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VALUES AND VALUE SYSTEMS OF NIGERIANS:  
IMPLICATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract**

*Values and value systems of most Nigerians over the years appear to be demeaned in the comity of nations. It is worrisome that most Nigerians are being described as people who have no good value system when compared with people of the civilized countries of the world. Most people of Nigeria both within the country and abroad have been seen and described as barbarians, dupes, cheats, rogues, 419ners (advanced fraudsters), cyber criminals, prostitutes, in-visionary entities, lazy, greedy, maneuverers (corner cutters), ritualists among other negative labeling. Against these vices, developed countries of the world and even some African countries seem not to like having dealings with Nigerians in social, political and economic spheres of life. Some countries have sent Nigerians doing one business or the other in their territory packing due to poor behavioural manifestations. Even in Nigeria, many Nigerians cannot trust one another anymore in social, political and economic activities. This situation seems to affect national development ideal of the country. Therefore,*

*the questions this study sought to answer include; what are Nigerian people's values? What are the positive value systems expected of every Nigerian? What are the negative value systems that every Nigerian should eschew? What are the contributions of good value systems to national development? The paper documented that if values of Nigerian society are emphasized via the teaching of social sciences like social studies, civic education and government at secondary education level, the values of Nigerians would be set right and the goal of national development would be attained. It was recommended among other things that the governments in Nigeria should take issues that border on negative values manifestations of Nigerians both within and outside the country seriously by giving severe punishments to people found guilty of negative behavioural manifestations in social, political and economic spheres of life.*

**Keywords:** Values, Value Systems, Nigerians, National Development

### **Introduction**

Most Nigerians all over the world are known for being hardworking, industrious, committed and achievement oriented. This could be because Nigerian society embraces honesty, fair play, patriotism, obedience, discipline, loyalty, respect, self confidence among others as the societal values (Fatoki & Sofadekan, 2019). This can be justified by existence of Nigerians in almost all countries of the world where they work assiduously to contribute to the growth and development of the countries they sojourn. Many Nigerians are occupying critical positions in some facets of different countries' economy. Nigerians have been appointed to man different establishments in the economy of many countries of the world.

However, recently most Nigerians seem to have imbibed some values and value systems that make the trust other countries of the world have on us to be waning down. Accordingly, Enu and Esu (2011:147) state that;

the decay in the Nigerian society has affected the standard of values and moral character formation. This has manifested in so many anti-social vices. Anti-social behaviour exhibited include corruption, dishonesty, greed, violent crimes, lack of accountability, indiscipline, disrespect to constituted authorities, laziness, low moral courage among many others. All these have constituted a serious moral problem for the Nigerian State and have constrained all sincere efforts targeted at achieving national development.

Values refer to standards or principles which the society collectively hold and therefore are imbibed by its members (Nwaubani, 2010). Nwaubani's view on what value is in this instance portrays positive value system. It portends good behaviour, practices, aspirations, beliefs, views and dispositions which a society cherishes. Nonetheless, it is not all the values that the society upholds. This could be the reason Ojobo (2012) views values as things or actions worth pursuing, realizing, doing or important to refrain from. In as much as there are certain actions or behaviours/manifestations worth realizing or pursuing there are certain manifestations that are worth refraining from as they showcase negative value system. Most of what makes people to avoid or reduce interaction with people of a particular country is the value system they uphold. If people of a particular country are known to embrace evils like bad conducts, cheating, backbiting, stealing, criminality, advance fraud, killing, assassination, kidnapping, materialism, maneuvering, corner cutting, laziness among other vices, they are said to have negative value system.

Negative value system affects human interaction. It is always difficult for an individual let alone, companies, governmental and non- governmental organizations to choose people who are known for vices in political, economic, social and socio-cultural interactions. Individuals, companies and even governments of any country of the world tend to avoid in interaction people who embrace vices as virtues and take vices to be virtues in political, social, economic and socio-cultural spheres. Lamenting on how vices seem to have replaced

values in many human societies Nzewi as far back as 1986 states that uncertainty and contradictions have replaced traditional values. According to Wahab (2011:182)

in Nigeria, vices have replaced virtues. Virtues are now vices while vices are taken to be virtues. Vices abound in all the nooks and crannies of the country. The spirit of materialism is fast evading and overshadowing our traditional values and ethics. It is no longer one's personality, quality and virtues that count, rather what counts is the volume of wealth one possesses, no matter how dishonest and unjust the source of the wealth and the means of livelihood are.

Injustice exists in Nigeria in all spheres of life being it political, social, economic and religious aspects (Obaje & Ajibili, 2014). Accordingly, Akinkuotu (2013) avers that all over Nigeria, hatred walks on four legs and it has found a ready accomplice in all manner of crimes. There seems to be ugly trend of collapse of values and ethics manifested in secret cults, corruption, examination malpractices, drug addiction, sexual harassment and other academic frauds (Esu, 2012). Kidnapping speaks volumes of the worsening state of insecurity in Nigeria; its effects make investors, tourists, and development among others unwelcome in the country (Ikimi in Oladiti, 2014). In Nigeria today, some unemployed graduates champion kidnapping 'business', engage in computer hacking and series of impersonations (Ayorinde, Amali & Yusuf, 2011). Ayorinde et al further lamented that the Nigerian system seems to promote culture of materialism, not industrialism. The authors reiterate that known Nigeria politicians are extremely rich, displaying ill-gotten wealth without evidence of industrial venturing.

Nonetheless, most of the culprits of poor value manifestations in Nigeria seem not to be dealt with in a way that will deter future generations from emulating wrong value system. Accordingly, Ayorinde, et al (2011) aver that an average child in Nigeria witnesses cases of high powered crimes such as tax frauds, illegal sales practices, embezzlement, manufacturing and sales of dangerous products,

theft, and electoral crimes. Most of these crimes that the Nigerian child witnesses at home, observe in school, see in traffic, hear on media and watched being perpetrated by legal institutions, educational institution, religious institutions, family members, parents and wards and security agents are becoming lucrative since the perpetrators are affluent and enjoy societal honour and admiration. Thus, it could be deduced perhaps that Nigeria society does not abhor negative practices but cherishes highhandedness as most of the high crime perpetrators are even crowned with chieftaincy titles in many Nigerian societies without recourse to enormous crimes they may have committed against humanity. If society can recognize a person of negative practices with chieftaincy title probably because he/she wields affluence or economic power as a result of mischievous deeds, dishonest economics activities and many other fraudulent practices, it portrays appreciation of negative value system. This situation could make younger generations to imitate wrong behaviours or practices in order to make it fast so that the same society that acknowledges bad things or evils will recognize them.

Seeming appreciation of negative value systems could be the reason many Nigerian youths engage in different kinds of crimes in order to make it fast for societal appreciation. Many youths of Nigerian origin hitherto have acquired wealth through dubious means and the society seems to celebrate them. Hardly, could you see parents who disown a child that acquires wealth through dishonest means. A young boy would travel abroad and within some months he would come back and start building mansions and nobody asks what kind of business that he did that made him make such money within some months. Government seems not to bother probing into what he did to earn such money. The culprit will be free, moving with other people who would make him their hero in wrong deeds. The whole society will be watching arm folded seeing the society degenerate into valueless entity. As if people of Nigeria do not know, poor value system, mostly materialism has destroyed the image of Nigeria in comity of nations of the world. Many countries of the world as at the time of this study are becoming very careful in accepting Nigerians for any meaningful interaction. This

could be as result of poor or negative value system being orchestrated by Nigerians in their interaction with other people of the world. Nigerians cannot be trusted any more in political, economic, social and socio-cultural interactions.

Negative value system peddled by many Nigerians in their interaction with other people of the world has destroyed the images of even few good minorities. According to Njoku (2015: 26)

the society is characterized by high level of distrust, suspicion and everybody has become a suspect of misplaced value. Immorality and lack of sanctity of life have increased as murder and kidnapping have become daily occurrence that pervaded the society with infanticide, fratricide, Patricide, matricide and suicide in pursuit of materialism. The malady of corruption has polluted the character and personality of every Nigerian doubt why' seemingly responsible Nigerians within the corridor of powers gather around themselves sycophants and praise singers. It is worrisome, in that those who dare to criticize the ugly trends are faced with open harassment or veiled security. It is regrettable that vices have taken the place of virtue and merit is scarified. These and other similar negative values have taken the place of dominant or positive values needed for development of our society.

Nigerian children seem to be wrongly socialized that even assassination with other negative values are normal patterns of life (Wahab, 2011). This is exemplified in statements against Nigerians in many foreign countries. Many civilized countries of the world due to nefarious practices of some Nigerians in the past see Nigerians as cheats, dupes, advance fraudsters, internet hackers, bank account hackers, cyber criminals among other bad appellations. Some countries seem to have gone to the level that when they advertise for menial jobs in their establishments, they will put the phrase, 'except Nigerians'. This means that Nigerians are now being rejected in global interaction as a result of poor value system exhibited by

few greedy Nigerians. If this is allowed to persist, soon Nigeria as a country would be isolated by most countries of the world due to evil practices that cannot be condoned by civilized countries.

Most worrisome is the fact that even many African countries are rejecting Nigerians in businesses as result of monumental manifestation of dishonest behaviours. Imagine that even Ghana is now rejecting Nigerians, calling that Nigerians should leave their territory as most of the nefarious practices observed in their land are associated with Nigerians. Nigeria today is morally sick (Falade, 2016). From west to east, and north to south, customs, traditions and culture are fast eroding (Oladejo, 2013). The researchers are perturbed whether the state of value system of Nigerians currently can help achieve the dream of National Development. Something needs to be done to restore desirable values and norms in Nigeria towards attaining national development (Wahab, 2011). It is against this background that this study determined values and value systems of Nigerians: Implication for national development. The study was conducted to clarify the concept of values, value systems and national development. It equally value systems of Nigerians (Positive and negative value systems), then, it considered the implications of values and value systems of Nigerians for National Development.

### **Conceptual Clarifications**

**Concept of Values:** Values refer to cherished behaviour, norms, practices, beliefs, and principles by a people or society. Balogun (2017) sees values as moral ideas, general conceptions, or orientations towards the world. Balogun reiterates that values are collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable, and proper or bad, undesirable, and improper in a culture. The author further states that, sometimes values refer to interests, attitudes, preferences, needs, sentiments and/or dispositions. Values are what are taken as important, worthwhile, and worth striving for. They are the components of cultural objects, actions and practices that are considered as important and cherished by the society which are preserved and transmitted from generation to generation (Mohammad, 2017). Values are standards of conduct, efficiency or worth that the society endorses, maintains and transmits to the

future generation (Osaat & Omordu, 2011). According to Sebiomo (2011) values are personal measures of worth, like how important an individual considers certain things, beliefs, principles or ideas. It refers to standards of behaviour (Orisa, 2010). Bolarin (2009) defines values as trait, practices, acts, ideals, beliefs, attitudes, and principles that a group or society considers to be of merit, worthwhile, dear, acceptable and right. They are basic beliefs and attitude in a society whether of individual or groups which are considered worthwhile and which serve as guide to choices and behaviour in daily life (Bodurin, 2009). Buttressing these views, Ezegbe (1993) sees value as the worth or importance which is attached to something. It is a belief that something is good, desirable and adorable. It is the belief people have about the desirability, goodness, importance, benefits and worth of ideas, events, practices, observances, or things such as wealth, loyalty, independence, equality, justice, honesty, fraternity, friendliness among other things. Values refer to specific and general beliefs of people about some ideas, events, practices, observances, theories, principles and/or things.

Examples of values are obedience, lateness, goodness, humility, honesty, law abiding, democracy, unity, arrogance, domineering among other things which people of a culture have preference for. This implies that values could be positive or negative. Positive values are people's standards of life or beliefs that could be accepted by other societies. Negative values are people's practices, beliefs, preferences, or ideas that may not be tolerated by other people. However, value is a relative term or concept in that what people of a culture have preference for could not be a standard of life in another culture. Most basic values whether individual, collective, intrinsic, or instrumental values are learnt early in life from family, friends, neighbourhood, school, the mass media and other sources within society and immediately they are learnt, they become part of people's personality. Values are general principles that regulate people's day-to-day manifestations. National values include tolerance, obedience, honesty, diligence, patience, loyalty and cooperation (Falade, 2016). Individuals' value influences their orientation towards what they do (Ojobo, 2012). Ojobo further



reiterates that people's value may include; Justice, liberty, equality, honesty, responsibility, consideration, human dignity; others are belief in God, detesting laziness, dignity of labour, filial piety (respect for parents and elders in general), hospitality, integrity, public spiritedness, respect for authority, respect for sanctity of life, sharing, caring and so on. Values are the basis of judgements about what is desirable, beautiful, proper, correct, important, worthwhile and good as well as what is undesirable, ugly, incorrect, improper and bad (Balogun, 2017). People's selection of a set of values (whether positive or negative) to propagate is what could be referred to as value system. This is exemplified when people make up their minds on which ideal to cherish in their interaction with other people in the society.

**Concept of Value Systems:** Value system refers to individual or societal arrangements of values in order of preference. It is the practice involved in putting of what people consider important or worthwhile in order of importance. Value system is people's preference for certain behaviours, actions, beliefs, aspirations, practices, attitudes or principles against some others. According to Ezewu in Mohammad (2017) value system is the hierarchy of values within the individual's scale of values from the highest to the lowest. It refers to people's value preference. For instance, an individual may like telling lies more than truth probably because of what he/she benefits from telling lies. This preference for lies against truth would make people say that the individual has lies as a value system. On the other hand, a person may like being honest (saying the truth always no matter the situation) more than being dishonest (lying most often to achieve selfish goal). Then, when this behaviour is sustained for a long time in different situations, the person can be said to have honesty as a value system.

In essence, people could have bad value system or poor value system, good value system or positive value system. Any ideal behaviour the civilized society cherishes is good value system. When people demonstrate virtues like honesty, truth, humility, tolerance, law abiding, cheerfulness, carefulness, love, loyalty, sincerity, perfection among other ideals, we say that they have good value

system. On the contrary, negative value system is observed whenever anybody manifests bad conducts like treacherousness, insincerity, hatred, dishonesty, disloyalty, violence, lie, avariciousness, materialism, covetousness, bribery, corruption, incivility, among other negative virtues. Explaining the status of value system of Nigerians Raji (2016) avers that our value system have been badly eroded over the years. Raji further states that, the long-cherished and time honoured, time- tested virtues of honesty, integrity, hard work, punctuality, good neighbourliness, abhorrence of corruption and patriotism, have given way to dishonesty, indolence, unbridled corruption and widespread impunity. Seemingly in line with this view, Enu and Esu (2011) aver that moral values are compromised in Nigeria through greed, sycophancy, mediocrity, corruption, insecurity, official high handedness, obnoxious policies for the benefits of the few, religious intolerance among others. Nonetheless, any indication of negative value manifestation is a betrayal of collective cherishes which affects human interaction. Anything that affects human interaction can affect national development as people must cooperate with one another to attain national development.

**Concept of National Development:** For better comprehension of the term national development, it is necessary to explain the term development. Development refers to general improvements in people's political, economic, social and socio-cultural aspects of life towards better living in the society. Oghator and Okoobo in Nwapa and Njaka (2018) state that development goes beyond the increase in per capita income or economic growth, but also includes improvements in living standard of the people, which are guaranteed through the provision of gainful employment coupled with the presence and availability of social and economic infrastructure. It is a multi-dimensional process which encapsulates not only economic growth but also involves reduction or elimination of poverty, unemployment and inequality (Ajogbeje & Oparinde, 2014). Development is envisaged in reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality, and unemployment within the context of a growing economy (Okoye, 2005). According to Kambhampati (2004) development requires growth and structural change, some measures

of distributive equity, modernization in social and cultural attitudes, a degree of political transformation and stability, an improvement in health and education which are capable of stabilizing growth and improving people's living standard. Development refers to man (human beings) influenced and propelled political, social and socio-cultural improvements of self and entire structure of a given system from a relatively low to a more qualitatively and improved status. These improvements/transformations have their primary objective as the enhancement of the living conditions and material standing of the citizenry. Buttressing the above Staff Writer (SW, 2020) states that development is the transformation of the living standards of people/citizens of a nation. When people's lives are transformed in all spheres (political, social, economic and socio-cultural) they would contribute to the wealth of the nations. Indeed, the basic purpose of development is to enlarge human freedoms.

National development is a term that refers to a sustainable growth and development of a nation to a more desirable one. National development therefore can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. National development has to do with increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material well-being of members of the state that brings about total transformation in the lives and activities of the citizens (Ezegbe, Eskay, Anyanwu, & Abiogu, 2014). The authors state that it is general improvement in all facets (political, economic and social aspects) of the national life of a country.

National Development is improvements in political, economic and socio-cultural well-beings of people of a country, society or nation. National development is people oriented and its success is evaluated in terms of the impact it has had in improving the lot of the masses. National development is a process which is concerned with enhancement of people's capacity in different areas of life over a considerable period of time to manage and induce positive changes through predicting, planning, understanding and monitoring changes to reduce unwanted or unwarranted changes (Obasanjo & Akin, 1991). National development is made manifest through all

round positive transformation of man, his/her life, attitude and general well being in the society. It refers to quantitative and qualitative enhancement of the nation's political, social, economic and socio-cultural well beings. It is the ability of a nation to improve the lives of its citizens in all spheres of life. Measures of improvement may be material, such as increase in the gross domestic product, or social, such as literacy rates and availability of healthcare, and improvement in value systems of the citizenry. National development can be said to be a reality when there is all round transformation of man and society including but not limited to transformation of man's value systems for universal acceptability and interaction.

### **Value Systems of Nigerians (Positive & Negative Value Systems)**

Nigerian society has a lot of core values. These core values represent what Nigerians cherish as ideal behaviours. Essential values need to be inculcated on Nigerian citizens (Ekweoba, 2012). Some of the core values of Nigerian society as explained in this study are;

**Justice:** Justice is a social value that deals with fair play in people's manifestations in all facets of life. It is manifested in equality and equity in social interaction by all and sundry. Justice is consistency and transparency in rendering to everyone what is due to him/her ((Ukegbu, Faskari, Adebayo, Obasi & Anyaoha, 2011). Nigerian citizens all over the globe are expected to maintain the value of justice for national development bid to be attained. According to Ukegbu et al (2011) justice is the bedrock of peace, progress and development.

**Hard work:** This refers to persistence in accomplishing tasks given to an individual or choosing by an individual. It is show of seriousness, doggedness and zealousness towards accomplishing tasks. A zealous person works consistently until a goal is achieved. Hard work as a value system makes an individual who upholds it to ensure that he/she does not leave a goal unattained. The goal of Nigeria national development will be attained if many Nigerians cherish and practice hard work as a value system.

**Loyalty:** Loyalty is respect to the constituted authorities. It refers to obedience to constituted authorities, rules and regulations of the state. The value of loyalty when adequately manifested by Nigerians both within and outside the country would breed peace and tranquility which will engender national development.

**Honesty:** This is one of the core values of Nigerian society. It refers to the act of saying the truth in all situations no matter whose ox is gored. It is the quality of being straightforward, reliable, truthful, sincere and godly in human activities (Ukegbu, Faskari, Adebayo, Obasi & Anyaoha, 2011). The authors further affirm that to be honest means to be responsible, respectable and fearlessly truthful. An honest person says the truth, does not steal or cheat, works hard at his/her job, is fair to all and sundry (Mohammad & Danladi, 2017). Nigerians within the country and in diaspora are expected to be honest in all their dealings. When this value of sustained truthfulness in all activities is maintained by Nigerians they will be cherished by many civilized countries of the world and that will bring about trusting them with tasks that will bring about their individual development towards national development.

**Contentment:** This is a core value of Nigerian society which manifests in people being satisfied with whatever they have. Contentment refers to ability of an individual to be satisfied with what he/she has at any given period of time (Ukegbu, Mezieobi, Ajileye, Abdulrahman & Anyaoha, 2012). The authors further posit that contentment is feeling of happiness or satisfaction with one's possessions in life irrespective of the size. Contented people are people whose desires are controlled by what they have in terms of personal effects, job, experience, material things among other possessions. Contentment makes people not to look after other people's property with inward assumption/feeling that it should be theirs. A contented person makes due with what he/she has. A contented person cannot kill his/her boss to have the property; cannot think of stealing somebody's property to meet up with vain expectations from the society or at best his/her fans and abhors in totality anything that breeds covetousness. Nigerian citizens are expected to manifest contentment in life so that cases of duping, cheating and all manners

of crimes will be nipped in the bud towards producing breeds of Nigerians that would contribute positively for attainment of national development.

**Right attitude to work:** Right attitude to work is a practice of showing commitment and/ or dedication to one's duties or tasks. This is a positive value to work which promotes productivity. A person that shows positive attitude to work is not lazy; he/she puts in the best to ensure that a task is accomplished in the work place. People that manifest right attitude to work eschew laziness, late coming, redundancy, rigidity, conservatism and daydreaming in work place but embrace dedication and commitment. Manifestation of value of right attitude to work boosts productivity towards national development.

**Law abiding:** This is a value system that connotes obedience to rules and regulation by the people of a particular society. It is respect to rules and regulation towards maintaining peace and order in the society. Nigeria champions the value of law abiding as one of the societal core values. When Nigerians are law abiding, they will engage in all acts that promote peace and tranquility in the society. When there is relative peace and tranquility in any society, development of such entity is guaranteed.

**Integrity:** Integrity is the ability of an individual to maintain constant stand on issues. According to Ukegbu, Mezieobi, Ajileye, Abdulrahman and Anyaoha (2012) integrity refers to the virtue of being honest and firm in one's moral principles. The authors reiterate that integrity manifests in the quality of having transparent sense of moral standards on human relationships. Thus, a person of integrity is one who wields respect, trust and confidence of others. A person of integrity manifests values of honesty, hard work, fairness, respect for others and trustworthiness (Mohammad & Danladi, 2017). When we have many Nigerians that demonstrate integrity as a value system in Nigeria and abroad, national development will be guaranteed.

**Cooperation:** Cooperation refers to the act of working together to attain a goal. It is collaboration among people of common interest

towards dream or goal realization. It is the act of helping one another in the time of need. Although people of the world may be different, there is need for peaceful co-existence towards realization of common goals but no country or individual is an Island. Accordingly Mohammad and Danladi (2017:195) aver that;

No matter how brilliant we think we are, or how strong, hard-working, energetic, beautiful, or handsome etc, we cannot do everything on our own. We always need the help and assistance of others. We can now see the wisdom behind such saying as united we stand, divided we fall, no man is an island unto himself, unity is strength. Unless we have a feeling of togetherness and are ready to cooperate with others, we can never hope to survive as a world, a nation, a community or even a family.

The benefits from cooperation as a value system when well utilized could promote national development. This is because, when Nigerians work together in all sectors of the economy the dream of national development will be realized.

### **Negative value systems**

Dishonesty is not a good value system. It refers to the act of living in falsehood. Dishonest manifestations of people comprise cheating, examination malpractices, robbery, kidnapping, child trafficking, over-invoicing among other anti-social behaviours (Ukegbu, et al, 2011). The authors further posit that dishonesty among people is the bane of many societies today manifesting in scientific crimes, socio-political and economic instabilities. These behaviours are antithetical to the survival of individuals and even society that may cherish it. Nigeria national development will be in serious problem if Nigerians cannot say the truth in issues that arise from their interactions with one another or even foreigners. For example, if Nigerians are known for deceiving people in business world, giving people fake products in place of originals, lying to get foreign contacts they do not merit and cheat on their local and foreign

collaborators in political, economic and social interactions, national development will be very hard to realize.

Laziness is a condition of being weak in carrying out tasks. It is a show of ineptitude in one's activities. It refers to a process of shying away from duties which at times leads to shoddy work (task) completion. Laziness is not a positive value system to both the individual and the society. A generation of any society that exhibits laziness will not be able to contribute meaningfully to national development. In essence, if Nigerian youths are lazy, national development will hardly be a reality in the country but on the contrary, national development bid will be realized.

Injustice: This refers to a practice of thwarting truth to favour wrong side or person. Injustice is negative value system that manifests when justice is perverted. No civilized society cherishes perversion of justice in any case deliberation both within law courts and out of court case settlements. This is because, justice perverted is justice denied. Denial of justice is a wrong value system that is capable of destroying human interaction. When human beings cannot interact in all facets of life as a result of rape of justice, societal development cannot be achieved.

Materialism is not a good value system. It is a term that is associated with heavy desire for things of the world. Materialism manifests in too much desire for landed property, money, clothes, food among other necessities of life. Too much desire for basic necessities of life would lead someone into making wrong value choices thereby affecting the relationship with people. Describing materialistic value tendencies of some Nigerians Nwabuisi (2000) states that money is capable of buying anything and everything and everything else is a means of obtaining money including human life. Okolo (1993) noted that Nigerians are largely drawn to things of immediate material gain, advantage or pleasure. Okolo further reiterates that an average Nigerian strongly believes that money is almighty and can achieve anything and everything. For instance, wrong materialistic value system is exhibited when an individual needs landed property, cars, money among others at all costs and steals, kills, cheats and defraud others to achieve it. These attitudes



could destroy fellowship and would lead to the individual's waterloo or failure, which if not condemned by the society could lead to societal failure.

Cyber crimes: Cyber is a term that is closely associated with space, internet, World Wide Web (www), information communications technology and general communications. Cyber crimes are criminal activities that either targets or uses a computer network or networked device. They are computer – related crimes like intercepting of data, infringing copyright, illegal gambling, e-mail bombing among others. Cyber crimes refer to any cheating, dishonest act or stealing associated with internet and ICT among other computer- related media for sending and receiving information. This is a wrong value demonstration that manifests in duping people through bad practices of hacking their business account, business name, private mail account, or taking advantage of people's private data or information via the internet. When Nigerians refrain from cyber crimes as negative value system, they would have worthy image both within and outside the country which would breed more trusts on Nigerians by other people towards engaging Nigerians in meaningful contracts and/ or ventures that would accelerate individual cum national development.

Corruption is a negative value system that manifests in taking advantage of public property, offices and opportunities for private gains. It is the practice of deviating from the norms of public office(s) by applying nefarious strategies to cheat on others for personal aggrandizement. Corruption manifests in selling of public property, using public office(s) to cheat on others, stealing public funds, signing documents on expenses that were never embarked by public office(s) to swindle public funds, destroying public property to request for replacement towards making undue money, inflammation of budgetary allocation to maximize excess gains among other negative practices that are inimical to the survival of public establishments. According to Ibrahim (2019) Nigeria has continued to occupy despicable position in the global ranking for corruption. The author states that in 2018, Nigeria was ranked the 144th most corrupt nation in the world out of 176 countries surveyed

by the Transparency International. People celebrate wealth without questioning the source of such wealth. It is common to hear of people with questionable character and wealth being celebrated in Nigerian society. This misguided disposition towards wealth acquisition encourages the get-rich-quick mindset. When corruption and corrupt practices otherwise called sharp practices are allowed to thrive, national development will be a mirage.

Armed robbery is a negative value system which is derived from 'arm and robbery'. To arm is to be with something mostly weapon(s) of threat. To rob is to take away something from people forcefully. Robbery is the act of stealing money, or property from persons, shops, houses, stores, banks, supermarkets among others through the use of threats, intimidations or violence (Ukegbu, Mezieobi, Ajileye, Abdulrahaman & Anyaoha, 2012). When gun or any weapon of threat is used to force somebody, company or firm to let go of the property, it refers to armed robbery. Armed robbery is a negative value practice where individuals or group of people organize themselves with dangerous weapons to engage in violently dispossessing people of their property through the use of knives, guns and big sticks (Ukegbu, et al, 2012). It is a wrong value practice where people threaten others with weapon to collect their belongings by force. A society that allows the citizens to practice armed robbery or cherishes armed robbery will be doomed and would hardly develop. Nigerian citizens both at home and in diaspora are expected to eschew armed robbery towards maintaining positive value images in comity of nations for national development.

**Greed:** This is a negative value system that manifests in excessive desire for material possessions like clothes, money, buildings, and other property not necessarily for immediate use but for proof of personal aggrandizement. According to Ukegbu, Mezieobi, Ajileye, Abdulrahaman and Anyaoha (2012) greed is excessive desire to acquire money, material things, power, and other possessions for the sake of acquiring them mostly at the expense of others. Consequently, what greedy people desire may not always be what they need, but what they want to use to show off. Greed is immoral act(s) that manifests in unnecessary internal pushes to have almost

everything for show of wealth acquisition in order to attract societal accolade. Nigerians both within the country and outside the shores of the country are not expected to be greedy as greed can affect human interaction which can adversely affect national development.

### **Value Systems of Nigerians and National Development**

For national development to be actualized, Nigerians both at home and in diaspora have to manifest positive value system. Nigerians should not be cheats, dupes, corrupt, highhanded, nasty, bully, ritualists, avaricious, materialistic, but honest, law abiding, humble, loyal to constituted authorities, and above all civilized in all their demonstrations in political, economic, social and socio-cultural spheres of interaction all over the world. Buttressing this proposition, Mohammad and Danladi (2017:189) state;

a good citizenship should not only possess the requisite knowledge and skills that will enable him live a meaningful life in society, he should also imbibe those values and attitudes that are treasured by society. It is when generation of learners continues to imbibe and nurture these values and attitudes that the society is assured of survival.

This is because substantial economic progress cannot be made where social vices like corruption, fraud, dishonesty, bank account hacking, internet hacking, cyber crimes, fragrance abuse of law and order and lack of patriotism among others are prevalent, hence the need to educate the citizens on positive values (Ekweoba, 2012). Bad or negative values and value system can destroy the image of a country and even that of the people of the country thereby affecting the interactions (political, social and economic) that may exist between the country, its citizens and citizens of other countries of the world for national development bids to be attained. Think of images of Nigeria and Nigerian citizens in a situation where past negative values manifestations of some Nigerians in their interaction with other countries of the world have earned Nigeria and Nigerians bad labels as cheats, dupes, looters of common resources, corrupt,

lazy, dishonesty, dubious, callous, barbaric, cannibals, among other negative personality ascriptions. With these negative values in mind, many people from other countries of the world would not think of having businesses with people of Nigeria descent. Negative values and value systems associated to a particular people is capable of truncating their individual and collective development, national development inclusive. A situation where some countries of the world can boldly delist Nigerians from the list of people to be employed in their territory is a worrisome picture of underdevelopment in the sense that Nigeria economy cannot develop in isolation of other economies of the world.

If Nigerians can be associated with grave value degeneracy of killing their business partners, duping them either directly by assassination or through emotional turbulence associated with hacking of their business accounts, advanced frauds, cyber crimes, then their interaction with people of other countries of the world will be in jeopardy. This situation could subsequently, jeopardize their economic ventures towards national development as they may be avoided in certain businesses that could accelerate national development.

Many Nigerians seem to have negative value of cyber crimes. Saraki (2020:1) disgusted with this negative values manifestations states

in recent times, there has been an alarming increase in the number of reported cases of Nigerians alleged to have been involved in Cyber scams in different parts of the world. The sheer number of these cases, the amount involved and the effect that they have on the national image and psyche require urgent action by our government and Nigerians at large....It is worrisome that this insignificant population of misguided Nigerian youths have chosen to earn a living through criminal activities. More than that, it saddens me greatly to notice the damaging effect the activities of these fraudsters is having on their fellow country men and women. These fraudsters have earned the disrepute for Nigeria as a

nation of dubious people. Millions of Nigerian citizens who travel across the world to study, work and live peacefully while abiding with the laws of their host countries have also now become stigmatised. The immigration and homeland security officials will certainly reinforce intrusive inspections when screening us at the point of entry and even when we go around town in foreign lands. There might be more humiliating experiences and some negative comments made against us.

Apart from cyber crimes, negative values exhibitions of some Nigerians who engage in ritual killings could affect national development. For instance, in 2010, dead bodies with missing organs were being discovered on a daily basis on a road close to Lagos State University that was described as a “hot spot for ritual killers” (This Day Sept. 26 in Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC, 2012). In February 2011, in the same area, ten people had been killed in suspected ritual murders in the preceding two months (Bodunde, 2011). A 2009 article published by Agence France-Press reported that, according to a state government official, the kidnapping of children for ritual murder was on the rise in Kano (Abubakar, 2009). However, ritual murder is not limited to any specific part of the country and “every region, tribe and state has its own share of the scourge” (Uzoaru, 2012). Nonetheless, a confidential memo from the Nigerian police to registered security service providers indicated that ritual killings were particularly prevalent in the states of Lagos, Ogun, Kaduna, Abia, Kwara, Abuja, Rivers, and Kogi (Abubakar, 2009). National development cannot be attained in face of violent crimes against humanity. In essence values and values systems of Nigerians should be set right for purpose of effect. Basically, Nigerians and Nigerian governments are expected to join force in tackling the problem of cyber crimes, ritual killings, corruption and other bad social practices which are parts of the negative value systems exhibited by some Nigerians. National development ideal can hardly be realized in a situation where Nigerians cannot be trusted by other countries of the world as a

result of few people's engagement in vices and criminalities. People's manifestations of vices and criminalities against national values and value systems have serious implications against national development.

### **Implications of Values and Value Systems of Nigerians for National Development**

Values and value systems of Nigerians can either enhance or deter national development. The pursuit of national development is first attitudinal and so the citizenry should be given new orientation that goes to ensure the overhauling and reconstruction of the total values system in the society for national development to be guaranteed (Enu & Esu, 2011). If Nigerians exhibit positive values and value systems, the country will develop but if the citizens of the country manifest negative values and value systems, the country will continue retrogressing as no individual, firms, companies, governmental or non –governmental organizations would like to choose people or even nations with awkward values and value systems in meaningful interaction in political, economic, social and socio-cultural spheres of life. Thus, the implications of values and value systems of Nigerians for national development comprise;

Manifestations of positive values and value systems by Nigerian citizens would enhance global acceptability of Nigerian citizens in all areas of human interaction. This is because, when an individual exhibits worthy behaviours, attitudes, beliefs and/ or aspirations, people tend to choose the individual in meaningful businesses of life. This postulation is in accordance with a wise saying in Igbo language that 'ahia oma na-ere onwe ya'. The transliteration of this popular Igbo saying is that good market sells itself'. Manifestation of worthy values of honesty, integrity, transparency, loyalty, obedience, civility among other positive ideals of Nigerian society by Nigerians both at home and in diaspora would help restore the near lost image of Nigeria and Nigerians in the comity of nations. When

Nigeria and Nigerians are rebranded through sustainable positive values manifestations in their interaction with other countries of the world, people of Nigeria descent can be trusted once again in human interaction and the national development bid that appears utopia hitherto would be actualized.

Positive values and value system exhibition by Nigerians will engender adequate foreign investments in Nigeria thereby enhancing national development. When greater majority of Nigerians embrace positive values and value systems by eschewing dishonesty, cyber crimes, looting, kidnapping, hostage taking of foreign workers, internet hacking, pen robbery, armed robbery among other vices, foreigners would develop more propensity to invest in Nigeria. Establishment of companies and firms in Nigeria by foreigners and the consequent employing of Nigerians to work in these companies and firms due to restoration of our nearly eroded value systems would promote national development. When there is adequate foreign investment like establishment of companies and firms in Nigeria, the GDP of the country will be enhanced towards national development.

Manifestation of positive values and value system by Nigeria citizens globally will help in rebranding the images of Nigeria and Nigerians. Hitherto, Nigeria and Nigerians are no more being preferred by many countries of the world in meaningful interaction due to past evidence of exhibited behavioural decadence. This bad label would be removed when Nigerians begin to show worthy characteristics of honesty, hard work, contentment, integrity, loyalty, obedience to rules and regulations and constituted authority, avoidance of materialistic tendencies, greed and avarice in all their dealings within and outside the country. When these are done the negative understandings people have about Nigerians in all spheres of life will be erased towards

accepting Nigerians in meaningful interactions in all facets of life for accelerating national development.

### **Conclusion**

This study on values and value systems of Nigerians: Implication for national development is necessitated by the fact that the value systems of most Nigerians both within and outside the country seems to be degenerating in recent times. Most Nigerians seem to be cherishing vices in place of virtues, wrong things in place of right things, bad behaviours and practices in place of good behaviours and practices among other awkward manifestations of Nigerians in political, economic, social and socio-cultural spheres of life within and outside the country. Nigeria and Nigerians are recently suffering from moral sickness otherwise called value degeneracy or decadence. This affects adversely the national development ideal of the country as nobody or country under normal circumstances would interact with a morally sick person or country. This situation should not be allowed to continue as it will be a cog on the wheel of development of this country. Accordingly, this paper documented that if values of Nigerian society are emphasized via the teaching of social sciences like social studies, civic education and government at secondary education level, the values of Nigerians would be set right and the goal of national development would be attained. It was recommended among other things that the governments in Nigeria should take issues that border on negative values manifestations of Nigerians both within and outside the country seriously by giving severe punishments to people found guilty of negative behavioural manifestations in social, political and economic spheres of life.

### **Way Forward**

This paper suggest that Nigerian government should through appropriate legislative bodies make laws against dishonest acquisition of wealth and property by Nigerians living within the country and abroad to reduce the rate at which Nigerians practice all forms of dishonest adventures in order to make money fast against the national value of honest deeds cherished by many Nigerian societies. This when done will make Nigerians both at home



and in diaspora to cherish legitimate means of acquiring wealth and property wherever they are to ensure that positive value systems of Nigerians are restored towards enhancing legitimate interaction between Nigerians and other people of the world for achieving the dream of national development.

Communities, churches and any other organizations in Nigeria bestowing titles on people should verify adequately people's sources of wealth before conferring any title on them to ensure that positive value systems of Nigerians are restored towards improving the images of Nigeria and Nigerians in comity of nations for national development. Parents, wards and siblings should be very proactive in making sure that their relations eschew negative values and imbibe positive values system in all their dealings in political, economic, social and socio-cultural spheres of life to restore the eroding positive values of Nigerians towards enhancing interactions between Nigerians and people of other countries of the world for national development.

Teachers of social science education subjects like Civic education, social studies and government should apply practical instructional techniques that could enable Nigerian students acquire positive values, moderate wrongly formed values and sustain positive value systems towards acquiring standard behaviours that would make them admirable to people within and outside the country. When this is achieved and Nigerian citizens learn to demonstrate positive values in all their dealings, they would be cherished by people of other countries of the world who would absorb them in businesses or interactions that would help the development of their individual economy towards national development.

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