

**REVIEW OF “MANAGEMENT, SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT: A
FESTSCHRIFT CELEBRATING A DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR”**

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The Elgon forest dwellers say that “little dreams” are of no great significance, but if a person has a “big dream”, the entire community must be gathered and told. How then does an Elgonyi know the difference between a big dream and a little dream? Upon waking up, there is an instinctive feeling about the significance of the dream for the community, and the thought of keeping such a dream secret never occurs. The present work under review on: “Management, Society and Development: A Festschrift Celebrating a Distinguished Professor” published in April 2018, is among the biggest dreams of our time.

To have been adjudged capable of making a review of this piece in honor of an eminent Professor with unquestionable distinction, is to me a privilege and an honour. It is a privilege because I am confronted with the responsibility of sounding a drum for a masquerade of such academic stature. It is equally an honour, first because of the remarkable novelty and creativity with which the authors handle themes within the broader concerns of education, management, science and development; second, because in these festschriften, fellow scholars have courageously ventured into terrains that were hitherto considered complex and not-too-familiar.

As a scholar with an African appetite, this Festschrifts would be described from an African perspective; precisely, in festive terms. This is important, as this book is an opportunity for scholars to harvest from the immense and measureless garden of knowledge, the economic, social, political, cultural, technological, philosophical, theological fruits, among others, which have matured for us as a result of the labors of Prof. Joseph Ikechukwu Ogbuagu. Implicit in the concept of harvest is a preceding period of sowing or planting. This explains why harvest is a period of blissful celebration, marked for us, especially as Africans, by group

dances and colorful masquerades, by goodwill visits and exchange of gifts. In the cosmological context, as the human drama unfolds, the dynamics of planting and harvesting provide part of the light which enables us see and understand the human condition at any time in history¹. Thus, the nature and quality of the harvest are logically determined by the kind of seed we sowed, on what kind of soil we sowed it and how painstakingly we manured and tended it. As Prof. Joseph Okechukwu Ogbuagu is honored with these works, it tells us the story of how skillfully and beautifully well he sowed his seeds in thought, word and deed, as in the social institutions and intergroup and inter-personal relations which he established². He has left behind in FCE (Technical) "...a tradition of excellence, a culture of professionalism, a regime of sanity, and an era of transformation"³. He has erected "...memories that cannot be erased, monuments that cannot be destroyed"⁴. He has handed over "an institution glowing with pride"⁵. It is, therefore, not surprising that a double festschrift has emerged in his honor; a scene very rare in the academia.

The image of Prof. Joseph Okechukwu Ogbuagu that resonates in this work, is the image of a masquerade who has performed at various important ceremonies. Going through the resume of our Distinguished Professor, there is abundant evidence that he has not only danced but danced beautifully well; and it is in the nature of every serious masquerade to make an impression on the spectators. The nature of this impression cannot, unfortunately, be forecast before hand as it depends not only on the dexterity of the masquerade or lack of it as a dancer, but also on the humor of the spectators, and on their ability to assess and appreciate an artistic performance⁶. A glance at these Festschrifts shows that your spectators were impressed, and that your dancing steps were not monotonous and insipid, neither did you repeat any of the other dance steps that you presented during the

¹ A. E. Afigbo, *The age of innocence: The Igbo and their neighbours in pre-colonial times*. A lecture delivered at the 1981 Ahiajoku Lecture, p.7.

² A. E. Afigbo, *The age of innocence: The Igbo and their neighbours in pre-colonial times*. A lecture delivered at the 1981 Ahiajoku Lecture, p.7.

³ J. O. Ogbuagu, "Promises Made, Promises Kept". A VALEDICTORY ADDRESS BY THE PROVOST, FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (TECHNICAL), UMUNZE, ANAMBRA STATE, PROFESSOR J.O OGBUAGU, mni, TO MARK THE END OF HIS EIGHT YEARS EVENTFUL TENURE (JANUARY 18, 2010 - JANUARY 17, 2018), p. 11.

⁴ J. O. Ogbuagu, "Promises Made, Promises Kept", p. 11.

⁵ J. O. Ogbuagu, "Promises Made, Promises Kept", p. 11.

⁶ A. E. Afigbo, *The Igbo and their neighbours*. Ibadan: University Press Limited, 1987, p. 10

celebration. Nor was it a mere arrangement of an old and jaded dance step. When I speak in these ways, it is only my idiosyncratic way of beating the big drum for a big masquerade.

Subtle minds like Bertrand Russell made a classification of Professors into three categories:

1. those who are figures of fun, who are totally out of their element in the academic environment, who see professorship as a retirement benefit to be enjoyed and indeed exploited;
2. those who are technically competent but uninteresting;
3. those, usually a minority group, whom inquiring minds admire wholeheartedly and enthusiastically⁷.

Of the third group, there are few indeed. And it is a matter of joy that in the front rank of that small group of dedicated intellectuals, we have our own son and friend, Prof. Joseph Okechukwu Ogbuagu.

This work opens with a profile of accomplishments of our eminent scholar. This profile reveals a life process that, unlike the inferno of a revolution has moved with a swaggering gait, transmuting the retinues of life's fundamental elements into an edifice that would stand the test of time. His specialty and efficiency in his particular parameters of inquiry has seen him traverse Nigeria from Kebbi to Awka, from Sokoto to Nnewi, from Nsukka to Umunze among others, and thus revealing the broadness of his personality. He is a polymath and Gulliver of a sort with commendable and admirable expertise. His wide experience within the parameters of the academia is at the base of his self-awareness, self-confidence and sense of mystery.

The Festschrift titled: *Management, Society and Development: A Festschrift Celebrating a Distinguished Professor* is a work of forty chapters, 638 pages. In this piece, one encounters a college of scholars who like exorcists will continue to conjure the spirit of their readers to thread on new academic grounds. In this book, one comes 'face to face' with true academic bees that have gathered the spoils of the flowers of managerial and developmental meadows, and are ready to engender in the souls of their readers a deathless element of knowledge. You

⁷ A. E. Afigbo, *Salute to a Colleague*. 1979 Ahiajoku Lecture. Owerri: Imo Newspapers Limited, 1979, p. 5.

can only applaud at the end of each chapter and wait to applaud again at the end of the next chapter.

I, therefore, beat the drum for these Festschriften that are essentially a harvest of thoughts from the best minds you can ever imagine. In them are individual perceptions crystallized as thought contributions which will survive the physical structures of generations yet to come.

I sound the drum for these Festschriften in honor of a quiet but industrious academic bee; a scholar whose inner peace, transparent honesty, self-effacing demeanor, yet joyous sense of humor have fascinated colleagues.

I beat the drum for the Festschriften of an academic whose achievements in the academia are pre-eminent and the prospects even more.

I sound the drum loud for the Festschriften that loud the just celebration of Prof. Ogbuagu, a productive scholar; an academic whose productivity is marked by happy versatility, rich variety, unfailing originality, consistent incisiveness, high voltage reasoning, limpidity of style and unwavering logic.