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## 'KWAME-NIS!', NKRUMAH'S LEADERSHIP DYNAMICS, A FACSIMILE OF PLAY DIRECTING IN OSIFISAN'S *NKRUMAH-NI!...AFRICA-NI!*: PANACEA FOR NIGERIA LEADERS

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### Abstract



*This paper explores "Kwame-nis!", Kwame Nkrumah's leadership dynamics, exemplified in Femi Osofisan's *Nkrumah-ni!...Africa-ni!* The approach is seen a facsimile of the conventional method of Play Directing, theatrically accentuated in the play. When "Kwame-nis!" is juxtaposed with play making methodology, it is a replica of the conventional play directing approach, which this paper advocates as a leadership loom for Nigerian leaders. A qualitative research design approach, complimented with the tool of descriptive and textual analysis were the methodology through which the primary data of this work were drawn. Transformational Leadership Theory of James MacGregor Burns (1978) is employed to analyse the visionary disposition of Kwame Nkrumah leadership dynamics, juxtaposed with the conventional directing style in the dramaturgical analysis of Osofisan in *Nkrumah-ni!...Africa-ni!* The paper finds that in play directing are deeply seated leadership model the replica of what Nkrumah's "Kwame-nis!" leadership style typifies for leaders' world over. The paper therefore, concluded that play directing is a lens through which the concept of leadership is exponentially made visible to the world. It, therefore, recommended that more professional registers should be explored as a medium of communication and pathways to demonstrating ethics in governance for leaders in Africa.*

**Keywords:** *Kwame-nis!, play directing, leadership model, governance and*

### 1. Introduction

Good governance is an operational concept that any goal-oriented organisation will naturally sought after. However, it is a paradigm that has eluded the polity and governance in many African nations such as; Nigeria, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Togo to mention just a few.

While one may not be able to illuminate authoritatively on the political dynamics in many African countries, the Nigeria leadership problems stare stark nakedly on all and sundry across the globe. This explains why Nigeria has been described by many critics as corrupt. The submission of the former British Prime Minister, David Cameron suffice. He described Nigeria on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2016, at a function as "fantastically corrupt."

On 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2025, a distinguished Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, representing Borno State, Senator Alli Ndume, in an interview reported by Arise Television, unapologetically described the administration of President Ahmed Tinubu as insensitive to the plights of Nigerians, lamenting the Federal Government's lackadaisical attitudes to 'arresting cost of living crisis'. He describes the administration as one run by 'kakistocrats and kleptocrats.' This simply means that Nigerian as a nation is under a terrible siege, where her leaders are enmeshed in proclivity for corruption. Perhaps that is the reason why things are incorrectly done or deliberately avoided, which is an evidence that the major player in our governance are soiled in oil of predetermined misconduct. This Aghalino (2024) describes in his Inaugural Lecture as "a ray of optimism evaporated...on the people"

As if those vituperations above were blown out of proportion, the submissions of the duo of Aisha Yesufu, an Activist and Omoyele Sowore, a social commentator and the former Presidential candidate of African Action Congress (AAC), in a Tele-live interview with *Inside Sources* on *Channels Television*, reacting to state of affairs in Nigeria, on Friday, February 2, 2024, descended pugnaciously on the Nigerian political players, and described them as "play team of corrupt politicians' who have taken Nigerian two steps forward and six steps backwards. Aisha in particular, confidentially describes the situation in Nigeria as that where "life is short and brutish" while Sowore concluded that "we are not going in any direction, there is no movement."

Drawing from the above, this paper examines the model of leadership that Osofisan theatrically epitomised in *Nkrumah-ni!...Africa-ni!* as "Kwame-nis!" is to underscore dynamism of leadership in managing man and material resources in a multi-ethnic diversity like Nigeria. Noting that leaders, anywhere in the world, require skills, tact, attitude, mindset and shared aspirations of empowerment that excites, motivates and inspire followers to be committed to a goal oriented course. In theatre performances, when a performance is good, it is said to be aesthetically pleasing. To achieve result in governance, team work is the antidotes for good governance, which philosophers underscore as an approach to fast tracked action. This is what 4dhumanbeing.com, (2024, np) confirms when it states that: "The pace of change today is as slow as it will ever be. The world of work is changing rapidly; creativity, collaboration and communication are becoming ever more important qualities that we look for in our teams." Consequently, this paper aims at illuminating on the model of leadership that Osofisan accentuated in his play, *Nkrumah-ni!...Africa-ni!*. The work, juxtaposed play directing concept to press home theatrically the leadership dynamics of Kwame Nkrumah in a theatrical coinage of 'Kwame-nis!' as a panacea for leaders in Nigeria and Africa at large. Osofisan, in his characteristic of lampooning critical socio-political lacuna, came up with the unrecorded discusses of Nkrumah during the period of his asylum in Conakry as the muse deposited in him. His fictional imagination, which made him asked the emotion laden question after the demise of Nkrumah that: "what in (his) death has Africa lost-or gained." (Osofisan, 2009, p. vii) Loss or gain, lots of lessons are obviously leant and this is what this paper intends to illuminate on.

The paper employed descriptive research design situated within qualitative research paradigm, complimented by script analysis methods. Transformational Leadership Theory of Burns (1978), which emphasises that "leadership is a relationship of power for a specific purpose that is consistent, or eventually consistent, with the motives, needs, and values of both the leader and the led." This theory is what this paper employed to foreground this discuss.

## 2. Related Literature

A couple of literary works have been cited, which expound on some of the key concepts that permeate this work. Reviewing them is with the intention to exemplify their relevance to this discuss. They include leaders, concept of leadership, play director and directing and literary travails of Femi Osofisan, the playwright of the play text under examination.

### 2.1 Notions of Leader, Leadership and the Play Director

A Leader, according to Prentice (1961), is one who "successfully marshals his human collaborators to achieve particular ends." More pungently defined by the (*Northwest Education* 2023) is its submission that: "A great leader is someone who inspires and motivates their team, communicates effectively, and is accountable for their actions." That, in essence, means that leadership is a leader's framework, which Nebo (2019) defines as "an influence process...a practical skill, encompassing the ability of an individual to "lead" or guide other individuals, teams or a whole nation". Therefore, leadership is about inspiring others to act, exploring motivation to drive members of his team to action. These qualities are what a play director possesses, hence he/she is described variously as; a god, a coach, a psychologist, a gynecologist, and above all, one who excite finesse in an artistic production. Looking at a director in the theatre from all facets of artistic endeavours, he is a leader, a *primus inter pares* in all theatrical expeditions. Whether referred to as a leader or a director, in the context of this study, art of Directing is involved, which manifest in; controlling, coordinating, and organising in multifarious ways. Unequivocally, Angelou (1981) cited in Timms (2023, p.3) describes a leader as "a comfort of courtesies while trying to make wrong right." Therefore, the types of leader or director that one is, visible in the style that an individual adopts in pursuance of h/her goals. There are leaders who are transformational, bureaucratic, transactional, democratic, authoritative, collaborative, and so on. Whichever leadership style that is adopted by a leader, has been in a play director. The leadership approach, irrespective of the one chosen is with the aim of building relationship, and setting pace for a meaningful change.

Today, things are no longer as it was, the type of leaders that we parade now, have jettisoned the quintessential qualities that we see in the Nigerian past leaders, the likes of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Sadauna of Sokoto, all of them who navigated the polity of Nigeria preaching equity, washed in hyssop leaf and are without blemishes. Although, they also did not also feel completely fulfilled, when we drew from their lamentations at different fora of their public appearances. Notwithstanding, their footprints remain indelible on the sound of history, which speak volume of their commitment and passion for progress. The other side of the coins that we experience in today's leaders make us to ask question that; at what point did our current leaders disconnect from the history of true governance, to the extent that things begin to deteriorate as we experience today. The answer to this question has remained unanswered until today so much that our hope of witnessing better days keeps disappearing in leaps and bounds. It was at the point in our search for solution that we found leadership model of 'Kwame-nis', a facsimile of play directing, which underscores qualities of

a good leader, theatrically juxtaposed as a facsimile of act of play directing, which Osofisan epitomised in *Nkrumah -ni...Africa-ni!*

Leadership on the other hand is defined variously as one who motivates others to act for the purpose of achieving an organisational goal. Leadership is an influence process that enable managers to get their people to do willingly what must be done, do well what ought to be done. Cribbin (1981) cited in Mkheimer (2018, p.1) "Leadership as group of process and steps tend to influence the practices of an organised people to accomplish the goals." Also Biloa (2023, p.1) summarises leadership thus:

Leadership is a complex concept that involves a process of different types of actions and developing several styles. It plays an important role in organisations. It is a type of power that has the ability to influence someone's behaviours or attitudes. In order to achieve organisational goals, leaders are expected to lead their employees toward a great performance, therefore they utilise different leadership styles depending on the situations that they face.

Leaders are in different categories; authoritarian or autocratic leader, democratic or participatory leaders and delegative leaders. Whichever style a leader decides to use; the bottom line is that it is with the aim of achieving an organisational goal.

## **2.2 Notion of Play Directing**

Directing in theatre is an art of coordinating, man and material resources in the theatre. It is a leadership tool that a theatre leader explores in his playmaking assignment. However, the concept did not come into official existence in the theatre until around or late 1900. Wilson and Goldfarb (1991) confirm this in their submission:

It has sometimes been argued that the director did not exist in the theatre before 1874, when a German nobleman, George II, duke of Saxe-Meiningen began supervising every element of his theatrical production and coordinating them into an integrated whole...Nevertheless, the term *director* did not come into common usage until the end of the nineteen century.  
(pp.34-35)

No doubt, the emergence of a director in the theatre was like a timely arrival of a messianic phenomenon, to rescue a society that has degenerated to chaos, lacking the dynamism occasioned by the monolithic play-making approach at that time. The assertion of Wilson and Goldfarb (1991,) as they adumbrate in their submission further shed light on the importance of a director in the theatre. They submit thus: "the emergence of the *director* as a separate creative person coincides with important changes which began to take place in the society during the nineteen century." The director here is seen as the pathfinder, the one who (Brook, 1968) calls 'god'. One, who "does not ask to be God and yet his role implies it" (Brook, 1968, p.38). This unequivocally bestowed on the director the status of a 'leader'. Juxtaposing the art of play directing and the Osofisan's Kwame-nis leadership model is what this paper examines.

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

As earlier discussed, this paper employs James Macgregor Burns Transformational Leadership Theory propounded in 1978. Burns Transformational Leadership Theory stress on the

relationship between leaders and followers which he avers make organisational goals achievable. Some of the features emphasises that:

- i. The "high road" in developing social values and individual purpose is in coherent philosophy, which underpins the nature of leadership;
- ii. Leaders should address the most fundamental question of what the ultimate goal of leadership is and why one should be a leader;
- iii. Counting on saving itself from the numerous potential disasters it faces, such as overpopulation, global warming, and systemic economic collapse, the theory transcendent in overall scope of the human species;
- iv. The theory focuses on motivations and values in assessing how a leader approaches power, having the basic ethical approach that sets leaders apart from those merely aspiring to power but ethics is first and leaders must be people-centric; and
- v. Leaders were supposed to work on the emotions and desires of followers, not just their material needs. Transformational leaders were to be the masters of their followers' feelings.

Nevertheless, a couple of weaknesses were traceable to the theory, such as; the idealistic nature of the theory which was said may not be applicable to all populations and therefore, not motivationally inclined. Again, it was insinuated that Transformational Leadership Theory may not work in emergency situations or situations in which tasks are enormously complex and beyond the skill level of the average group member. In the overall analysis of the theory, its strengths outweigh its weaknesses, hence this paper finds it apt to foreground the discourse in the work.

A foray into the life of Babafemi Adeyemi Osofisan, born in the village of Erunwon, Ogun State, Nigeria in June 1946 presents the compendium of a complete art man. Popularly referred to as Femi Osofisan or F.O. for short, is a Nigerian writer noted for his critique of the ills in the society, using the idiom of African traditional performances. He is a didactic dramaturg whose works call attention and proffer solution to the decadence in the society. Osofisan had his primary and secondary education at Ife Government College, Ibadan respectively. He thereafter proceeded to the University of Ibadan (1966–1969), where he studied French for his first degree. As part of his degree course, he went to the University of Dakar for a year and later to Sorbonne, Paris for his post-graduate studies. He started his teaching career at the University of Ibadan where he held faculty positions and later retired as full professor in 2011. Currently, he is an Emeritus professor at the University of Ibadan. In 2016, he became the first African to be awarded the prestigious Thalia Prize by the International Association of Theatre Critics, the induction ceremony taking place on 27 September.

Osofisan, a multidimensional personality has written and produced more than 60 plays. He has also written four prose works: *Ma'ami*, *Abigail*, *Pirates of Hurt* and *Cordelia*. One of his prose works; *Ma'ami* was adapted into a film in 2011. Several of Osofisan's plays are adaptations of works by other writers: *Women of Owu* for instance was an adaptation of Euripides' *The Trojan Women*; *Who's Afraid of Solarin?* from Nikolai Gogol's *The Government Inspector*; *No More the Wasted Breed* from Wole Soyinka's *The Strong Breed*; *Another Raft* from J. P. Clark's *The Raft*; *Tegonni: An African Antigone* from Sophocles' *Antigone*, to mention just a few. Interestingly,

Osofisan has directed most of his plays, like the play under analysis. Below is the picture of Osofisan at Ghana National Theatre in Accra directing *Nkrumah- ni...Africa-ni!*



Figure 1:Osofisan at Ghana National Theatre

Femi Osofisan in cap, when directing *Nkrumah- ni...Africa-ni!* at Ghana National Theatre in Accra (courtesy Osofisan pictures).

Some of Osofisan's works emphasises gender: His representation of women as objects; objects of social division, due to shifting customs and long-lived traditions, and also as instruments for sexual exploitation; and his portrayal of women as subjects, individuals capable of cognition, endowed with consciousness and will, and capable of making decisions and effecting actions speaks volume about his overall disposition to barrage of societal issues. In a submission by Ajayi, (1996) cited in Owonibi (2014), Ajayi bore eloquent testimonies to how Osofisan priced women, when she enthuses that: "undoubtedly, gender becomes a critical factor in traditional ethos; particularly in the way...Osofisan uses historical models to construct his fictional heroine". Again, Olusola, (2020, p1) who explores Osofisan's literary prodigy attests to his literary pedagogy on his female gender discourses as he submits that: "the feminist beliefs of Femi Osofisan in some of his drama texts lend credence to the argument that every genre of text and talk is capable of bearing ideological nuances. Another contributor, Agunbiade (2023, p. 1), in his submission when he interviewed Osofisan describes him as: "as an objective playwright." In alluding to his guiding philosophy and attitude to art, depict Osofisan as one who has penchant "to create an equitable society where everyone is happy...an objectivity that spares neither the ruler nor the ruled".

#### 4. Synopsis of the Play, *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!*

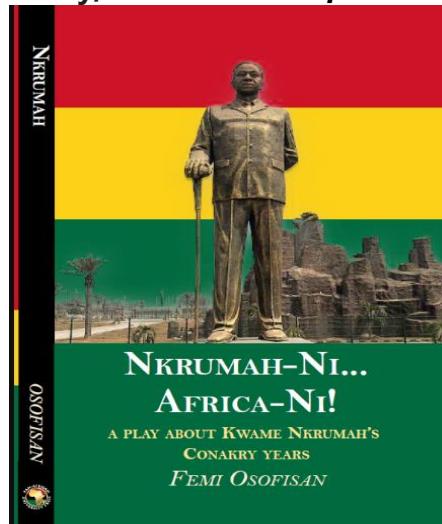


Figure 2: Book cover of *Nkrumah-ni! Africa-ni!*

The play, *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!* explores the quintessential leadership qualities in Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana who is forced into exile after a coup d'etat carried out by Kotoka-Afrifa-Harley in Ghana before Nkrumah's return from an official peace mission journey to China. Consequently, he could not return to Ghana but finds Guinea, where his friend, Sekou Toure, and another African Leader, Amilcar Cabral (President of Guinea-Bissau), who are noted for their notoriety against the Western imperialists chose as a safe haven. Together they live for six years. Nkrumah's stay in Guinea witnessed the coming together of the three anti-imperialist leaders, Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Sekou Toure (Guinea) and Amilcar Cabral (Guinea-Bissau). The trio are labelled "notorious", non-conformists African leaders. They lived together in oneness as Osofisan identifies it in all their speeches such that he describes them as "different modulations of the same voice and actions". To Osofisan (2009, p.vi), in spite of the fact that Nkrumah battles some ailments, he swears to fight on and return to Ghana to take back the mantle of leadership. Unfortunately, death would not allow that to happen, as he gives up the ghost while he is being prepared to be flown abroad for a better medical treatment.

##### 4.1 Nkrumah's Kwame-nis! Leadership Model in Osofisan's *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!*

In Osofisan's *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!* the play-text didactically expounds on leadership model that any leader who prices equity, justice, fair-play and egalitarianism, political equality would embrace in the delivery of democratic dividend. This, Osofisan clearly chew over in the "Kwame-nis!" model that he theatrically weaved around the character of Nkrumah. Osofisan in his dramaturgical and artistically coinage presents "Kwame-nis!" as a leadership model of Nkrumah's philosophy, and his framework in dealing with the troubled race of life. Nkrumah, in explicating on the model describes it as a game of 'Tennis' without 'ball', and even without 'Racquet' but of full of 'imagination.'

This is how he describes it:

**Nkrumah:** ...it's a new game I have invented "Kwame-nis!"

**Nkrumah:** Yes, "Kwame-nis!" Or, tennis without balls!

He further demonstrates it:

**Nkrumah:** I will show you. Look, you don't even need a racquet. Just pretend you have one in your hand. Now, you stay there, and you are going to play.

The dialogue above reveals that Nkrumah's "Kwame-nis!" is a game of imagination. His interactive dialogue with Cabral (Leader of the PAIGC, one of Nkrumah's ardent admirers) further sheds more light on the concept as contained below:

**Cabral:** But...I still don't understand!

Nkrumah enthused:

**Nkrumah:** Just imagine it, that's all, Cabral! Imagination, as you keep telling me, can do anything! Not so? Just imagine the ball coming towards you, and hit it, hard as you would normally do. That's all! Got it?

Cabral still not clear with the explanations queries further

**Cabral:** Yes, but I still...

Nkrumah expounds further

**Nkrumah:** Come on! "Kwame-nis!" You will be sweating in no time at all, if you play well. Okay ready?

Osofisan, using African oral tradition style, a blend of African folkloric story-telling idiom of call and response, describes the game as a rich philosophical duet game that characterises conventional game playing. Nkrumah instructed that the leader in the game will always make a call, onomatopoeically, the word "Zzzack!" while the game partner will respond onomatopoeically with the word "Zzzonk!" The calls and responses will be accompanied with a shout as the ball is imaginarily hit. A hit and the shout by the game players, as Nkrumah describes it, is a good exercise for the lungs. The shout-out we philosophically view as an act of leader's transparency in governance while the response is likened to a complimentary remark indicating satisfaction with the performance of a good administration.

The game, the tact, and the rules of "Kwame-nis!" are carefully and chronologically presented in the game-dialogue between Nkrumah and Cabral below:

**Cabral:** Okay, zzzonk!

**Nkrumah:** Good, you got it! Zzzack!

**Cabral:** Zzzonk!

**Nkrumah:** Zzzack!

**Cabral:** Zoooonk!

**Nkrumah:** Zzzack! Exercise, Cabral! Exercise always!

**Cabral:** Zzzonck!

**Nkrumah:** Zzzack! When you are sad or depressed! Exercise!

**Cabral:** Zzzonck! When depressed!

**Nkrumah:** Zzzack! Or just lonely, by yourself!

**Cabral:** Zzzonck! When by yourself!

**Nkrumah:** When abandoned! Or when betrayed!

**Cabral:** Zzzonck! Both are hard to bear!

**Nkrumah:** Zzzack! What can we do? Men will be men!

**Cabral:** Zzzonck! One learns to forgive...!

**Nkrumah:** Zzzack! And to look beyond! (NA, pp. 21-22)

In further accentuating on those who stands to benefit more from the style, Nkrumah describes those who stands to benefit more as the youths thus:

**Nkrumah:** Age! That's your advantage!

In essence, the philosophical process of "Kwame-nis!" is a model for navigating life experiences, when one applies the Joseph Kennedy's saying that: 'when the going gets tough, the tough gets going.' This principle, Nkrumah adopted when in one of his submission above, encouraged leaders to remain steadfast thus:

**Nkrumah:** Zzzack! What can we do? Men will be men!

#### **4.2 Kwanme-nis! Nkrumah Leadership Dynamics: A Facsimile of Play Directing in *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!***

Kwame-nis! as describes in the play, *Nkrumah...ni! Africa...ni!* is a theatrical craft, an innovative leadership game model that excite focus, concentration in the face of distraction in governance. Consequently, it is a model that a leader should embrace to contend with multifarious challenges in governance, such as Nepotism, ethnic-diversities, inequality and many others that confront a nation.

On the other hand, directing as a theatre tool is a model for achieving an aesthetically pleasing play production. The exploration of the art requires that some unique steps are followed to navigate all the stages in play production process; at the pre-production, production and post-production levels. These levels include but not limited to the conventional ones, which are not just physical but psychological. The physical are the ones that the fundamental elements of directing in play production such as; composition, picturisation, movement, rhythm and pantomimic dramatisation are explored. Application of these principles in play directing begins with script selection, to script analyses, auditioning, casting and supervision, which are the practical aspects of the play production process. It is the stage at which all artistic elements are integrated into a unified entity. In spite of the fact that Nkrumah, the Ghanaian leader fell out of power as Osofisan theatrically presents in *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!* the strategy that leaders should apply in the face of obvious distractions, which he refers to as "Kwame-nis!" is a facsimile model found in the act of play directing that we proposed for leaders in all sphere.

To take us down memory lane. Ghana political history dated back to 1957, when it gained political independence from the British colonialist, three years before Nigeria's independence. Kwame Nkrumah, popularly referred to as Osagyefo (the Victor) became the first President. Few years after he became the president, his administration was toppled by The National Liberation Council (NLC), a military junta that led the Ghanaian government from 24 February 1966 to 1 October 1969. The body emerged from a coup d'état against the Nkrumah government carried out jointly by the Ghana Police Service and Ghana Armed Forces with collaboration from the Ghana Civil Service. Thereafter, Nkrumah seeks a political asylum in Guinea with his trusted friend, the then President of Guinea, Sekou Toure. Nkrumah's real political life and his leadership representation in is theatrically captured in the theatrical text, *Nkrumah ni!...Africa ni!* which is directorial juxtaposed in this paper.

#### **4.3 Juxtaposition of Kwame-nis! Model and Play Directing in the Political Travails of Nkrumah in *Nkrumah ni!...Africa ni!***

Life has been described in many fora as a stage, where man's existence requires that he act out his role as contained in the script handed down by the Master Artist, our Creator. A representation of Nkrumah's political courage is what this paper chronologically juxtaposed with the processes involved in the conventional art of play directing in the analysis of the play, *Nkrumah- ni!...Africa ni!* The textual analysis started from when Nkrumah was ousted from office, his choice of where to spend his asylum and eventually his death.

Like a play director who will pay attention to the foundation of his play-making process, which is the choice or selection of a play script. In the same manner, Kwame Nkrumah made a choice where he would spend his asylum as contained in the dialogue below:

**Nkrumah:** Oh yes! I always insist on putting them up myself... (NA, p.18)

A leader's choice is with a view to ensuring that his choice paid off. The choice of Nkrumah to stay back in Guinea can be likened to a play director's choice of a virgin play script for a performance. Little wonder why Brook (1968) likened the director to a 'god' who "must lead even when he does not know the route" (Brook, 1968, p.35). This same attitude, Nkrumah displays in the choice of the country where he knows little or nothing about, safe for the fact that the leader of that country shares with him a similar political ideology.

Good governance anywhere in the world, thrives when leaders make the right choice, as a play director would make choice of the play-script he intends to direct. This, usually determines the success of a play production. In most cases, we found political leaders in Africa not prepared to navigate the tasks ahead, to the extent that their choices are always marred with incorrect decisions, which is the direct result that manifests in bad governance as witnessed in many African countries.

Another disposition that a leader should pay attention to is, the process of enlisting players in an administration. This act is referred to in playmaking process as 'Audition'. Many nations in Africa had made subjective search before enlisting political appointees into many administrative positions. Whether a privately searched or a publicly searched conducted before enlisting a player, as it is the case with audition, a correct search is the tonic for putting the right peg in the right hole. Like a play director who wants to succeed will do, he must attract actors who will deliver, after he must have subjected his appointees to both private and public interrogations. In most cases, incompetent friends or members of one's family makes the list of appointees. In a situation like that it is sacrificing merit for mediocrity on the altar of nepotism. It should be noted that once an objective search is jettisoned, enlisting a formidable team will be a mirage. Just as a Play Director will cast the right actors to enable him have a perfect performance, many political leaders toy with that approach, which explains why success becomes a mirage. Nkrumah in *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!* displays this thus:

**Nkrumah:** And then there is Camara, who watches over me, like a hen over her chick. And Yankey, Nyamikey, Kofi, all my entourage here and the Guinean troupes...(NA, p.19) When the right political loyalists are enlisted, success is guaranteed.

A leader must be ready to give direction and ensure compliant. This administrative tact is usually put to test, to ascertain the quality of implementation and how reliably the directive a leader gives is carried out. That in essence means it must be ascertained that in the laboratory of governance, a leader's experiment must not fail. What a play director does in his rehearsal room that is likened to what politicians do laboratory of governance; Board Rooms where

policies are formulated, sent out for implementation and later appraised for success or failure is what this paper enunciated to mean appraisal. Such a policy direction is what is given to some security personnel in Guinea when a reappraisal attack is being proposed on the Ghana embassy in Conakry. After the news came to President Sekou Toure that his presidential jet was confiscated and the crew are held hostage, including the Guinean Ambassador in Accra, Ghana. Nkrumah, in *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!* rather than give a go ahead for a reappraisal attack gives a different direction Thus:

**Nkrumah:** Go as far as surrounding the place, if you like. Even a few stones may be thrown, to please the crowd. But nobody must be allowed into the Embassy grounds at all, let alone take hostages! Is that clear? (NA, p.40)

Like this, a play director takes some steps, not because it is palatable but because it is the needed decision at that time. For instance, a director may decide to remove an actor he has been rehearsing for long because h/she does not respond to changes that are conspicuous. Political leaders should be courageous enough to remove and replace non-performing team members who are consistently flouting the ethics of good democratic dispensation.

Again, a leader should be prepared to take responsibility where necessary. He needs to understand the psychology of those he is leading. This is what a play director constantly does knowing fully well that psychology is a factor in play directing (Adeoye, 2001). The director needs to study the psychology of his actors, which should be a model for leaders in governance. Nkrumah displays this in *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!* Thus:

**Nkrumah:** Ah, if you know how much I pity them! They haven't seen their families since we left Accra, Hanoi! All because of me. And it is beginning to affect their moods, even their loyalty! (...) I think it is all because they miss home so much. (NA, p.42)

A leader should feel the pains of his followers and understand their psychological mood. This is what James MacGregor Burns stressed in his Transformational leadership theory that: leaders should "focus on motivations and values in assessing how a leader approaches power, having the basic ethical approach that sets leaders apart from those merely aspiring to power but ethics is first and leaders must be people-centric." Nyamikey, one of Nkrumah's followers, pragmatically submits to Toure on the need for leaders to consider the people they govern. He states in the dialogue below thus:

**Nyamikey:** (Laughs) That's what Nyanibah, my Uncle's mother, used to say, sir. That a lot of leaders make that mistake with common people. They think that because the masses are usually silent, that they have no brain, that they can absorb pain for ever without complaint... (NA, p. 63)

**Toure:** Nyanibah said that! (NA, p. 63)

**Nyamikey:** She said that's why our leaders don't last... (NA, p. 63)

A leader must be decisive no matter the condition they find themselves. In theatre for instance, in the course of preparation for a production, an actor by virtue of faith may be involved in an accident that will incapacitate such an actor from continuing with the production, the director in this case must decide on what to do to avert any untoward experience that would affect the production. So also is a leader, and this is what Toure did when he had to grapple with an unpleasant condition that bothers on the issue of life and death. Here is his decision:

**Toure:** I must go and join the people at once! These vandals must be driven out...(NA, p.73)

When a decision fails, a leader must think of an alternative. Toure could have remain in his cocoon while he would send a force to confront the situation but he decides to go himself. This is what Nkrumah demonstrates even outside of Ghana, he still monitors what is going on there. Hence, Nkrumah states:

**Nkrumah:** ...I want their spies over there (*points*) to see our flags flying high in the wind. Because they know that as long as that happens, as long as the flags are up, that is as long as the legitimate government of Ghana will continue to exist! Although a leader may be lonely at times when it requires that he must take a decision no matter the situation. That situation Cabral enumerates here:

**Cabral:** There is no need to tell me that! I know how lonely it can be, there at the head...One we accept the chains of leadership. (NA, p.28)

Demonstrating the Kwame-nis! model, which advises a leader that in whatever situation a leader finds himself, even when he is depressed, lonely, abandoned or betrayed just like the jesters who we see here as the led did:

**Jesters:** I would have been wealthy, yes-o!  
I would have been wealthy!  
I would have been richer, yes-o!  
I would have been richer!  
But I missed my chance  
Oh I missed my chance  
Because of Nkrumah's misdeeds! (NA, p. 23)

This is what leaders get, no leader is seen or praised for acting perfectly. This is why Kwame-nis! model emphasises that a leader must be undeterred, resolute and focused. The situation referenced above upsets Nkrumah, but his model reminds him that "when abandoned! Or when betrayed! ...what can we do? Men will be Men!" (NA, p.21)

All that have been discussed above underscore the "Kwame-nis! philosophy that Nkrumah underscores as one navigates the travails of life experiences.

#### **4.4 Kwame-nis! Model for an Ethnic diversified Nigeria in Osofisan's *Nkrumah-ni...Africa-ni!***

Nigeria is populated by many cultural and ethnic groups with over two hundred and fifty ethnic diversities. The amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 was responsible for these diverse ethnic population. Since then Nigeria has been coping with the marriage of inconvenience that the Western powers bestowed it. Since providence had brought such ethnic plurality together in the nation called Nigeria, methods to strike a balance become necessary, noting that the relationship cannot be easy, but it must be navigated for the benefit of all. One way or the other, the nation has to continue to cope with the excruciating experience occasioned by their ethnic plurality.

In a multi-ethnic society like Nigeria, leaders can only try, no leader can please the nation, especially, when, apart from being ethnically different, cultural incompatibility becomes a challenge. Employing a single, straight jacket approach to govern such a nation will no doubt

be pose serious challenges. Like in play directing, a director cannot adopt one leadership style in his play making process, rather, a success-prone director will apply multifarious dictatorial styles like, negotiation, confrontational, creative and at times combination of all of these styles to achieve an aesthetically pleasing performance.

The features of the Kwame-nis! model earlier illuminated in the course of this paper, underscores the model that leaders should employ in governance. If Juxtaposed with the art of play directing, irrespective of where a director is engaged to direct a theatrical work, he would manifest different cultural nuances, behaviours, and characteristics to present a total theatre that is pleasing to the viewers.

Leaders in Nigeria, a multi-ethnic nation, have a lot of leadership dynamics to explore in Kwame-nis! model, which should make its governance seamless and plausible to its citizens. A few of such suffice here:

Nigeria leaders should make a right choice, regarding the selection of their working aids; Ministers, special Advisers, Governors, Commissioners Permanent Secretaries and others. Nigeria had witnessed cases of aid of the Presidents and Governors in some cases charged for corrupt practices. For ethical and legal reasons, names of such aids will not be mentioned in this work. If leaders painstakingly select aids that are credible, governance will witness a positive turn around in the democratic dispensation.

Nigerian leaders are not always decisive, even when the cries of citizens get to them, they are not emotionally arrested to listen to them. This was responsible for series of industrial actions embarked upon by different labour unions; Nigerian Labour Congress(NLC), Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Resident Doctors, to mention just a few. This is what James MacGregor Burns emphasised in his theory, Transformational Leadership Theory that: "Leaders should address the most fundamental question of what the ultimate goal of leadership is and why one should be a leader"

Leaders in Nigeria do not empathise with citizens, rather, they turn lackadaisical attitude to their cries, and if they would act at all, it is usually in the negative. A case in point was the 'Endsars' episode that saw many innocent Nigerian future leaders killed and many brutalised for asking for their right courtesy of act of insensitivity of Nigerian leaders who should engage angry citizen in warm dialogues.

Expectation of citizens from Nigeria political leaders is, giving listening ears to constructive and genuine complaints. No doubt, aggrieved citizens will use unprintable languages to leaders when they noticed inequality in the distribution of resources, when nepotism become the order of the day. The Kwame-nis! model teaches leaders that when they are sad or depressed by the attitude of the citizens, lonely, by oneself, when abandoned or when betrayed, men should be men! Learn to forgive and look beyond! These are qualities of leadership and the potent antidotes for balanced governance that Kwame-nis! demonstrates.

The history of Nigeria nation is one that its nationals have co-existed without problem in a habitation that sees the Hausas, Yorubas and Igbos, move and live in any part of the country, peacefully without any form of molestation from anyone. Wherever anyone chooses to live, is

seen as a home. It is most unfortunate that after a while, the religions that Nigerians embrace as their faith are what have divided them. Muslims sees Christians, not any longer as their brothers and vies-versa, traditional religion that pre-dates all religions, is regarded as fetish. This dislocation, the art of play directing tries to ameliorate by bringing together all elements of the theatre that are in our various cultures into a performance entity that is referred to as total theatre. This approach is what has in many cases reminded us of our roots, thereby retell us that irrespective of our ethnic differences, we have many things in common that bind us together. Hence, we are brothers and sisters that only occupy different divides as providence dispersed us.

Kwame-nis! model, discussed in this paper is a prototype of conventional play directing style is recommended as panacea for adopting enduring disposition to mending cracked fences that corruption, nepotism and injustice have inflicted on our dear nation, Nigeria.

## 5. Conclusion

Attempt has been made in this paper to explore the model, 'Kwame-nis!', a facsimile of the art of play directing, seen as the conduit through which the gap of inequality in governance can be bridged for the benefit of an ethnic diversified nation like Nigeria. Having analysed the play, Osofisan's *Nkrumah -ni...Africa-nil!*, the paper found a pragmatic narration in the concept Kwame-nis! leadership model juxtaposed in the play directing approach artistically elucidated in the play under examination. The lacuna that have distance us as a nation from achieving a true, and a unified nation is exposed. Thus the paper underscores that a leader, in whichever condition he finds himself, must ensure that the people he governs have the hope that they have someone to lean on. Leaders should always see themselves as eponymous sacrificial lamb in whichever situation they find themselves to cleanse our land of the self-inflicted devourers that eluded the nation of an enduring governance.

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