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The Rhetorical Analysis of Obafemi Awolowo's Political Speeches as Premier of Western Nigeria: Lessons for the Present Nigerian Leaders

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Abstract:

This rhetorical analysis examines the attributes, ideologies and performance of Obafemi Awolowo during his very first experience at governance as premier of the defunct Western Region of Nigeria and, by extension, leader of his party, the Action Group. It gauges Awolowo's political communication against the background of the contingent apprenticeship that he and other African nationalists were subjected to under the colonial rule. It, further, examines Awolowo's zeal and enthusiasm at governance, with a view to determining his readiness for the onerous task of proving to the world that he, like his contemporaries, was capable of performing more creditably than the colonial masters, formerly in the saddle of leadership in Nigeria. The study forms part of the ramifications of the developmental study of Awolowo's political rhetoric, during his entire political career. Thus, this study of Awolowo's first experience at governance, from October 1, 1954 to 31 December 1959, has been lifted from the totality of the umbrella study of his full career, as a politician, from 1951 to 1983, undertaken by this same researcher. With the original intendment of the whole developmental study, 40 political speeches, delivered by Awolowo, during six periods of navigating the political terrain of Nigeria, were carefully chosen, for content analysis, via the proportional stratified sampling technique. Nine of these were in the compilation for the period under scrutiny. The purpose of this particular study was to determine how articulate Awolowo was with governance and how serious he was with his philosophy of democratic socialism. The hypothesis tested, in this study - whether any significant difference existed in issue salience, judging by Awolowo's reactions to them - was answered in the affirmative. Awolowo was also discovered to have been very articulate as premier and was serious with the execution of his philosophy of democratic socialism, although he tended to be equivocal in the discussion of the philosophy.

Keywords: Rhetorical analysis, articulate, democratic socialism, premiership, equivocality, themes, salience, issue treatment, reactions to issues.

1. The Study's Background

This paper reports the findings from an original study carried out by the researcher to examine the comparable salience which Awolowo attached to five major issues - the economy, politics, international relations, socio-cultural milieu and education - which he treated as premier of the defunct Western Nigeria. The paper places Obafemi Awolowo's fugacious governance, as the premier of the defunct Western Region of Nigeria, in perspective. It looks at this period, in the life of Awolowo, as a period of utilizing Western education that he, like his other contemporaries, had acquired as well as putting into practice the governance experiences he had garnered under the tutelage of the colonial masters

In the Nigeria's first republic, where regional governance was clearly distinguishable from federal governance, the concentration of power at the centre put a serious question mark on the recognizability of researching on regional leaders. Consequently, although the investigation of the traits and achievements of Nigerian heads of state or government have been a lavish endeavour of researchers, over several decades, this has not been so with leaders at the regional level, who merely enjoyed mere passing remarks. Underlying this research about Obafemi Awolowo was the assumption that good governance could not necessarily be rooted in the bigness of the leader's terrain but rather on the leader's qualities as well as his determination to affect their society positively, by bringing marked improvement in its socio-politico-economic emancipation. This study, therefore, foregrounds the imperativeness of learning about Obafemi Awolowo, as a foremost Nigerian leader, who had impacted on the lives of numerous people in the society positively, notwithstanding the relatively small terrain over which he governed as premier. This is with a view to turning around his tangible remembrance as well as emulating and practising his skills and roles in order to bring about a better society. Thus, this study about Awolowo represents a pukka effort at situating his numerous achievements as premier of Western Nigeria within the gamut of his philosophy of democratic socialism.

The research is a product of the quantitative content analysis of speech data (as primary evidence) and relevant review of literature (as secondary evidence). It, therefore, employs content analysis and information methods. At no better time than now is this kind of research more relevant, when there is a persistent cry for reverting to the good old days of Awolowo as premier of Western Nigeria, the days of free education, free medical services and integrated rural development. At no more appropriate time, than now, is this research needed, when workers are not being given

recognition, when promotion is delayed, when salaries are halved, when morale is at its lowest ebb. Not at any other time, but now, is this kind of research useful when equality of opportunities, like in the days of Awolowo, has become a mirage. Indeed, any argument, as to the belatedness of this research, is sure to crash like a pack of cards, in view of the fact that, several of Awolowo's predictions, as premier are now coming to pass. This is where the value of this paper lies. No doubt, the article will appeal to honest and patriotic stakeholders in the quest for moving Nigeria forward once again. It is, in fact, going to be of value and interest to the general Nigerian populace yearning for true and selfless service to the nation. It is particularly going to be of interest to our youths who are being touted to assume leadership positions in all tiers of government under the current dispensation.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The background to this study has clearly shown that effective political leadership is a sine-qua-non for success in the implementation of the party's programmes. Indeed, there is a general agreement between political scholars that leadership is fundamental to the success of any political experiment. This view is universally supported by results of findings obtained from almost all significant investigations. Nonetheless, the extensive consensus that leadership is germane to politics does not include the notion that leadership should ensure that political office holders govern well; neither does it extend to what needs to be done, by whom and for what reasons. It is conceded that there is substantial literature on the necessity of political leadership in bringing succour to the people. It is regrettable, however, that this is, largely, to the exclusion of the issue of governance at the regional level.

Hicks and Gullet (1975), have defined a leader as the one who is in charge of galvanizing people into achieving the set-goals of an organization. It is for this reason that it is expected of the leader of every political organization to, always, keep the soul of the party, come up with viable executable programmes and give the needed inspiration and motivation that will make the society advance. More often than not, a serious contender also comes up with an ideology embedded in the party's manifesto. In fact, research has shown that success is contingent upon the leader's effectiveness (Lussier and Achua, 2009). This position is applicable to any political leader and the fate of his party. Suffice to say that leadership is regarded by researchers as the most essential factor for the attainment of phenomenal success (Lussier and Achua, 2009). It is, however, an irony of fate that leaders, who are effective in the formulation and execution of their party policies, in Nigeria, like Awolowo, have been ignored by researchers by virtue of their operation at a limited level of governance while the ineffective who operate at the centre have been accorded a great place in research. It is noteworthy that research by articulate politicians who have ruled at a lower tier of government has been given spasmodic attention by researchers. This is strange. This study postulates that researchers should celebrate excellence in performance, at any tier, rather than mediocrity exhibited by certain heads of government. It still remains a paradox that how a political party is maintained, at a lower level of governance; why it is able to keep afloat and perform at a phenomenal rate; how it generates funds to fulfil its, sometimes, grandiose programmes; what makes the government it controls to outshine other governments, with wider resources; have been accorded little attention by researchers.

It is noteworthy that although a few researches on Nigerian participants in the political scene have concentrated on either the historicity or the performance of heads of Nigerian government, both civilian and military (e.g. Johnson, 1988; Maiyanger, 1990), such researches have always been to the exclusion of participants at the regional level. What this means is that little interest has been shown by researchers on the ideological posturing of leaders at both the regional and central levels. Thus, it will be impossible to get at the nitty-gritty of the ideological leaning of a highly successful politician, like Awolowo, and tap from his knowledge and template, for national development. Yet, it is written concerning the first political party of this great Awolowo:

The Action Group [of Awolowo] within its first term in office had recorded such tremendous political feats that it had become the pace-setter for governments in this part of the world. The free primary education...the expansion of secondary schools, the programme of massive overseas scholarship for deserving youths, the free health services for children under the age of 18, the construction of general hospitals...the tarring of roads, the establishment of farm settlements, the creation of a major industrial estate at Ikeja, and the development of housing estates – all these were of revolutionary dimensions at the time... (Mabogunje, 2012:7-8)

These achievements, and more, tend to showcase the profession of democratic socialism by Awolowo. Despite this fact, however, there has not been a really systematic way of reconciling his claim to the promotion of the principles of democratic socialism with his actual practice of the ideology. This research, however, postulates that an effort, in this area, will definitely expose what needs to be done to move a stagnant country forward. This also makes this investigation highly essential.

1.2. Aim of the Study

It was the main aim of this study to examine how Awolowo's reactions to the five issues could be linked to his asseveration of the philosophy of democratic socialism, as premier of Western Nigeria. The study was, thus, tailored towards confirming the general assumption that an articulate self-professed socialist, like Awolowo, would discuss mainly themes that would boost the emancipation of the poor and downtrodden and bridge the gap between them and the very rich, through populist programmes. This was even so when it was obvious that Awolowo would be putting his integrity and believability into test against the backdrop of working at cross purpose with the more powerful federal forces of his society.

1.3. Significance of the Study

Research has shown, by extensive consensus, that communication helps political leaders to air their views, just as leadership helps to foster the development of politics. This study becomes significant in so far as it underscores the necessity of foregrounding the indispensability of learning of the political leadership acts of Obafemi Awolowo, as a prerequisite to developing the template with which to lead the modern Nigeria, with vision, focus, sincerity of heart, diligence and patriotism. Awolowo, himself, states, in one of the hangings in his Ikenne home in Nigeria:

I have never regarded myself as having a monopoly of wisdom. The trouble is that when most people in public life and in the position of leadership and tutorship are spending whole days carousing in clubs or in the company of men of shady character in clubs or in the company of men of shady character and women of easy virtue, I, like a few others, am always at my post working hard at the country's problems trying to find solutions to them.

This statement actually summarises the true nature of a genuine leader who strove hard, especially as premier of Western Nigeria, to put smiles in the faces of several Nigerians despite his relatively small terrain, as opposed to the very big terrain occupied by the leaders at the centre. This study posits that it is just proper to enliven the memory of the acts of a man like this, who could have done more had he been given the opportunity to rule at the centre. Indeed, this study about Awolowo actually represents a genuine effort at situating his several invaluable achievements as premier of Western Nigeria against the background of his democratic socialism philosophy. It is submitted that the identification of the dependent and independent variables associated with the relationship between any leader's ideological posturing and actual performance, at any level of governance, will, to a large extent, serve to show the position of research in engineering the impetus for the progress and development of any country. Awolowo's case cannot be an exemption. This study, therefore, becomes highly significant in that it will reveal ways by which contemporary politicians in Nigeria can take Awolowo as a model, deal with issues in a practical way like him and, generally, practise his skills, in order to have a better Nigeria.

1.3.1. The Impact of the Study within Its Discipline

It is expected that this study will add to a plethora of studies on the application of content analysis to the speeches of articulate politicians and rulers in the social sciences. The review of relevant literature will also lend credence to the study as well as show current trends in political rhetoric. It is believed too that other upcoming researchers in the area will find the methodology adaptable and useful.

1.4. Research Question/Hypothesis

The problem of this study emanates from the genuinely expressed scepticism that researchers' concentration on the ineffective political leaders who operate at the centre, as opposed to the insensitivity to effective leaders who operate at the regional level, is bound to have far-reaching negative implications on the progress and development of the polity. Arising from this is the call for a more robust attitude to research on political leaders who are known to be articulate and effective in the formulation and execution of their party policies. It is, thus, evident that the study's problem has to do with the spasmodic attention of researchers to the rhetoric and ideologies of non-heads-of-government politicians operating at the regional level of governance. It is common knowledge that an articulate leader, at whatever level, will operate better and with more focus than his unintelligible counterpart. This study posits that, in as much as Awolowo was articulate and focussed, a research into the nature of his governance, including his ideologies, during his reign, as premier of Western Nigeria, would serve to add to existing knowledge that would bolster the development of Nigeria. More importantly, it is believed that such a research will assist in articulating the relationship between Awolowo's reactions to the issues and the relative prominence of the issues. Thus, an effort will be made to answer the question: Is there any significant difference on Awolowo's reactions to the issues of the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education, during the period he was Premier of Western Region? Converted to a hypothesis, H_0 will state: There will be no significant difference on Awolowo's reactions to the issues of the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education, as Premier of Western Region.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Importance of Rhetoric in Governance

There is a growing emphasis by current communication studies on the importance of rhetoric in the art of governance in different political situations (e.g. Johnson, 1988; Maiyanga, 1989). Besides, the consistencies and inconsistencies of such rhetoric have been studied (Hagstrom and Guskind, 1986). Indeed, the preference of political rhetoricians for issues and rhetorical strategies has been found to be contingent upon particular situations (Nelson, 1973; Adams, 1974; Sellnow, 1988). Furthermore, the efficacy of rhetors, in their communication efforts, has been shown and so has the validity and correctness of their argumentative propositions (Hinshaw, 1973; Park, 1989).

2.2. Issue Discussion and the Values Espoused by Political Communicators

Thomas (1973) holds the view that issue discussion is an element of political campaigning in which politicians participate in order to manipulate voters' behaviour. In his study of Nixon's two presidential campaigns, Thomas investigated how Richard. M. Nixon treated substantive issues of war and peace, law and order, the pocket book aspect of domestic economy and civil rights during his two campaigns for presidency. The approach of Thomas, in this regard, was to analyse the contents of a sample of Nixon's formal public address on the issues, conduct a rhetorical analysis of the issues and compare Nixon's shifts on the treatment of issues over the two campaigns. The study found that Nixon actually

addressed the selected issues in his campaign oratory in the two campaigns. It was also found that, in 1968, he placed greater emphasis on law and order and civil rights, less emphasis on issues of war, and a neutral position on nearly all issues accepts the issues of the pocketbook. Findings also show that in pursuing a centrist strategy, Nixon addressed more issues, more superficially than in 1960.

In a related study, the necessity of adapting messages to audience was emphasized in a study of Billy Graham's speeches, carried out by Garvin (1972). Garvin analysed twenty Graham's speeches for differences in subject-audience relationship and speaker-audience relationship. The study's findings showed that Billy Graham altered the subject-audience relationship "through selection of specific purpose appropriate to audience predisposition, topics related to audience interests, argumentative form and content appropriate both to subject matter and audience attitudes, and appeal to audience motivation" (Garvin, 1972:3825A).

Yet another stimulating study was Iyenga's (1979) longitudinal study entitled "Television News and Issue Salience: An examination of the Agenda-Setting Hypothesis." In this study, Iyenga compared agenda setting measure during congressional and presidential campaigns. Using the issue salience measure drawn from the Center for Political Studies (CPS) election surveys of 1974 and 1976, he grouped item responses into 30 issue categories with attention on the most "important problems." Each issue is ranked according to the total number of mentions by respondents who in the CPS survey are able to name up to three different problems. Coverage of issues by Television was also gauged through the content analysis of the Vanderbilt Abstracts of the daily network news broadcasts. Coding reliability was guaranteed through the coding of a sample of news stories twice over a three-month period with a reliability coefficient of .92. diachronic rank-order correlations were utilized to assess the causal direction of the relationship. Results showed that agenda-setting effects are likely to be more prominent among social and economic groups that are most dependent on televisions for political information than among groups that are less politicized and whose attention toward the television are unfavourable.

Furthermore, Maiyanga, A.A. (1990) in "A Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis of Selected National Day Speeches of Nigerian Heads of State" states that in the Nigerian President' speeches, the meaning relations, among the words used, contain a unique and intricate tapestry of political discourse. On agenda setting, he claims that political lexicon deals with the ramifications of many semantic fields of defence, mass media, religion, commerce, economics science and technology. David (1996:4607-A) also examined a number of King's discourses including his sermons, civil rights addresses, debates, interviews and published materials and finds King's rhetorical move as "delicate, requiring methodological development and an affirming audience."

Besides, a study by Lee (1996:4204-A) examines the roles of Malcom x in creating the "Black Muslim image" and registers his attempts at reshaping that image. Lee's finding is that Malcom x, in his attempt at transforming social reality, believed that "the myths and stereotypes concomitantly projected the heritage to generations to black people, and acted as ontological truths to generations of white people." Lee further demonstrates how Malcom x used four rhetorical strategies, viz, repetitive returns to the Afro-American past, articulation of people's sufferings, reconstruction of "official narratives" of black inferiority and reconstruction of "alternative narratives" of black humanity and his predilection to continually agitate for Afro-American human right to reconstruct social reality.

3. Methodology and Data Collection

An ex-post facto analytical research design was employed to investigate Awolowo's rhetoric through quantitative methods. The study worked on the philosophical presupposition that a socialist-inclined leader, operating at the regional level of governance, would work out the means of satisfying the yearnings of the mass of the people, notwithstanding obvious obstacles from both other regional opponents and federal opponents of his society. It discusses the philosophical assumption, within the background of the communicator's rhetorical behaviour, as he reacts to issues that are fundamental to establishing an egalitarian society. Thus, the major preoccupation of this study was to investigate how Awolowo reacted to the issues of: the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education, when he was in the saddle as premier of Western Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to content-analyse the issues which Awolowo reacted to, during this period, by concentrating upon the content of his speeches and making valid inferences about his purpose, motivation and philosophy. To assess Awolowo's attributes and governance, the research respectively worked on the dependent and independent variables of "issue prominence" and "issue choice." The litmus test underpinning the development of this study was hinged on the conjecture that Awolowo would accord different degrees of prominence to different issues depending on their perceived salience. Nine of Awolowo's speeches, selected through the proportional stratified sampling method, were content-analysed using a validated logical scale with 25 themes. The test-retest measure for the final instrument was adjudged to be highly reliable while the constructs too were clearly operationalized to remove biases of human coders. The study's null hypothesis, designed to ascertain any significant difference between the dependent and independent variables, was tested through the one-way ANOVA and the Neuman Keuls' Method of Multiple Comparison and the study's findings were considered unassailable.

3.1. An appropriate Contextualization of the Research

The research was appropriately conceptualized by subjecting the hypothesis to scientific confirmation and reality through statistical analysis. Besides, the assumptions underpinning the origination of the research were subjected to close scrutiny through objective linking of the study's problems to relevant empirical studies and methodologies. Furthermore, the study endeavoured to ensure content and construct validity by respectively simultaneously training the coders and

carrying out a pilot study and clearly operationalizing the study's 25 constructs. A test-retest measure of the instrument also yielded a high 0.95 reliability coefficient.

4. Research Findings and Data Analysis

4.1. Research Findings

This dissertation worked on the research question associated with Awolowo's attributes and governance performance-rating as premier of the defunct Western Nigeria and transposed it into a null hypothesis. The research drew inference from Awolowo's rhetoric on the five selected issues and presented the results to demonstrate his attributes, governance style and ideology. The study's hypothesis was tested using the ANOVA and Newman Keuls' Method of Multiple Comparison. The alternative hypothesis was accepted, with the ANOVA revealing a significant difference in Awolowo's treatment of the five issues as the head of government in Western Nigeria. Findings, thus, confirmed the major assumption underlying the study's purpose. Indeed, the Newman Keuls' comparison of the issues' relative scores showed politics as, undoubtedly, having the highest salience, with the issue of the economy relegated to the second position, while the remaining issues of international relations, socio-cultural milieu and education were accorded the same prominence with that of the economy. As premier, Awolowo's body language could be seen as tilting towards the practice of democratic socialism, although Awolowo seemed equivocal in his theoretical postulations of the philosophy. Besides, findings revealed that Awolowo's utterances bore semblance with those of other political gurus lifted from the literature. Tables 1 to 4 show a comprehensive view of the results.

Source of Variation	Ss	Df	MS	F	P
Total	501069.975	39	-		
Between	303968.475	4	75992.11	13.5	P<0.01
Within	197101.5	35	5631.47		

Table 1: ANOVA on the Issues Discussed by Awolowo as Premier of Western Nigeria

The null hypothesis of this study is shown along with its alternative thus:

- H_0 : There is no significant difference in Awolowo's reactions to the issues of the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education as the premier of Western Nigeria.
- H_a : There is a significant difference in Awolowo's reactions to the issues of the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education as the premier of Western Nigeria.

As revealed by Table 1, the alternative hypothesis is upheld following the rejection of the null hypothesis. The F obtained (13.5) is greater than the tabulated F (3.89) at $P<0.001$ ($F = 13.5$, $df = 4/35$, $p<0.01$). The obtainment of a significant F here was an initial step in the analysis. A post-mortem multiple comparisons analysis is as shown in Table 2 below.

The Issues	Economics n = 5 x1 = 41.1	Politics n = 5 x2 = 239.4	Socio-Cultural Relation n = 5 x3 = 20.1	International relation n = 5 x4 = 26.4	Education n = 5 x5 = 5.63
Economics		198.3**	21.0ns	14.7 ^{ns}	35.47 ^{ns}
Politics			219.3**	213.0**	238.8**
Socio-Cultural milieu				6.3 ^{ns}	14.47 ^{ns}
International Relations Education					20.77 ^{ns}

Table 2: Multiple Comparison of the Prominence of the Five Different Issues, During the Time Awolowo Served as Premier of Western Nigeria, Using the Newman Keuls' Method of Multiple Comparisons

Ns = Not Significant; * $P < 0.05$ (Significant at That Level) ** $P < 0.01$ (Significant at That Level)

	0.05	0.01
Q2	75.87	101.34
Q3	91.26	115.93
Q4	100.54	124.69
Q5	107.18	130.79

Table 3: The Critical Differences Obtained from the Studentized Table on the Hypothesis

In addition to the critical differences, the means of the five issues were also compared. The means are reproduced again in Table 4 so as to see them at a glance:

Period	Research Question	Mean Scores of Issues					Source
		Politics	Economy	Soc-cult Milieu	Int. Rel.	Edu.	
Premier	Any difference in issues discussion as premier?	239.4	41.1	20.1	26.4	5.63	Table 2

Table 4: Mean Scores of Five Issues within Six Political Situations

Thereafter, the following conclusions were reached for the period of Awolowo as premier:

- Awolowo placed a greater emphasis on politics than any of the other four issues.
- No statistically significant difference was observed in the remaining six pairs of measures (no difference between any of the other 4 issues).

4.2. Data Analysis

The research question for this part was answered in the affirmative. The data provided compelling scientific evidence that Awolowo discussed the issue of politics more than any other issue when he was the premier of Western Region. As can be seen, at a glance, from Table 4, the mean scores of the issues are recorded in the following order: politics (239.4), the economy (41.1), international relations (26.4), socio-cultural milieu (20.1) and education (5.63).

Specifically, the results showed that:

- Politics was given more prominence than any of the other 4 subjects.
- There was equal salience for the issues of the economy, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education, the difference in their mean scores notwithstanding.

It is important to give the antecedent leading to the speeches delivered by Awolowo as premier of the Western Nigeria. This will serve to guide the interpretation and discussion of his rhetoric during this period. That Awolowo placed politics far above other issues can be justified by considering his new role in politics as premier. He did not have to concentrate all his efforts at launching strident attacks on the economic policies of the colonial government. He still continued to attack British imperialism, no doubt; but the attack was, more often than not, directed at the politics of the central government. That Awolowo was already premier was incontrovertible. He was, thus, preoccupied with how to make the best use of power conferred on him to launch himself into greater political reckoning. Politics was, thus, more in Awolowo's thoughts than other issues.

Besides, Awolowo demonstrated his love for the masses, during this time, by implementing people-oriented programmes akin to the practice of democratic socialism. Awolowo also combined the special topoi of the economy, socio-cultural milieu, education and international relations to package his democratic socialism programmes. This accounted for the parity of the four issues, the difference in their mean scores notwithstanding. In conclusion, Awolowo's predilection for democratic socialism could be deciphered from his practical approach to cushioning the effect of poverty through the execution of programmes like free education, free medical facilities for children under 18, rural integration and provision of infrastructure, which tended to emphasise equality of treatment of the citizenry, although his rhetoric on democratic socialism tended towards equivocality.

4.3. Analytical Framework

The study's research design used the modified version of Holsti's (1969) and Johnson's (1988) analytical models. Thus, the analytical framework, in addition to Holsti's and Johnson's inclusion of the study's purpose, types of comparison, questions and research problems, further highlights the relationships between the dependent and independent variables and the study's analytical scheme.

5. Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

I have argued, elsewhere (Babatunde, 2018b:145) that the petit bourgeoisies, among whom was Awolowo, became very active participants in the administration of their respective regions from 1951. Notwithstanding this fact, it was from 1954, when the Lyttleton constitution came into being, that they were able to demonstrate the extent of their grasp of power and authority. The question may be asked: what fundamental differences were there between the Macpherson Constitution of 1951 and the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 that opened the eyes of the regional leaders to the opportunity of consolidating their hold on political power?

The Lyttleton constitution was an improvement on the Macpherson constitution for several reasons. First, it served to constitute Nigeria into a federal set up with three regional governments each with specified powers. Second, it provided for a federal legislature which was composed of an equal number of elected member from each of the three regions. Third, it put in place regional assemblies with full legislative sovereignty and made the conduct of election into each assembly subject to laws passed by the assembly. Fourth, it created a regional executive. Fifth, it gave power to each region to determine when it could be internally self-governing. All these factors influenced Awolowo's rhetoric when he

was premier. Another factor which guided the rhetorical behaviour of Awolowo, during this period, was that the 1954 Constitution affected the daily life of the average Nigerian directly. As Dudley (1985:54) argues:

As an employee, he (the citizen) now found that level of his tax varied with the region in which he resided; as a farmer growing export crops, he found that the price he got for his produce varied with the region in which the produce was sold... as a parent, with children of school going age, he found that if he resided in the West, he did not have to pay fees for his children in the primary schools.

The effect of this was that each region strove to outshine the others and each premier tried to show his citizens and residents that he actually loved them more than the premiers of other regions loved their own. Thus, Falola and Adebayo (2002:54) record that:

... From 1955 the leaders of the ethnically based political parties began to work strenuously... in order to fulfil their promises which were a mixed bag of different classes of the electorate. The promises were made to attract the voters, and they had to be fulfilled in order to disarm the opposition and keep the electorate favourable disposed for future election.

In fact, each of the 3 regional premiers exhibited charismatic leadership during this period. Sylla, as quoted by Mabogunje, (2002:8), sees in each of the regional premiers: "The hope of a saviour or a hero capable of putting an end to colonial domination and the need for a great teacher to restore a shattered cultural identity and establish a new political order." Mabogunje (2002:8) further argues that "together with Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, Chief Awolowo came to be seen as the preeminent heroes (Sic) of our national independence from Britain." Makinde (1988:178) adds that: "From 1954 to 1959, Awolowo's principles and practice was noticeably effective in the Western Region of Nigeria. His leadership at that time remains a showpiece of African democratic socialism in the continent of Africa."

5.2. Discussion of Findings

In discussing the findings of the study, the first big question is: what values did Awolowo espouse during this period that made his leadership "a showpiece of democratic socialism"? We can understand the values espoused by Awolowo, during this period, from his humanitarian and welfarism programmes, akin to the philosophy of democratic socialism. The first thing that set the tone for Awolowo's populist programmes was the devolution of power to the regional leaders in 1954, with the attendant inevitability of a greater political control than before. As the literature has clearly shown, each of the premiers of the 3 regions endeavoured to maintain his firm grip on his own region. Little wonder, then, that Awolowo gave serious thought to political control when he was premier. He maintains that a leader must have dignity and honesty of purpose to be able to attract good fellowship. According to him:

A party which seeks to be entrusted with the affairs of Government should be able to set up a standard of conduct worthy of emulation. The citizens should be able to feel assured that whenever such a party gives its plighted word, it will be redeemed and that whenever it proffers an opinion it is honestly held according to its light and judgement

(Awolowo, 1956:2).

He also calls on those aspiring to serve their age and fellowman to be masters of themselves arguing that "those who essay to lead others must first ... purify themselves and subject their own feelings and achievements to self-discipline" (Awolowo, 1981b:25). In this connection, Awolowo reasons that, as a thing held in trust, political power "is not intended to be used for the gratification of the vanity, or lust for power" (Awolowo, 1959:3) He maintains that power must be used wholly and solely, for the benefit of the people, the ultimate custodian of the power as of right. So, at the heart of Awolowo's programmes, as premier, was the betterment of the people.

As premier of the Western Region, Awolowo also demonstrated abundantly in his action programmes that he was a social democrat. Indeed, his slogan of 'life more abundant' became more intensified during this period. Awolowo emphasizes, here, that farmers should be given every encouragement and assistance by way of loans and technical instructions so that they might enjoy such good things that contractors, merchants and industrialists enjoyed. Like a social democrat, he was bridging the gap between the rich and the poor. In demonstration of this, the Action Group government of the West gave "loans ranging from £15 to £50 to several thousands of farmers for the improvement of farming" (Awolowo, 1957:10) Not only this, Awolowo also promises, in his election broadcast of 1959 into the House of Representatives, that if voted in, he would encourage "the establishment of cooperative farms... big enough to utilize scientific methods and mechanized cultivation" (Awolowo, 1959:10).

Besides, Awolowo promises to improve road communications, and build new railway lines to assist farmers move their crops to the market more quickly and cheaply. Awolowo demonstrates this same attitude in handling the package for the working classes. Awolowo explains that "the attitude of the Action Group to the working classes has been oft repeated and is unequivocal. We believe that workers should reap to the full what they sow." (Awolowo, 1957b:19)." It was as if Awolowo knew that critics would dub his attitude to democratic socialism as equivocal. Anyway, in line with his promise, Awolowo reiterates that he will try to influence the payment of an absolute minimum wage of 5/6d per day as a member of the House of Representatives. He also promises that civil servants and the working classes generally would benefit from a comprehensive review of salaries, wages, and conditions of work. In addition, Awolowo promises the workers to implement a policy of full employment under which anyone willing and able to work and who, through no fault of his own, is out of employment would be paid a reasonable sum of money by an Action Group Federal Government to keep body and soul together until another job is secured or offered (Awolowo, 1959:9). Daily paid workers and ex-servicemen were not

left out in Awolowo's scheming. In this regard, he promises: "All daily paid workers throughout the federation will be placed on a pension scheme" (Awolowo, 1959:9); while ex-servicemen would be provided with "a series of welfare schemes" directed towards placing them on better economic plane" (Awolowo, 1959:15). Although Awolowo dubs his programmes "welfare", the programmes are akin to social democratic philosophy.

The democratic socialism attitude of Awolowo is not restricted to the working classes alone; it is, in fact, extended to "all the peoples and inhabitants of Nigeria, whatever their state in life, whatever their race or religion" who Awolowo believes "will be happy as human beings, and will enjoy life more abundantly" (Awolowo, 1957b:19). In line with his welfares programme to all the people, Awolowo in a Presidential address, at the 3rd congress of the Action Group held at Foresters Hall, Lagos on July 12, 1957, reiterates: "We want to see secondary industries springing up all over the place; we want trade generally to be enormously expanded; we want education to flourish, the health of our people to improve and the general standard of living of all classes of our people to rise" (Awolowo, 1957b:21).

Awolowo considers the main task for the immediate, present and future as providing for the happiness, orderly progress and prosperity of the generality of the people of Nigeria. He, thus, argues that "Nigeria with its vast untapped natural resources should provide a reservoir of plenty for all industrious people" (Awolowo, 1958:28). He also avers, in his election broadcast of December 1959, that "Anything that affects the welfare, happiness, or the very existence of the people must be a matter of utmost concern to the Government" (Awolowo, 1959:4). In the same speech, Awolowo promises to provide free medical treatment for all children up to the age of 18 years in East and North, provide "for the masses of the people," very cheap but modern houses, "introduce a scheme whereby the federal Government will pay a given sum of money to the needy people to ensure that they enjoy a happy old age." Awolowo also makes it abundantly clear that it is for the sake of the welfare and happiness of the people that he constantly advocates for unity in Nigeria. According to him: "Nigerian unity is desired because and only because a united Nigeria will be better able to promote the prosperity, welfare and happiness and dignity of its inhabitants" (Awolowo, 1958a:9)

There is, thus a link between Awolowo's penchant for democratic socialism and his advocacy of federalism. That Awolowo was also a freedom fighter par excellence was demonstrated when he was Premier. In his presidential address at the 3rd congress of the Action Group held at Forester's Hall, Awolowo reiterates that "freedom is the inalienable right of men and that we are all, black and white, born equal as to our right and dignity" (Awolowo, 1957b:11). He denounces the state of political subjection in which Nigeria had found herself since the advent of British rule as unnatural. He also puts it on record that Nigeria resents and detests "our status of inferiority in the comity of nation" (Awolowo, 1957b:11). He gives two grounds on which his call for Nigeria's independence was hinged. The first is that "self-rule is better than foreign rule" while the second is that self-rule would "usher in a new era at home: an era of individual freedom and equality in the eye of the law; and abroad, equal status with the citizens of the independent nations" (Awolowo, 1958a:9). Here Awolowo emphasizes the need for both corporate and individual freedom.

Besides, Awolowo does not lose sight of equal status at home, in his rhetoric. He emphasizes that freedom from foreign rule must be granted to each of the ethnic or racial group in Nigeria and should not "degenerate into an unrestricted licence for the majority ethnic groups in the country to lord it over the minority ethnic groups" (Awolowo, 1958a:10).

In addition, Awolowo insists, in his policy statement of September 9, 1958, on the Nigerian constitutional conference, preparatory to Nigeria's independence, that fundamental human rights should be entrenched in the independence constitution. Indeed, Awolowo calls for a constitution under which the citizenry would enjoy or undertake identical rights or duties, do what they like "subject to the same restraint as will be legally imposed on other citizens throughout the county" (Awolowo, 1958a:18). He also insists on getting, for the independent Nigeria, a constitution which would guarantee to every citizen the freedoms of speech, assembly, movement and association. He further reiterates, in his presidential address at the 6th congress of the Action Group, held at Forester's Hall, Lagos, on September 22, 1958, that he would raise the one voice that he had, as Premier of Western Region, "to advocate unequivocally for those fundamental human rights which are part of the British tradition of democracy ..." (Awolowo, 1958b: 28). Awolowo also amplifies on such fundamental human rights which Nigerians needed. According to him: "These must include freedom of movement, speech and assembly, freedom of the press; freedom from unjust imprisonment; the rights to public hearing and properly regulated procedure in civil and criminal proceedings and the right of an accused person to be represented by a legal practitioner of his choice" (Awolowo, 1958b: 28). He maintains, further, that the independence constitution must "clearly prohibit any restriction upon the freedom of religious activities" (Awolowo, 1958b: 27). In short, Awolowo calls for "freedom and peace for all the years to come" (Awolowo, 1958b:27).

In his pursuance of fundamental human rights for Nigerians, Awolowo advocates for a constitution under which every Nigerian would have equal access to the law courts and under which there would be "identical measure of impartial dispensation of justice" (Awolowo, 1958a:18). This is why he correspondingly advocates for an independent judiciary. According to Awolowo "the bulwark for the rights and liberty of the citizen is an independent judiciary ... politicians should have no decisive voice of influence in the appointment or removal of judges." Awolowo's insistence on an independent judiciary is in consonance with the legal doctrine expressed in the Latin maxim *nemo iudex in causa sua*, which literally interpreted means "a person should not be a judge in his own cause". Besides, Awolowo extends the concept of legal equality to the realm of economic and social equality when he emphasizes that "all citizens are equal in the eyes of the law and must be so treated by the government through the provision of economic developments and social amenities" (Awolowo, 1959:4).

Moreover, Awolowo detests any situation that is repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience. He argues that it is neither fair nor equitable that "civil servants should work for 34 hours a week, whilst the labourers with

comparatively less pay and more arduous exertions do 40 hours" (Awolowo, 1957b:20). He also could not see any justice in a situation where senior civil servants, with higher pay, lived as a privileged class in subsidized quarters while the junior ones with meagre income had to fend for themselves. He therefore, echoes: "There are many of us who are looking forward to the day when the houses in Ikoyi and other government reservations throughout the country will be available for sale to, and for habitation by Nigerians whether or not they belong to the official class". (Awolowo, 1957b: 21). Awolowo further feels that it is the duty of government to deploy the wealth produced by the country in such a way that would bring about a parity of development throughout the country and parity of development is a key essential to democratic socialism.

Suffice to say that what Awolowo did, as premier, between 1954 and 1959, was clear – he brought about massive improvement in the lives of the suffering masses. For example, it was under Awolowo's democratic socialism, in the defunct western Nigeria, that we had the satisfaction of basic human needs like free education, enhanced healthcare delivery, portable water, proper childcare system, low-cost housing for civil servants, rural integration – programmes that kept the society alive and awake. Besides, under Awolowo's government, resources were widely deployed to enhance performance and productivity; infrastructures were provided; people were encouraged to earn their legitimate incomes, without let or hindrance and crime was reduced. With his very good intendment, Awolowo, actually, was able to spot differences and bridge the ever-widening gap between the 'haves' and the 'haves not'. I don't know any name to call this practice other than democratic socialism. Such attitude like that of Awolowo by other leaders would have saved our democracy from its 1966 collapse. Indeed, the right attitude of according to everyone equal chances of survival, as exhibited by Awolowo, would have made Nigeria's democracy to flourish, like in the Scandinavian countries. This, unfortunately has not been the case as democracy has, more often than not, truncated because of bad leadership and corruption and, even, as at now, it still proves shaky.

I have argued, elsewhere, (Babatunde, 2018a:242-243) that even though commentators have given Awolowo kudos for his achievements, which they believe are akin to the practice of democratic socialism, Awolowo did not specifically attribute his achievements to democratic socialism when he was premier. Although I consider his body-language as being tilted towards democratic socialism (Babatunde, 2018a:243), he himself thought otherwise, at least during the period he served as premier. All he was preaching this time was an adherence to any "isms" that would better the lives of the people. He himself said in 1952 that he was only interested in fashioning out and pursuing "any economic policy that will ensure prosperity and contentment to the citizens of Nigeria." (Awolowo, 1952). Critics have, therefore, concluded that he could be seen, at best, to be a moderate and that he vacillated "between Fabian socialism and welfare state capitalism" (Sklar, 1963:272; Zachernuk, 2002:285). Thus, his claim, after independence, that he had been preaching democratic socialism, as far back as 1951, could not be true. Critics are, indeed, correct in ascribing equivocality to Awolowo's democratic socialism, although for different reasons. As for me, I consider his claim to democratic socialism equivocal in view of his practice of democratic socialism, as premier, while still preaching about any "isms". After independence, and specifically, as from 1962, Awolowo had made up his mind fully both to preach and practice democratic socialism and he was sincere about it, albeit, he never personally won any election, thereafter, that would have made him prove his mettle. Be that as it may, I, indeed, believe that, had Awolowo succeeded at gaining the centre, all that he had put in place as premier would have combined to spur him on to the full implementation of democratic socialism in Nigeria.

6. Recommendations

The most probable major phenomenon in Africa today has been a search for honest and patriotic leadership with the sole aim of ending the endemic corruption and injustice entrenched in the political system. Nigeria, particularly has recently been in the eye of the storm for its inability to stem the tide of corruption, impunity and reckless killings associated with ethnic cleansing. The necessity of focussing on the elimination of evil vices and promoting good governance in Nigeria is obvious. It is this: As the acclaimed giant of Africa, any happening in Nigeria can quickly spill over to other countries. Furthermore, it has become obvious, to an increasing extent, that Nigerian leaders need certain virtues and skills to be able to steer the ship of the state to the desired successful end. This is where the memory of Awolowo comes in.

One good thing that Awolowo has consistently advocated for and which I wish to recommend for any government that wants to succeed in Nigeria is the quest for dignity and honesty of purpose. All governments, local, state and federal, most especially the federal government, must give the example in puritan morality so as to be able to fulfil the important obligation of ensuring accountability, effectiveness and true allegiance (as opposed to ethnic allegiance). Remember Awolowo argues that those essaying to lead others "must first ... purify themselves and subject their own feelings and achievements to self-discipline."

Another thing that needs to be emulated in the life of Awolowo is the uncommon passion for the development, progress and empowerment of the downtrodden Nigerians. Awolowo's penchant for initiating programmes that are akin to democratic socialism agenda and his tenacity of purpose in making the programmes work should be the focus of any serious government in Nigeria. This will definitely add meaning to governance at all levels, in this era of suspicions, mistrust and disillusionment about the change mantra of the government. Fresh life should be given to the intensification of life in abundance, Awolowo's popular slogan as premier.

Nigerian governments already have the executive powers to fight institutional corruption, strengthen governmental integrity and make internal democracy a fait accompli. These feats are achievable by falling back on Awolowo's template with a view to repeating the successful experiments at true governance which he represented even as a mere regional premier.

7. Summary and Conclusion

This paper is a product of an original study which sought to investigate the relative prominence attached to 5 issues discussed by Awolowo, when he was serving as the Western Nigeria first premier. It examines the first experience of Awolowo at political governance against the background of his preparedness and earnest expectation, having acquired sufficient Western education as well as having been at the vanguard of agitating for self-rule. The paper, however, recognizes the problem of the study as that of the researchers' relegation of Awolowo's laudable achievements because of their interest in concentrating on heads of state and government in Nigeria, even though these ones had little or nothing to offer with regard to good programmes and governance. Arising from the identification of this problem is the study's central thesis that it is necessary to be interested in the works of a man like Awolowo who had successfully cushioned the effect of poverty on numerous people, through his populists' programmes, his operation at the regional level, all the same. The paper's general purpose, in this regard, was to analyse the way Awolowo reacted to the broad issues of the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education, as a man in control of power at a limited level of governance. The assumption was that an articulate Awolowo would find time to discuss issues in the polity that supported his principled stand of making a difference in governance, by improving the socio-economic well-being of the majority in abject poverty; react to opposition's criticisms; and attack unwholesome agenda that relegate the downtrodden to the abyss of hopelessness and oblivion. It is, further, assumed that, in doing so, he would vary his reactions across the issues. The study, thus, worked on the hypothesis that there would be a significant difference in the prominence Awolowo attached to the five different issues as he reacted to them as premier. This working hypothesis was accepted at $P < 0.01$, with the conclusion that Awolowo gave more prominence to the issue of politics than the remaining four, which were also seen to be at par. Awolowo also practised democratic socialism, as premier of Western Region, although his rhetoric exposed his equivocality about the philosophy. The significance of this study is obvious. It fills a necessary gap, left open by earlier research, by elucidating on ways by which a serious-minded and visionary politician can explore Awolowo's template to develop the penchant for affecting the lives of numerous people positively.

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