-cultural values or norms. Thus, any anti-social behavior, such as indiscipline, dishonesty, laziness, corrupt practices, murder, arson, assault, drug addiction, and bad governance were sanctioned to serve as deterrent to others. While minor cases were settled within the family, major ones were resolved by the Council of Elders at the village square. Although the values were not written, individuals got acquainted with them through socialization process. In this way, there were only few cases of moral decadence.

This pattern fairly changed during the colonial era, especially from Arthur Richard's Constitution in 1946. The Constitution split the country into three major regions along ethnic lines, and created the executive and legislative arms of government in Nigeria. By the arrangement, anti-social behaviours or crimes became a function or duty of the government or state. The state assumed to be the ultimate victim of all the major breaches of values or criminal codes, earlier stated (Quinney 1975, and

Danbazau 1994). During this period, the concept of criminal law developed to replace several cherished socio-cultural values, and the family system equally changed to the loose individualistic type found in urban centers. This adversely affected the traditional authority of the elders in a village to enforce values. Be that as it may, the rate of social deviance was still low.

The low pattern and trend continued at post-independence up to the collapse of the First Republic in January 1966. The General Yakubu Gowon (1967-1975) military administration that succeeded the First Republic kept the trend low at the initial stage, but could not sustain it at the later part Jibo, (1993:63-85). This became an issue of public concern in the country and a contributory factor to his overthrow in July 1975. The pattern and trend is outlined at Table 3.

In an effort to locate value decay in Nigeria and its negative consequences on the Niger Delta region we assessed its prevalence rate among ten (10) former Heads of state and governments (HOSG) and eight (8) parameters (criteria). The parameters were then matched with the core values in table 1

**Table 1: Measurement of Core Value System in Nigeria**

| S/NO | VALUE DECAY | CORE VALUE |
|------|-------------|------------|
| 1. | Level of social behaviour | Discipline |
| 2. | Level of traditional crimes | Discipline |
| 3. | Level of white collar crimes | Accountability |
| 4. | Level of unemployment | Productivity |
| 5. | Level of restiveness (i.e. youth) | Resilience |
| 6. | Level of corruption | Accountability |
| 7. | Level of abuse of office/impunity | Discipline |
| 8. | Level of insecurity | Resilience |

Source: Authors field work, 2013.

The study went further to administer 500 questionnaires on three (3) major institutions saddled with the responsibility of sustaining and promoting core values in Nigeria. The institutions and number sampled were as indicated in table two (2).

The rating may be subjective, but instructive in this type of study where there is no precise standard of scale. The survey was complemented by case study – official government gazette on investigation of assets of public officers and other persons, tribunals, code of conduct bureau and specialized publications/journals. It is important to state that each respondent organization was given ten (10) set of the questionnaire that corresponds with the 10 HOSG. Using the measurement at table 1, the ratings of each of the HOSG against the criteria were aggregated and presented in table 3.

**Table 2: Institutional Survey of Core Value System in Nigeria**

| s/no | Institution | Organization | Measurement of value decay | HOSG | Rating | No. of questionnaire | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Administered | Received |
| 1. | Civil society organization (CSO) | 1) Civil Liberty Organization (CLO) | Table 1 | Table 3 | Low, moderate, High (Table 3) | 72 | 61 |
| | | 2) Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) | | | | 72 | 50 |
| | | 3) Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) | | | | 72 | 43 |
| 2. | Anti – Graft Agencies | 1) Nigeria Police (criminal investigation department) | | | | 72 | 50 |
| | | 2) Independent corrupt Practices and related crimes commission (ICPC) | | | | 72 | 35 |
| | | 3) Economic, Financial Crimes & Related Offences Commission (EFCC) | | | | 72 | 32 |
| 3. | Human Rights Watch | Human Rights Watch (HRW) | | | | 68 | 20 |

Source: Authurs field work, 2013

Table 3: **Trend and Assessment of Value Decay in Nigeria, 1960-2007**

| Year | Head of State and Government | Type of Govt. | Rating (Level of Decay) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1960 – 1966 | Abubakar Tafawa Balewa | Civil | Low |
| 1967 – 1975 | Yakubu Gowon | Military | Low |
| 1976 – 1978 | Murtala Mohammed/Olu Obasanjo | Military | Low |
| 1979 – 1983 | Shehu Shagari | Civil | Moderate |
| 1984 | Muhammadu Buhari | Military | Low |
| 1985 – 1993 | Ibrahim B. Babangida (IBB) | Military | Very High |
| 1994 -1998 (Aug.) | Sani Abacha | Military | Moderate |
| 1998 (Sept. – 1999 May) | Abdulsalami Abubakar | Military | Moderate |
| 1999 – 2007 (May) | Olusegun Obasanjo (OBJ) | Civil | High |

| 2007 – 2011 (May) | Yar-Adua / Jonathan | Civil | High |

*Source: Okolo and Etekpe (Authors) field work.*

The Table 3 assess the malaise in a scale of four factors – low, moderate, high and very high, and shows how value-decay was low between 1960 and 1978. It rose "significantly" to a moderate level during former President Shehu Shagari in 1979-1983. The period witnessed crass corruption that almost collapsed the economy, ranging from constants armed robbery, non-payment of salaries to civil/public servants, and abject poverty. The people of the region and Nigeria were not used to this level of social decay and the military overthrew the government. The Buhari military regime that succeeded it in 1984 applied several policy options, including "War Against Indiscipline – WAI" to bring it down to a low level. The government short-lived as it was overthrew by IBB military government shut-it-up between 1985 and 1993. During this period, the level and dimension became endemic and the period has become a reference point in discussing value decay in Nigeria. Since then, the rating has not improved significantly, but continues to oscillate between moderate and high (Table 3). One thing is clear from the Table, that the problem of value-decay is not prevalent only in civil government. Instead, it is a function of the leadership style of the head of state and government; and three areas where the problem has manifested greatly are: family, political process, and governance. Let's briefly discuss them one after the other.

**The Family:** As earlier stated, socio-cultural values evolve from the family. It is in the family that socialization process takes place where the parents are role models. Thus, any deviant behaviour brings shame to the entire family. The family is known to be the custodian of virtues of self-reliance, self-improvement, risk-taking, discipline, temperance, productivity (hard-work), drive, and personal responsibility. The family gives confidence that through hard-work and honesty, each person can rise above his or her circumstances of birth. Jimmy Carter, former President of America, shares this view when writing his autobiography, *Keeping Faith* (1982). Carter states that he drew inspiration from his Christian family background to address the "crisis that confronted me, the people who worked intimately with or against me, the advice I received and accepted or rejected, the drama of the Oval Office, and the relationship with my wife Rosalynn."

The family system has changed tremendously in the Niger Delta since 1985 due mainly to several factors, such as single parenthood, falling standard of education, enticements by politicians, disregard for hard-work, and influence by foreign media. We wish to emphasize the issue of single parenthood further. It is a known fact that in course of seismic activities of oil companies, their workers resides temporarily in the rural communities. The workers, being well paid, entice the girls with money to sleep with them. They even deceive the girls by promising to marry them, but abandoned them at completion of their assignment when they have already impregnated the girls. The girls then give birth to children that don't have fathers. The practice was so pronounced that in Twon Brass, in Bayelsa state, such single parents have constituted a separate community of their own, known as '*ashawo* (prostitute) village'. This is the pattern in Escravos or *Ibeno* in Delta and Akwa Ibom states in the region. It has been observed that the bulk of militants in the region are traceable to single parenthood Etekpe A. (2007:35). The consequences of the breakdown of family system are manifested more prominently in the political process.

**The Political Process:** There is no doubt that the decaying value system is felt more during the political processes, especially, at election periods i.e., 1964, 1978, 1983, 1999, 2003 and 2007. While the political class would send their

children/wards to London, South Africa or Ghana for quality education, they engage the other young people staying at home between the ages of 16 and 45 years as militants or thugs to intimidate voters, rig elections, and disappear with ballot boxes for a very small amount of money. Two things account for it. First, that election is considered in Nigeria as a "do-or-die" affairs, and second, that the votes of the electorate do not usually count in the country. This is evidenced by the way and manner armed youths were allegedly brought from neigbouring states, especially, Osun State to Ekiti State by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the re-run election in 2009. In many of the Niger Delta States, such as Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Delta states, armed militant youths were engaged during the 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 elections to snatch ballot papers and scare away voters. Incidentally, they were ready to re-invent such acts in the general elections in 2015, and Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) headed by Professor Attahru Jegga has to be resilient against the plan. This is where this study comes in as a concrete measure of planning against fraudsters by resuscitating their values to chart a new path for sustainable development in the Niger Delta and the country at large.

**Bad Governance**: The fraudulent political process is manifested in the worst form of social malaise, i.e. inept leadership and bad governance in the region. In contributing to the debate, Osagie (2009:85) identified "leadership and bad governance as the basic problems of the Niger Delta, in particular, and Nigeria in general", and pointed out how such malaise has further impoverished the region.

Farouk, Idris, Director-General of *National Orientation Agency* (NOA) shares this view when he said, "the breakdown of morals in the society and the challenges confronting the family and nation is attributable to leadership failure in the country." He pointed out that leadership had failed in the families, schools, and private and public organizations; and has given impetus to young men and women to equally disregard the values that initially confined them to decent behaviours

Bad governance has also breed corruption, which in turn, blindfolds the political class from discipline, honesty, integrity, productivity and character to the point that *Transparent Initiative International,* an International NGO, ranked Nigeria in 2009 as the $20^{th}$ most corrupt country in the world. Ufford (2009:39) went further to amplify it by stating that the past political leaders in the country at Table 1 have embezzled about US$20 trillion between 1960 and 2007. This amount is six times higher than what was expended to "rebuild" Europe from the ruins of World War II. Corruption, the bane of good governance and development has brought Nigeria so low that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) human development index (HDI) ranked Nigeria in 2009 as the "$15^{th}$ poorest country out of 177 countries, and the $22^{nd}$ out of 45 in Africa." What the foregoing statistics mean is that the country cannot achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs) of eradicating extreme poverty, maternal mortality and combating moral decadence by the target year of 2015.

**THE THEORETICAL CHALLENGES**

There are basically four prevailing theoretical frameworks commonly applied by scholars (Vold 1958, Schefer 1969, Bohn and Haley 2002) in explaining the phenomenon of value-decay. These are: classical, neo-classical, conflict, and failed state theories. The classical theorists trace evolution of socio-cultural value system to the early civilization in the $6^{th}$ century B.C. (Baker 1930, and Etekpe 2007:3-4), and how changes occasioned by time and environment propelled people to come together and establish values or norms. The values were to act as guidelines to forestall life becoming "nasty, brutish and

short" Hobbes (1969). Earlier, Baccaria (1704) had expressed "concern over the protection of rights of the people from political corruption and excessive application of sanctions or legal institutions." Baccaria's main thesis is that "punishment for violating values, norms and crime should not exceed what was necessary to maintain public order."

For the neo-classical thinker like Vold (1958) and Schefer (1969), the issue is that of "responsibility." The theory of responsibility is about the individual restraining him or herself from certain deviant behaviours for the interest of other individuals or society. This is generally referred to as a "voluntary agreement" to sacrifice the minimum amount of liberty necessary to prevent anarchy and chaos. Experience has shown that with time, those in political positions in Nigeria (Table 1) no longer adhere to the voluntary social contract (agreement) and breach the cherished values with impunity.

Going forward, the conflict theorists that deals with competing interest groups, namely: the political (ruling) class against the working class, and the privileged political executives (leaders) against the less privileged youths. Adherents of the theory, especially Dahrendorf (1959), and Chamblis (1975) explain that those responsible for the moral decadence in any given society like Nigeria are the dominant political class. This class then defines and re-defines behaviours that seemingly challenge their interest as violation of values. It is for this reason that Chamblis (1975) and Adeoye (2009) interpret value-decay or crime as the activity of the powerful minority groups (i.e. ruling class) promoted by capitalism. Quinney (1975), looks at "capitalism as a symbol of dominance and social structure developed by the colonialist in Nigeria to create unequal economic position between the capitalists and workers." This conflict spurs young men/women to deviant behaviour in form of ethnic nationalism movements or militancy to challenge their predatory leaders.

The last is the failed – state theory propounded by Nguyen (2000). The theory is frequently applied by non – African scholars to describe African societies typified by Somalia on one hand and Nigeria on the other hand. These countries are economically weak, fragile and are in perennial crises in development as if they are re-inventing Thomas Hobbes' thesis on the state of nature, Jones and Kiguel, (1994: 20 – 35).

This study adopts the failed – state theory to explain incidences of value decay in Nigeria as indicated in table 3. In applying the frame work to Nigeria, it would perhaps be helpful to first define what a "non-failed state" is. The character of a non-failed state is enshrined in sections 14 and 15 of chapter II of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria (as amended) that "Nigeria shall be a state based on the principles of democracy and social justice, provide adequate infrastructural facilities and abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power."

In contrast, the concept "recognizes that when the phrase failed state is used, it refers to a state not ordered and secured, or unable to provide efficient social infrastructure and execute its statutory duties" Amoda, (2009: 19). To use the phrase descriptively will require an enumeration of the characteristics, qualifiers or indices of what a failed state is. In this regard, Nguyen (2000) and Amoda (2009: 19) have identified some of the characteristics to include the followings:

    (i)     High rate of traditional and white collar crimes;
    (ii)    Corrupt governance and abuse of office;
    (iii)   Inadequate internal and external security and order;

(iv)     Incessant intra-and-inter ethnic and religious violent and conflicts; and

(v)      Inability to sustain physical force on the citizenry.

Incidentally, these characteristics are found in the Nigerian state, and as such, it qualifies to a large extent as a failed state.

The three – classical, neo-classical and conflict frameworks are inadequate in explaining value-decay in the Niger Delta. Thus, we turn to what Nguyen (2000) refers to as "the theory of failed state." This framework is frequently applied by non-African scholars to describe African societies typified by Somalia on the one hand, and Nigeria on the other hand that are weak, fragile and in perennial crises as if Thomas Hobbes "State Nature" is being re-invented (Jones and Kiguel 1994: 20-35). In applying the framework to Nigeria, it would perhaps be helpful to first define what a "non-failed state" is. The character of a non-failed state is enshrined in Sections 14 and 15 of Chapter II of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria. The section says that "Nigeria shall be a state based on the principles of democracy and social justice, provide adequate infrastructural facilities, and abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power."

In contrast, the concept "recognizes that when the phrase, failed state is used, it refers to a state not ordered and secured, or unable to provide efficient social infrastructure and execute its statutory duties" (Amoda, 2009:19). To use the phrase descriptively will require an enumeration of the characteristics, qualifiers or indices of what a failed state is; we have identified five of such characteristics at Table 4.

**Table 4: Characteristics of Failed State**

| S/No | Indices |
|------|---------|
| 1 | High rate of traditional and white collar crimes; |
| 2 | Corrupt governance and abuse of office; |
| 3 | Inadequate internal and external security and order; |
| 4 | Incessant intra-and-inter ethnic and religious violent and conflicts; and |
| 5 | Inability to sustain physical force on the citizenry. |

*Source:          Excerpts from Amoda, J. M. (2009). "The Conceptual Status of the Phrased Failed State" The Vanguard, December 22, p. 19.*

Incidentally, these characteristics at Table 4 are found in the Nigerian state, and as such, "it qualifies as a failed state. "Under such circumstance", Schohl and Smith (1999) wrote, "the rulers either military or civil break the underlying compact by neglecting or ignoring the fundamental rights due their people by directing the state apparatus (i.e., military, State Security Service - SSS now Directorate of State Security (DSS) and Mobile Police Force MPF) against one segment of the population to hunt down another." This is the tactics the Nigerian state has been applying in the Niger Delta where it pits one ethnic groups (i.e., Ijos and Urhobos) against the other (i.e., Itsekiri) over the ownership of Warri town and then resort to maximum force to deal with it, even when it is purely a civil matter. This was the case in Umuechem (1990), Ogoni (1990), Odi (1999), Odioma (2004), and Okenenkoko (2008) in the region.

The failure of the Nigerian state has in no doubt, created the environment for value-decay and other anti-social behaviour, including under-development to triumph. When this happens, the society itself celebrates and would not raise an eye brow over the corrupt practices or fraudulent leaders. The recent case of Chief Bode George, a PDP's Chieftain in the South-West Nigeria, and Chairman of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) Board of Directors is a pointer. The society ought not to have celebrated Bode George by going to court with traditional drummers signing praises for him – some one that has abused his public office (Adegbojega, 2009:11).
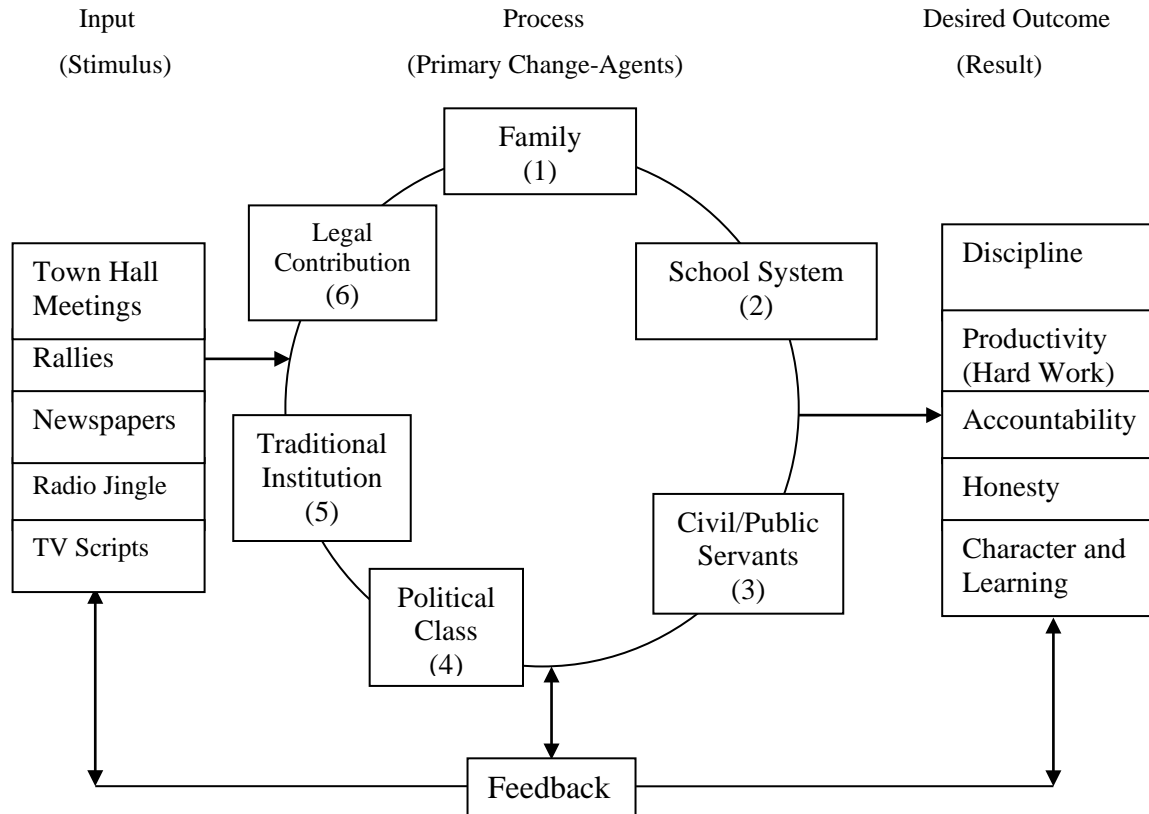
The question worth asking at this point is, with the degeneration of the Nigerian state, what are some of the implications of the wrong values that we now celebrate? What are the policy options to control reverse and prevent it from further decadence? This forms the crux of the next part.

**RECOMMENDED POLICY OPTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The ideal policy option recommended to reverse the negative consequences of value-decay is an "Intensive Massive Value Re-Orientation Campaign (IMVRC)" programme. The campaign is very apt as the economic and political problems facing the Niger Delta and Nigeria have strong relationship with declining value system and ethics. And the targets of the campaign programme are: (1) young people (youths) between the ages of 16 and 45, and (2) those over 60 years. Our reasons for categorizing them this way are that value-decay is more prevalent amongst these two groups, and they constitute about 33 percent of the population of the region. Ordinarily, those above 60 years should have been exempted as they should be thinking of celestial matters, but in case of the region and country, they are the ones at the forefront of breaching values Adegboyega, (2009:1).

The two categories are further clustered into six cells at Table 5 (and diagrammatized at Figure 1) to form the primary change-agents. They are: the family, school system, civil and public servants, political class, traditional, and legal institutions shown as a diagram at figure 1. The clustering is followed by preparation of specific syllabus/curriculum for each of the cells. Figure 1, we have shown the input (stimulus), process (accelerators), and desired outcome (result) of IMVRC.

**Fig. 1. Intensive Massive Value Re-Orientation Campaign (IMVRC)**

| Input | Process | Desired Outcome |
|-------|---------|-----------------|
| (Stimulus) | (Primary Change-Agents) | (Result) |

Family (1)

Legal Contribution (6)

School System (2)

Town Hall Meetings

Rallies

Newspapers

Radio Jingle

TV Scripts

Traditional Institution (5)

Civil/Public Servants (3)

Political Class (4)

Discipline

Productivity (Hard Work)

Accountability

Honesty

Character and Learning

Feedback

*Source: Okolo and Etekpe, 2014*

At the input phase, the campaign would apply town hall meetings, public rallies, mass media (newspapers, radio and television) as stimuli to positively influence the six cells through an intensive dynamic process of socialization. The interfacing and/or socialization process is expected to re-fashion the cells (primary change-agents) towards resuscitating the desired outcome of discipline, productivity (hard work), accountability, honesty, character and learning. This would go back and forth, i.e., from input to process to desired outcome through feedback mechanism until the desired values become internalized amongst the people as culture.

The policy will equally recognize and work through established socio-cultural organizations in the region, namely, Ijaw National Congress (INC), Urhobo Progresss Union (UPU), Itsekiri Study Group (ISG), Ibibio Town Union (ITU), Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Community and Faith-based Organizations shown at Table 4 to reach the primary change agents - family, schools, civil/public servants, political class, traditional and legal institutions. These organizations directly control about 7.14 million, out of the 28 million people in the region. When properly re-oriented, they are expected to positively influence the rest of the population in the region within five years. To do this, the programme had

articulated specific syllabus or curriculum for teaching and re-orientation during the campaign and the programme content and desired outcome are stated at Table 5.

**Table 5: Syllabus for Intensive Massive Value Re-Orientation Campaign (IMVRC) Programme**

| | Primary Change-Agents | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Syllabus | **Family (1)** | **School System (2)** | **Civil/Public Servants (3)** | **Political Class (4)** | **Traditional Institution (5)** | **Legal Institution (6)** |
| | - Marriage education | - Identification of responsibility centers | - Short term training courses/workshops | - Leadership development | - Town Hall meeting | - Legal aid service |
| | - Counselling | - Physical education | - Citizenship education | - Good governance | - Citizenship development | - Citizenship education |
| | - Citizenship education | - Development of school farms | - Community Service | - Citizenship education | - African Dispute Resolution (ADR) | - Community Service |
| | - Pursue legitimate livelihood | - Leadership development | | - Ethics | - Community Service | - Advocacy |
| | - Community service | - Citizenship education | | - Community Service | | |
| | | - Community Service | | | | |
| Result (Desired Outcome) | - Discipline<br>- Productivity (Hard work) | | - Accountability<br>- Honesty | | - Resilience<br>- Character and Learning | |

*Source: Fieldwork of Authors 31 March 2009 and re-validated in December 2013*

**Table 6: Stimuli for Intensive Massive Value Re-Orientation Campaign (IMVRC) 2006**

| S/N | Major Socio-Cultural Organisations in Niger Delta | Ethnic Nationality/State | Population (000,000) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Organiz. | Region |
| 1 | Ijaw National Congress (INC) | Ijaw – Bayelsa, Rivers & Delta States | 2.74 | |
| 2 | Itsekiri Study Group (ISG) | Itsekiri – Delta State | 0.12 | |
| 3 | Urhobo Progressive Union (UPU) | Urhobo – Delta State | 0.41 | |
| 4 | Ibibio Town Union (ITU) | Ibibio – Akwa Ibom State | 1.00 | |
| 5 | Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) | Ogoni – Rivers State | 0.80 | |
| 6 | Others | Efik, Bini et Cross Rivers and Edo State | 2.1 | |
| | Total | | 4.17 | 28.0 |

*Sources: Excerpt of 2006 National Population and Housing Census*

The essence of the syllabus/curriculum at Table 5 along with stimuli for IMVRC in table 6 are to provide an intensive framework for helping married couples stay together and pursue legitimate means of livelihood; impress on the school system to identify appropriate responsibility centers such as establishment of school farms, handicraft or vocation centers that would restore the dignity of labour; inculcate in the civil/public servants the value of productivity and mentoring. It is also meant to groom the political class who are the elected or appointed public office holders and political party executives towards imbibing the values of productivity, leadership and good governance; as well as fortify the traditional and legal institutions in the art and science of African dispute resolution (ADR) method, citizenship education and advocacy. To achieve these, the programme shall pursue core values that cut across the six cells. These courses are citizenship education, community service, productivity, responsibility centers, and leadership development.

It should be emphasized that the legal institution is an essential accelerator of the programme, and is to form the hub of the campaign in taming the political class and civil/public servants. A recent case of breaching the value of honesty, accountability and productivity (hard work) with impunity is that of Bode George earlier highlighted. Justice Olubumi Oyewole's action of jailing him along with the other five directors of NPA (referred to as "elite core of corruption") on 26 October 2009 is in line with the tenets of value re-orientation (Sekoni, 2009: 10). He has practically set the stage, and the euphoria about jailing them is an indication of the optimism brought into the campaign. It is unfortunate that the supreme court of Nigeria (SCN) over turned the judgment in 2013 on technical reasons. The action of SCN has not gone down well with generality of Nigerians.

The issue at stake is who or which institution should be saddled with the responsibility of executing the IMVRC programme? Ordinarily, it should be the various State Ministries of Information and Culture in the region. If the ministries are involved, there would be the difficulty of standardization and coordination. The other alternative is to engage the National Orientation

Agency (NOA) that has the advantage of national spread and experience. This, too, may not be plausible as NOA has become so engrossed with the Federal Ministry of Information that it would not be able to effectively run a regional programme of this magnitude.

Amidst these difficulties, one man and institution stands tall to easily execute the programme. He is General Yakubu Gowon (GCFR) and the Yakubu Gowon Centre (YGC). They are the best option with proven track records in the region and country. The YGC, for example, has been in the vanguard of promoting Nigerian unity and co-existence, resolving crises in the region, including the Ogoni debacle, and collaborating with *Global 2000* of Jimmy Carter in Atlanta, USA, for the eradication of guinea worm epidemics in the country. The Centre has since 1997 used the platform of *"Nigeria Pray"* programme to persuade the political class and youths towards good governance and ethical revolution in the country (Tyoden, 1998). As one of the most respected former Head of State and Government with national and international networks, he would quickly assemble his team (which includes the authors that worked on the Ogoni Peace Process) across the Niger Delta and the country to successfully operationalize the campaign.

Using the Niger Delta as a pilot programme, the campaign shall move to the national level within five years. It is expected that within the period the core values earlier highlighted would be resuscitated for the sustainable development of the region. This is a radical policy departure from the prevailing norm and is worth the support of the local, state and federal governments.

**CONCLUSION**

We have argued that the value decay has adversely inhibited the sustainable development efforts in the over 3,000 communities in the Niger Delta and 250 ethnic nationalities in the country. In view of this, the people remain 'poor, backward, and neglected inspite of the fact that it is the economic live wire of the country. From the findings of this study, we foresee the trend continue unless a decisive policy measure in reviving the core values that would strengthen development i.e. especially, productivity and accountability are put in place. Unfortunately, these values have gradually eroded, especially from 1985 when Ibrahim B. Babangida (IBB) became the military President, and the communities, institutions, and subsequent governments have found it difficult to resuscitate the value system. In this regard, the paper argued against the wholesome adoption of values that are obnoxious to the contemporary Nigerians. It is, therefore, obvious that not all the eroded values would be useful to Nigeria in the 21st century.

The paper analyzed the patterns and trends in value-decay, offers conceptual explanations, and established a strong relationship between declining value system and a failed state in Nigeria. It then pointed out three major areas of manifestations, as well as policy option to control and prevent further decay. The policy option is referred to as, "an intensive value reorientation campaign (IMVRC)." This is a new innovation that requires the support of political executives at the three levels of government in Nigeria (local, states and federal). Thus, the paper finds value orientation as a perquisite for sustainable development in the Niger Delta in particular and the country at large. The IMVRC programme has to begin as a pilot project within the first five years in the Niger Delta states before extending to the rest of the country, we have argued that for the programme to be successful and/or sustained, it should be private sector driven under the auspice of the Yakubu

Gown Centre (YGC) and /or any order such organization that has proven track records in such massive regional and national programmes.

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