

# International Journal of Arts and Humanities (IJA)

## Ethiopia

Vol. 7 (4), S/No 27, SEPTEMBER, 2018: 60-69

ISSN: 2225-8590 (Print) ISSN 2227-5452 (Online)

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ijah.v7i4.6>

---

### Ethical Reorientation and the Nigeria Moral Question

**Eresia-Eke, Agha, Ph.D.**  
Department of Philosophy,  
Niger Delta University,  
Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State  
E-mail: [aeresiaeke@gmail.com](mailto:aeresiaeke@gmail.com)

.....

#### Abstract

Man is gregarious by nature and thus has come to live in communities of various descriptions. Social life demands orderliness, and to endure its existence, norms and rules become integral parts of any community or society. It is however common knowledge that some members of most human communities and societies exhibit behaviours that strain the tolerance level of other members of the community. Those who exhibit such acts are labelled deviants or preverts and their actions termed criminal when sanctioned by the laws of the state. It is as a consequence of this that Nigeria, like many countries of the world, has witnessed high level of activities and life-styles considered inimical to the good of society. Efforts have therefore been made by different government regimes to stem the trend. The thrust of this paper in this regard becomes an attempt to expose the specificities of these government programmes to know what extent intended goals of checking those social maladies were achieved. However, without prejudice or bias against whatever the achievements of these government policies and programmes of government were, it is the position of this paper that those measures were inadequate. And this accounts for the reason those misbehaviours have escalated rather than abate. To wrest the challenge of the Nigeria moral question which calls for ethical reorientation, the paper calls for the adoption of the 'Socratic Model' this lifted the Athenian society of Socrates' time out from its worst moral decadence.

#### Introduction

Contemporary Nigerian Society is plagued by severe and protracted social life-styles and high level of activities considered inimical to the society such as; corruption, bribery, robbery, social violence, impunity, embezzlement, cultism, god-fatherism, examination malpractice of all shades and the likes. These negative tendencies have become so prevalent to the point of crises which have adversely affected the value and normative orientations of the citizen, adults and youths alike. These anti-social behaviours have also provided fertile ground for aberrant behaviours and practices in society. What is required to redress the situation therefore is ethical reorientation that would ameliorate the Nigeria moral question

since it is obvious that our society is infested by malignant morally repulsive habits, which demand the attention of all and sundry.

Studies in socio-political philosophy are concerned with ways orderliness is maintained between two or more people, a group or society. Orderliness of a society in this wise, rests on a network of roles according to which each person accepts certain duties toward others. An orderly society can be operational only when most of her members reliably fulfil their duties toward others and are able to claim most of their rights from others. A system of people, relationship and customs operating smoothly to accomplish the work of a society is described as a social order. And all the means and processes whereby a group or a society secures its members conformity to its expectations is described as social control. It is in view of this that anti-social behaviour is considered as an act which disrupts the social order, for example, an act of murder can provoke inter-communal warfare, thus disrupting the peace of the group.

The concept of an orderly society implies some shared standards of feelings, acting, thinking and responding which is usually transmitted to the younger generations, which is accepted as normal. Described as norms, these standards of behaviour are rules that specify appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. They inform of what we ought and must do as well as what we should not, ought and must not do. They are expectations, conceptions of ideal behaviour – that are shared by members of a society at large by the members of particular groups or within a group. It is in this regard that those whose behaviour differs to a much greater degree from the norm are labelled anti-social agents. The challenge of this though in Nigeria is, if there is such a shared norm as the different cultures/societies in Nigeria has conflicting norms.

In relation to this, societies also share values, which are commonly held conceptions of the desirable. Values are usually criteria or conceptions individuals use in evaluating things or assigning merit or otherwise, values contrast from norms in that the latter may contain penalties while the former may not. The difference between the two can further be highlighted in the fact that the event an individual holds values that are radically opposed to the dominant one in society, he is not likely to be described a deviant.

The need to maintain order, enforce norms, and transmit value to ensure the survival of society compels the adult members to embark on the socialisation of young members of the society. All that a society considers valuable and shares amongst its members constitute their culture. In this direction, culture could be classified as the “way of life of members of a society, the collection of ideas and habits which they learn, share and transit from generation to generation, which must be transmitted to the younger generation, to ensure continuity and orderly succession” (Egbezor 29). And this process through which members of a society are taught to function efficiently and acquire the sort of character, which make them eager to act in the acceptable way of that society, is referred to as Socialisation.

This view is in tandem with Haralambos and Heald (109), who defines Socialisation as the process through which individual members of a society are made to desire to do what objectively is necessary for them to do. In other words, society through the process of socialisation prepares individuals for their roles by imparting in them attitudes and values which make their roles attractive. The woman for instance, sees her duties as a housewife attractive, and not drudgery, while the man labours happily to fulfil his role as a father and head of the family. Women are socialised so that they want husband, she is branded deviant when she refuses to marry or be taken in marriage. This is also the case with other classes of persons. Almost every society to varying degrees of success transmit these shared values and norms through certain agencies which in modern societies include the home, the family, and the school, described as primary and secondary socialising agents respectively (Egbezor).

These agents of socialisation have however been weekend in the face of the socio-economic realities of present-day Nigeria to the point where they cannot perform their roles effectively. It is to this fact that most government policies and programmes aimed at reorienting the attitude of Nigerians have failed. This state of affairs typifies the position of this paper, which calls for the introduction of the ‘Socratic Model’ for realising the much-needed moral rectitude of our people.

### **Theoretical Frameworks for Understanding Society**

In investigating affairs of society, scholars use certain basic foundations as basis for their points of view or perspective. The most dominant of these viewpoints is that usually described as structural functionalism. This perspective as the name implies sees the structures in society, for example, family, individual, stratification, kinship, and schools as performing functions that would lead to social order and harmony. In other words, structures of society exist for the benefit of society.

This is more like the anatomical structures in a living organism, which function to sustain the organism but are generally incapable of separate existence. Implicit in this theoretical learning is the idea that society is far above the individual. The individual members of society need to be integrated to maintain stability and order so that society can remain in equilibrium. Implicit also is the notion that these structures of society should impact attitudes and abilities that are in alignment with socially approved behaviour. It is in view of this that concepts such as social order, socialisation, norms, and values are analysed as aspects of society.

As a reaction to the structural-functionalist perspective which places the demand of society above that of the individual, comes the perspective known as the conflict-interaction perspective. This argues that, in line with Marxist Philosophy, society contains contradictions that lead them to conflict. The conflict-interactionist perspective would rather argue that instead of investigating societies to ascertain how social order is maintained by the structures of society, it is usually better to investigate how conflict and conflict situations develop and are managed.

Another reaction to the structural functionalists’ emphasis on social order and its maintenance is the symbolic-interaction perspective. The proponents argue that critiques of society should seek to understand the symbol individuals use in their interactions with other members of society. For instance, according to the proponents of this perspective, if we comprehend the language or symbols which the individual uses to understand or uses to make themselves understood in their social interactions, for example, hunger, marriage, economic needs and other social demands, the student of society could be on the path to understanding social order.

A further framework for studying society is that described as ethno-methodological perspective. This argues that investigation and understanding society should proceed from the study and analysis of the methods and processes individuals utilise as they make decisions about their daily needs and circumstances, they may be called upon to react against as they interact amongst themselves.

Summarily, what is central to these perspectives is that the concept of social order is a worthy goal whether imposed by society on the individual or emanating from the individual and on to society. However, in line with our acceptable position for this paper, we align ourselves with the view of functional-structuralists, which s us to maximise the benefits of the Socratic Model.

### **Entailment of Ethical Reorientation**

To accomplish this task, we would avoid giving a strait jacket definition of what the terms stand for. Instead we would employ the scheme of vividly painting the picture of all the entailments through analytical power. In view of this, ethical reorientation could be explained to overlap a broad spectrum of issues. Distinctly, the point of departure for this paper is on the realities of our social indiscipline, youth decadence, and the perversion of elders. These are all “products of a degenerating society, where

survival hinges on development of crude instincts and animalistic valour a negation of civilisation” (Eresia-Eke V).

Ethical reorientation in the light of this becomes the attempt to cause value shift in society that will encourage individual actions to conform to societal normative behavioural expectations, an enthronement of the moral values and ideals of our society (Eresia-Eke 16). Ethical reorientation in this wise assumes an enhancing characteristic to re-mould the Nigerian society gone awry into one of moral rectitude. This will elicit in Nigerians of all ages and sex, social and cultural values and awareness which will inculcate the spirit of patriotism, nationalism, self-discipline and self-reliance. Reorientation of the citizenry is a lifelong process involving people of all age brackets. Eresia-Eke (3) expresses this view as he says;

For the young, it is a process of learning, for the first time, attitudes, behaviour, and habits which they will need as they enter life. For the older and already experienced folk, it is a process for learning some things, unlearning others and being awakened to the existence of new perspectives to issues and events.

In this context, reorientation of Nigerians towards maturity (nationhood) will involve awakening their consciousness to alternative ways of “thinking Nigeria”, other than the fragmentary and divisive ways that have prevailed in our lives as members of one society”. It is this that makes the import of reorientation with regard to consciousness awakening highly relevant. More so, in view of the magnitude and complexity of the undesirable and destructive modes of behaviour prevalent among Nigerians in control, and in view of the existence of the dangerous but powerful belief that crookedness is normal for Nigeria, awareness of dangers of these behaviours and belief must be quickly, consistently and actively created. People must be convinced that Nigeria, which holds a lot of promise for every of her citizens, will cease to be under the weight of these evils and unpatriotic practices. What we require therefore is value-shift. According to Eresia-Eke;

The value of this is two-fold, it will insulate the young against unhealthy behaviour of the adult and also encourage them to question the adult whose behaviour deviate from the ideal. It will make the perverted elders to acquire new virtues that will be exemplary and place them as heroes in the eyes of the youths (4).

The need to reorient the people towards the acquisition of new virtues culminates in the fact that basic to any development process in man’s desire for a better life and better environment. But development does not start with goods and services. It starts with the people, their orientation, organisation and discipline. When a society is property oriented, organised and disciplined, it can be prosperous on the scantiest basis of natural wealth. This therefore calls for the institution of the right culture-civility.

It is only in such culture that mistakes are made and corrected without social upheaval. It is only in such culture that people are groomed to be tolerant of people of other language, colour, ethnic groups or clans and to be able to give and take in periods of triumph and failure. It is only in such a culture that Nigeria can evolve to become viable polity that inspires loyalty and patriotism (Eresia-Eke).

### **What Efforts at Reorientation?**

In order to stem what many citizens consider as social crises, the Murtala/Obasanjo administration made “military efforts” to “correct the ills of the Nigerian Society so as to re-establish the principle of impartial and orderly administration” (Jedo 5). The efforts here took the form of deliberate actions directed against perceived “bad eggs” – those who have perpetrated one form of gross indiscipline or the other, including purge from the public service in 1975. Despite this measure, the then General Obasanjo was to confess latter at Jaji on 12th September, 1977 that; “The Nigerian society as at now, in spite of all our efforts since July 1975, is not sufficiently disciplined, fair, just or humane” (Jedo).

Shehu Shagari, the Nigerian Second Republic President in an address at the convocation ceremony of the University of Jos, in what was referred to as “Sermon on the Plateau” decried; “The decline in public morality, probity and word ethics” (New Nigerian). The President did not stop at sermonising but set up what he called; National Ethical Reorientation Committee with the following terms of reference;

- i. Study the nature and causes of the apparent breakdown in our national ethic and discipline, and
- ii. Recommend measures immediate and long-term for reversing the trend and removing its effect.

In 1984, the Buhari/Idiagbon regime launched a “frontal attack” against indiscipline through the programme tagged “War Against Indiscipline (WAI). This was also replicated by the Abacha regime when he launched; War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC). This trend continued even with the Obasanjo democratic administration in 1990. The regime sent anti-corruption bill to the National Assembly as an impetus to stem the moral degeneration of the Nigerian public. What emanated from this is the creation of some institutions like, EFCC, ICPC, Code of Conduct Breau, etc, to halt the decay. With all these efforts of different government regimes, it is however common knowledge the situation rather than abate has degenerated. Indiscipline and corruption are now rule rather than exception as moral sermons alone could not arrest the downward trend.

A major reason for failure of government to realise set objectives through those programmes is that they were symptomatic. They were formulated to ‘heal’ those symptoms instead of the cause(s) of the symptoms. It is as a consequence of this that we call for the ‘Socratic Model’, which is an identification process by which the self takes on objective characteristics or attributes to become (Eresia-Eke 2).

#### **What is Socratic Model?**

The one abiding principle of Socratic Model is the fact that virtue is knowledge and so, can be learned and taught. With this, the discovery of a valid general rule of action is not impossible, and imparting it through the means of education is not impracticable. Further, Socratic Model is akin to the psychology of human development in which a developing child so admires better developed adult that he/she seeks to Ginitate the adult in order to “become” that adult.

To acquire the characteristics to “become”, we must employ the power of Socratic Model (socialisation). Socialisation is a process of “learning to become a member of one’s family, one’s community, and one’s national group to the point where one behaves, thinks, feels and evaluates in ways similar to everyone else in Society” (Stacey 199). The greatest advantage of the Socratic Model in the light of the above is impartation.

This becomes a potent tool because people’s responses or reactions are ruled by the meanings that issues, events and entities, like persons and nations, have for them or in their lives as they function in the course of solving their problems. The meanings or conceptualisations can be peculiar to individuals or group, these conceptualisations (beliefs) are facts and they behave toward the belief objects accordingly. The inclination which this elicits is not the uniformity of behaviour, for there exists individual or group conceptualisation of issues. But this presupposes the distinct existence of an objective, generalised or idealised conceptualisation of any phenomenon. Objective expression ensues from a union, coherence, single minded commitment to unity, unqualified loyalty and patriotism and the correlation of the individual group conceptualisation with the generalised or idealised form. Stacey agrees no less when in his discussion of the construction of social reality’ has this to say;

A person interprets the social situations he (or she) encounters in his own way, influenced by his upbringing, education and experience and by his own intellectual efforts as he acts in the light of such interpretations (188-120).

All the core issues raised here by Stacey in embedded social reality are embodied in the Socratic Model realisable through impartation, which calls to task the role of the philosophers and all others who possess wisdom.

### **Why Socratic Model?**

Our position for the adoption of the Socratic Model in order to effect value reorientation in the country cannot be overemphasised. The inherent values of the model make it an imperative. Socratic Model has the capacity to affect the intelligence, personality and temperament levels of persons through impartation.

In the view of psychologists, some correlates of resistance to temptation include intelligence, sex, age, personality and temperament. Evidence summarised by Wright (55), indicates that the more intelligent a child, the more honest he was likely to be. This fact was found to be true even when different socio-economic levels of the home were considered. From the emerging facts of this finding, a concerted effort at continues impartation would have enhanced the intelligence, temperament and personality of the ordinary Nigerian and with it, the correspondent ability to affect positively the behavioural pattern of the citizenry.

The Socratic Model is derived from the ethical teachings of Socrates. Socrates was principally concerned with man. He considered man from his inner life, “know yourself” which brings the inner self of man to light (Eresia-Eke and Ukhun201). And this bears a new meaning in Greece. It means reflection, criticism, maturity that enriches the Greek even “if costing him something of the frank and courageous impulsiveness with which the first centuries of Greek history had been lived” (Plato 30). One cannot speak of corruption, for it is assuredly true that Socrates decisively changed the spirit of Athenian youth. This can also be replicated with the Nigerian youth. All it requires is the emergence of ‘Nigerian Socrates’ willing to change the despicable behaviour of Nigerians especially, the youths.

The core of Socrates’ ethics is the concept of virtue. This is not virtue in its usual sense, but more like what the word means when one speaks of the virtues of plants or of a violin. Virtue is the deepest and most basic propensity of man, that for which he was actually born. And this virtue is knowledge. A bad man is bad through ignorance. The man who does not follow the good fails to do so because he does not recognise it. Thus, virtue can be taught and what is necessary is for everyone to know his/her own virtue. This is what is implied by Socrates’ imperative, ‘know yourself’. It is thus a moral imperative, whereby man may gain possession of self and be his own master, through knowledge. Just as from the Socratic definition, there arose the problem of essence and with it all the metaphysics of Plato and Aristotle, so also from Socrates’ ethics originate all the ethical schools that came to fill Greece and the Roman Empire from that time on. This was first with the Cynics and Cyrenaics, and then especially, the Epicureans and the Stoics. All of Greek philosophy from the beginning of the fourth century on is rooted in Socrates. What in the brief life of Socrates is outlined or sketched in him was to be realised in the fruitful tradition based on his teachings. Socrates’ doctrinal contribution to philosophy was modest. He was probably not a man of many profound metaphysical ideas, as Plato and Aristotle were shortly to be. However, his role was to prepare for them and make them possible, placing philosophy for the second time on the way of truth the only path it can follow from which it had been diverted by the rhetoric of the Sophists and the apparent wisdom of “speaking well”, which was incapable of being anything more than opinion.

### **Example as the Best Teacher**

For the most part of Socrates’ life time, he expounded in streets of Athens his philosophy of life. He aimed as he explained in the *Apology*, at exposing the ignorance of his fellow-citizens as well as to convince them that everyman is responsible for his own attitudes. For Socrates, the very basis of the

good life and ultimately of philosophy is discovering the truth, acquiring that knowledge and understanding of life and its values.

As Chinua Achebe (1) has said;

The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. The unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which, are the hallmarks of true leadership.

In the case of Athens, Socrates rose to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example. These traits he exhibited till his death. And this accounts for the reason he led an exemplary life as shown in the *Apology*, one of his dialogues.

### **Truth**

Truth is one of the traits of an exemplary life which he led. Socrates even confirmed this himself in the *Apology* (17b-c), where he said; “from me you will hear the whole truth” (Plato 22). Most evils of our society today are perpetrated owing to lack of truthfulness on the part of our leaders. These ruling elites or even the entire populace live in a world of make-believe and unrealistic expectations. Instead of stating a common fact of what is, or what ought to be, they present a false image of things and themselves.

If Socrates were alive to listen to this form of leaders, he would have spoken of them as those who thought themselves wise when indeed they are ignorant and unaware of their ignorance. Socrates would have done this because as he stated, his ‘mission’ was to expose the ignorance of those who thought themselves wise. This is encapsulated in his famous statement, “man know thyself”.

### **Humility and Selflessness**

Socrates is a man proclaimed to be the wisest man in Athens by the oracle of Delphi yet he undertook the pain of going on to investigate whether he could refute the oracle by finding who was wiser. Of course, he found none. Rather than being conceited, he opted to help others by teaching them to become like him without charging any fee. Many today would have exploited such a privileged position and charge exorbitant fees from those who consulted them. Rather than do this, Socrates went to markets and other public places to talk and teach whosoever cared to listen. He saw himself as god-sent and as such owed an obligation to his people which, was to educate them especially, the youth. Even when he was prosecuted for telling the truth, he did not choose the easiest way out or abdicated his role but remained steadfast according to the dictates of his duty and in conformity with the tenets his mission.

Socrates showed the qualities and enough good examples as a selfless and intelligent man. He did not exploit his position as the wisest man in whom everybody especially the youth sought knowledge from. He could have taken advantage of this for personal aggrandizement but this he did not as he was sensitively conscious of the exemplary life he was called out to lead.

Socrates never a time exhibited such a desire for wealth even though from all indications, he had a chance of doing so if he had chosen to. Rather than do this, he chooses a very hard option, to render a selfless service to his people while accepting no fee or remuneration for his endeavour. If our leaders or intellectuals had led such an exemplary life may be our society today would have been a different thing from what it is now. To support the above view that Socrates cared very little for himself he says:

... I do not have the leisure to engage in public affairs to any extent, nor indeed to look after my own, but live in great poverty because of my service to the god. (Plato 23<sup>b</sup>, 26-27)

He as well frowned at the acquisitive tendency which men are driven to in the following way:

.... I shall not cease to practice philosophy, to exhort you and in my usual way to point out to any one of you whom I happen to meet; Good Sir, you are an Athenian, a citizen of the greatest city with the greatest preparation for both wisdom and power; are you not ashamed of your eagerness to possess as much wealth, reputation and honours as possible, while you do not care for nor give thought to wisdom or truth, or the best possible state of your soul. (Plato 26<sup>d</sup>, 32)

The quotes above comprehensively capture the disposition of most Nigerians both in public and private life. who do not give thought to the welfare and well-being of the state and the citizenry but seek so much after their own. We have the penchant for acquiring the highest honours in all sectors of the economy of the country without seeking to understand first, the meaning of life itself. This attitude most often leads to the misplacement of priorities thereby making us villains instead of heroes and heroines of the people.

### **Patriotism**

We are among the world's most unpatriotic people. This is due to the fact that we see patriotism as being part of an unwritten social contract between a citizen and the state, and this contract cannot exist where the state reneges on the agreement. We therefore tie our patriotism to the state undertaking to organise society in such a way that the citizen can enjoy peace and justice – some favours.

Quite on the contrary, Socrates did not see patriotism along this line. He was very much concerned with what help or service he could render to the state rather than from the state to him. Even the much talked about peace and justice which we think the state owe us were not in whatever form given to Socrates. What he got instead, were slander and prosecution as the State saw him as a thorn in their flesh, and subsequently charged him with corrupting their youth. However, in order to know if Socrates possessed the quality of a patriot, we posed a question here; what do we understand by being a patriot?

A patriot is a person who loves his country. He is not a person who says he loves his country. He is not even a person who shouts or swears or recites or sings his love of his country. He is one who cares deeply about the happiness and well-being of his country and its entire people. Patriotism is an emotion of love directed by a critical intelligence. A true patriot will always demand the highest standard for his country and accept nothing but the best for and from his people. He will be outspoken in condemnation of their short coming without giving way to superiority, despair or cynicism.

These examples of a true patriot, Socrates exhibited all in his life time and have therefore left a legacy both for the Athenians and for mankind in general. On the contrary, our society today has not benefited from such true patriots as Socrates. Rather, what we find are those who are extremely loud in their adulation of our time or country and its systems, and are anxious to pass themselves off as patriots and to vilify those who disagree with them as trouble makers or even traitors. This is but spurious patriotism.

Socrates bequeathed to mankind good examples of a much-disciplined person. Had mankind pursued and imbibed the examples or norm of life left behind by him, our society would have been different, rather than the indiscipline which pervades our life so completely today. As a result of this, one may be justified in calling it the condition par excellence of our contemporary society. For our present purpose, it will be pertinent to understand and fully the meaning of indiscipline.

Indiscipline is a failure or refusal to submit one's desires and actions to the restraints of orderly social conduct in recognition of the rights and desires of others. True of Socrates, he did not only show traits of a very humane and disciplined man by taming his appetite but also taught his country-men how to tame theirs. His refusal to escape from prison after the frantic efforts made by his close friend Crito lends credence to this fact to further prove that Socrates is disciplined and therefore submits his desire



and actions to the restraints of orderly social conduct. In recognition of the opinion and feeling of others, he says;

...we must examine next whether it is right for me to get out of here when the Athenians have not acquitted me. .if it is seen to be right, we will try to do so; if it is not, we will abandon the idea. (Plato 48<sup>b-c</sup>, 48-49).

The above quote from Socrates portrays the height of patriotism. He was wrongly accused and condemned to death by the Athenian government, while awaiting execution in prison he still showed respect for the opinion and feeling of others. As a result, he rejected a worked-out escape plan by his close associates because “the Athenians have not acquitted” him, and on the moral content of such escape since he is admired as a father-figure.

### **Corruption and Law-Governance**

Socrates abhors corruption of whatever form. To prove this point is his refusal as a convention in Athens, to bring his wife and children, friends and family members to court to arouse as much pity as he could in order to sway the judgment of the court to his favour, at least, a lesser penalty. His reason for not doing this according to him, is not due to arrogance, or lack of respect for members of the jury, but was concerned with showing a good example and a norm of life for all to follow as well as to maintain his reputation. In his characteristic diligence he said;

Nevertheless, I will not beg you to acquit me by bringing them here. Why do I do none of these things? Not through arrogance, gentlemen, nor through lack of respect for you. Whether I am brave in the face of death is another matter, but with regard to my reputation and yours and that of the whole city, it does not seem right to me to do these things especially at my age and with my reputation. For it is generally believed, whether it be true or false, that in certain respects Socrates is superior to the majority of men. Now if those of you who are considered superior, be it in wisdom or courage or whatever other virtue makes them so, are seen behaving like that, it would be a disgrace. (Plato 34<sup>d-e</sup>, 36-37).

The refusal of Socrates to do what any ordinary Athenian in his position would have done is simply because doing so would be morally objectionable. He sees the act of bringing loved ones to the court to arouse emotions and curry favour as an inducement. He cherishes his reputation over every other mundane thing. He would rather die than accept anything that would bring his moral and exemplary life into disrepute. From all the illuminated antecedents of Socrates shown so far, it is almost certain that it would take a heavenly intervention for this nation to have such an impeccable character.

### **Conclusion**

Socrates’ greatest interest was ethics, in short, the puzzling question about the multitude of local and changeable conventions and the true and abiding right. The doctrine most characteristically imputed to Socrates is the belief that virtue is knowledge and so can be learned and taught. Given this, the discovery of a valid general rule of action is not impossible, and imparting it through the means of education is not impracticable.

Put in another way, if ethical concept can be defined, a scientific application of them in specific instances is possible, and this science may then be used to bring about and maintain a society of demonstrable excellence. It is the vision of a rational demonstrable science of behaviour that exemplifies Socrates as an embodiment of a role model.

Nigerians should therefore learn these virtues, be educated on these matters and applying same to specific instances of our national life. With this sort of rule of action, Nigeria would be a better place.

### Works Cited

- Achebe, C. *The Trouble with Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1983.
- Dawson, M. M. *Ethics of Socrates*. New York: Dover Publications, 1984.
- Eresia-Eke, A. (ed.) *Alasia: Thoughts on Orientation*. Uyo: Abigab Associates, 2004.
- Eresia-Eke, A. and Ukhun, C.E. "Investing Socratic Ideals in the Leadership Question in Nigeria." *Anyigba Journal of Arts and Humanities*. Vol. 13 (3), 2014.
- Egbezor, D.E. *Behaviour Problems in Nigerian Schools: A Sociological Perspective*. Choba: Akporkem; 2002.
- Haralambos, M. and Heald, R. *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*. Suffolk, England: University Tutorial Press, 1980.
- Jedo, S.O. *The War Against Indiscipline in Nigerian*. Igbo-Egurin: Jedo Teacher's College Publishing, 1985.
- Kalu, N. "National Orientation and Wai Brigade: Organisation and Functions". Amucheazi, E. and Sanomi, D.O.P. (eds.). *Police, Law, and Order in Nigeria*. Abuja: National Orientation Agency, 1988.
- Marias, J. *History of Philosophy*. New York: Dover Publications, 1967.
- New Nigeria, Kaduna: 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1988.
- Plato. *The Trial and Death of Socrates*. Trans. Grube, G.M.A. Indiana: Hackett Publishing, 1985.
- Stacey, B. *Psychology and Social Structure*. London: Methuen, 1976.
- Wright, D. *The Psychology of Moral Behaviour*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1971.