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100 LEVEL

TRIBALISM AS AN ILLNESS IN NIGERIA

Introduction

Tribalism is the sate of being organized by, or advocating for tribes or tribal lifestyle. It is a very strong feeling of loyalty to a political or social group, who support themselves in whatever they do. Tribalism is the belief that one’s own group is supreme or rather, greater than the other groups. This illness has reached an out break level which has put the people of Nigeria at stake. People on a daily make rash comments about tribes which are not of their belonging feeling entitled to diminish the images of these tribes by laying all sorts of insults and mockery. This now is a norm in our society. According to Elizabeth Segal ‘tribalism is a group that fosters the bullying and scapegoating of others not like you’.

History

Dating back before the colonialism of Nigeria, before our country became Nigeria people lived in groups/tribes. These people had a lot in common. They ate together, spoke the same language and dressed alike. Africa was not like other worlds. We needed to grow in our own pace but unfortunately for us, the westerners came to our land and enslaved our ancestors and took over our land. Most at times, our ancestors were treated with so much scorn and our cultures were not regarded. Our ancestors were taught ‘hatred’ to hate themselves and hate their brothers (fellow Africans).This ‘Hate’ is what we have grown in, taught our children, turned against ourselves and fought each other for. Now, Nigeria is made up of three hundred and seventy one (371) tribes with three (3) major tribes involved in the number which are the Hausa tribe, the Igbo tribe and the Yoruba tribe.

Causes

**Firstly**, Nigeria is made up of multiple ethnic groups which we cannot count with beer fingers. Tribes are separated and located in different places. People of the same tribe feel free and at home with their members than foreigners of their tribe. This has caused Nowadays, most Nigerians stereotyping people of different tribes. They stereotype without gaining or broadening knowledge about these different tribes.

**Secondly,** superiority complex among different groups is defiantly a cause to this illness. So many groups do not get along because of this. They fight, argue and at the end do not even come up with a solution to this problem. Rather, they sleep and wake up with this hatred.

Effects

Tribalism has eaten deep in all sectors of our nation Nigeria. Concerning the political sector, we vote leaders in power for the sake of being ‘biased’. People do not think “is this representative capable of ruling our country fairly?” but rather people only care and think about the ethnic background of the leader. We fail to ask ourselves if this leader’s ethnic background will provide anything important for the country. Rather our people are hell bent on voting their ‘brother’ in power, then voting an incapable individual whose main focus is not on the development of the nation, then leading the whole country in a cry for help.

Tribalism thinks only about itself than others. We can find tribalism not only in the political sector but also in our school environment, work place and even in our households. It is even a taboo for some families to let their child marry from a different tribe. If one should go against such rule, most families would go to the extent to disown their child. They are not open minded towards issues as such. Rather, they let their narrow minds and hate take control of their behavior and decisions.

Tribalism is also a cause of unemployment to youths. One can have the potential for a certain job they seek but will be denied work because of his/her ethnic background. Why can we motivate and make a way for our youths? Most Nigerians judge good people they have not met before and deny them amazing opportunities because they are ‘outcasts’

Solutions

Whether we Nigerians know it or not, let us have it at heart that we are one. Connected in different ways and should not let what our past leaders fought for be in vain. We should love, respect, accept, people who do not belong to our tribal group and also educate oneself to see the beauty of different cultures in our country. Even if we are of different tribes, we still belong to one Nigeria. We owe it to our past leaders and ourselves to defend our unity and uphold our honor and glory.