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PROFESSOR OBIEFUNA AND CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP: A BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH TO THE FORMATIVE ELEMENTS

Amara Mary Chukwuma-Offor and Elias Ifeanyi E. Uzoigwe

Abstract

Leadership is an indispensable component of every human society. Indeed, leadership is the one ingredient that makes or mars a society. As families, communities and nations face daunting challenges that call for and, at the same time, signal leadership failures, it becomes imperative to focus on how to groom leaders by studying the formative elements that coalesced to produce acclaimed leaders. Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna is a case in point in this study, as we shall, through a biographical approach, explore the foundational cum formative experiences that shaped Obiefuna's charismatic personality. This study is both expository and analytic. It aims to highlight some of the Igbo cultural values that moulded and shaped the figure of our study - Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna. It is our position that those salient culture-based principles and values and formative environment, should be highlighted and presented for re-appropriation and recreation for the grooming of new generation leaders. This is important because of the indispensability of effective leadership in the society.

Keywords: Charisma, Leadership, Biography, Igbo, Cultural Values, and Formative Elements.

Introduction

Leadership is exercised in various spheres – in the home, communities, schools, businesses, political parties, international organizations, etc. At face value, the context of the exercise of leadership seems to be within and among groups. However, one can speak of self-leadership in recognition that human beings are composite. The elements seem to work across purposes, and thus, there is a need for a centre of coordination or leadership. There are also levels of leadership roles within the same group. For example, parents play vital roles in the home as leaders and their children, depending on their age. Leadership is indispensable for every group. There must be leadership for every group to achieve its goals and visions. Leadership is one element that can advance or retrogress the organisational goals of a group. It is required, among others, in saying the fact that without leadership, no human organisation would stand, resources and matching of same with the tasks, the ongoing monitoring and coordination of efforts, the resolution of challenges and conflicts that arise along the way, the provision of motivation, as well as the reward scheme, etc. There is no gainsaying that without leadership, no human organisation would stand, much less make progress. However, leadership can be graded as being on a spectrum, from ineffective to effective to charismatic, according to quality. Not all who aspire to or occupy leadership positions are effective leaders, and many are far from being charismatic leaders. Hence, attempts have been made, and ink spilt on what constitutes effective leadership.

It is important to note that those who turn to become leaders are human beings from homes. For one to be an effective leader, one must have had some kind of nurturing or mentoring experience primarily from the home, one's immediate environment, association with other people, as well as interaction and relationship in and within the larger society.



One's experiences in life obviously contribute in shaping one's personality trajectory which could either turn out positive or negative. A loving, human, humane, engaging and assiduous upbringing could produce empathetic personality while a hard, harsh, inhuman, unjust, lawless experience in one's formative stage could result into toxic personality. Both personality traits have their implications. Our interest is in the former. Empathy is one of the strong characteristics of charismatic leaders. Prof. Boniface Anthony Chijioke Obiefuna is a case in point. He has those characteristics that distinguish a charismatic leader. It is, therefore, important that we explore in this essay those Igbo cultural values and formative elements that interlaced in moulding and shaping Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna into a charismatic personality. Admittedly, culture is unique and dynamic. Considering the strides and accomplishments and quantum of positive energy exuded and the influence exerted by Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna in home community, the church, university environment, organisational bodies and others, one cannot but demand to know, learn and share in his rich cultural heritage even when one does not share the same or similar background. For us to achieve this task, we shall pay attention to his family background and educational journey, not losing sight of his seminary formation. The possible contributions of these to his charismatic personality will be highlighted. Some of the pieces of information employed in this discourse are from our personal knowledge of Prof. Obiefuna and his family and other materials that are relevant for the study. We conclude by positing that the rich Igbo (African) cultural values and principles, which Obiefuna embraced and lives-out, are indispensable and, are therefore, presented in this study for appropriation by everyone, especially by the leaders in the academia, social organisations, religious bodies and associations as a way forward for effective leadership.

Conceptual Clarification

Leadership as a concept has been discussed by scholars from different disciplines across the ages, and from diverse perspectives. Among the different approaches various scholars employed in the discourse of leadership, there has been a unifying point, which is that one goes first to direct and others follow. Therefore, leadership is the ability of someone to influence and guide followers or members of a group towards achieving organisational goals. A leader oversees and directs others on the good and the general welfare of a group or an organisation. Leadership presupposes the concept of a leader leading and followership. It is important to note that the three strands are interconnected and important. It is most probable that someone who could take instruction as a follower and has the capability to respond positively and conscientiously for optimal yield of the group/organisation could make for good leadership if given the opportunity. Therefore, followership is as important as leadership. The process and the approach or the system that the leader adopts to ensure that the group's goals and visions are quite important and fundamental. For this very task to be achieved, there must be a nexus between the leader and the followers. This synergy is what Obiefuna (2011) refers to as collaborative leadership.

For one to be addressed as a leader, the person must first and foremost understand the roles of a leader. The Awka Diocesan Preparatory Commission's *Lineamenta* (Outline Document) (2017) articulates the fundamental role of a leader in terms of helping the people to achieve the fullness of their potential. The Commission holds that a leader "is someone whose duty is to enhance and enrich the lives of others" (p.79). This is leadership beyond just the realisation of organisational goals. The leader is to help the led achieve their full



potential in life. It is believed that the leader must be a person who can wield influence on the followers to achieve the desired goals of the group. The leader adopts an uncommon approach to influence the followers towards achieving the group's goals. The leader's ability to convince the followers to respond or do what ordinarily they would not have done is what distinguishes the leader as a charismatic leader, and that is what is referred to as influence. It is taken for granted that there is no leadership if the leader cannot influence the followers towards pursuing and achieving the organisation's objectives.

The leader's capability to set the organisational goals rolling together with the support of the followers avails the leader of the uncommon loyalty of the followers. The influence could be positive or negative. Some leaders cash in on their ability to influence followers for the group's interest or personal gain. It is important to note that leadership goes beyond the mere acquisition of a position or title. Both Nonyelu (2004) and the Awka Diocesan Preparatory Commission (2017) are explicit on this. For them, one could occupy a formal position as a leader without being a leader. The latter sounds more religious in this regard; thus "People without positions and titles could be leaders through the power of the witness of their lives" (p.78). This is not without prejudice to the necessity of leadership as a position. Leadership, as a matter of importance and necessity, requires focus and intentional actions. Intentional action is indispensable because it is geared towards realising defined goals.

Charisma

Charisma as a concept can be traced back to the Greeks. It is derived from the Greek word "charism (kharism)" meaning "a gift", "divine favour", or "supernatural power". It is believed that in ancient times, certain people, especially within the religious circle had gifts from the gods to enable them in their earthly duties either as healers, prophets, or religious leaders. These were known as charismata. The term later made an in-road into Christendom, especially in the New Testament times to refer to Godly gifts given to the people of God. Notable among the gifts were: gifts of prophecy, vision, healing and others which are believed to have been given to God's faithful (1Cor.12, 4-11). Charisma is a special kind of gift of an office or position that confers on a person some kind of uncommon ability for leadership.

A charismatic leader, therefore, is a person who possesses special traits that attract and fascinate followership. According to Barnes (2005), charisma is a certain magnetism and charm that draws others to someone. It is to some extent, a bit of a confidence trick played on those around someone. People feel free and tend to lean more on the person they have confidence in. Charisma remains a catalyst that ignites such confidence. For some persons, charisma is an innate trait that one possesses right from birth. This assertion has been challenged by Barnes who argues that such view may not always be the case. He says "We have all known people who seem to be naturally charismatic, possessing an enviable kind of innate confidence in their abilities and judgment. But it is equally true that many people who did not appear charismatic early in their lives but subsequently come to be seen that way." (p.73). Assertions of this kind immediately reminds us of one-time president of United States of America, John F. Kennedy, who initially had no clear clue about leadership, and later through education, training and exposure became a leader. To buttress this point, Barnes (2005) remarks: "a glance at one of John F. Kennedy's earliest appearances before a newsreel camera shows an awkward, self-conscious, almost impossibly young –looking



man explaining his vague and inchoate plans to one-day work for the government” (p.73). The general belief that charisma is an innate trait is apparently defused by the very fact that it can be learned or acquired. It should be noted that charisma can be used either positively or negatively. Adolf Hitler is a case in point when considering inhuman charismatic personality of all times as First World War records present it.

In this study, charismatic leadership is discussed as a phenomenon and not solely faith based. Interestingly, the personality for our study is both a charismatic leader within the schemes of faith and charismatic personality as a political connotation within the framework of human science. Our attention and concentration would be on the later. Charismatic leadership is not about someone who occupies leadership position. It is about someone who, beyond accomplishing the organisational goals, is set to motivate the followers and commit their welfare to heart. A charismatic leader is people-oriented who could initiate ideas and is also open to listen and sift the opinions from members of the group. He tunes into right combination of different leadership approaches for optimal results. Charismatic leadership is a form of guidance built on the basis of effective communication skills and persuasiveness geared towards motivating the people to perform their duties optimally.

There are two main traditions in the theory of charisma. The older sociological approach focuses on Max Weber’s concern about the social conditions under which charismatic leaders appear and operate. In addition to social conditions, there are contingencies in which individual charisma will or will not be routinized into a stable social order (House & Jacobsen, 2001). The second paradigm is called the neo-charismatic, a psychological approach that grew due to studies on organisational behaviour. This approach centres on the personal characteristics and behaviour of charismatic leaders who gain the support of their followers through influence. Both Jacobsen and House share concerns about how situational variables and leader attributes interlace to predict leader behaviour and effectiveness. For propagators of this school of thought, leaders are more likely to express their dispositional inclinations in weak rather than strong situations. Weak situations suggest a lack of rules, poor attention to the rule of law, and an absence of norms and guides. Strong situations are filled with features that are opposite to the former. However, leaders are attuned to being effective when, by their personal behaviour, they are able to handle the demands of the environment of the group they lead competently.

Both sociological and psychological approaches have unique but complementary ingredients regarding conditions that shape charismatic leaders. The sociological approach emphasises the social conditions in which charismatic leaders appear and operate, while the psychological dimension concentrates on the personality characteristics and the behaviour of charismatic leaders who wield influence on their followers. However, both the sociological and psychological approaches are strong factors to reckon with. However, they do not capture the cultural context from which charismatic leaders’ personality characteristics and social transformational variables evolve. This is the gap that the two traditional theories of charisma created, and this study will fill it.

A Biographical Sketch of Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna

Prof. Boniface Anthony Chijioke Obiefuna was born on the 24th of June, 1954, in Agulu, into the family of Chief Nwokoye and Lolo Ozoaku. The Obiefuna family is one of the famous nuclear families constituting the Umuezeada extended family in Umuejeaju kindred

in Nkitaku village, Agulu town, in Anaocha Council Area of Anambra State. The marriage between Chief Nwokoye and Lolo Ozoaku was blessed with five children, three males and two females, and B.A.C is the youngest of them. The young Bonny was barely two years old when Lolo Ozoaku died, and when he was about six years old, Chief Nwokoye also gave up the ghost, leaving Bonny and his elder siblings as orphans. The challenges of such a vacuum cannot be overemphasized.

The eldest of the sisters, Mrs Victoria Ugha (Nee Obiefuna) though very young, assumed the role of a mother. At this point, the words of Psalm 128:2 (Your work will provide for your needs, you will be happy and prosperous) took flesh and dwelt in the life of young Boniface. Ichie Matthew Obiefuna, the eldest son, had already left for apprenticeship in Lafia, (presently in Nasarawa State) while Julius, the younger brother, was at College of Immaculate Conception (CIC) Enugu. Victoria took care of her younger siblings – Cecilia and Bonny and the entire family. Bonny stayed for some time with his aunt, Mrs Mgbafo Ofojebe in Umunonwu village in Agulu and also lived with his uncle, Augustine Nwankwo Obiefuna. Bonny's stay with his Aunt and Uncle exposed him early in life to what could be adjudged in the contemporary time as child labour.

Agulu people are core traditional farmers and very enterprising people. At different intervals that Bonny stayed with his Aunt and Uncle, he was fully engaged in farming. He cultivated yam, cassava, cocoa yam, vegetables, and other farm produce. Because of his hard work at those places, the family barn was filled to the point that they had excess which Bonny carried to the market to sell. Bonny also marketed *Ogiri*, *ukpaka*, pumpkin leaf, pepper, banana, pawpaw and others. He was so blessed that he sold out his wares sometimes, before he got to the market. Bonny had a very strong mastery of the use of the hoe in spite of his age and body size and was very tenacious. In fact, his tiny body size was actually what surprised and endeared people to him. People were amazed at the expanse of land he could till regardless of his size. His body stature and age did not limit him from exploring his inner strength. He was hard working to the point that people came to the farm where he was currently working to book for his services ahead of time. When he was about nine years, Bonny became a full time itinerant labourer and moved around villages in Agulu and its environs, including Nri and Nise to till the soil for pay.

Bonny's elder sister, Victoria, was also a hardworking and resilient farmer who never relented in knitting the family together and providing for their daily needs. When Bonny returned from his Aunt's house, he teamed up with his siblings to fend for themselves and keep the family spirit and bond. In Igbo traditional setting, it was customary that a labourer working in someone's farm would be served food once or twice a day for the period of time the job would last (depending on the agreement between the owner of the farm and the labourer) in addition to his/her wage. As an itinerant labourer, Bonny sometimes, in the company of John Ozue (his childhood friend) and Paul Nwagbo, preferred collecting his own ration of food whether raw or cooked and would go home with it so that his siblings would partake of the meal. The money that Bonny realised from his jobs was wholeheartedly submitted to his sister, Victoria, who would utilise it according to the family needs and to address other challenges of the family.

Apart from being a farm hand, B.A.C. sought for other means of survival. He was a significant instrument in the erection of the three-storey building of Igwe Michael Ejidike. He consciously and assiduously was involved in the collection and packing of sand that was used for the construction of both Igwe Ejidike and the Personage at Nwagu, Agulu. B.A.C.

equally engaged himself in craft works, like processing brooms and making traditional chairs and traditional baskets with cane sticks. Bonny's family clan, just like every other clan in Igbo land, has what constitutes a taboo for them. For his own family, eating snail meat was a taboo. The young and smart Bonny saw this as a business opportunity and engaged in picking snails, which was usually a night venture with the aid of a local candle. He went to Afor-Agulu market to sell his craft works and snails, and the money he realised was for the family's good. Bonny's family is known for hospitality. The death of their parents and its challenges did not push them to a life of dependency or unchecked freedom. They had and maintained their family values, which are enshrined in community values. They welcomed every person with love and respect and shared whatever they had with neighbours, friends and acquaintances. They believed in themselves and engaged in meaningful work and activities. They had good quality time with their extended family members and friends. As orphans, they had listening ears, paid attention, and received advice from uncles, aunts, neighbours, and friends who cared. Bonny's family thrived in good human relationships, among other values. They had significant others in their lives, including Mr Julius Nwakor Obiefuna, Mrs Louisa Obiefuna, and Mr Cyril Obiefuna, among others. It was Mr Cyril Obiefuna who initiated Bonny into Christianity and Catholicism. Through his care, support and guidance, Bonny enrolled in the first Holy Communion, after which he joined the altar servers and remained an active member throughout his stay in the village.

B.A.C.'s itinerant farming cum business enterprise did not negatively affect his interest in education. Enrolling in primary school at that point as an orphan was not only challenging but scary. He had his primary education at St Mary's Practicing School, Agulu, where he encountered committed and dogged disciplinarians as teachers. The young Bonny hardly copied notes when others were writing because sometimes, he did not have the writing materials. He would wait for his friends to finish, and he would collect a pen to write. Notwithstanding these challenges, Bonny remained an outstanding pupil and graduated with distinction. His brilliance attracted him to his teachers in different classes, who made a remarkable impact on him. In class two, Mr Felix Okeke, a seasoned, committed and dogged teacher and a disciplinarian, got involved in Bonny's academic life. Bonny's quest to know made him approach Mr Felix Okeke to find words in the dictionary. Mr Felix, amazed at his quest, utilised that opportunity, and taught Bonny how to find words in the dictionary during break periods. In class three, Bonny encountered another teacher, Mr Felix Chukwu. Bonny's creativity warmed the heart of Mr Felix Chukwu, who taught him some craft work. Incidentally, both Mr Felix Okeke and Mr Felix Chukwu were from Owerre-Ezukala in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Both in the church and in school, B. A. C. was a figure to reckon with. He was always involved in football, drama groups, choir groups, and other lively teams. His stature would always make him noticeable to the people. Bonny is gifted in many ways, but his melodious voice is irresistible. Mr Andrew Eyiuche, his choirmaster, banked so much on him in every outing. In one such competition, Bonny performed creditably well at St. Paul's Awka, where the trophy given to their group was filled with Coca-Cola soft drink, and he was asked to drink from it by the choirmaster to motivate him.

Bonny's journey to the seminary formation began at the age of fifteen. This journey was somehow interrupted by the Nigeria/Biafra civil war. To shield the school, students and teachers from the main heat of war, the students were transferred to St Paul's Seminary

Ukpor. Seminary formation is all about preparing the young male students admitted into the seminary for service to God and society through the Church. The seminary environment is such a facility that tries to mould people into organised, stable personalities with leadership capabilities. This preparation, among other things, has four major strands: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation. With personal efforts, commitment and cooperation with the grace of God, B.A.C. Obiefuna, having scaled the hurdles of seminary formation and completed his training in Philosophical and Theological Studies at Bigard Memorial Seminary Enugu and was ordained a catholic priest on the 2nd of July, 1982 by Most. Rev. Albert K. Obiefuna, the pioneer Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Awka. At different intervals, Rev. Fr. Prof. Obiefuna was assigned a couple of duties by his diocesan bishops. He served as the premier chaplain of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Nigeria (CCRN) Awka diocese, under His Lordship, Most Rev. A.K. Obiefuna, who later became the Archbishop of Onitsha. He was later appointed the chaplain of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province by Most Rev. Dr. Valerian Maduka Okeke, the Archbishop of Onitsha. He was also a chaplain of Catholic Corps members in Anambra State. In the University community, Prof. Obiefuna remains a seasoned teacher and lecturer, and through counselling, teaching and quality communication, he has made positive impacts on both students and staff of his unit. B.A.C bagged his doctorate degree from the prestigious University of Nigeria, Nsukka and was also elevated to the rank of a professor at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. He served as Head of the Department of Religion and Human Relations, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Director of the School of General Studies and, in different capacities, as either chairman of a committee or a member. Obiefuna's involvement in Nigeria Public Relations has placed the institute at an enviable height, so that anybody around him feels the importance and impact of the organisation, even when one is not a member.

It is glaring that the formative elements and experiences Bonny garnered during his seminary formation and education helped prepare and season him into an influential personality. Some of the qualities like doggedness, obedience, hard work, humility, resilience, honesty, justice, equity and fairness, calmness, and other qualities are often identified in people who undergo seminary formation, and these are apparent in Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna's charismatic personality and leadership as a priest and a scholar. Today, he is celebrated, especially in human management and in achieving organisational goals.

Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna and Igbo Cultural Values and Principles

Besides his family background, seminary formation and education, Igbo cultural values played a significant role in B.A.C. Obiefuna's charismatic personality and leadership style. Culture is the way of life of a people. It plays a vital role in people's lives. It shapes and continually reshapes people's ideologies, thoughts and beliefs and stimulates people's interests and choices. Culture and values are interconnected. It is within a culture that values come alive. Values are indisputably subjective and flexible beliefs that people hold on to in line with ideas and issues. But then, one can also talk about objective values and principles, which serve as a moral compass that guides human decision-making in society. For Adibe (2015), "Values are guiding principles one holds on to be important, desirous, worthy, significant and useful; it is also what one admires, appreciates, holds to high esteem and rates to be high in worth" (p.420). In the words of D'Souza (2001), "values are the bedrock of culture and the essence of an organisation's philosophy".

Igbo people, no doubt, have rich, useful and cherished cultural values that they imbibe. Personal and family values are shaped by the societal values and culture in which one lives. Adibe (2015) makes an important assertion by positing that the collective law of society and the people's collective life bring about a launch pad called value scale. This value scale checks the dos and don'ts of the people in that society. Onwubiko, as cited in Obiefuna (2011), articulates some of the Igbo cultural values which would be juxtaposed alongside Obiefuna's family background and upbringing that moulded him into a charismatic character, which, if appropriated by our contemporary leaders, would make for effective leadership. These include, but are not limited to:

- Sense of community life and communication
- Sense of good human relationship
- Sense of sacredness of life
- Sense of hospitality
- Sense of the sacred and of religion
- Sense that time is of the essence
- Respect for constituted authority and the elders
- Regard for language and proverbs as veritable instruments of communication

These cultural values are distinct and they distinguish Igbo people. In Igboland, humanity remains at the centre of life. Obiefuna (2011) postulates that "life in Igboland is life because it is human-centred. Humanity is primarily the community. One is, simply because the community is" (p.16). The Igbo people value life and consider it a pillar on which other Igbo cultural values rest. This is predicated upon the high sense of dignity of the human person. In light of the foregoing, some Igbo expressions like *Igwebuikie* and *Igwediuto* would be understood and appreciated. In community life, the individual's life and strength are energized and savoured. B.A.C. Obiefuna, undoubtedly, has a high sense of community life, having grown and survived within a family and community setting in addition to communal life in the seminary. He values everyone as a human person - male and female, young and old, irrespective of age, height, complexion, class, religious affiliation, or race. He believes that every individual is unique and has appreciable contributions to make. As a charismatic leader, priest and scholar, he does not build walls that distance people from him rather he is open and welcomes people with a listening ear and an open heart. He gives attention to the pastoral needs of the people. This is not without identifying and respecting personal boundaries. As a scholar, Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna believes that no student is weakling. For him, there is an innate gift in every student that must be harnessed. In this regard, he approaches the students with patience, prudence, and humility, yet insists on due process and that everything must be placed in their proper perspective. As a promoter of human relations, he emphasises the need for quality and effective communication among members of the group, which makes for more precise understanding and realisation of organisational goals.

J. Klein and J. House (1995) made the assertion that charisma neither resides in the leader nor in the follower but in the relationship between a leader who has charismatic qualities and followers who are open to charisma within a charisma-conducive environment. Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna is a reputable personality with a high sense of good human relationships. He treats whoever comes around him with respect as primarily a human person with human dignity. He cherishes the company of friends and relatives (both

ordained and lay faithful) and tries to create lasting memories at every opportunity. He creates opportunities for celebrations in which he makes his audience feel warmth, love, honour, and respect. He celebrates his birthday not just as an annual event or for fun but as an opportunity to touch lives and share in a communal relationship with the people. In 2023, he celebrated his sixty-ninth birthday with the elderly, the sick and the entire community of Akwaeze, where he resides. Bonny could not have learnt the real meaning of human relations and hospitality elsewhere other than in and within his family circle, from the seminary, and from the Igbo (African) cultural values.

Prof. Obiefuna's immediate environment and formation experience in the seminary also nurtured his high regard for the sacred and religion. In his own words, "Agulu is a deeply religious community. Traditionally, it has one powerful male deity, *Ududonka*, and a female one, *Haaba*. In the contemporary Christian era, Agulu has more than three-score reverend fathers and an uncountable number of preachers of other Christian bodies" (Obiefuna, 2009, p.103). The deities traditionally and fundamentally formed and guided the religious sensibility of the people of Agulu. These observed values no doubt helped mould and shape the personality of Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna, who is a charismatic and influential leader, priest, and scholar.

Conclusion

From the above analysis, we discovered that the natal background cum formative experiences of Prof. B.A.C. Obiefuna nurtured him into a charismatic leader, priest and scholar. The influence of his siblings, especially his elder sister, Mrs Victoria Nwonye Ugha, who played the mother-figure role, can never be overemphasized. His personal experiences at different intervals in his aunt and uncle's houses, his encounters in primary school and in the seminary, and his philosophical and theological formation and university environment are of immense help in his character formation. The impact of his age grade and Igbo (African) cultural values of honesty, probity, respect for elders and constituted authority, a sense of the sacredness of life, taking responsibility in any given task, and so forth all coalesced in moulding and shaping Obiefuna into the personality he is. We do not also discountenance the spiritual guide and care of his diocesan bishops, his personal experiences and encounters with people as a pastor in different places of priestly assignments that positively and remarkably impacted him.

We, therefore, suggest that in the pursuit of excellence in character and learning, the rich Igbo (African) cultural values and principles which Obiefuna imbibed are inevitable and should be appropriated by the contemporary leaders in various spheres of life, which include, but not limited to, the academia, social organisations, political groups, religious bodies and associations, as a way forward for compelling and charismatic leadership in human society.

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