

**A REVIEW OF CHARLES NWEKE'S "SOCIAL STABILITY WITHIN THE
NIGERIAN STATE"**

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Nigeria today is regarded as a third world country. This is due to the level of underdevelopment evident in our country. The high rate of corruption led to increase in poverty in Nigeria and has hindered her progress in as much, reduced her image to nothing when placed on the global map. The country keeps experiencing lack of infrastructures; deep rooted corruption practices with no penalties, bad and decayed health facilities which all sums to bad governance. What could be responsible? Is there any remedy?

Man by nature is a social animal and thus must interact. Dr. Charles Nweke in this article; "Social Stability within The Nigerian State" recognizes that Nigerians are social beings. The human society has evolved from different stages to the current of today and this evolution led to many changes which would not have been possible if man is not a social animal. As a social being, the individual cannot be interpreted alone as a society. It is his interaction with other individuals that promotes the existence of any given society. However, the same nature made man as a free agent. In his capacity as a free agent, he is open to possibilities which spring up from personal desires. The fact that all men are free and can act freely would lead us into a society of anarchy and as such, there is of very much importance the need for a society and social stability.

Hegel believes that history is a dialectic movement of the Absolute Spirit. The State is a Rational/Absolute Spirit which moves from the individual to the family and then, to the State. In other words, for him to negate the ability of the African to rationality does not hold water. It cannot be accepted that the African Nations or the continent as a whole was without reason and thus, without history. The African in his communalistic existence believes that an individual in his existence can only be identified in a community. Just like Hegel, communities in Africa are a movement from individual to individuals, to family, to kin and the community. The community in African worldview is a conglomeration of families.

The author in his article identifies that every society desires and aims towards social stability. He identifies that social stability is interwoven with political stability and economic stability. It also exposes that social stability is a prerequisite for national development. Nigeria has remained underdeveloped (being regarded as a third world nation) and this is as a result of lack of social stability. The author identifies that Nigeria could experience social stability when we must have achieved individual stability. The individual Nigerian should be stable within himself. However, due to the high ethnicity that has affected Nigerians, citizens place more priority on their ethnic group to the detriment of that of the national. Philosophically, it could be interpreted that the subjective is given more credence and attention against the universal/objective. Patriotism lies in the ethnic group and not with the national structure.

He began by identifying the idea of social stability. Social stability has remained a topic of discussions for disciplines such as Sociology, Political Science, Socio and Political Philosophy. Every society carves for social stability because it promotes the social contract as well as enables the existence of a just, equal and peaceful society. From the social contract, the government is subjected to the duty of ensuring that necessary conditions which promotes and improves the quality of life are in place. The society goes into social tension and conflict when there is scarcity of resources, unemployment, and lack of justice and other basic of man's existence.

The author carefully selected choices of how to arrive at social stability. For him, it involves a moral apprehension. Should individuals be forced into social stability by the government or should they be allowed such freedom? In the article, the author further exposes that the 'State' as an entity is not natural to man. Man's desire to acquire social order was what led to the establishing of States. Even though man is regarded as a political animal, he still lives for only his natural self-preservation which exists on the plain of social relation. After considering the Hobbesian and Marxist theory of the state, (C. Nweke, 2013) concludes that; "the state is the product of social contract and the political activities within the state are all geared towards a more refined social living (social stability)."

He further establishes that social stability is fundamental for national development. Nigeria is a nation suffering from underdevelopment. Many reasons have been ascribed to be the cause which includes colonialism, neo-colonialism, corruption, poor educational standard, ethnicity, religion, etc. The

pursuit for national development is an indirect pursuit for social stability. The author perceives the Nigerian situation and blamed in a not direct way the lack of proper social living as the cause of our underdevelopment.

Nigeria is a country of multi-ethnic groups; a country with about 250 ethnic groups all with different languages, culture and religion. The African naturally identifies with is community and a community is distinct because of its distinct cultural values. A typical Nigerian is tied first to his ethnic community before he identifies with the nation at large; he first an Igbo man before he is a Nigerian, he is first a Hausa before a Nigerian, he is first a Yoruba man before a Nigerian. Most Nigerians in performing their civic responsibilities are patriotic to their ethnic background before the country. Social living is tied to civic responsibilities because as the author identified;

Adherence to civic responsibility which includes loyalty to the community and the state, obedience to rules and regulations, participation in the political process, respect for the rights of others and helping to prevent crime is cardinal to any nation's social stability. A society could be termed socially stable if it could boast of a considerable level of harmonious social relations. Social welfare services are also important for a viable social stability." (C. Nweke, 2013)

Our country Nigeria suffers from underdevelopment not because we are not blessed with natural resources rather; it is as a result of poor social relations. When there is lack of social relation, conflicts and crisis would become the order of the day. 'To achieve social stability in Nigeria has remained impossible because citizens are indigenes before they become citizens.' (Uzowulu, 2020) Conflicts arise from inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic, religious and many more.

What is the way forward? Nweke in his article identifies that in order to attain social stability; there is first and foremost, the need for individual stability. The individual should be stable within and outside. This inner stability enables him to accept criticisms from others without picking out a quarrel. It is the duty of the government to adopt the best morally and right means to achieve social stability. Nweke charges the government on the need to go back to African communalism. African communalism is a worthy system that promotes individual stability. The African by nature is a being of community existence. He writes; "to this effect,

Nigeria can revamp its social stability by the adoption of the principles of communalism which tend to bind people together in African brotherhood. Such principle will simply collapse the politics and social relations of ethnic consciousness." (C. Nweke, 2020)

The concept of national development is a continuous process. It involves the political, social, economic, legal, ethnic, demographic and technological growth of a nation. Nigeria possesses immense potentials looking at the vast natural resources she is blessed with. These resources have been tapped into and will continue to be tapped into for years to come. Nigeria is always developing but not as at a competitive rate when compared to other nations especially Europe. A lot is expected because of the huge endowment of different natural resources and the talented-ness of its people. However, Nigeria would be on the map of development when she attains social stability. Social Stability as advocated by C. Nweke can be effective considering our multi-faceted cultural values when we achieve individual stability. Individual stability should inculcate into everyone and this can be done through the community because the individual is closer to the community. I accept the author's position about social stability in relation to individual stability which boils down to African communalism. This would promote more patriotic citizens. However, in application this has in evidence the stance of returning the individual back to his ethnic background.

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