NIGERIA: ISSUES IN ECONOMY, POLITICS AND SOCIETY

VOLUME 2

Edited by

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PREFACE

The Rosa Luxemburg Foundation West Africa Roundtable Series in Nigeria began in 2017.

The objectives of the roundtables were to:

- foster knowledge production on critical issues of development: politically, economically and socially.
- To enhance RLS West Africa visibility in Abuja and Nigeria in general and strengthen platforms for critical thought on contemporary development issues in Nigeria as well as
- foster active participation of the youth in political processes.

This reader is based on the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation West Africa's Programme cycle for 2020 -2022. Topics for the public debates covered the following themes: Youth and Conflict Resolution; Dialogue and Peace building; Domestic Work, Restructuring Nigeria, Gender and Health.

The declaration of the COVID 19 outbreak as a global pandemic in February 2020 by the World Health Organization, necessitated the switch to webinars to ensure participants at the roundtables stay safe. Thus in 2020, twelve webinars were organized with the Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Abuja; African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL); Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) Kano; Charis Healthcare Initiative Jos; Maroon Square Lagos and Veritas University Centre for Peace and Development (CEPAD).
In 2021, with the gradual ease in the COVID 19 protocols for public gatherings, a mix of thirteen roundtables and webinars were organized in collaboration with the Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Abuja; African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL); Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) Kano; Centre for Gender Studies, Bayero University Kano; Charis Healthcare Initiative Jos; Maroon Square Lagos and the Veritas University Centre for Peace and Development (CEPAD).

The round table series have been a success, mobilizing students from several

institutions from selected states across Nigeria. In 2021, students of the College of Education Technical Akoka were mobilized to participate in the roundtables organized by Maroon Square Lagos. Similarly, the AFRICMIL roundtables were held at the Nasarawa State University Keffi, mobilizing students from several social science departments of the institution. Similarly, the Public Presentation of the Research Report: *The Root Cause of the Farmers and Herders Crisis in North Central Nigeria* was held in November 2021.

In 2022, eight roundtables and a public presentation were held. Roundtables were organized by Charis Healthcare Initiative Jos; Maroon Square Lagos; Centre for Information Technology and Development; Veritas University Centre for Peace and Development (CEPAD); Centre for Gender Studies, Bayero University Kano (CGS BUK);African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL) and a public presentation of the research report : *The Face of Poverty in Nigeria* organized by the Yusufu Bala Usman Institute, Zaria.

Thus, thirty-three roundtables were held between 2020 and 2022, with about 66 papers presented. This volume of the roundtable series contains a selection of forty one presentations, divided in seven sections.

Special thanks to Dr Armin Osmanovic for the conception and nurturing of the roundtable series in Nigeria and to his successor Dr Claus Dieter Konig for his commitment to the sustenance of the roundtable series in Nigeria.

The views and recommendations shared by the authors are their opinions and perspectives and does not represent the views of Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, West Africa.

We hope that the research papers collated in this reader provides a valuable resource for analysis of the challenges Nigeria grapples with as a nation and offers policy alternatives and recommendations for peaceful and sustainable development of Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS), in its work in Nigeria, has sought to promote and advance progressive ideas that act as germane interventions in the conversations to get the country out of the quagmire of underdevelopment in all spheres of human development. Using the instrument of public lectures and symposia, as well as commissioned research on specific themes, the foundation seeks to provide varying and alternative prognoses to our socio-economic and political challenges.

This 2nd volume of *"Nigeria: Issues in Economy, Politics and Society"* is made up of seven sections or thematic areas. Section one is on Youth and Conflict Resolution. This part has 12 chapters contributed by different authors. Section two, with six chapters, is on Dialogue and Peacebuilding. The theme of Domestic Work in Nigeria and its challenges is the subject matter of the third section. It has four chapters.

The controversial theme of Restructuring Nigeria is the focus of section four of the publication. There are seven chapters under this theme. Next is the issue of Gender, addressed in three chapters. The subject of Healthcare is taken up in section six and it is covered in six chapters. The seventh and final section is in form of Book Review. Three contributors reviewed an earlier research publication supported by RLS entitled: *'Root Cause of Herder-Farmer Crisis in North Central Nigeria,'* from different perspectives.

Under the Section on Youth and Conflict Resolution, Dr Ibrahim Machina wrote on the Role of Youth in Peacebuilding in Nigeria, while Dr. Ruquyyah Aliyu's chapter is on the same subject but from a communication perspective. Dr. Safiya Nuhu contributed her chapter on Developing Effective Leadership Strategies Among Youth in Nigeria; while Prof. Hassana Sarma addressed the subject from a slightly different perspective under the title: The Nigerian Youth and Leadership Development.

Prof. Omachonu's contribution on Democracy, Collective Action and the Role of Students and Youths in Intra-elite Conflict in Nigeria is next. Dr. Sarah Lwahas and Dr. Ifedolapo Ademosu's contributions are around Media and Information Literacy and Freedom of Information. They analyzed how both

are essential tools in the promotion of dialogue and participatory democracy. Prof Murtala Mohammad's contribution is on Youth Political Inclusion, How to Strike a Balance Between Age and Principles.

Dr. Sunday Adejoh's chapter under this section is on Interrogating Criminal Label and the Scourge of Insecurity in Contemporary Nigeria, while Dr. Neji Obi tackled the subject of Extreme Labels and the Scourge of Insecurity in Contemporary Nigeria. Dr Ruth C. Luka and Sunday O. Igaba addressed the subject matter of the #Endsars Protest Under the Perspective of Moving Forward Through Political Participation and Radical Social Change Prospects respectively.

The various contributors to section one of this publication attempted to address topical issues relating to youth and their involvement or inclusion in leadership and governance. In this respect, we note the remarks by Prof. Darma, who opines that instead of having youths in governance, there is the need to do more in building their competencies and capacities. He contended that formal educational systems in our climes focus basically on the academic curricular, which fails to create much opportunities for youth engagement in activities that develop their skills and capabilities. This, according to him, has the effect of creating a gap in their overall educational sojourn. To rectify this situation therefore, it was important to engage the youths in roundtable discussions on leadership issues that will help them evolve and develop into not just leaders but effective leaders at that.

Section two on Dialogue and Peacebuilding has contribution by Prof Iro Leke on Promoting Peace Through Traditional Authorities and Citizens Consultation and Participation. Fr. Blaise James and Juliet Pwajok contributed a chapter on the Impact of Historic Trauma and Violence on Peacebuilding: Community-based Approach. Barrister Ogunlana-Nkanga looked at the Root Causes and Consequences of Farmers-Herders Crisis and its Implication on Women and Girls in North Central Nigeria; while Prof. Benson Igboin contributed the chapter on: Which Talk is Not Enough? Interfaith Dialogue and Violent Conflict in Nigeria. Prof. Rafatu Abdulhamid did a piece on the Islamic perspective of Interfaith.

Section three on Domestic Work in Nigeria and its Challenges has chapters

contributed by Dr Awwal Magashi on the "Situation of Domestic Workers in Nigeria: An Assessment of the Working Conditions, the Legal Framework, Protections and Gaps in Laws Protecting Domestic Work;" Dr Muhammad Nuruddeen contributed a chapter on the same subject titled "An Assessment of the Working Conditions, the Legal Framework Protection and Gaps in Laws Protecting Domestic Workers." Drs. S.L. Malumfashi and Binta Abba both wrote on the Role of Stakeholders in Mitigating Abuses in Domestic Work.

Dr Nuruddeen, in his contribution gave an assessment of the working conditions of domestic workers while also appraising the situation of domestic workers. He identifies gaps in the legal framework of promoting domestic workers in Nigeria and raises some critical concerns on the subject matter as well as proffering some recommendations.

The author of the piece gave a historical evolution of domestic work industry from the Nigerian perspective. He notes that around the 19th century, legal position of domestic workers changed as they were required to obey their masters and mistresses without any recognition of their own time and leisure. However, as labour power evolved, and the concept of collective bargaining gained currency, legal protection began to be extended to domestic workers. Dr. Sani L. Malumfashi in his contribution dissected the Role of Stakeholders in Mitigating Abuses in the Domestic Work Industry. He looks at the psycho-socio and economic effects of domestic work abuse and discusses the role of stakeholders like the National Agency for Protection of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), National Orientation Agency (NOA), Ministry of Education and the rest in mitigating abuses in domestic work. Dr. Abba, in her own contribution, critically examined the roles of stakeholders in mitigating against domestic workers focusing mainly on international organizations/instruments and less emphasis on national situations and organizations.

In the 4th section of the publication, broadly entitled, Restructuring Nigeria, there are seven contributors who focused on the discussion around restructuring of the country as well as the rights of women and the challenges of insecurity in the country, a piece contributed by Kadishi Oliseh. Dr. Odukoya and Ebenezer Ishola contributed a chapter on 'Restructuring: A Counterfactual Discourse on the Minorities Problematic. Adewale Adeoye wrote on the National Question and self-Determination in Nigeria. The link between regionalization of security

and federal control of the security apparatus is taken up by Dr Ayokunle Fagbemi and Owei Lakemfa in their contributions on the South West security outfit, Amotekun.

Ms. Oliseh Kadishi, in her contributing chapter on Interrogating the Concept of Restructuring for Progress or Balkanizing to Retrogression, using Sudan and Yugoslavia as case study, delt with the subject of restructuring very succinctly. She unfolded the history of the clamour for restructuring in Nigeria. The contributor gave conceptual clarifications on restructuring and balkanization. She also highlighted the history of the clamour for restructuring in Nigeria by outlining the long process of restructuring in terms of the number of geopolitical administrative units constituting the polity. She contended that to understand the agitation for restructuring of the federation, there was the need to look at state creation and the Nigerian Federal System. This, she said, is traceable to many stages ranging from the British annexation to the era of the Richards Constitution of 1946, Macpherson Constitution of 1954 and the Lyttleton Constitution.

Oliseh raises questions of concern about the subject and interrogates the concepts of restructuring for progress or balkanization to retrogression. She asserts that the quest for secessions comes with problems like civil war, broken nation, etc., while noting that secession may not be possible in Nigeria owing to the attendant ravaging consequences that befall the nation as a result of the interdependence of each region in the country on one another.

'Language Identity and Power in the Framing of Nigeria as Monolithic Binary' is the title of the contribution by Adagbo Onoja. Here, the author discusses also language, identity and power in the framing of Nigeria as a monolithic binary. In his analysis, Onoja paints a picture of Nigeria in terms of framing her into a predominantly Muslim North versus largely Christian South explaining the monolithic binary as an exercise purely in acquisition and consolidation of power which relies on the use of language to frame identities in the service of hegemony and hegemons. He asserts that the understanding would be that the framers of the monolithic binary hoped to frame commonsensical, and by implication, deterministic of how citizens of a country relate to the idea of Nigeria as a whole. He traces efforts of the academics, who equally had series of scholarly engagements to appreciate the narrative that Nigeria be taken to

be monolithic in nature.

Although attempts were made to foist this thought, there were no conclusive ends to how far such discussions yielded any meaningful results as there were quite a number of disturbing views as to the diverse nature of the North and Southern regions. In trying to find out where the understanding of Nigeria in terms of binary metaphysics of the country no more than a monolithic north, opposed to a monolithic south might be coming from, the colonial experience, which was dictated solely by conflictual cooperative dynamics of trade, war, migration and diplomacy, sufficed.

The essay posits that the view of Nigeria as a predominantly Muslim North versus a largely Christian South can only be understood as a disciplinary and hegemonic move. This is because like all plural societies, Nigeria is what the totality of its dynastic wars, trade networks, cultural and ideological linkages and migration makes of it before and after colonialism. Therefore, the monolithic binary can only be understood as a colonial strategy of colonising the future by undermining the Pan-Nigerian radical Nationalism that early nationalists such as Zik were promoting.

The 5th section on Gender has three contributions. The first is by Prof. Chijioke Uwasomba on 'Patriarchy: Women as its Nemesis.' The next contribution is by Hauwa Mustapha on 'Patriarchy: Women and politics in Nigeria', The last contribution here is by Kabiru Dakata, entitled, "CSOs Addressing the Menace of Sexual Harassment in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria: The Case Study of Caja in Kano State".

Chijioke Uwasomba wrote on patriarchy, stating a background of women as it's nemesis. In the chapter, he demonstrates very interestingly and argues that women by their nature have inherent powers that negate and make nonsense of the machismos of men which, according to him, is not as powerful and sustainable as those possessed by the female folk. He explains the thought by drawing instances from the Igbo extraction in Nigeria and shows the place of women before colonialism. He also gives a detailed exploration of the concept of patriarchy and showcases the concept in its entirety basically as power and a facade. He discusses the place of women during the pre-colonial African era dwelling emphasis on the Nigerian society. Also laudable in his

write up on the subject matter is his painstaking analysis of what later turned out to be understood as a colonial intrusion as well as its implication for the female power. He maintains that patriarchy is a weak institution and does not possess the type of powers that women are imbued with, hence calling for the sustenance of gender equality as the ideal way to progress.

Also, on gender and furthering a discuss in this regard, Kabiru Dukata treats the menace of sexual harassment in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria stating the underpinning causes and attendant effects as well as the roles of civil organization in addressing sexual harassment. Kabiru discusses succinctly the major activities undertaken in addressing the prevalence of sexual harassment and proffers necessary policy recommendations that could address this social ill.

The sixth segment of the publication is on health with six chapters. Four of them delt with COVID-19 and the lessons from a pandemic that shook the world to its foundation. The remaining two contributions were on substance/ drug abuse and strategies to combat them.

Adejoh, Oko and Legbeti co-authored the chapter on "Emergency Preparedness for Another Pandemic: Mental Health Implications and Responsiveness to Wholistic Care". Henry Ojenya contributed the chapter on "Beyond COVID-19 pandemic: mental health implications and responsiveness to wholistic care". Francis Abah contributed the chapter on "The Nigeria psycho-social support system in the era of emergency: COVID-19 challenges and implications." Dr Aishatu Armiya'u did the piece on the Nigeria Mental and Psychosocial Support System in the Era of Emergency: COVID-19 Challenges and Implications.

Dr. Maikano Madaki, in his chapter, did a critical review of the existing strategies for combatting substance/drug abuse in Nigeria. While Dr. Aminu Dukku did a cause and consequence analysis of Drug and substance abuse.

Adejo M. O. et al wrote on the emergency preparedness for another pandemic, focusing on the mental health implication and responsiveness to wholistic care. Here, the authors discuss the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, tracing it to Wuhan in China where in the year 2019, the pneumonia cases were first observed. They stated that the virus was first noticed in those who

had pneumonia symptoms and were perceived to have contacted it. The responses by the Nigerian government and the world over were documented. The emergency preparedness for subsequent attacks of the pandemic and the role of stakeholders in mitigating the effects on well-being and development on nations of the world were outlined. The authors provided a tabular presentation in various components of the recommended preparedness actions starting with particular attention on a wholistic response.

Henry Ajine, in his contribution, maintains a balance in the understanding of the subject matter as demonstrated by Adejo M. O. and others, but traces further, the subject beyond the pandemic and presents what might be considered as a paradigm shift thereby focusing on what the mental health implications and responsiveness to a wholistic care would be. He relates to the readers of the chapter the tendency that the pandemic made people to develop new skills that would keep them going while adapting also to life changes that such skills would bring to the fore. The changes according to him would include a new trend of psychological disorders like depression, anxiety and substance use-dependency, severely evident as symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) emerging from exposure to life stressors during the pandemic.

He re-echoes the daunting challenges posed by a similar virus, the Ebola Virus which ravaged and constrained the economies of some West and Central African nations in its outbreak. The author unequivocally maintains that if the lessons learnt from the Ebola Virus disease, which had a case fatality rate of 42.1% could not be translated in preparation for another pandemic like the COVID-19 pandemic in the space of five years, then as a nation, we might just be sailing in an already capsized boat. He concludes the chapter by examining the mental health implication of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria and canvassed for collaborative responses by individuals, professionals, communities and organizations respectively.

The seventh and final segment of the book contained the review of a research publication on *The Root Cause of Herder-Farmer Crisis in North Central Nigeria* by three authors from varying perspectives. The reviewers were Drs. Obodo and Otegwu as well as Prof. Oshita.

They all drew attention to the casual thrust of the book, which is that the

crisis is caused by the quest by herders to find dwelling place for grazing their livestock.

This 2nd volume of *Nigeria: Issues in Economy, Politics and Society* is a welcome addition to the body of literature discussing the challenges Nigeria faces in its quest to build an egalitarian society.

SECTION 1: YOUTH & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN PEACEBUILDING IN NIGERIA

BY
IBRAHIM MOHAMMED MACHINA

Abstract

Nigeria has witnessed myriad of security challenges since its transition to democratic rule in May 1999. This adversely affects peace, security and development and undermines Nigeria's efforts to achieve sustainable and inclusive peace. In response to these security challenges, Nigerian government counter-terrorism (CT) strategies focus primarily on military approach. However, this approach only tackles the symptoms of the problem rather than addressing its root causes. In addition, most peacebuilding interventions in Nigeria focused on formal state authorities while paying little attention to the roles of critical stakeholders such as youth. That is why almost seven years since the historic adoption of the UNSCR 2250, young people remain largely excluded from formal peacebuilding processes. They received inadequate policy attention as they are frequently othered in the conversations about peacebuilding. Against this backdrop, this paper examines the role of youth in peacebuilding in Nigeria, with emphasis on the essential role of youth in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in north east Nigeria. This paper contributes empirical evidence on the positive roles and contributions of youth and youth-led organisations in the broader context of achieving sustainable and inclusive peace in Nigeria. The paper argues that youth inclusion in peacebuilding processes is critical to achieve sustainable peace and development. Thus, it is vital that policy-makers and practitioners recognise and engage them as key partners. Hence, government should facilitate the implantation of the YPS agenda by fostering the participation of young people in peace and security decision-making processes as advocated by the UNSC resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020).

1. Introduction

Violent conflicts and terrorism increasingly threaten global peace and security and undermines the efforts of many countries to achieve sustainable peace and development. Nigeria has witnessed myriad of security challenges since its transition to democratic rule in May 1999. This includes violent atrocities perpetrated by the violent group Boko Haram in the North East region, communal and ethnoreligious conflicts in the North Central region, banditry and kidnapping in the North West region, and militancy and kidnapping in

the Niger Delta region as well as other security challenges. These protracted conflicts adversely affect peace, security and development and undermines Nigeria's efforts to achieve sustainable and inclusive peace. In response to these security challenges, Nigerian government counter-terrorism (CT) strategies focus primarily on military approach. However, this approach only tackles the symptoms of the problem rather than addressing its root causes. More than two decades after visible commitment to the idea of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, Nigeria is struggling to achieve sustainable peace and security. Furthermore, most peacebuilding interventions in Nigeria are leader-centric, focusing on formal state authorities while paying little attention to the roles of critical stakeholders in the society. This focus on the state rather than the society as an entry point in their peacebuilding interventions and approaches led to limited success because local coping capacities and strategies employed by individuals or communities outside the sphere of the formal state institutions are ignored (Olonisakin et al, 2014). In addition, patriarchal dominated state apparatus in Nigeria as in other parts of the world, do not adequately focus on the role of women and young people in their response to the security challenges in the country. They often view women as victims of the conflict and young people as perpetrators of violence, rather than critical stakeholders with the power to contribute to ending these conflicts (Machina, 2020). The idea of conceptualising peacebuilding as a multi-stakeholder activity is borne out of the fact that conflict affects everybody in the society; therefore, peacebuilding should be the responsibility of all in the society.

The role of young people in promoting peace, security and development in recent times have generated serious discussions and clear-cut policy agenda which are necessary for the development, plan and policy action of any country. This is due to the demographic reality of youthful population asserting their voices through both violent and non-violent means. The significance of youth participation in peace building and conflict resolution is of key relevance considering their vast majority in the world's population. In recent years, there has been a significant shift globally toward recognising the importance of young people and their contributions in promoting global peace and security. It started in December 2015 when the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously adopted the ground-breaking and historic resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS). This resolution for the first time introduced the YPS agenda and recognises the importance and positive contributions of young people in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. It also

urges Member States to increase active and inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels, as well as in institutions and mechanisms to prevent and resolve conflict and counter violent extremism (UNOY & SFCG, 2016). This was strengthened with the adoption of the UN Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism which was presented by the Secretary-General in January 2016 that calls on Member States to develop national prevention plans and policies. Moreover, UNSC resolutions 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020) recognised the importance of regional and sub-regional mechanism for the implementation of the YPS agenda and reiterate youth's important role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. The African Union (AU) through its Agenda 2063, seeks to remove all forms of systemic inequalities, exploitation, marginalisation and discrimination of young people to ensure that youth issues are mainstreamed in all development agendas. That is why the Organisation of African Youth (OAY) has been working with young people all over Africa and advocating for the inclusion of African youth in all spheres of society, as enshrined in African Youth Charter.

However, almost seven years since the historic adoption of the UNSCR 2250, young people remain largely excluded from formal peacebuilding process. Governments at the federal and state levels in Nigeria struggled to fully implement the UNSCR 2250 and subsequent resolutions that support youth-led peacebuilding initiatives. Nevertheless, young people in Nigeria are charting innovative and creative ways to exercise their voices, thereby contributing to advancing youth inclusion in peacebuilding processes locally. Against this backdrop, this paper examines the role of youth in peacebuilding in Nigeria, with emphasis on the essential role of youth in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in north east Nigeria. This paper contributes empirical evidence on the positive roles and contributions of youth and youth-led organisation in the broader context of achieving sustainable and inclusive peace in Nigeria. This will influence existing knowledge and understandings of the YPS agenda in Nigeria.

2. Conceptual Clarification

2.1. Youth

The concept youth is transient, contested and context-specific. Youth is not just a biological expression that is confined to a specific age category but differs according to socio-cultural context and time. Countries and organisations used

different age categories of youth for policy and statistical purposes. For example, the UN defines youth as persons in transition from childhood to adulthood, who fall in the age category of 15 and 24 years old, without prejudice to other definitions by member states. The African Youth Charter defines youth as young person between 15 and 35 years old. In the context of Nigeria, the Nigerian National Youth Policy defines youth as a person between the ages of 18 and 35 years. These age-based definitions of youth are underlined by the assumptions that youth is a homogenous group with common needs and aspiration devoid of agency. However, youth are not a homogenous group and several factors such as culture, social markers and identities shape our understanding of the concept. Youth transcend a person's age and include specific status and role in a community such as individual's activities and responsibilities that determine his classification as a youth or an adult. The concept youth and young people will be used interchangeable in this paper.

2.2. Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding refers to measures initiated by multiple stakeholders such as governments, international partners, civil society and local communities toward establishing positive peace in a given society. This involve addressing the root causes of conflict and preventing and mitigating all forms of violence as well as fostering just and inclusive societies. Peacebuilding aims to strike a balance between negative and positive peace because violent conflict divides communities and create distrust and hatred that affects post-conflict settlement process. The 2016 UN Review of Peacebuilding Architecture states that peacebuilding encompasses interventions implemented at various levels that are employed in an integrated, strategic and coherent approach that incorporates human security, democratic governance, sustainable development, rule of law, human rights, equitable access to resources, and environmental security. The aim of peacebuilding according to the UN is to reduce the risk of conflict relapse by strengthening national capacity at all levels for conflict management and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development (UN, 2016). It recognises that local actors can be peacebuilders in their own right and that locally led peacebuilding efforts play a pivotal role in the peacebuilding architecture. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) defines peacebuilding as "effort to strengthen the prospects for internal peace and decrease the likelihood of violent conflict" (CIDA, 2002). It is a dynamic process involving all segments of the society, including the often-overlooked

and undermined youth population. The overarching goal of peacebuilding is to enhance the indigenous capacity of a society to manage conflict without violence. The focus on local efforts by peacebuilders is underscored by the growing recognition of the need for adaptation of national and global policy approaches to local contexts and inclusion of local actors in peacebuilding processes.

3. Youth in the Context of Northern Nigeria

States in northern Nigeria are among the states with the worst human development indices in the country. States in the northern region are trailing behind in terms of GDP per capita, life expectancy at birth, job opportunities, good governance and public service delivery. For example, in 2010, nine out of the 19 states in the northern region had the highest levels of youth unemployment in the country (Hoffmann, 2014). The NBS data shows that north east, north central and north west states have the highest underemployed working population in the third quarter of 2018. Katsina, Jigawa, Kaduna, Yobe and Niger states recorded the highest underemployment rates during the review period, with 39.5%, 38.1%, 31.0%, 30.0% and 26.9% respectively (NBS, 2011). Accordingly, the World Bank estimated that 87% of all the poor people in Nigeria are in the northern region (World Bank, 2019). Two regions in Northern Nigeria were recently ranked among the poorest in the country by the National Poverty Index Survey. The North West and North East had 70.4% and 69.1%, respectively, of their people living on less than $1 per day (World Bank, 2019).

It is within this underdevelopment context that the Boko Haram insurgency emerged in the region. People in the region have been experiencing these structural vulnerabilities prior to the emergence of Boko Haram which has now caused a large-scale humanitarian crisis in the region. It is estimated that more than 37,000 people have lost their lives and over 2.5 million people have been internally displaced while more than 10 million are in dire need of humanitarian assistance (UNOCHA, 2022). This have made significant populations of the country vulnerable to forced displacement and have disrupted livelihoods and socio-economic activities. Demographically, a vast majority of young people lives in developing countries. According to the UN, there are approximately 1.2 billion young people aged between 15 and 24 years in the world and close to one billion lives in sub-Saharan Africa (Niland, 2018). Therefore, young people represent the majority in Africa. Nigeria has one of the highest percentages

of youthful population in the world with an estimated youth population of 61,306,413 or 31.7% of the total population. Out of this figure, 11 million were unemployed according to the 2012 NBS statistics (Akande, 2014). In addition, youth have faced numerous challenges and unequal power relations. They remain marginalised and excluded in governance and often overlooked as agents of peacebuilding both in formal peace processes as well as in their communities. In this context, the contributions of youth in building peace at the local levels have been largely ignored while in reality they are working to resolve social inequalities and transform structural conditions that lead to conflict.

4. Drivers of Conflict in Northern Nigeria

Since peacebuilding approach aim to address the root causes of conflict, it is pertinent to understand the potential drivers of conflict as an important starting point in identifying how to address the structural challenges which enable violent extremist groups to gain foothold in communities. Peacebuilders can address the factors driving violent extremism by carefully analysing both the individual and societal drivers of violent extremism; inclusively engage broad range of social actors and thoughtfully response to widespread grievances. Studies argued that economic hardship, exclusion, marginalisation and grievances about governance were some of the factors that led to the emergence of plethora of conflicts in northern Nigeria. This opens the door for extremist groups to rally support for their ideologies and radicalise people. For example, Boko Haram capitalized on grievances and frustrations with government as well corruption, illiteracy, inequality, unemployment, poverty and exclusion of young people in decision making processes and persuade them to join their group (Machina, 2020). That is why significant number of young people who join Boko Haram were influence by business and social peers. They see joining Boko Haram as an opportunity to prosper economically through business support.

5. The Essential Role of Youth in Peacebuilding in Nigeria

Despite the fact that 1 in 4 youth around the world experienced violent conflict, youth are often ignored in the peacebuilding processes. This is due to the fact that young people are commonly problematised as violent perpetrators or being framed as a problem to be solved by both government and international actors. This must be addressed in order to support and tap

from their contributions to peace and security. Building sustainable peace that sustains post-conflict reconstruction and socio-economic development requires a drastic transformation of attitudes as well the full support and participation of all stakeholders in the society in decision-making processes. However, the role of critical stakeholders such as young people has received inadequate policy attention as they are frequently othered in the conversations about peacebuilding. Thus, youth as crucial stakeholders in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding have been underutilised or undermined.

However, youth constitute the most active, energetic, innovative and entrepreneurial group of people in the society. Historically, they played important and critical roles in societal transformation and development. Across Nigeria, majority of courageous young people are creatively working to prevent violence and build peace. They play important roles in the peacebuilding processes in various capacity. They potentially use every opportunity to prove their capacity by creating innovative ideas and approaches to build peace. As the conflict in north east Nigeria continues into its thirteenth year, young people have been Mobilising to augment the military to tackle Boko Haram and fill gaps in community security and protection. Young people in various groups have played crucial roles in protecting communities and keeping order. They have been credited with bringing back peace, security and stability in their communities. In the subsequent sub-sections, the different ways that young people contributed in the areas of conflict prevention, peace support operations and post-conflict reintegration and development in north east Nigeria are examined.

5.1. Conflict Prevention

Peacebuilders through their broader agenda of conflict prevention focus on countering violent extremism (CVE). Peacebuilding and CVE work increasingly intersect because failure to effectively apply preventive peacebuilding strategies will allow violent extremist groups to continue to recruit and grow their influence within a particular community. Violent extremism is a driver of conflict and violent extremists are spoilers in peacebuilding efforts. The opportunity for conflict prevention lies in applying peacebuilding tools to address the number of factors that lead to violent extremism. That is why young people and youth-led organisations are working to prevent violent extremism by addressing the contributing factors that make an individual's choice to engage in violent extremism. They focus in their prevention efforts to

understand the environment which enables violent extremist groups to operate and recruit. They also work to address the factors which make individuals and groups susceptible to enlisting in such organisations.

For example, the #NotAnotherNigerian social media campaign is an example of youth-focused initiatives that focused on bringing individuals from north east Nigeria closer to their communities to counter violent extremism, while promoting national discourse of ideas that would support peacebuilding process. The #NotAnotherNigerian hashtag stem out from the need for Nigerians to empathise with individuals and communities in the North East who have experienced widespread destruction and displacement as a result of Boko Haram insurgency. The hashtag does not only empathise but also advocates for an end to violent conflict in Nigeria. It unites Nigerians in saying never again should any part of country go through such a horrible experience. The hashtag was used by young people in the Campaign Against Violent Extremism (CAVE). The CAVE platform emerged in 2017 and was designed to raise awareness of the lived experience of the people in the North East. It also provided a counter narrative to extremist ideology by showcasing a variety of media products that promote positive dialogue, peace building, education, tolerance and unity.

Another platform where the #NotAnotherNigerian hashtag was used is the North East Social Innovation Fellowship (NESIF). The programme was part of USAID CVE strategy in north east Nigeria. USAID embarked on "Social Innovation" cluster of activities to engage a group of young thought leaders and prepared and trained them to engage in the arduous task of countering the toxic philosophies of violent extremism using social innovation techniques. The NESIF is an offshoot of the North East Intellectual Entrepreneurship Fellowship (NEIEF) with forty-five (45) young men and women from the North East and other parts of the country. The NESIF fellows over the course of six months participated in facilitated book club meetings, capacity building sessions, leadership trainings and debates, online engagements and social media campaigns. There was mutuality between the fellows and the targeted audience in the communities because these are young people from the region.

These give young people living in communities threatened by violent extremism in north east Nigeria a transformative opportunity through non-violent approaches to counter violent extremism and address the drivers of violence. At the community levels, they transformed relationship and promoted

community dialogue and public engagement. They also empowered key institutions through capacity building initiatives with the skills, knowledge, and capacity to mediate grievances and conflict in a way that gives voice to the needs of all citizens while challenging the factors that enable extremism to take root. For example, the North East Regional Initiative (NERI) in 2018 engaged youth-led organisations Youth Peace and Community Development Initiative (YOPCODI) and Centre for Community Development and Research Network (CCDRN) to embark on advocacy visits to traditional and community leaders in conflict affected communities in Gujba and Yunusari local governments in Yobe State on peacebuilding and conflict resolution. They also implemented the strengthening early warning and early response (EWER) mechanism project by training traditional and community leaders on how to identify and respond to early warning signs of radicalisation and extremism, as well as peaceful resolution of disputes between returning internally displaced people (IDP) and host communities. Through these programmes, local leaders were empowered to participate in influencing policy at national level. These examples demonstrated the agency of youth and youth-led organisations in the midst of violent conflict.

5.2. Peace Support Operations

Young people in north east Nigeria are not passive in the face of violence by Boko Haram. They have contributed significantly to building peace by playing crucial roles in the course of the conflict in north east Nigeria. Youth have participated in several efforts to protect civilians from harms which led to relative peace in the North East. They have adapted and participated in variety of ways to address the insurgency bedevilling their local communities such as involving in community policing in the rural areas. For example, young people have volunteered to join the fight against the Boko Haram insurgents and fought alongside the Nigerian military. This has played a major role in the fight against Boko Haram. Over the past decade of violence by Boko Haram, young people have contributed to reducing direct violence by setting up a youth-led voluntary organisation the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). The CJTF also known as Yan Gora (Local youth with sticks) has worked as auxiliary fighting forces to battle Boko Haram insurgents in their local communities. There are at least 26,000 members of the CJTF in Borno State alone. The CJTF emerged in 2013 when the insurgency was at its peak in Maiduguri and many civilians especially youth were afraid of their security and safety.

Initially, the Nigerian security agencies were basically problematising youth in the region as potential members of Boko Haram. Whenever Boko Haram attacks, the Nigerian security forces will conduct retaliatory arrests and harass young people in the affected community. Thus, youth were caught in the crossroad between the Nigerian security agencies and Boko Haram on the other hand. The CJTF assisted the security agencies to distinguished between civilians and those who associated with Boko Haram group. This saved local residents from arbitrary arrests and killings by the security forces (Nagarajan, 2020). The security forces later recognised the crucial role of young people as a potential source of local knowledge, intelligence and manpower. Thus, they engaged them in carrying out surveillance and intelligence gathering, as well as uncovering plots of planned attacks. Youth played crucial roles in the conflict by providing protection to civilians' population from a range of threats including attacks, abduction and extortion. Whenever their communities are under attack, they respond quickly to defend their local population. As seen in many occasions, they defended their communities from the insurgents. They fought alongside the military and sometimes acted alone when there is absence of security agents. The CJTF reacted quickly whenever an imminent threat is reported to them. In some cases, they helped community members escape violence and reach safety, more especially the most vulnerable segment such as the elderly or persons with disabilities. They also safeguard their communities by identifying strangers and suspicious movements. In addition, the CJTF conducted various joint-operations such as stop and search and house to house searches. These played crucial role in flushing out Boko Haram out of Maiduguri (Nagarajan, 2020).

Moreover, the CJTF contributed in clandestine surveillance networks. They have been instrumental in protecting and defending communities by gathering and sharing intelligence with the security agencies. They have been proactive in collecting, investigating and consolidating information received from civilians and sharing it with the security agencies. They also made responses by the security forces more effective by acting as link between the local communities and the security forces. Thy are part of the communities and they understand their local languages. So community members find it easy to share information with them than with the security forces. Apart from their role in linking civilians and security agencies, young people play crucial roles in passing on security and intelligence. They rely information, guidance ad instruction from security agencies to local communities. For instance, they

inform local communities regarding changes in curfew time, security tips or warning of threats from insurgents and the security situation such as current risks as well as ways to improve security awareness (Nagarajan, 2020). They also engage in patrols around their communities and station themselves at key locations so they can respond quickly in the events of attacks. They also stay on guard at nights to provide security in their communities.

5.3. Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development

Youth and youth-led organisations played an integral role in post conflict reconstruction and development efforts. They have been working to build inclusive communities, strengthen social cohesion and counter violent extremism in north east Nigeria. They focused on addressing the root causes of the conflict and resolving local disputes in communities. They also offered psychological and mental support, as well as rehabilitative services for victims of the insurgency, as well as ex-combatants and their families. They work in collaboration with government and other non-state actors to provide psychological counselling, formal and informal education, vocational skills training, sports programmes and food support to vulnerable people.

Furthermore, private philanthropists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) engaged youth as humanitarian workers to assist with the distribution of humanitarian relief and aid. Other youth groups such as the CJTF played significant role in keeping order, controlling crowds and helping the elderly and people with disability during the distribution of emergency food assistance. They also keep guard to prevent the stealing or vandalism of food items. The CJTF also screen entries to their communities, including IDP to prevent the insurgents or their allies from embedding among the IDP to gather intelligence or engage in targeted killings. Since all of the members of the CJTF live within their communities, they know who is who and they can easily identify stranger. If any stranger is coming into the community, they will question him to know who he is visiting and they assign their member to follow him to see if the person is actually going to that person's house (Nagarajan, 2020). They also provide security at entrance of crowded locations such as IDP camps, market places, worshipping centres (mosques and churches), schools as well as other critical buildings. They ask questions to verify the identity of people, conduct body scans and search luggage. This is critical due to high prevalence of the incidence of suicide bombers. These activities enable civilians to safely continue with their livelihoods such as trade and farming.

6. Recommendations

To enhance the impact of peace and security policies and peacebuilding programming, as well as place young people at the core of initiatives for preventing or stopping activities that lead to violence, this paper recommends the following:

"Government and relevant stakeholders should work to harness the agency, capacity and leadership of young people and recognise their critical roles in peace building and preventing violent extremism.

"It is vital that policy-makers and practitioners recognise and engage youth as key partners in peacebuilding. Hence, they should facilitate the implementation of the YPS agenda by fostering the participation of young people in peace and security decision-making processes as advocated by the UNSC resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020).

"There is a need to overcome the obstacles that hinders youth from participating in peace building and post-conflict resolution processes. Thus, government and relevant stakeholders should support the design and implementation of youth-driven and youth-focused initiatives to strengthen their ability to collaboratively lead local peace efforts and build resilience.

"Enhancing structures and institutions that promote the participation of youth in governance will actively contribute to their engagement with decisions and activities that affect their wellbeing.

"The way youth resilience manifests itself is diverse. Thus, when youth are recognised and engaged in decision-making process, they are more likely to capitalized on their resilience and become valuable assets in peacebuilding.

"Government and development partners should design holistic programmes to address the social, economic and political factors that lead to violent extremism.

7. Conclusion

This paper examined the role of youth in peacebuilding in Nigeria, with emphasis on the essential role of youth in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. The paper argued that young people inclusion in peacebuilding processes is critical to achieve sustainable and inclusive peace. While most peacebuilding interventions in Nigeria are leader-centric, focusing on formal state authorities and problematising youth as perpetrators of violence, this paper revealed that youth are critical stakeholders with the power to contribute to ending conflict. The experience of the CJTF and

NESIF fellows show that young people are at the forefronts of initiatives and community-based interventions to promote peace and development in North East Nigeria. They have played crucial roles in preventing violence and building peace. This demonstrates the agency of young people in the midst of violence and prove their capability of emerging as leaders and exercising leadership even without a formal position of authority. In the face of violence affecting their communities, young people like the CJTF and NESIF fellows potentially use every opportunity to prove their capacity by creating innovative ideas and approaches to build peace. That is why it is vital that policy makers and practitioners recognise and engage them as key partners.

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YOUTH AND PEACEBUILDING: A COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE

BY
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Abstract

This paper discusses youth and peace building from a communication perspective. It highlights the inevitability of conflict and the uncompromising importance of peace as prelude to any meaningful and sustainable development. Central to the discussions are the most active members of the society; the youths. The youths take centre-stage in conflict and peace situations and should therefore be mainstreamed in any peacebuilding initiative for it to succeed. Highlights also include the essence of communication at intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and mass levels. The paper also discusses the importance of understanding the root cause of conflicts as basis for effective peacebuilding plan, while it highlights that there are no two conflict situations that are the same and therefore, peacebuilding in each context must planned according to its peculiarities. Related concepts to peacebuilding; peace making and peacekeeping are also highlighted. Communication strategies of social and behaviour change (SBC) with advocacy, behaviour change communication (BCC) and social mobilisation as important strategies to achieving behaviour change within the context of peacebuilding. Persuasion and Strategic Communication also formed part of the discourse. The paper concludes that while conflict of different levels and magnitude is inevitable, peace is uncompromisingly paramount for any sustainable development and youths should be mainstreamed in any peacebuilding process for it to success. Effective communication, using the most appropriate technique(s) takes a centre stage in the whole process of peacebuilding.

Introduction

The relationship of between communication, in its many forms, and peace, in its many interpretations remains very important (Hoffman and Hawkins, 2015). This underscores the fact that communication is central in instances of both conflict and peace in which the youths have a crucial role. This is true because the youths are active participant perpetrators of conflicts as well

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as peacebuilding. While they negatively serve as security threats in some instances, they are equally positively active in restoring and or creating peace. However, they play these roles according to the different circumstances they find themselves. Sharing a similar view, Galtung (1967, p.12) described peace as an "umbrella concept". To him, "it is a state of mind felt as a consequence of the actualisation of certain stated human desires. That is, it is a feeling of internal serenity as a result of external stability".

Conflict is a natural phenomenon and therefore inevitable, what really matters is how it is being managed. In our world of today, "Violent conflict is one of the most pressing challenges facing humanity. Armed violence causes physical devastation, suffering, displacement and death. It creates trauma now and for generations to come" ((Silva, Bothen, Szreter, Devereux, Chambraud and Makinson, 2022, p.6). Youth have been identified to be active in conflict situations. Young people are active perpetrators and victims in most crisis circumstances (World Bank, 2012). Their participation is however dependent on a number of circumstances they are faced with.

Arguably, when their youthfulness and positive potentials are harnessed, they certainly will act positively and vice versa. This is so because the youths are at their prime; physically active and psychologically sound, they are in many instances engaged in conflicts on the one hand, and on the other hand, they are also engaged actively in terms of redressing conflict and its aftermath; hence building sustainable peace, especially when they are accorded all the opportunity.

Peacebuilding, peacekeeping and peacemaking are three important concepts in restoring and sustaining peace in any conflict or violent ridden environment (Galtung, 1967) and communication remains very crucial in all the three processes. According to Search for Common Ground (2014), in the area of conflict transformation, communication has historically played a role in shaping the views of policy-makers and influencing popular opinion on conflicts. This implies that for effectiveness of any of the process, communication is indispensable. It is based on the above that this paper discusses youths and peacebuilding from a communication perspective.

Peace

The concept of peace, like many other concepts in the social sciences and humanities, has been defined and conceptualised in divergent ways, depending on the perspective of the person or context from which it is being

defined. Scholarship on peace has been faulted as it is claimed not to have attracted the needed attention. Ginty (2006) observed that because the concept of peace has not been given the desired scholarly attention, it has been under-conceptualised. For Pieper (2008, p.1), ""Peace" means many things to many people. Ranging from the mere "absence of war" to a condition of stable group cooperation to a feeling of individual tranquillity, peace performs a great deal of semantic work." However, a handful of scholars have made several attempts to defining the concept. According to Jarstad, Eklund, Johansson, Olivius, Saati, Sahovic, Strandh, Söderström, Wimelius, Åkebo (2019), peace is a fluid concept, associated with all sorts of laudable goals and embedded in visions of a good society, but the specific meaning of peace, or its constituent components, is rarely analytically clear.

> ... Peace can be defined as negative, positive, or unqualified; however, all three types involve the absence of violence. Peace has been categorised into negative, positive and unqualified. "Negative peace" which refers to the absence of significant relations with groups with whom there is likely to be antipathy and conflict while "positive peace" involves occasional cooperation, mostly for purposes that transcend the daily concerns of either party, and "unqualified peace" entails a pattern of ongoing interaction and cooperation (Pieper, 2008,p).

One thing that remains unchangeable, notwithstanding the context within which and perspective from which peace is defined is that it is the foundation of any meaningful and sustainable development. By human nature, development is a constant craving for individuals and societies. However, it can be argued that peace in itself is hardly acknowledged and appreciated in the absence of conflict (which could be at intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, community, national and international levels). Probably, taking peace for granted could be a contributing factor to conflict and as remedy, concepts like peacebuilding, peacekeeping and peacemaking come to play. Within the context of this chapter, the emphasis is on the involvement of youths as the most active members of any society in peacebuilding.

Conflict

Conflict could be said as an attribute of the living. Galtung (2000) wrote that wrote that conflict can also be seen as a natural process which is part of life and relationships. The concept has received attention of scholars in an attempt to providing an understanding of it. According to Schellenberg (1996),

a more systematic study on conflict started in the twentieth century. Even though there seem to be an agreement on definition of the term, implying that conflict constitutes disagreement or clash of interest, there are varying scholarly views on its consequences.

Diez, Stetter, & Albert (2006, p.565) define conflict as "a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals." Thakore (2013, p.7) is of the view that "conflict means expression of hostility, negative attitudes, antagonism, aggression, rivalry, and misunderstanding. It is also associated with situations that involve contradictory interest between two opposing groups. It can be defined as a disagreement between two or more individuals or groups with each individual or group trying to gain acceptance of its view over others." For Sambou (2017, p.3), "conflict is a struggle between two ideas fighting to occupy the same space at the same time. It is a struggle between interdependent organisations with un-matched goals and who fear interference from each other". Conflict can therefore be referred to any disagreement through which parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns and therefore strive to protect these perceived needs, interests or concerns.

On the varying views on the consequences of conflict, Galtung (2000) observed that conflict is often used as a synonym for violence and thus it bears negative connotations. It can be defined negatively, as a fight or struggle, as a disagreement between people with different ideas or beliefs or as an incompatibility (or perceived incompatibility) of goals and can also be defined positively as an opportunity for actors to express their differences, become aware of others' perceptions, interests and needs, and thus, be an opportunity for change and growth. In agreement to Galtung's assertion, Omisore and Abiodun, (2014) wrote that in the last 25 years (now 33 years), scholars have changed their views concerning conflict. Unlike when it was conceived as negative, conflict is now seen as having the potential for positive growth. Galtung (1968) categorised conflict into positive and negative. Jarstad et.al (2019) observed that ever since Galtung in 1969 introduced the distinction between negative and positive peace to peace and conflict studies, it has constituted the two basic categories of peace employed in the field.

On the consequences of conflict, Aliyu (2020) wrote that conflict is an inevitable situation which could be as mild as simple argument as a result of conflicting ideas/opinions which if properly managed can help in development and can be as big as destroying a whole society, especially when not properly

managed. Also, its consequences could be positive and constructive or negative and destructive.

Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding as a concept came about in response to addressing cases of violent conflicts around the world. It describes a situation of creating harmony between and among aggrieved members of a conflict or conflict-prone society (Aliyu, 2020). According to the United Nations (2010), the term Peacebuilding is rooted in Johan Galtung's work; Three approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, Peace-building of 1976. On the evolution of the concept; the UN (2010) noted;

Peacebuilding became a familiar concept within the UN following Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report; An Agenda for Peace, which defined peacebuilding as action to solidify peace and avoid relapse into conflict. In 2000, the Brahimi Report defined it as "activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war." The UN's understanding of peacebuilding has continued to evolve ever since.

Waldman (2009) wrote that the field of peacebuilding developed in response to some of the world's most severe cases of violence and armed conflict. Essentially, peacebuilding seeks to prevent, reduce, transform and help people recover from violence and armed conflict, as well as empowering people to foster positive relationships at all levels of society. Galtung (1976) defined peacebuilding as "the process of creating self-supporting structures that "remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur." This connotes that peacebuilding is both curative and preventive measure in conflict management.

In the view of Waldman (2009), peacebuilding widens the possibility of post-conflict reconstruction and embraces the intimate link between development and peace. It should also be seen as a supporting and complementary process to conflict prevention, management and post-conflict reconstruction. For Galtung (2000), conflict resolution mechanisms be mainstreamed into the peacebuilding structure to serve as a ready-made conflict management pool, to draw from when the need arises. Thus, a conscious effort of quick and proactive response.

Peace building, as explained by Alida (2022), is a process planned to

resolve current conflicts and prevent reoccurrence by digging into the root causes of the problem and building a comprehensive strategy to encourage sustainable. Alida further explained that successful peace building not only stops or prevents violent conflict, it also changes the way disagreement is handled in a society or between nations. Its main thrust is to maintain peace while acknowledging problems and disagreements as a normal part of human interaction. Rather than rushing to violence, peace building teaches the different parties how to address their problems rationally, how to find solutions cooperatively, and how to identify new problems early enough to address them before further problems arise. In the Nigerian context for example, many of our conflict are ethnic or religious, when building peace, the target should be an attempt to appreciate our differences and respect each other. Emphasis should be made on the strength in our unity against the weaknesses in our divide.

Explaining the concept, Waldman (2009) wrote that peacebuilding refers to:

> activities that go beyond crisis intervention or conflict management, such as long-term development that focuses on developing social, governmental and non- governmental (including religious) mechanisms that favour nonviolent, constructive means of resolving differences. Peacebuilding is an approach to (primarily) post-conflict settings that recognises the need for reconciliation, developing a capacity for conflict resolution, and working towards a sustainable peace. It involves a full range of approaches, processes, and stages needed for transformation toward more manageable, peaceful relationships and governance structures. Peacebuilding is distinct from both peacemaking and peacekeeping as it is proactive in dealing with conflict, rather than reactive. Peacebuilding can be seen to differ from conflict resolution in the sense that its focus is more on building a 'positive peace' grounded in just societal relationships.

Peacebuilding is a comprehensive and sustainable peace process. According to the UN (2010,p.20), peacebuilding is:

> … a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships. The term thus involves a wide range of activities that both precede and follow formal peace accords. Metaphorically, peace is seen not merely as a stage in time or a condition. It is a dynamic social construct …

The UN emphasised that the process of building peace must rely on and operate within a framework and a timeframe defined by sustainable transformation which suggests that the success of any peacebuilding process depends largely on the relationship of the parties involved. As noted by the UN (2010):

> At a general level three overarching principles have been asserted by experts. First, that peacebuilding should take a long-term view in order to build an enduring peace (a peace which should be viewed as a process, not an end-point). Second, that it should take a broad and comprehensive view of the people and contexts which produce conflict (and not just focus on elites and top-level initiatives). Third, peacebuilding must focus on preventing minor conflicts from escalating into open warfare.

Stages in Peacebuilding

It is important to note that while conflicts are inevitable (Omisore and Abiodun, 2014, Aliyu 2020), there are no two conflicts that are the same. Each is unique in its own self. Therefore, peacebuilding in every different situation should be approached differently, based on its peculiarities. The conflict situation defines the terms and conditions of the peacebuilding process. It is also emphasised by the UN (2010) that peacebuilding should be conflict sensitive. A thorough understanding of the causes of conflict is absolutely necessary as it helps in designing conflict sensitive peacebuilding programmes. For instance, there should be diversity (all groups should be given equal chance and treatment) in employing staff to implement a planned peacebuilding programme, all parties should be equally represented and proportionately benefit from a planned peacebuilding programme, if at all it is planned to succeed, community members should be given chance to air their voices, etc. Overall, the distinctive feature that will identify an activity as peacebuilding is whether or not it will significantly reduce the risk of relapse into conflict.

Even though there are no stringent procedures in peacebuilding, it is important to note that the basic steps that are very helpful and facilitate effective peacebuilding process. They include the following as suggested by the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding (2010):

1. Always attempt in understanding the root cause of the conflict

2. Identify key actors and influencers within the aggrieved groups
3. Have a clear focus and involve all necessary stakeholders
4. Let the affected people identify their needs
5. Let the community own the programme

The Challenges of Peacebuilding

Communities recovering from conflict situations experience high degree of uncertainties and complexities; fear of the unknown, recovering from the trauma and shock of the conflict, suffering the losses and damages resulted from the conflict, coping with displacement and lost of hope among other things. At this time, an avalanche of interventions and activities are required to restore and sustain peace; hence restore hope in the people affected. Waldman (2009) observed that a range of multidimensional reconstruction, reform, and rehabilitation efforts have to be implemented in some of the most fragile and unpredictable environments recovering form violent conflict. He noted that societies emerging from war often experience periodic setbacks and sporadic instances of violence. At a time like this, practical approaches like peacebuilding and other related concepts are the most desired. However, despite being a systematic, all-encompassing and sustainable process, peacebuilding, like any other human activities is bound to face certain challenges. This might include but not limited to:

1. Divergent priorities among several donor agencies and national actors working within the same conflict inflicted areas- This could be a big setback in an environment recovering form conflict and its attendant consequences. when organisations operate with different priorities and focus, all in an attempt of peacebuilding, the outcome might not be commensurate with the resources invested in the programmes, put together. Therefore, it is best for different organisations working in peacebuilding to consolidate their individual efforts by working closely in the interest of the conflict inflicted community, with a view of instilling sustainable peace and long-term development
2. Lack of improved strategic plan and communication- In any peacebuilding initiative, donors and national actors need to improve strategic planning and communication, as well as priority setting to ensure a successful implementation.
3. Lack of equal and proportionate participation of all concerned groups,

women and youths especially

4. Lack of adequate involvement/participation of state actors- This might be a serious setback for the process because there might be gap as far as policy formulation and implementation on peace is concerned.
5. Financing modalities not matching policy practice in dealing with the dynamics of post-conflict settings
6. Lack of strategies to build a positive relationship between the state and citizens and to support opportunities for social reconciliation within the conflict-aflicted area.
7. Lack of community ownership of the process
8. Accountability between national and international partners should be strengthened to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated and effectively executed

Related Concepts

Peacemaking

Closely related concepts to peacebuilding are peacemaking and peacekeeping (Galtung, 1976).

Ouellet (2003) wrote that the term "peacemaking" is used in several different ways. As noted by Boutros -Ghali (2003), peacemaking is "action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as contained in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations; Pacific Settlement of Disputes." Peacemaking encompasses the process of tactfully transforming a violent conflict into a non-violent discourse, through communication strategies like mediation, consultation and the likes. As a principle of conflict resolution, peacemaking implies making peace by balancing powers (Rummel, 1981). Peacemaking is thus an active strategy to limit war and violence, through mediation, arbitration, and adjudication. Peacemaking may involve the process of seeking resolution to a conflict while the conflict is ongoing, but it may also involve some kind of arbitration of issues after armed conflict has ceased (Ceadel, 2000).

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping is one of the major mechanisms of ensuring peaceful resolution of conflicts in post-conflict situations (Agrawal, 2011). The UN peacekeeping operations are varied in nature. Facilitating cease-fair

agreements, mediating conflict situations to find solutions, monitoring emergency rule, and non-military aspects including provision of emergency relief and political reconstruction such as facilitating to restore representative democracy, protect and promote human rights and rule of law are some of the major activities associated with UN peacekeeping. The UN (1996, p.3) defines peacekeeping as "an operation involving military personnel, but without enforcement powers, established by the United Nations to help maintain or restore international peace and security in areas of conflict". It is a technique designed to preserve peace, however fragile, where fighting has been halted, and to assist implementing agreements achieved by peacemakers (Castellan, 2010).

The UN peacekeeping remains one of the most effective tools to respond to the challenges of world peace and security. The UN peacekeeping continued to be a dynamic and demanding activity, responding to continuing turbulence in relations between states and to armed conflict within state borders (Boutros-Ghali, 1996). However, Sorjoon and Yusoff (2019) observed that the UN peacekeeping has become so difficult because of many political, humanitarian and military challenges bedevilling the process.

While peacebuilding is a thorough process aimed at resolving current conflicts and preventing future reoccurrence by digging into the root causes of the problem and building a comprehensive strategy to encourage sustainable, peacemaking is the process of tactfully transforming a violent conflict into a non-violent discourse, through communication strategies like mediation, consultation and the likes and peacekeeping is aims at preserving peace, where fighting has ceased, and to assist implementing agreements achieved by peacemakers.

Youths and Peacebuilding

"Violent conflict is one of the most pressing challenges facing humanity. Armed violence causes physical devastation, suffering, displacement and death. It creates trauma now and for generations to come" (Silva, et.al 2022, p.7) Young people are active perpetrators and victims in most crisis circumstances (World Bank, 2012). Sub-Saharan Africa offers a telling example of youth increasingly seen as a cause of societal crisis unlike hitherto seen as the hope and strength of the continent. As observed by Olawole, 2004, In the immediate post-independence period, African youths were seen in extremely positive terms, as the hope of the continent. The youth enjoyed

cultural prestige as agents of transformation of African societies…"

The involvement of young people in violent conflicts is however not unconnected to their agility and active minds in protecting their interest and that of the social group they belong. As observed by Silva, et.al (2022), "humans are tribal. We have an evolved tendency to form and prefer our own group. We are also emotional and our actions are often driven by rapid and unconscious processes, such as the need to preserve a positive sense of self".

Even though many perceive youths as perpetrators of conflict, their involvement in crimes is linked to the societal factors they are faced with, which pose a lot of challenge to their lives. High rate of unemployment is a classic example. As UNDP (2006, p.12) noted,

> analyses of conflict in different parts of the world are starting to identify a 'youth factor' as a key element in the generation or perpetuation of violence. This tendency often leads to overlooking the positive contribution of young people to society, including their potential role in sustaining the social fabric and promoting peace. Understanding the involvement of youth in violent conflict requires a framework that reflects the complexities of the transition to adulthood in societies under pressure. The issue of 'youth and violent conflict' concerns more than youth: it is a reflection - and at the same time a further aggravation - of a broader societal crisis. Trying to understand the intersection between youth and violent conflict is a way of re-examining societies and development processes.

Key among the factors responsible for involvement of youths in violent conflicts are backwardness in education, unemployment and lack of participation in decision making processes. This is justifiable since peacebuilding entails a process of addressing the root causes of conflict, to reconcile differences, to normalise relations and build institutions that can manage conflicts without resorting to violence (SFCG,2014).

Peacebuilding: A Communication Perspective

Paramount to any efficient and impactful human activity is effective communication; intrapersonal, interpersonal, group or mass communication and or verbal/ non-verbal communication. Communication is exceptionally important in peacebuilding. As it is common knowledge, peace is priceless and the foundation for any meaningful development. Peace also influences policy

formation and implementation as well as impact popular opinion. For these to be attained, effective communication takes a centre stage, absence/misuse of which could incite and/or escalate violence. "Communications can be used to incite and escalate violence as well as to mitigate and prevent violence" (SFCG, 2014). Communication, dissemination and perpetuation of war and peace are intimately linked Richmond (2015) in Hoffman and Hawkins).

Search for Common Ground (SFCG, 2014, p.8) noted that, "In the arena of conflict transformation and peacebuilding, communications have historically played a role in shaping the views of policy-makers and influencing popular opinion on conflicts."

To transform the ideas on peacebuilding to action beyond rhetoric, there is need for the use of a range of communication strategies. Communication techniques that could be effective for youths in peacebuilding include but not limited to the following:

1. Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC)

Behaviour is a complex phenomenon, influenced by factors within the social system. As explained by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Social Ecological Model, there are four levels of influence that interact to affect behaviour; individual, family and peer networks, community and social/structural. In conflict situations, a number of factors might affect the behaviour of people, especially young people, considering their vulnerability in conflict situations, and even influence them to develop new behaviour that might not be helpful in peacebuilding. Therefore, it is important to target the behaviour change when designing any peacebuilding project or programme. Communication strategy targeting behaviour change is what is referred to as Behaviour Change Communication (BCC).

Social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) could be said as an upshot of behaviour change communication (BCC). While BCC might be conceived to as targeting behaviour change in individuals, SBCC targets behaviour change in social group(s). According to USAID (2020), SBCC is the strategic use of communication approaches to promote changes in knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs and behaviours. It is composed of synchronised communication messages and activities across a variety of channels to reach multiple levels of society, including the individual, the community, services

and policy.

SBCC is an evidence-based approach and therefore suitable in peacebuilding. Programmes are designed on the basis of existing data and they follow a systematic process, analysing the problem in order to define barriers and motivators to change, then a comprehensive set of communication-based intervention activities are designed to promote the desired behaviour(s). An SBCC strategy is the document that guides the design of interventions, establishing intended audiences, setting behavioural communication objectives and determining consistent messages, materials and activities across channels (USAID, 2016).

According to USAID (2013), "Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) is a framework that uses the strategies of advocacy, Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) and community mobilisation to influence both individual and societal change. It uses a 360-degree approach that is focused not just on mass media but integrates mid-media and interpersonal communication. It systematically addresses the complex processes integral to planning, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluation" of the process. Advocacy, behaviour change communication and social mobilisation are important communication packages helpful in SBCC.

2. Advocacy

Advocacy is a viable SBCC technique where policy makers and influencers are reached out to take policy action and offer the necessary support for a planned project, in this context, peacebuilding. According to the World Bank Group (2018, p.9), "advocacy is the process of educating and motivating influential audiences to take specific actions in support of an issue." Servaes and Malikhao (2012) wrote that the main aim of advocacy is to foster public policies that are supportive to the solution of an issue or programme. They further suggest that since public policies must be viewed as an integral part of development process, advocacy in peacebuilding should be participatory. Advocacy could be seen as a continuous and adaptive process of gathering, organising and formulating information into argument to be communicated to decision makers through various interpersonal and media channels (USAID, 2013). According to Alliance for Justice (2016), advocacy is any action that speaks in favour of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or pleads on behalf of others. A very powerful advocacy tool is the media (traditional and new) plus other levels of communication like interpersonal means.

Areas that policy influencers could be motivated on may include creating enabling environment for peace through enacting supportive laws, policies, providing finances and the likes with an ultimate aim of fostering lasting peace. Effective advocacy strategies include interpersonal communication, use of communication materials like policy brief, handbills, mass media channels and social or digital media platforms. For Sharma (undated), advocacy is the process of people participating in decision-making processes which affect their live and advocacy strategies can include lobbying, social marketing, information, education and communication (IEC), community organising, or many other tactics. He suggested coalition, setting achievable advocacy objectives, fundraising, data generation, identifying target audience, developing the advocacy messages, presentation and evaluation as the basic elements of advocacy.

In mainstreaming youths in peacebuilding, they (the youth) should be provided with the enabling environment and capacity to actively participate in the process. Active participation involves exhibiting the enthusiasm and courage in making sacrifices to learning about the process and participation. They must also understand how the governance system works as well as be ready to accept criticism and resistance (which they must overcome) from members of the affected environment as well as the policy makers.

3. Behaviour Change Communication (BCC)

Silva, et.al (2022, p.7) argue that situational and structural factors also interact with our behavioural characters, often intensifying them. For example, people who are accustomed to violent behaviour may behave in violent ways as part of harmful, automatic patterns of thinking and acting which could prompt further violence. An example is a that of young people that actively participated in violent conflict and might therefore be adaptive of violence even after war time. These behaviours can become normalised and reinforced as part of a group culture, as is often the case for urban street gangs, armed militias, and military forces. A conflict environment can also create cues that individuals associate with violence such as temperature, memories, or a 'hot-headed' emotional state that prompt further violence. Understanding these behavioural and structural drivers of violence is the first step in combating them. The next step is to identify insights that help to overcome these barriers to design more effective peacebuilding interventions.

4. Social Mobilisation

Social mobilisation is a strategy commonly adopted in development projects and can be effectively be used as part of peacebuilding process, especially in mobilising youths to participate in the process. It is a process of dialogue, concession and consensus building between and among parties involved. According to UNICEF (2000), social mobilisation is a broad scale movement to engage people's participation in achieving a specific development goal through self-reliant efforts. It involves all relevant segments of society: decision and policy makers, opinion leaders, bureaucrats and technocrats, professional groups, religious associations, commerce and industry, communities and individuals. It is a planned decentralised process that seeks to facilitate change for development through a range of players engaged in interrelated and complementary efforts. It takes into account the felt needs of the people, embraces the critical principle of community involvement, and seeks to empower individuals and groups for action (UNICEF, 2002).

Within the context of peacebuilding, the goal of socially mobilising youths should be the provision of a range of activities in a broad strategic framework to attain sustainable peace. In social mobilisation for peacebuilding, young people could engage in activities like community mapping, torchlight match, village/community timeline, friendly sporting competitions among others at the initial stage of the process.

Also very important is the use of new/social media to mobilise youths to participate in a peacebuilding process. Owing to the realities of modern day, where technology is evolving very fast and unstoppable, social media platforms serve as very viable tools for mobilisation. Especially that the target is the digital generation, it is arguable if any other platform could be more suitable that social media. The new media provides for interactive information sharing and collaboration via the internet using a variety of means such as texts, images, audio and video (Addison, 2006). Additionally, many social media channels facilitate social engagement, viral sharing of information and trust. It is obvious then that integrating social media into different communication campaigns and development activities will allow the government, civil society and other professionals to leverage social dynamics and networks to encourage participation, conversation and community - all of which can help spread key messages and influence informed and positive decision making. However, this is not to say that other media platforms are not important, but hardly if any will suffice without combining it with social media platforms. All forms

and channels of communication are important in mobilisation. The context determines which platforms are most suitable.

Some of the outstanding characteristics of social media platforms that make them indispensable tools for social mobilisation in this era include but not limited to:

(a) Interactivity: New media is known for its ability to involve and engage the audience in content production and consumption. The new media offers the audience that leverage of being active in the communication process better than older forms of media. Hence, we can say that compared to other media forms, new media has the most evolved feedback system in place and to a large extent, audience determine the extent to which they use the media as well as the type of benefit they derive. Considering this feature of the new media, in mobilising for peacebuilding, the youths have the opportunity of actively participating in the communication process. This gives them a sense of belonging and opportunity to air their voices, hence better chance for sustainable peace.

(b) Mobility: This gives the new media edge over older forms of media because new media gadgets are mobile and aid reception of messages by users, real time. This characteristic is advantageous in the context of mobilising youths in peacebuilding process because the process does not require one to be stationed before he/she can catch up with the process.

(c) Accessibility: Another important opportunity of social media is accessibility. Users have easy access to new media gadgets and therefore aids and makes use very convenient. As observed by Dunu & Uzochukwu (2015), social media are also perceived as tools that help to reach people when, where and how they want to receive messages; it improves the availability of content and may influence satisfaction and trust in the messages delivered.

(d) Multimedia: messages on social/ new media could be in multimedia forms; a combination of various media formats; moving images, cartoons/animations, text and images which enhances content make makes them more interesting and engaging.

1. Persuasion

Mainstreaming elements of persuasion in peacebuilding process is helpful as it aims at shaping, reinforcing, or changing the responses (Miller, 1980) of parties to a conflict. It is natural that people that have experienced violent conflicts are aggrieved and hardened. Therefore, their responses to any peace accord might be quite aggressive and negative. Such responses could be modified by deliberate and symbolic mediated messages containing of emotional appeals of the target audience (Wilson, 2002). In mainstreaming persuasion in peacekeeping, it is important for youths to understand that framing of the message is very important. Lots of diplomacy and fairness most be engraved in the messaging. Persuasive communication targets:

(a) Cognition- Persuasion can be used to change individuals' beliefs about an object or an issue, which includes attributes, interpretation, definition, outcome, etc. McGuire (1968a) in Albarracin (2002) proposed that the impact of a persuasive message depends on the completion of a series of stages, including; exposure to the communication, attention, comprehension, yielding, retention, and behaviour. Subsequently, McGuire simplified his original model by abandoning the distinction between exposure, attention, and comprehension and proposed a single stage comprising all aspects of message reception. Retention y_ and behaviour were excluded as irrelevant to most laboratory studies of persuasion, and yielding remained the other critical processing stage. In the new framework, the probability of actual influence is a joint function of the probability of receiving the message and the probability of yielding to the message recommendation once its content has been received. Therefore, it is important to adopt the above model of giving room for cognition during any peacebuilding process among youths.

(b) Attitude- Persuasion can be used to change individuals' attitude during a post-war period when peacebuilding is absolutely necessary. Attitude toward in response to conflict might be negative and destructive, hence aggravate the conflict. Therefore, persuasion is a valuable strategy in attitude change for the affirmative.

(c) Behaviour- Behaviour could be difficult to change; it needs consistent and sustained effort over a long period of time, and especially a behaviour formed in response to conflict which is

expectedly overt. Persuasion can be used to change individuals' behaviour developed as a result of conflict.

2. Strategic Communication

The communication challenge expectations of rapidly improved living conditions can be very high in the immediate post-conflict period. A strategic communication campaign can help to narrow the gap between what is expected and what can realistically be provided. Goals of such a campaign may include:

- To provide essential information about the security situation and what is being done to protect the people
- To inform the population of social, economic and political initiatives underway to improve their lives, thus enabling them to participate, and
- To publicise the dividends of peace and thus build support for the peace process.

Conclusion

This paper concludes that peace is uncompromisable, it lays the foundation of any meaningful development and youths who are the most active and productive members of any society play important roles in restoring hope in the afflicted through peacebuilding. In as much as young people are active perpetrators and victims in most crisis circumstances (World Bank,2012), they can as well be active in peacebuilding processes.

Peacebuilding is a broad and complex concept but yet flexible and a brilliant alternative to managing and preventing conflict. It aims at theoretically and practically changing the prevailing narratives emanating from a conflict situation and also aims at preventing future occurrence of the said conflict. Closely related concepts like peacemaking and peacekeeping are as well strategic in brokering peace and rejuvenating conflict inflicted and conflict prone communities.

One of the most vulnerable groups that needs be mainstreamed in the process is the youth. There should be an avenue for the community to own the project and handle it emphatically even if the initiation is coming from outside. Affected persons are in best position to identify their needs and be part of the process of finding lasting solutions through peacebuilding. Even though there are no straight-jacketed rules to designing a peacebuilding

programme, the overall and distinctive feature that will identify an activity as peacebuilding-driven is whether or not it will significantly reduce the risk of relapse into conflict as emphasised by the UN (2010). The process should kick start with an understanding the underlying cause of the conflict which can only be established through careful and thorough research of the socio-cultural and emerging issue in the conflict area. From a communication perspective, as discussed above, it is noteworthy that peacebuilding encompasses an avalanche of communication components and techniques, among which are SBCC with advocacy, BCC and social mobilisation as techniques for achieving social change. Persuasion and strategic communication are also vital in achieving peacebuilding objectives and should be harnessed. No dogmatic rules to designing peacebuilding initiative but understanding the major causes of the conflict is important, so also the use of different media platforms; both traditional and new is important and effective. This should be based on the peculiarities of the conflict situation in question.

Recommendations

Based on the issues discussed about youth and peacebuilding from a communication perspective, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Youths in conflict inflicted persons should be encouraged to initiate peacebuilding projects on their own and seek assistance when and where necessary. This is because they are directly affected and suffered the consequences and will therefore manage their situation more emphatically than any external initiative.
2. Stakeholders in peacebuilding should ensure involvement of youths in peacebuilding projects. This very important because they pay a key role in both conflict and peacebuilding. The relevance of youths in peacebuilding process must not be underestimated. They should be given the opportunity to participate in the process and also be encouraged to make contributions for sustainable peace.
3. Nigeria has over the years experienced several conflicts and no longer a novice in conflict management or rather the need for effective conflict management. It is now evident that conflicts do not happen overnight, they normally present signals before they finally happen. Conscious and proactive efforts must be invested

in inculcating the spirit of peacebuilding, especially in the conflict prone communities.

4. Social media platforms should be embraced as vital platforms for mobilising for peace, especially among the youths. This is because we are in the technological era that has determined to a very large extent that communication procedures are evolving very fast with unimaginable dynamism.

5. In an attempt to achieve peace through peace building, it is important to harness whatever strategies employed with setting a development peace agenda through fair and ethical framing of the peace messages.

6. Peacebuilding should be mainstreamed in school curriculum right from primary schools. This way, the young minds will grow with a mindset of peace loving and appreciation of our diversities. Peace clubs and activities among school children should also be encouraged.

7. Religious intolerance should be discouraged at all levels of the society.

8. Fake news and hate speech should be checked. They disrupt peace and ignite hatred between and among particularly different youth groups. Key to this is particularly politically linked. It has been established that fake news and hate speech in Nigeria was heightened during the electioneering period of 2015.

9. All conflicts are unique in their own ways, peacebuilding should also be based on the peculiarities of the conflict situation that prompted the peacebuilding process.

10. Use of multiple strategies should be explored in any peacebuilding project should be encouraged.

11. Peacebuilding is time consuming and it takes patience, perseverance, resilience, diplomacy to be achieved. Youths should be encouraged to endure and persevere to build lasting peace and ultimately, foster meaningful development.

12. Social factors pushing youths into violence should be addressed with a view of paving way for lasting peace.

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DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES AMONG YOUTH IN NIGERIA: AN INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP: MEANINGS, CONCEPTS, TYPES.

BY
SAFIYA AHMAD NUHU*

Leadership Defined

Various definitions of leadership have been advanced by experts, writers and researchers in the field, however, no universal definition is adopted.[1] What characterises a leader is mostly based on qualities which defines a leader in a variety of ways. How one defines leadership depends on the individual's perspective about it. There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it.[2] Northouse tried to define leadership by identifying 'components' he considered as being central to the phenomenon: (a) Leadership is a process, (b) leadership involves influence, (c) leadership occurs in groups, and (d) leadership involves common goals.[3] From these, he described leadership as a 'process', whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.[4]

Grint discusses various contexts from which leadership could be defined (positional, achievement, results, etc), and agrees that leadership could be viewed from the perspective of a process -observing and learning from how leaders perform their functions, an approach which allows for the development of leadership skills from the observance of leaders and how they perform their tasks.[5] Altalib sees leadership as both a role and a process.[6] The leader is chosen from the group for that role, and members expect him to deliver and also ensure the achievement of their goals.[7] Leadership is also seen as the ability to transmit one's passion to inspire the followers, to achieve their common goals and vision to set down the group's norm etc.

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1 Peter G Northouse *Leadership theory and practice* (2015) 7th ed. at 2.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid at 6.
4 See ibid at 5-6.
5 K Grint *Leadership: A Very Short Introduction* (2010).
6 H Altalib *Training Guide for Islamic Workers: Human Development Series No.1* (1991)
7 Ibid.

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Lynn defines it as 'the ability or capacity of an individual to influence others to take some type of action.'[8]

Who is a Leader?

A leader is often considered as being someone with 'influence', 'authority', 'headship' within a group or a team. Leaders inspire and support. There are many characteristics that indicate who a leader is. One needs to have some of the following to be able to lead effectively: vision, resolve, discipline, hard work, aptitude, knowledge, courage, diligence, perseverance, strength, ability to listen, empathy, wisdom, consultation, participation, eloquence, patience, accountability, ability to monitor, ability to delegate, among many others.

Kouzes and Posner gave this description 'leaders get people moving. They energize and mobilise. They take people and organisations to places they have never been before…'[9]. Leaders seek not just improvement but also innovation.[10] In popular terms, it is true that 'the only limit of the realisation of tomorrow is the doubts of today'. A leader directs and leads people to realise a common vision, this is often best achieved if the leader is innovative in approach. A leader should not be fearful of the unknown, they should take challenges and turn them into opportunities.

Is Leadership Natural or Acquired?

There was a belief that 'some people are innately creative, while most have few original thoughts. Some people are born to be leaders, and the rest are followers. Some people can have real impact, but the majority can't'.[11] Those who ascribe to this line of thinking are people who conceptualise leadership as a natural trait or as a behaviour -and this is a 'personality perspective' of leadership. Some other scholars regard leadership from a skills perspective. This viewpoint stresses the capabilities (knowledge and skills) that make effective leadership possible.[12] In his book, 'Originals' Grant demonstrates that everyone can enhance his/her skills and creativity,

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8 D Schultz *Encyclopedia of Public Administration and Public Policy* at 251.

9 Kouzes and Posner et at 1.

10 Jonathan Gifford *100 Great leadership ideas: from successful leaders and managers around the world* () at 3

11 Adam Grant *Originals* (2017) ix.

12 Northouse op cit note 1 at 5.

and thus be able to lead.

Whatever the case, the good news is that, a person need not be innately creative or a born natural leader to be effective at leadership. And although there are those people that are born with natural leadership traits, they may not in reality be that much successful at leadership. Again, although leaders may have certain shared qualities, these need not be biological traits. Leadership qualities can be acquired, through the understanding of what makes effective leaders and how their qualities of leadership can be developed in individuals through an information-processing channel. Hence, leadership qualities, traits and values can be developed and inculcated.[13]

Relevance Of Training on Leadership

First, one needs to understand the question 'why' improve your skills on leadership. Though not the only reason, one very influential motive is because 'Corporations seek those with leadership ability because they believe they bring special assets to their organisations and, ultimately, improve the bottom line.'[14] Thus, this implies that having those special assets is desirable in a competitive environment.

Whether one has natural leadership traits or not, a training on leadership is important in honing in one's overall leadership potential. Leadership trainings often help a person explore one's abilities and potential, as well as helps one identify possible leadership gaps or weaknesses in order to overcome them. Leadership trainings can help an individual refocus and reflect, and if need be, redirect one's attention to leadership strengths. A second important reason is because leadership trainings offer an insight into the science of what motivates people. Understanding individuals gives one the added advantage and a certain edge, which enables one to easily sell ideas, products or services that are desirable and likely to earn positive points.

The relevance of the subject matter of leadership gained much significance in the 1980's, a period which brought the topic to 'the apex of the academic and public consciousnesses'.[15] This awareness and publicity was as a result of the belief that understanding leadership, is a way to improve an individual's personal, social, and professional life as well as advance

13 Ibid at 1.
14 Ibid.
15 See ibid at 4.

one's prospects. Hence much importance was attached to understanding and acquiring leadership skills.

Some Leadership Styles

Styles of leadership, refer to the way and manner a leader acts to attain their goals. These styles differ on the basis of personality, goals, operational context, training, nature of authority and so on. There are about five types of leadership styles; laissez- faire, autocratic, participative, transactional and transformative leadership styles.

Laissez-faire is the hands-free type of leadership where followers are expected to do what is right with little or no supervision. Employees or the lead may or may not be highly experienced and trained. Mentoring opportunities are not enhanced with weak supervision and the leader may not be aware of all necessary information. On the other hand, it fosters a sense of responsibility, harmony and teamwork.

The autocratic type of leader on the other hand, solely takes decisions devoid of consultation. Supervision is very high and the leader has total authority which is unchallenged. However, it dampens the initiative of creativity subordinates.

Participative style is democratic where the leader consults with subordinates and peers but in the final analysis takes the decision. The participative leader carries his/her team along and gives them ownership of decisions and actions. Positively, participative type of leadership enhances the acceptance of changes within organisations but quick decisions are conversely difficult to make due to the need for consultations.

The transactional type of leadership as opposed to the laissez-faire is more hands-on, where the leader works with his/her team to attain the set goals. Performance of team members are reviewed by the leader and observations; corrections and re-training are given if required. The leader uses the reward and punishments for attainment or non-attainment of goals respectively. This style enables modification on the job due to practical realities but at the same time also indicate inconsistency in the positions of the leader.

The leader using the transformational style motivates and inspires the subordinates to achieve the set goals, hence effective communication is very vital. It is related to populism or the espousing of people's aspirations. The transformational leader also acts as a role model and engages in the delegation of simple tasks and concentrates on more complex ones. However, this style

of leadership can border on authoritarian tendencies.

Leadership Contexts and Roles

a) Personal leadership: The role of the individual within his environment and how he conducts himself/herself in personal dealings, relationships and issues. How he/she executes daily affairs and activities, and how life choices are selected and worked upon. It refers to one's approach towards general life's goals and aspirations. It pertains to how one makes life choices and one's approach to opportunities.

b) Organisational leadership: The role of the individual in his organisation and how he/she handles collective goals to achieve organisational objectives. It pertains how one positions him/her self within the organisation.

c) Public service/leadership: This relates to how an individual approaches the work space within the civil service sphere, and the role he/she plays in executing his/her responsibilities. How one is able to use personal skills and interpersonal relations to get the job done, and how one makes leadership choices as he/she climbs the civil service ladder.

Personal Leadership Development

For the individual, it is important to identify which personal development stage you are at, and how to develop your leadership prospects at that stage. Here, the individual situates himself in his environment and tries to identify his values, develop his vision and mission. In a general sense, one can place himself/herself within the following personal development stages:

Early learning years -studentship/apprenticeship, etc:

These are the years when an individual is trying to navigate the skills and knowledge acquisition stage. At this stage, it is important for the individual to identify what his/her life's purpose is, what direction he/she is going, what priorities the person will focus on, and what realities one has to navigate. An example will be targeting a particular grade to be acquired to, for example, be a lecturer, or work in an oil company, or to start up your own business initiative.

This is often the stage of career choices and paths, thus being aware of options and opportunities will be really helpful in developing a success path.

Developing a 'personal leadership development strategy' (PLDS) will also be relevant here. Always revert back to your PLDS at subsequent stages, and modify, or upgrade when necessary.

Early career stage

This is a critical stage which shapes an individual's career path and influences if not determines career prospects. At this stage, the individual needs to be careful about his/her choices to be able to excel. Developing a career objective is quite useful at this stage. For most, this stage is one in which a person works under someone -be it a mentor, a boss, a manager, supervisor, etc. Thus, hard work and dedication will make a person stand out for leadership prospects. Identifying your values, and career priorities is very important at this stage.

Mid-career levels

At the mid-career levels, you have many people that are working under you, or look up to you. It is good to actualise your values by following your rules and standards. Your leadership potentials will exhibit more where you are able to manage situations aptly and establish integrity within your work space. Understand your environment and the people you work with in the environment.

Management levels

At this level, the skills you have honed in overtime, are demonstrated in what you do, and reflect on your leadership role. These are exhibited in how you handle various activities to make you successful at this leadership level or otherwise. If you reach the management level without having developed good personal development skills, established values, then it is likely you will not optimally utilise the opportunity that leadership presents. If this happens, your performance is likely to be at a level that is not at par with your leadership prospects or potential.

Organisational Leadership

Most people, especially those between the mid-career to managerial levels, work within the context of an organisational structure, working with other people to achieve an organisational goal. According to Maxwell, the *17 Indispensable Laws of Teamwork* state 'one is too small a number to achieve

greatness,' for, no accomplishment of real value has ever been achieved by a human being working alone.[16] Grifford also opines that 'Leaders are leaders of teams'. He further added that 'Leaders themselves, despite their apparently astonishing abilities, are still only one person, with one brain and one set of ideas. The organisation has many people, with many brains and many more ideas…The collective wisdom of the organisation can be the key to a leader's success. So, potentially, can its adaptability. In numbers there is variety, and variety-of thought, of skill, of aptitudes, of ideas -is the key to survival'.[17] So basically, leadership cannot exist without followers. Even within the personal sphere, leaders influence and inspire followers.

An Approach to Organisational Leadership

A leader within the organisation must acknowledge that he/she is a part of a team, and must avoid positional thinking for the vision of his/her organisation to be successful. To bring out the best performance, employees should be regarded as teammates rather than those who work for the leader -to allow for a flow of ideas and facilitate innovation in their approach to work. The different approaches to organisational leadership are briefly explained below:[18]

- The Position approach: People in this arrangement are bosses but not leaders in the real sense. 'They have subordinates, not team members. They rely on rules, regulations, policies, and organisation charts to control their people. Their people will only follow them within the stated boundaries of their authority'. In most cases, the position approach does not require ability and effort to achieve. An example can be seen in various professions that have strict codes of seniority such as the Forces (armed forces, police force, and other security forces). However, a good personal leadership approach may help the leader in executing his functions and also inspiring loyalty. That is why Maxell opined that some leaders who lack the self-discipline, work ethic, organisation, or skills to be productive people can't seem to produce results.[19] When that is the case, it's usually because they have not developed their individual and

16 John C. Maxwell, *Leadership Gold* (Thomas Nelson Inc, Nashville, 2008) p.7.
17 Ibid at 2.
18 See: http://psychologyformarketers.com/5-levels-leadership-john-maxwell/.
19 Ibid.

personal leadership skills.

- The permission approach: This is an approach in which a leader influences people with relationship, not just position.[20] He seeks out views and encourages participation. 'People do more than merely comply with orders. They actually start to follow. And they do so because they really want to'. The leader's approach here influences people's behaviour. But one needs to be careful that this produces results.
- The production approach: This approach views that, it is not just enough to be in the position of leadership and use such position to influence people, a leader should be able to produce impact in the organisation. [21]
- People development approach: While the emphasis of the production stage is personal to the leader, people development focus on the people because they are any organisation's most appreciable asset. Therefore, good leaders invest their time, energy, money, and thinking into growing others as leaders.[22]
- Pinnacle: Leadership at this high level lifts the entire organisation and creates an environment that benefits everyone in it, contributing to their success. The individuals who lead so well for so long that they create a legacy of leadership in the organisation they serve.

Public Service Leadership

Sometimes, people find themselves working in the civil service sphere rather than the private sector. Within the civil service, leadership is not usually determined by qualities of leadership exhibited, or approach to work, but by experience acquired over years, and hierarchy. In some cases, other factors such as political contacts, and affiliations may also influence who becomes a leader. Thus, in this regard, the leader may not be the most qualified to lead. Having good interpersonal skills and enhancing your personal leadership skills will always make a person stand out as a valuable contributor to the organisation. Transparency, accountability and commitment to work are indispensable assets to the public servant.

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20 http://psychologyformarketers.com/5-levels-leadership-john-maxwell/. *Op cit*.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.

Developing Good Personal Leadership Skills

Have a vision:

A vision is the projection of what a person would like to see achieved overtime. It is the imagery, that takes shape with every effort put in place to realise it. A successful vision should have the quality of inspiring one on the milestones he/she hopes to achieve, as well as defining the changes one intends to introduce. Thus, it is important for visions to be bold, and aspirational, to be clear and measurable. Although, it is also good to have a vision that is ambitious so that you can employ your efforts to the fullest to have it realised, you should try to construe it in such a way that will make it achievable.

Aside from having a personal vision, depending on where one finds him/herself, one may have to deal with the organisational vision. Glifford defines an organisational vision as 'what an organisation should look like in the future and the way in which it will change the world'.[23]

It is advised that good leaders should both be visionary and realistic. A leader must be ready to adjust his vision in the face of reality. This reality may be that a vision needs adjustments that are not necessarily in consonance with the original ideas that informed the vision. Failing to do this often emanates from a desire to focus on vision at the detriment of facing reality which land leaders in awful pitfalls. That is why Maxwell emphasised that "face reality as it is not as it was or as you wish it were".[24]

Have a mission

The mission is the instructing power that pushes the leader to achieve results. The mission, as argued by Grifford, 'should spell what the organisation he leads has to offer, to whom and why, and how it intends to achieve that mission'.[25] When a leader has developed a mission based on the above guiding principle, a leader must be on the watch to find out whether the organisation's mission is congruent with the realities of the external environment. This will include answering question such as: Are there adequate demands in the external environment that are in consonance with the mission? Is the leader's mission

23 Jonathan Glifford *100 Great Leadership Ideas (*Beulahland publications,Edo, Nigeria), p.9.
24 Ibid. p.67
25 Jonathan Gifford, *op cit.*

able to respond to environmental trends in the economy? [26]

Establish your values

A leader has to establish values that will affect every aspect of corporate culture, and can ensure that every person under him/her understands how he or she is expected to behave in any circumstances.[27] Some examples of the value a leader should establish include: respect, courage, humility, service, wisdom, integrity, appreciation, commendation, etc.[28]

Seek out change:

According to Gifford 'bringing about change is the primary function of leadership. Change is frightening because it is, by definition, a leap into the dark. However, change is unavoidable: market conditions can shift quite suddenly and with little or no warning.'[29] What a leader must do is to encourage the organisational environment he/she leads to constantly innovate. As Gifford puts it, 'Organisations that actively seek out change are more likely to stay ahead of the game.'[30]

The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership[31]

1. Model the way: Being a model of the behaviour the leader expects of others is the best way to gain the commitment of and loyalty from the people that are led.[32] A leader must be an example to his followers. A leader's actions are the best ways to establish a path for his followers. The model of behaviour the leader exhibits has to be continuous and deliberate even where people are not watching so that when they do watch they will think of such acts as the personality of the leader that propel them to naturally emulate.

2. Inspire a shared vision: leadership it is said is a people's business.

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26 Ray Maghrori and Erik Rolland Strategic Leadership: The Art of Balancing Organizational Mission with Policy, Procedures, and External Environment. Available at: file:///C:/Users/HP/AppData/Local/Temp/1997-JSL-Leadership.pdf.

27 Jonathan Gifford *Op cit* p.12.

28 See: https://masonleads.gmu.edu/about-us/core-leadership-values/.

29 Jonathan Gifford *op cit.* 16.

30 Ibid. p. 17.

31 Kouzes at 15

32 Ibid, p.16.

Some of the ways to inspire people is to connect, communicate and motivate the people you lead. A leader must have a persistent sense of optimism about a bright future for the people he/she leads. To inspire a shared vision, the led have to feel liked, cared for, included, valued and trusted.

3. Challenge the process: Leadership inevitably involves challenge. A leader must be ready to challenge the process (meaning the established status quo) to mine for opportunities that are lurking in unknown treasures.[33] It is part of the duties of a leader to change the status quo which itself will be impossible without challenging the process.

4. Enable others to act: Majority of leaders only want to remain at the top because of insecurities associated with the consequences of having someone to deputise. A leader must feel that lifting people to new level is a requirement for effective leadership. Good leaders actually make themselves unnecessary. Without the leader making himself unnecessary to enable others act, the organisation will remain enfeebled by the absence of the leader. Enabling others to act is easily achieved through mentoring.

5. Encourage the heart: A leader must encourage the led by loving them. Love only develops if a leader does not get too far from the people because when that happens, the leader can no longer sense the needs of his people. That is why Al Maktoum is of the view that a good leader must consider his people as his country's foremost asset and not look at them as a burden because there is a world of difference between a leadership that is based on love and respect, and one that is based on fear.[34] Part of what naturally encourages the heart is for the leader to guide the led with respect even if the led errs because of inexperience. Patience is a virtue, that is very useful for encouraging the heart.[35]

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33 See: https://www.njit.edu/leadership/challenge-process.

34 Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum *My vision: Challenges in the Race of Excellence* (Motivate Publishing, Dubai, UAE), p.7.

35 Yahaya Kwande (1998) The Making of a Northern Nigerian, An Autobiography of Yahaya Kwande (Fab Anieh Nigeria Limited, Jos) p. 134.

THE NIGERIAN YOUTH AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

BY
PROF HASSANA SANI DARMA*

Introduction

Of its booming population of between 180-200 million citizens, more than 70 percent of Nigerians are youth (CIA, 2019). However, despite their massive numbers and huge prospects for contributing to economic growth and development, the participation of youth in leadership, and the general polity is not encouraging. Increasingly, however, there is a demand for more inclusivity and participation of youth and women in the leadership and governance, across the globe. This is reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

But one has to ask the critical question, 'if youth are engaged in leadership roles and position, will they be capably, efficiently and responsibly able to undertake the task and discharge it?', are they competent? Do they have competitive advantage? These questions do not necessarily require a prompt answer. However, certain facts indicate that there is need to do more to build competencies and capacity among youth in Nigeria. A number of factors may limit the young persons' exposure, experience and ability to fit into the climate of leadership and responsibility.

For example, in Nigeria, most formal school settings focus on the academic curricula, and do not create as much opportunities for youth to be engaged in activities that will develop their skills and capabilities. This has the effect of creating a gap in the overall outcome of the educational sojourn. Most of our graduates 'have worked hard to 'learn', but have not had the opportunity to employ their learning in real life situations. Thus, they have not learned to work with the knowledge acquired while learning. Most find themselves pushed to the world of labour without having acquired the necessary skills for them to be optimally productive or indeed, marginally so. More so, the employability of the Nigerian graduate is falling as the quality of education falls.

Today's world needs people with innovative and creative skills. People that can employ their learning experiences, and relate to their environments to solve some of the world's problems, people who are able to take on the challenge of using skills and using their innovative capacity to provide real solutions, these are the people sought after by corporations and enterprises.

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If youth are to be appointed into leadership positions, then it is important that we have people who are capable. Those who have had opportunities to improve their skills and expertise, those who understand our policy priorities, those who have effective leadership and communication skills. We need those who can create and advance vibrant and proactive policies that will benefit the polity. This roundtable proposes to engage youth in the leadership conversation that will help develop in them the capacities necessary for being not only leaders but effective ones.

Some Leadership Challenges in The Nigerian Context

It is very important for a leader to be able to place himself/herself in the context of one's environment, and balance his/her leadership roles within the environment one operates. In Nigeria, we have certain factors that may determine leadership roles. Some of these unbalance traditional leadership theories and create complexities. Some may pose a challenge to effective leadership and as such are important to be identified for a person to be able to situate himself/herself and navigate the leadership terrain.

a) Challenges of youth and poverty: 48% of Nigeria's population live in extreme poverty, giving the country the unenviable title of "The World's Poverty Capital." Close to 100 million Nigerians cannot afford necessities like food, education and shelter (Esowe, 2020). Despite poverty-alleviation schemes by the tiers of government, the number of poor Nigerians is pretty much the same for close to a decade.

   Youth growing in poverty stand at a disadvantage when it comes to leadership. Homelessness, little to no education, attention deficit, difficulty associating with others greatly affect how productive youth can become (APA, 2009). Moreover, poverty can directly lead to the others challenges itemised below.

b) Youth and unemployment: According, the National Bureau of Statistics 60.7% of youth aged 15-35 are unemployed, with at least 1.8 million entering the Labour market annually. Most of the recent government policies fail to address the problem of youth employment due to poor funding, structure or corruption. This leads to problems in youth like depression, low self-esteem, lack of initiative and creativity;

while also making vulnerable to falling into crimes (Olaleye, 2019).

Unemployment in youth also impairs their decision-making and critical thinking skills, and increases "the risk of loss of talent and skills since a great amount of university graduates are unable to find a job and to put their knowledge and capabilities into producing innovation and contributing to economic growth" (Nedeljkovic, 2014).

c) Youth and drug and substance abuse: To relieve stress, to fit in, or to feel better, among other reasons, youth resort to substance abuse. Different substances %pills, alcohol, animal dung, injections, etc.% are used in various ways to give a dopamine rush and make one temporarily euphoric. Repeated abuse of substances changes how a person's brain functions over time, which is referred to as an addiction. (NIDA, 2020).

Drug users may experience function at sub-optimal levels and may harm the developing brain and cause low IQ. Also, parts of the brain responsible for resisting impulses become damaged as a result, coupled with depression, paranoia, aggressiveness and slow thinking. The Nigerian government estimated in 2018 that more than 3 million bottles of codeine-based syrups are consumed daily in Kano and Jigawa alone (BBC, 2018). Regular confiscations by authorities in Nigeria reveal how much Nigerians are into substance abuse. In 2020, NAFDAC said it confiscated 31 containers of tramadol worth over 1.3 trillion Naira (The Punch, 2020).

d) Youth and violence: Observing the tendency of Nigerian youth to be aggressive, minor disputes to large-scale riots, one would easily draw a conclusion to how violent the youth are. Caused by many factors, youth violence, which is common the world over, range from bullying, fighting, assault, murder and more recently, joining terrorist and other armed groups. Effects of this include hindering building of social relationships, societal stigma, lack of involvement in decision-making, and low employability. If violence leads to a conviction, the convict may be denied the right to run for public office (TVS, 2009).

Some of the leadership issues in Nigeria are examined briefly below:

1. Leadership and accountability

   According to Ninalowo, 'accountability implies that government functionaries should be prepared to be answerable for their actions at all times to members of the public and be able to justify their actions at the level of moral and ethical standards.' A sizable number of scholars have argued that development in any nation is a function of a leadership that subscribe to the principles of accountability in government at various levels. It is further argued that one of the factors that has militated against the initiatives for development by various governments in Nigeria since independence in 1960 is that of leadership that failed to embrace the culture of proper management of public resources. The outcome has been that of poverty and hunger among the people leading to political and social instability in the country.

   According to Akinkuotu (2011), poor leadership is persistently a problem because most political leaders in Nigeria owe allegiance to 'godfathers' who sponsored them into political offices, so that they do everything possible to satisfy them even to the detriment of the nation's development. According to Babawale one of the major challenges to development in Nigeria is that of bad leadership and 'politics of belly' that abound at all levels of governance in the country. He posits that 'Nigeria lacks good quality leadership'. To move forward as a nation, we need new breed of leaders that are sensitive, patriotic, and have demonstrable vision.

2. Leadership and good governance

   Good governance is a term which many scholars have admitted as being imprecise in content and meaning. But across many ideologies, that are rooted in both secular and divine sources, one can deduce a consensus that the meaning of the word entails the possession of positive quality by public institutions in managing public affairs and public resources. Public affairs in itself incorporate ideals such as human rights, democracy, rule of law, transparency, accountability etc. In this sense, a leader has to be imbued or armed with the qualities of good leadership to be able manage the aforementioned ideals in the interest of the public good.

In Nigeria, leadership and good governance cannot really be discussed on a clean and positive slate. This is largely due to the historical context of the objective of the leaders that created the country now known as Nigeria. According to Oni and Excellence-Oluye, the colonial administration that formed Nigeria had amongst its objectives, the total domination of the colonised people and economic exploitation of the resources of the colonised state. As a result, many of the good qualities of good leadership alluded to above were lacking in the administration of the country. Unfortunately, this legacy had been passed on at independence. There is thus even under the democratic dispensation which started in 1999, a complete detachment between the leaders and the governed; perpetual embezzlement of public resources and constant attempt to cling to power through unlawful means. What happens in Nigeria is what Maxwell describes thus: 'as soon as leaders arrive at the top, they spend their time trying to push others off the top. They play king of the Hill because of their constant insecurity or competitiveness' One can hardly dispel the truism of Maxwell's assertion on the Third Term debacle of the erstwhile Obasanjo's administration within 2003-2007.

3. Leadership and corruption

Corruption is a culture arising from the moral shortcomings of institutional leaders who prioritize their personal interests over the organisation, institutions or groups of people for which they are responsible. Although some consider corruption as being generally interwoven with political leadership, many instances of organisational corruption exist to dispel this notion. Corruption occurs even in organisations that communicate and create an image around a commitment to value systems, such as the Enron Corporation and the Wounded Warrior Project.

The reality as put by William Pit is that 'unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it' Therefore the power a leader exacts influences his/her tendencies to be corrupt. Corruption in this sense, to borrow from Bala Usman, 'means much more than public officers taking bribes and gratification, committing fraud and stealing funds and assets entrusted to their care.' It 'means

> the deliberate violations, for gainful end, of standards of conduct, legally, professionally or even ethically established in private and public affairs.
>
> In Nigeria, the cancer of corruption has devastatingly destroyed the fabric of national existence. The consequences of this had over time translated to diversion of resources; poor budget implementation, looting the public treasury and rigging elections, etc.

How does one approach the realities of the leadership terrain in Nigeria? The answer quite simply is that, the leadership challenge never goes away. Leadership endures these changes -times change, problems change, technologies change, and people change. A true leader has to learn to navigate the terrain to achieve success. The core assumption necessary for emerging leader development is to understand that they should expect continuous white water—a turbulent work environment of continuous change Cerami (2015).

Combating Corruption Through Value-Based Leadership

Values-based leadership is defined as a relationship between an individual (leader) and one or more followers based on shared strongly internalized ideological values espoused by the leader and strong followers' identification with these values. Value based leadership is asserted to result in: a) exceptionally strong identification of followers with the leader, the vision espoused by the leader; b) internalised commitment to the vision of the leader; c) arousal of follower motives that are relevant to the accomplishment of attempts (Osiyemi, 2006).

Values are regarded as esteemed qualities which are intrinsically desirable and have importance. Experts in the humanities have described values as 'our very core. Values on which the Nigerian society should be built upon include transparency, patriotism, personal integrity, fear of God, courage, transformational leadership, accountability, vision, creativity, knowledge, character and passion (Kayode, 2010).

An organisation's leader's principal goal should be to cater to the interests of all relevant stakeholders while reflecting on their actions and seriously contemplating their affiliation with society-at-large. The good leader does not try to be socially obstructive by seeking operating avenues which are devoid of regulation (Nicolaides and Duho, 2019).

- Corruption can be mitigated through good values that are routinely promoted and reinforced through effective systems. Leaders must be committed, dependable, and willing to take action on the ethics they promote and be able to deal with diverse teams. Furthermore, such values should be sustained by processes and systems that are conducive to ethical action and which support effective ethical leadership, possessing the relevant skills and the aptitude to make the needed ethical decisions.
- An organisation's culture influences a great deal of things in the organisation both from and operational and also a strategic perspective. Institutional values can be further promoted through effective accountability systems, with appropriate support. A federal government comprises a legislative, executive and a judicial branch. Each branch is responsible for the execution of its respective duties, and for keeping one another from overextending its influence.
- Institutions must have clear policies for dealing with corruption – suspected as well as once confirmed. Transparency coupled with a genuine desire for openness are essential on the part of the leader and serve to restrain corruption as one is held accountable for their actions. Transparency is attained by stakeholders observing, analysing, and taking necessary actions to hold leaders accountable (Bauhr and Grimes, 2014).

Navigating Complexity and Performance

Dictionary.com defines complex as the state of being 'so complicated or intricate as to be hard to understand or deal with.' The world's biggest businesses lose an average of more than $1 billion (£620m) every year, according to the Global Simplicity Index, and also 10.2% of their profits due to poor handling of complexity (Chynoweth, 2011). The World Economic Forum concluded in 2016 that the ability to handle complexity is now the most sought-after quality in employees across industries and countries all over the world and is expected to become even more so by 2020.

Leaders are required to comprehend, interpret and manage complexity; and they should to be able to appreciate and explain its root causes, so that their organisations can better recognise and control its emergence; and that they

develop the right tools to manage it (Heaslip, 2015). A complexity-management framework is described in Navigating Complexity: A Practice Guide (PMI, 2014), which observes 3 major types of complexity—complexities that are based on human behaviour, system behaviour, and ambiguity. Kerr (2014) maintains that being head of a complex organisation can really be distilled into a few principles, and makes a case for 'going back to the fundamentals' rather than trying to 'over-engineer' principles. He asserts that 'To be successful in this extremely complex and unstable business environment, executive leaders must do all that they can to simplify. Therefore, checklists are in order.' The checklist is as follows:

- Establish leadership; Build trust; Set strategy; Engage staff; Manage work as projects; Renovate the business; Align technology; Transform staff; Renew communications practices; Reimagine organisational design.

He further simplified each item in the checklist to smaller principles for easier implementation. Buch-Madsen (2017), however, identifies 8 strategies to manage complexity:

Accept it: Confusion, ambiguities and contradictions should be expected instead of being rejected. Modern organisations must have complexities.

Loosen up your need to feel in control: Probably more often than we think, we are not in control. Control what you can, let go what you can't and know the difference.

Accept partial and temporary truths: build the best understanding you can in high risk, high stake or otherwise high importance situations. But in other situations, less will do and plausibility will do fine as a substitute for precision.

Expect surprises and be prepared to change your understanding or point of view: A good mindset in complex conditions is to be open to new information, perspectives and opposing opinions. This is an efficient way to work when understanding is more an ongoing process than a 'thing' or outcome.

Create/look for islands of simplicity: Create zones of routine and simplicity. The 20/80 rule apply here. 20 % of your working situations or assignments might bear 80 % of the complexity in your job and if they do, you can go for simplicity in 80 % of your assignments.

Practice holistic, non-linear thinking: Look for stories, metaphors, and analogies. These tools work well as shortcuts for understanding and describing complex matters that often include nonverbal, tacit or otherwise hard-to-grab

aspects.

Seek diversity across organisational or professional silo thinking: High complexity situations are simply too complicated for one mind. If you seek out perspectives, tools and points of view from other professions and departments, you can apply the kaleidoscopic thinking that works well in high complexity situations.

Avoid the trap of analysis paralysis and start acting: Expecting causality and seeking a clear 'why' answer to everything will make you tend to overdo analysis or simply freeze. In complex or low experience situations, muddling through and trial and error often work better.

Enhancing Team Building and Team Spirit for Effective Implementation

A team is 'a number of persons associated together in work or activity.' Individuals are organised to work together interdependently and cooperatively to accomplish common goals. Team- building is the process of turning a group of individuals into a cohesive team. It can include the daily interaction that employees engage in when working together to carry out the requirements of their jobs. For individuals to work harmoniously, providing the skills, training and resources that they need are necessary. But, to be truly effective, it needs to be a continual process, embedded into the team and organisation's culture. This process of learning to work together effectively is known as team development.

Bruce Tuckman, an educational psychologist, identified a five-stage development process that most teams follow to become high performing.

Forming stage: the forming stage involves team members having orientation and getting acquainted. Uncertainty is high during this stage, and people are looking for leadership and authority. Most interactions are social as members get to know each other. During this stage, you may discuss their skills, background, interests, project goals, individual roles, etc.

Storming stage: The storming stage is the most difficult and critical stage to pass through. The reality and weight of completing the task at hand have now hit everyone. The initial feelings of excitement and the need to be polite have likely worn off. It is a period marked by conflict and competition as individual personalities emerge. To get through this stage, members must accept individual differences, and to work through conflicting ideas on team tasks and goals. Failure to address conflicts may result in long-term problems.

Norming stage: If teams get through the storming stage, conflict is resolved and people start to notice and appreciate their team members' strengths. In the

norming stage, consensus develops around who the leader or leaders are, and individual member's roles. Interpersonal differences begin to be resolved, and a sense of cohesion and unity emerges.

Performing stage: In the performing stage, members are confident, motivated and familiar enough with the project and their team that they can operate without supervision. Consensus and cooperation have been well-established in this stage, and the team is mature, organised, and well-functioning. There is a clear and stable structure, and members are committed to the team's mission. Problems and conflicts still emerge, but they are dealt with constructively.

Adjourning stage: In the adjourning stage, most of the team's goals have been accomplished. The emphasis is on wrapping up final tasks and documenting the effort and results. The team disbands, or members get reassigned to other teams. This phase is sometimes known as mourning because members have grown close and feel a loss now that the experience is over.As the work load is diminished, individual members may be reassigned to other teams, and the team disbands. There may be regret as the team ends, so a ceremonial acknowledgement of the work and success of the team can be helpful.

Team-building exercises allow management and staff to forget about deadlines and corporate structure and focus on socialising informally. These exercises can also help employees work on more serious issues, such as learning problem-solving techniques and improving communication skills.

Conclusion

Nigerian youth today face a number of challenges that may limit their opportunities and inhibit their leadership capabilities. However, individuals can be trained to not only lead but to lead effectively. Even though skills for effective leadership are numerous and largely subjective, some stand out as the fundamental skills to effectively lead others. Acquiring the abilities to mitigate corruption, building and managing teams, working with others, problem solving, as well as managing organisational complexities are some of the key areas to be developed in prospective leaders.

Leadership trainings like these can help one have an insight into their strengths and weaknesses in different areas of leadership as well as an understanding of the human behaviour. It should, however, be noted that the skills discussed above cannot be learnt in a day but through practice. Participants

are encouraged to consciously and consistently practice the methods learnt, as it is as important as learning the methods and skills themselves.

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DEMOCRACY, COLLECTIVE ACTION AND THE ROLE OF STUDENTS AND YOUTHS IN INTRA-ELITE CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

BY
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Introduction

The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is 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 (Achebe 1984:1).

The questions of what, why, when, where and how of leadership problems in Nigeria have remained nagging issues in political discourse on Nigeria even as we claim to be running a democracy. Achebe's assertion above is clear on the 'what and why' of the leadership problems in Nigeria but when, where and how did we get it wrong, have remained polemical in the extant literature. What has remained a constant truth though is the fact that an objective assessment of leadership performance in Nigeria especially political leadership would leave no one in doubts that there is a glaring failure in leadership. And the fear is that once a country gets it wrong in leadership, it is likely to get it all wrong.

The great need of our time is the need for positive, constructive, dynamic, creative and effective leadership. Leadership is a serious business and those who go into it must approach the responsibility with the seriousness it deserves/ requires. A complete leadership package must be accompanied by willing followership which means that the two components must be in agreement and not a matter of 'forced obedience'. That is why in the opinion of Peter Drucker; "the only definition of a leader is someone who has followers." And there must be complementarities because **"The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things."** (Ronald Reagan) (c.f. Omachonu 2019). Even at that, the one who occupies the head position is very important because if anything goes wrong with the head, it will definitely affect the entire

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body. And that is why it is often said that 'an army of lions led by a sheep can be easily defeated by an army of sheep led by a lion.' Leadership is not about seniority, age, level of education, title, height, gender, physical strength or personal domineering attributes, and so on, but it is about the readiness, availability, sacrifice, influence and the capacity to translate vision into reality. That is why even the youths and students alike must not hesitate to aspire and desire leadership positions as change agents in the society.

As it stands, we do not need any political scientist or analyst to tell us what has happened or is still happening to political leadership in Nigeria. It is obvious there are roadblocks and dangerous potholes to a strong democracy in Nigeria at all levels of government and governance. As it is portrayed, leadership as we have currently in Nigeria is associated with:

> Conflict—triggered by political competition and communal, ethnic, religious or resource allocation rivalries—poses a major threat to democracy. Corruption pervades the daily lives of Nigerians. Many government institutions do not adequately engage with citizens or the private sector and lack the capacity to carry out their mandates. Further, civil society lacks both the capacity and the resources to effectively engage with government and advocate for a change.
> https://www.usaid.gov/nigeria/democracy-human-rights-and-governance
> July 12, 2021

In addition, Okoi and Iwara (2021:1) aptly summarised leadership failure in Nigeria thus:

> The failure of governance in Nigeria manifests in the declining capacity of political leaders to recognise systemic risks such as election fraud, terrorist attacks, herder-farmer conflict, armed banditry, and police brutality and put in place the necessary measures to navigate these challenges.

The duo concluded by recognising that Nigeria is grappling with governance challenges orchestrated by two decades of a failed democratic project. Overcoming these challenges, they argued, would require knowledgeable leaders and an equally informed electorate together with a truly independent electoral system that will be allowed to work. And that Nigeria will only have effective governance when the right people are saddled with the

responsibility to govern. This means that Nigeria democracy is still 'work in progress' and the search for true democracy and true democratic leadership is an ongoing project. There is still room for improvement. All hope is not lost.

But now that the foundation seems to be faulty and everything seems to be still going wrong with leadership in Nigeria, what can the youths and students do to forestall the ugly trends. They must be aware through some political education that the future belongs to them and they must develop the will power to turn things around for a better Nigeria because wherever there is the will, the wherewithal will surely come. The youths must be deliberately and intentionally exposed to the truth of the matter with a view to developing that political consciousness in them and the challenge to return to their erstwhile vital role of serving as a platform for social change and political consciousness. This way, they could mobilise and rise against the challenges like one man and no power can withstand such a resolve. Therefore, in what follows, we shall attempt a conceptual explication on the key terms or concepts of our discussion and proceed to interrogate the roles of students and youths in intra-elite conflicts as well as in democracy and democratic process in Nigeria.

Conceptual Explications

In order to have a better grasp of the subject matter and the focus of the current talk engagement, it may be necessary to undertake brief but concise explications on the key terms or concepts of our discussion namely: *democracy, collective action, students vs. youths*, and *intra-elite conflicts*, as we proceed to relate.

Democracy

Without going into any technicality, democracy as defined by Merriam Webster Dictionary is a 'government by the people especially rule of the majority and a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held elections' (https://www.merriam-webster.com › dictionary › democracy). 'A healthy democracy requires a decent society; it requires that we are honourable, generous, tolerant and respectful' (Charles W. Pickering, https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/democracy-quotes). The question is that does this look like what is currently in operation in governance in Nigeria? To me, what is happening currently in Nigeria looks more like what Franklin D. Roosevelt warned against when he said:

> The liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerated the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than the democratic state itself. That in its essence is fascism: ownership of government by an individual, by a group, or any controlling private power.
> (https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/democracy-quotes).

Collective Action

Collective action, to my mind, is an action taken by a group or collection of people; acting consequent upon a collective decision which in turn should be a product of collective responsibility. Because, they are more people involved, collective action most often involves larger scales as against individual action(s). Collective action is not a mere blind practice. It has a supporting theoretical basis. The first proponent of the collective action theory was Oslon (1966). Olson argues that any group of individuals attempting to provide a public good has difficulty doing so efficiently because of the forces against such good intentions. As he averred, public goods bear common and collective benefits. Collective action is important because we need unity of purpose to achieve anything reasonable. This is so because, alone we can do so little; together we can do so much (Helen Keller) and in the opinion of Virginia Burden, cooperation is the thorough conviction that nobody can get there unless everybody gets there.

Maybe Fela Durotoye[1]'s story may be instructive here to drive the point home. According to him, in one of his several trips to the United States of America, he had an occasion to connect a flight to the US from one international airport in Europe. And while on the queue, he saw a couple who were about the ages of sixty and sixty-five. Right down in his mind, he admired the couple especially the man and wished he would be like the man as he advances in age. He said between him and the couple, there were other travellers, maybe just four to five persons between him and the

1 Adetokunbo Olufela[1] Durotoye (born in Ibadan, Oyo State on 12th May, 1971) is a business consultant, leadership expert, and motivational speaker. Fela is the president of the GEMSTONE Nation Builders Foundation, a non-profit, non-governmental organization focused on training youths towards transformational leadership and social change. He was the Nigerian presidential candidate of the Alliance for New Nigeria party (ANN) for the 2019 presidential elections.

couple. Meanwhile, when it got to the turn of the couple to pass through the immigration gate, the young lady who checked their passports asked them to step aside as she continued to allow other travellers to pass. And when it got his (Fela) own turn, the young lady looked at his Nigerian passport and also asked him to step aside, and he said, that was when he realised the connection between him and the couple that were asked to step aside earlier; it was the Nigerian passport. He said, he thought because of his status as someone who is well-travelled and an international figure who travels to the US every other day flying first class, that kind of treatment shouldn't be applied on him but he was wrong. Assessing critically what happened that day, he concluded:

> Individual success in the midst of collective failure will always be despised. Average citizens of a great nation will always be treated better than successful and great citizens of a failed nation.

Students vs. Youths

The concept 'student' appears given in this context to mean youths studying in tertiary institutions. But who are the youths? In an attempt to answer this question, Omachonu (2018:1) has this to say:

The age category christened 'youth is very fluid and therefore difficult to define.

- ✓ The **United Nations, for statistical purposes**, considering the criterion 'age', defines youths as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24.
- ✓ The **Commonwealth** defines youth as 15-29 years of age.
- ✓ The **African Youth Charter** defines youth as "any individual between 15-35 years of age and seeks to resolve longstanding debates about defining youth within the African context and based on Africa's development realities."
- ✓ The **Nigerian National Youth Policy** defines youth as anyone between the age of 18 and 35.

However, other criteria such as **education**, **employment** and **responsibility**, could be used to define who is a youth; a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and the awareness of our interdependence as members of a community; a person or persons between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding the first jobs.

If one may ask, which is the most difficult era of human life? Infancy?

Adolescence? Maturity to adulthood? Agedness? While many might suggest that one's sunset years are the hardest, others might see the period designated as youth to be the most challenging and turbulent. **Why**? Youth is a frustrating time in life; it is a period when one is hardly old enough to be on his own, and yet he is feeling a sense of independence; a period when he is attempting to find some sense of identity; and this is responsible for certain strange behaviour one, sometimes, finds in some youths: dressing, talking, walking, certain unholy habits, and so on.

As I had argued elsewhere (see Omachonu 2018), in spite of the dangers and challenges of youthfulness, we must recognise the value of the youths to the overall development of any polity. They can make or mar the democratic process of any nation. They could be part of the problems and as well the solution to the problem of any nation. This is so because the youngsters have **energy**, they are **daring**, their hearts are filled with **visions of the future and they can do unimaginable exploits** in whatever they lay their hands to do. Indeed, they can be a most valuable component in social transformation and social engineering process as well as social disintegration. They are indispensable change agents. Youthful years are characterised with energy, sensitivity; they are both teachable and dangerous years; young or youthful years are minefield years susceptible to peer pressure, alcohol, drugs, pornography, immorality, and so on.

Intra-elite Conflicts

Elite usually refers to a select group that is superior in terms of ability or qualities to the rest of a group or society. They belong to the richest, most powerful, best-educated or best-trained group in a society. In other words, they are the people who have the most wealth and status in a society; the most successful or powerful group of people (https:www.collinsdictionary.com› dictionary ›elite). Conflict on the other hand is a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument, or a situation in which there are opposing ideas, opinions, feelings or wishes. It is these kinds of conflicts (internal) among and within the elite groups that one could refer to as intra-elite conflicts.

Sometimes, instead of competing on their own merits, or the merits of their political platforms, candidates or elite groups increasingly rely on "dirty tricks" such as character assassination, literal assassination, and so on. As a result, excessive competition results in the unravelling of pro-social and

cooperative norms. As it were, intense intra-elite competition or conflict could lead to the rise of rival power networks, which increasingly subvert the rules of political engagement to get ahead of the opposition. And this could be used to an advantage for a positive change in the polity of political arrangement. This is what the youths and others desiring positive changes in political governance and political arrangement and processes should watch out for to effect a desired change.

Having tried to explicate or operationalised the essential terms or basic concepts necessary for a better grasp of the subject matter of our discussion in the paper, the pertinent questions to ask are:

1. What roles can or do students and youths play for and against intra-elite conflicts and peace building in Nigeria?
2. What roles can or do students and youths play for and against ensuring true democracy and democratic processes in Nigeria?

   Attempts to address the above questions would form the focus and the concern of the next or the following sub-sections of the paper as we proceed to relate.

Why the Conflicts and What Can or Should Students and Youths Do?

The major causes of intra-elite conflicts are interests, greed, corruption and suspicion. Most political elite have this slogan that in politics, what is important and permanent is one's interest and not friendship or political affiliation, and this explains why our politicians behave the way they do especially in Nigeria. It is the conflict of interests that brings about, in most cases, incidences of intra-elite conflicts. Sometimes, outright greed, corruption and suspicion could be the other major factors that ignite intra-elite conflicts. It is to be noted that intense intra-elite competition is one of the most important factors responsible for massive waves of social and political instability, which periodically afflict complex, and state-level societies. When this becomes prevalent, the youths rather than fold their arms and watch helplessly, should cash in on the situation to make a positive change by penetrating the elite in times of crisis to create political spaces for themselves before the so-called elite realise their folly and cause a re-grouping and re-strategising.

Roles of Students and Youths in Intra-elite Conflicts

Youths and students play both positive and negative roles in intra-elite conflicts and peace building in Nigeria. Knowingly or unknowingly, the youths and students have yielded themselves as ready tools in the hands of politicians for several reasons. As it is argued, the lives and experiences of young people are more complex than we think or can ever imagine and this has made them vulnerable and susceptible for use to achieve various ends. As Crespo-Sancho (2018) has enumerated, youths can play many roles within fragile and conflict setting including perpetrators, victims, and peacemakers. They can be on either sides of the divides in conflict perpetration and peace building. And as he concludes, empowering the youths is essential for prevention of conflicts and for ensuring peace building on the other hand.

Crespo-Sancho (2018:2) identified multiple factors that have led policymakers to closely look at the relationship between youth and violence, these include:

1. Global trends of unemployment and urbanisation;
2. A growing youth population or "youth bulge";
3. Intergenerational inequalities;
4. Exclusion of young people in economic, social, and political life.

Even though one could argue that these factors have made the youths vulnerable and susceptible for use to achieve various ends including violence, conflicts and crimes, these factors are not clear-cut when it comes to looking at how they affect the youths.

Youths definitely will be part of the future local development and would assume important roles in conflicts perpetration and resolution within their communities. This is so because as active social agents within the society, they are linked to the larger society by family association, marriage, friendship, religion, culture and history. And because they are involved, they cannot pretend to be indifferent to the fate of the larger society. As a matter of fact, their influence on the society is pervasive and pervading.

There is a greater need today for the youth to re-evaluate themselves vis-à-vis their understanding about their leadership capacity and the current leadership performance around them with a view to intervening in politics and leadership across levels. And so, one significant role which the youths must aspire to play in leadership, politics, peace and conflict resolution is for them to be 'the change' themselves. Supposedly, given that the youths will be part

of the future local development and assume important roles in the resolution of conflicts and leadership within their communities and larger society, building their capacity as peace-building actors is key to strengthening democratic governance and solving problems at the local and national levels. And this, to my mind, underscores the importance of this kind of 'roundtable' session for raising political awareness among our teeming youths in Nigeria. As it is commonly held or generally believed, while the vast majority of young people may not participate in violence, young people tend to engage in violence in higher numbers relative to other age groups.

As suggested or advised earlier, when and where intra-elite conflicts become prevalent, the youths rather fold their arms and watch helplessly, should take advantage of the situation to make a positive change by penetrating the elite in times of crisis to create political spaces for themselves before the so-called elite realise their folly and cause a re-grouping and re-strategising to continue to subdue the masses through coercion and forced obedience.

Roles of Students and Youths in Democracy

The role of the youths and students in democracy and political development of the modern nation state was not in doubt from the beginning of time in our self governance. Even far back in the pre-independence era, the arrow heads of the nationalist movements in colonial Africa were youths in their teens and early twenties, who were mostly students of higher institutions of learning at home and/or abroad. Prominent among them were people like the late Kwame Nkrurnah of Ghana, Sekou Toure of Guinea, late Obafemi Awolowo, Nnamdi Azikwe of Nigeria, Arnicar Calbra of Cape Verde, and a host of others. In the opinion of Oloruntoba (2008), the failure of that generation of leaders was their inability to develop a platform through which the youth today could be trained to participate in political development process. And in addition, the problem became compounded by the many years of military rule where double strategy of cooptation and suppression was carefully employed to silence dissenting youths who wanted participation in the political process. In any case, the failure wasn't theirs alone (the first generation of youths), it is and was a collective failure because even they themselves, who was it that set the platform on which they operated?

Youths and students' participation in democracy and political development process is not only seen at the continental or intercontinental level in Africa.

In Nigeria, for instance, as far back as the 1920s and 1970s, Nigerian students had been in the frontlines of effort to change unequal social relations in the country. Apart from fighting against colonialism and for the emancipation of Africans, they took active interest in developments in the polity. For instance, they organised nationwide protests to reject all policies that were not in the interest of students and the working class people and proffered alternatives. They were so informed and resourceful that were adamant despite the sufferings and maltreatment received from the ruling power then. The same was the story even during the agitation for the return to democracy in the 1980s and 90s, the youths, students and other prodemocracy activists fought alongside to effect the change. The question is how come that the youths and students nowadays no longer care about such things let alone standing up to their right? Is it impoverishment, disillusionment or the ruling elite has put a knife on what bids them (the youths) together and so, they could no longer act and speak in one voice?

In addition to the seeming internal problems or limitations enunciated above, Oloruntoba (2008:13) identified the following as the challenges to youth participation and contributions to the democratic process in Nigeria:

(a) God-fatherism: As a youth, you cannot on your own go into participating in politics without a god-father to adopt and ordain you and send you into any position and to always pay allegiance to him. That way, you can't go into politics with your own mindset and the will power and the freedom to operate freely and with a free conscience, willing and ready to serve and make positive changes. You must be doing someone else bidding in the name of a god-father.

(b) Economic stagnation and poverty: In Nigeria, the ruling elite have deliberately and intentionally pushed the masses including the youths into poverty and economic stagnation through a deliberate policy targeted at impoverishing the masses so that they can continue to perpetuate themselves or their anointed candidates in office.

(c) The crisis of value and corruption: The crisis of lopsided value system, misplacement of priorities and corrupt practice has been a challenge to youth participation in politics, democracy and development of political process.

(d) Miltarised political space: In another development, the militarisation of political space through thuggery and political violence of all descriptions have limited the youths from participating and taking their rightful place in the political space in Nigeria.

(e) The challenge of coordination and national spread is another limitation confronting youths' participation in politics.

To the above, one may wish to add the high cost of contesting an election in Nigeria which is a major and serious challenge limiting youths' participation in politics and the overall democratic process in the country. To indicate interest and purchase form to run for an election at even the state and/or local government levels, costs fortunes that an average Nigerian youth cannot afford. Sometimes, one wonders what option is left for an ordinary man in matters of political participation in Nigeria.

The seemingly daunting challenges facing the youths in this country notwithstanding, I share the conviction of Oloruntoba (2008) that it is imperative to ensure that Nigerian youths participate in the democratic process. It is just like the Yoruba proverbs in Ola Rotimi's *The gods are not blame*: 'not to do something is to be crippled fast and to lie down resigned to fate is madness' for it is 'only a mad man that would go to sleep with his roof on fire'. The rate of the failure of leadership in Nigeria is such that calls for a greater concern if not an emergency. And so, any right thinking youth with a sense for the future would not brush it away with a wave of the hands but seek to cause a change for a better in governance in Nigeria.

First, the youths need awareness on the position of things in the county and the effects of such situation on their future because it is the awareness that creates the consciousness and the impetus to act, in other words, the youths need to be aware of the critical role that they can and/or need to play in the process of deepening democracy. As Oloruntoba suggested, such awareness can be undertaken by civil society organisations, international organisations and their affiliate agencies and progressively minded political parties in the country.

Creating an active youth wing of the various political parties which in turn should be advised on the need to constantly advocate a change in the ways that parties and the government are being run is also a worthwhile intention as it relates to youths participation in politics. As Oloruntoba argues further, they must insist on the inculcation of the practice of internal democracy, such

that the diverse interests of party members are taken care of. Rather than remaining passive and succumbing to the tactics, whims and caprices of the ruling elite, the youths should learn from history and act decisively to restore the glory of yester-years where constructive activism played a prominent role in shaping government policies in Nigeria and in Africa at large.

The journey towards the consolidation of the democratic process in Nigeria is germane and urgent. And to be relevant in the journey, the youths in Nigeria should through their respective associations, develop working relationship with Civil Society Organisations. As the vanguards or agents of change, they should also embark on the strategies of civil disobedience to compel the political authorities in the country to factor in their interests in political, social and economic activities (See also Oloruntoba 2008).

Youths and students alike could form a national youth parliament as a unifying platform. In other words, the various youth groups and organisations across the country can organise themselves to form youth parliament, which could deliberate on the political situations in the country and come up with a common position and push it over to the government for desirable attention. This way, the youth could organise themselves into a formidable force to be reckoned with in governance; a committed and effective youth movement, which can help in mass mobilisation of people for political awareness and participation. This should be possible and easy to achieve because as argued earlier, the youths are active social agents within the society especially as they are linked to the larger society by family association, marriage, friendship, religion, culture and history. And because they are involved, they cannot pretend to be indifferent to the fate of the larger society particularly as it relates to what goes on in governance and the democratic process.

To achieve this and retain the trust and earn the confidence of the majority including the ruling class, their intention and sincerity should not be in doubt. They must also be committed to work and aspire to build a virile and democratic culture among themselves and the society in general. At present, the issue of building trust and confidence in the public is in deficit due to the many years of failure of the government and the ruling class or elite. Building such trust is vital for consolidating a democratic process.

Lastly, another thing that should be part of the political engagement and agenda for the youths is attitudinal change and freeing themselves from the grips of wealthy politicians and selfish or self seeking ruling elite. The youths should stay clear of any attempt to devalue them and render them as willing

and ready tools in the hands of the selfish ruling elite by certain offers, be it money, position or other material gratifications.

Summary and Conclusion

From all indications, there is leadership challenge in Nigeria to the extent that we do not need any political scientist or analyst to tell us what has happened or is still happening to political leadership in Nigeria. It is obvious there are roadblocks and dangerous potholes to a strong democracy in Nigeria at all levels of government and governance. As it were there is a conflict—triggered by political competition and communal, ethnic, religious or resource allocation rivalries—poses a major threat to democracy. The failure of governance in Nigeria manifests in the declining capacity of political leaders to recognise systemic risks such as election fraud, terrorist attacks, herder-farmer conflict, armed banditry, and police brutality and put in place the necessary measures to navigate these challenges (Okoi and Iwara 2021:1).

As it were, the foundation seems to be faulty and everything seems to be still going wrong with leadership in Nigeria, what can the youths and students do to forestall the ugly trends? The youths must, as argued in the introductory section, be aware through some political education that the future belongs to them and they must develop the will power to turn things around for a better Nigeria because wherever there is the will, the wherewithal will surely come. Secondly, the youths must be deliberately and intentionally exposed to the truth of the matter with a view to developing that political consciousness in them and the challenge to return to their erstwhile vital role of serving as a platform for social change and political consciousness. This way, one must admit, they could mobilise and rise against the challenges like one man and no power can withstand such a resolve. Beyond the arguments in the introductory section, an attempt was made to conceptualise or explicate the key terms or concepts of our discussion and then proceed to interrogate the roles of students and youths in intra-elite conflicts as well as in democracy and democratic process in Nigeria.

In all, there is hope for democracy in Nigeria and the roles of students and youths in intra-elite conflicts as well as democracy and democratic processes are not in doubt. All we need to succeed is channeling the required energy in the right direction for maximum results. And with this and the unity of purpose of the youths and the elite in the university communities or society, there is nothing that we set to do that will be impossible.

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MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION: ESSENTIAL TOOLS IN THE PROMOTION OF DIALOGUE AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

BY
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Introduction

The ability to access, analyse, and create media, evaluate and communicate information in a variety of formats including print and non-print materials is what has been described as Media and Information Literacy (MIL), the perspective alluded by (Reineck & Lubinski, 2015). The dawn of the 21st century ushered in an unprecedented global media development in various countries thereby increasing the volume of information produced through television, radio, print media and the Internet. Similarly, the rise of social media in particular has created a platform for promoting, among other things, social interaction between different groups of people (Onyancha, 2015). Access to quality information thus assumed a new dimension by which individuals are not only users and receivers of information but also actors and producers of its content. This development has in turn heightened the need for developing appropriate skills to empower people to adequately utilise the new global digital media.

Background

From a rights-based approach, the current digital age has already positioned MIL as a fundamental prerequisite for citizens to actualise their rights to freedom of information and expression. More so, from the best interest perspective of the citizenry, it not only fosters the human need to communicate freely, express one's opinion and share positive ideas and open up wider conversations with others as a critical aspect of human nature but also deepens democratic practices. Research has shown that concerns for MIL are advocated on the need for the public to be liberated from the oppressive effects of institutionalised public media (Reineck & Lubinski, 2015). Similar concerns have also arisen out of the need to re-assess and address issues that affect women, children and youths as regards information obtained from

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television, the internet and other forms of media which often portray violence and stifle expressions and others like exposure to graphic materials amongst many.

In Africa, mass illiteracy looms over the larger society, and is reflected sometimes in the type of political democratic practice where older politicians hijack state youth councils recruiting youths as thugs to settle political scores with opponents, rig elections, cause electoral violence and form pseudo political parties. This is simply because not many of the youth in the state councils are literate, and they lack knowledge in accessing media contents, talk less of analysing them.

The youth seem to suffer from an inability to harmonise their thoughts and engage institutions that can assist and monitor them to achieve their outcomes. For instance, they lack mechanisms to evaluate violence or discriminations against them. Along these fault lines are the complexities brought about by the constant social change accompanying globalisation, migration, internal displacement by the increasing internationalisation of terrorist groups such as of Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, Islamic State and their individual and group sympathisers.

The growing phobic disorders of Afrophobia and xenophobia have also narrowed the democratic space and reshaped dialogues that need sensitive ability to access, transform content, and create media, evaluate and communicate information in a variety of formats that can change the seemingly dangerous narrative as they presently and weakens the foundational structures of participatory democracy in Africa.

MIL is therefore premised on the concerns that the expanded media of ICTs require the ability by individuals to sift through these sources in questioning the authenticity of all forms of information. Hence the discourse around MIL by countries including many developing countries has been very impactful in helping to address some of the challenges experienced in the new digital era.

The significant progress made so far in MIL has been attributed to the global effort by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) in placing the concept of MIL at the centre of international politics and the drive towards curricula integration in the educational sector ((Tuominen, & Kolainen, 2012). While previous media education mainly emphasised the negative effects of the media and sought to protect citizens from its harmful influences, the discourse around MIL as championed by UNESCO today seeks to empower people with the critical

skills and ability to evaluate diverse sources of information from the media. UNESCO's pioneering effort has thus played a key role in developing an understanding of MIL at the international level as a composite of traditional media literacy, journalism and information literacy that is essential for the sustainable development of the global society in the digital era (Reineck & Lubinski, 2015).

Closely allied to the concept of MIL is the issue of the freedom of access to information and expression. Access to information is a universal right as contained in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948). Human rights describe basic, internationally agreed upon standards that are essential for people to survive and live in dignity, which are inherent to the individual, inalienable and universal.

The right of the individual is a fundamental aspect of MIL, which is in agreement with the UDHR and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This right enables the exchange and development of opinions and is a condition or an important basis for other rights, such as participation in public affairs and cultural life (UN 2011). Hence a human rights-based approach to MIL seeks to encourage the right to the freedom of expression of the individual by which he/she is able to access, use and create new media and be able to identify violations of these rights where they exist (Reineck & Lubinski, 2015). Against this background, the discussion from this paper seeks to explore the concept of MIL and freedom of information as important tools in the promotion of dialogue and participatory democracy with a focus on the following issues:

1. What is the role of MIL in ensuring free access to information?

The current media information space in most countries is saturated with diverse topical issues ranging from politics, education, sports, entertainment and so on. Many people today struggle to cope with the multitude of options and pitfalls of the digital age and few make active choices to carefully sift the contents of such information products (Reineck & Lubinski, 2015). It is also noted that current issues in today's society, mainly political, are discussed at length in the media which makes it imperative that citizens are able to find new ways to consciously participate and shape the flow of information in ways that affect their lives.

A fundamental concern of MIL is the need to enlighten and empower

people with the needed competencies and critical thinking skills for accessing suitable media information sources. In this regard also, the right of the freedom of access to information, which is encapsulated in the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), enacted by most countries, is of valid consideration for ensuring access to government information and freedom of expression (Denedo, 2011).

The FOIA enhances human dignity because of its ability to enable more effective individual decision-making, whether at personal, professional or political levels. It also facilitates democratic participation by enabling citizens to contribute effectively in decision-making on issues that affect them. The FOI right as encapsulated in the FOI Act implies that government should not restrict or prevent a person from receiving information from another person who is willing to impart to him.

The concept of freedom as encapsulated or enshrined in the Freedom of Information Act is an expression of the rights of people globally to freely exercise themselves in an open dialogue without let or hindrance. To demonstrate the importance of this right Roosevelt cited in Scilly, (n.d) postulated the four freedoms and listed the freedom of speech and expression as the first freedom before the freedom to worship God and lastly the freedom from want and freedom from fear. Omotayo (2015) explained that its merits have long been recognised and entrenched globally as demonstrated in its inclusion as an extension of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and protected in International Human Rights Treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and also the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights 1948. Article 19 of the Declaration states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinion without interference and to seek, receive and impart information through any media regardless of frontiers.

In essence, the Freedom of Information Act discourse emerged to protect the right of expression across frontiers for all and sundry; thus, within the Nigerian context this is situated in the 1999 Nigerian Constitution in Section 39(1) to guarantee freedom of information at all levels for all citizens not just Journalists (Melami, 2009). Citizens in the democratic process have seen the FOIA as a powerful tool for fighting corruption, ensuring transparency in governance, and encouraging participation. Through MIL and the collaboration of government, media agencies and other stakeholders, efforts can be made to promote and publicise the FOIA and ensure greater public awareness and understanding of how it can be used to encourage freedom

of access to information and expression by citizens (Dunu & Ugbo, 2014).

2. How can MIL be used as an effective tool for deepening intercultural dialogue and participation in democracy among young people?

The media functions as a means for promoting cultural expression and cohesion, especially between countries of the world. The media has the power to shape the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of people by disseminating information that fosters interaction, dialogue and mutual understanding. It functions as "an advocate and social actor in its own right, while respecting pluralistic values" (KAICIID, 2014:14).

The youth rely on the media to explain information that will help them develop their self-identity, understand people from different religious, ethnic, and cultural beliefs or backgrounds so that they can engage in dialogue to understand each other's differences. The understanding of this expectation is that the media desists from issues that incite, discriminate against individuals in any society by presenting an accurate, balanced and fair information. The 16th session of the United Nations general assembly resolution adopted states it this way "combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatisation of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons based on religion or belief". Therefore, the youth need to identify and understand the role the media plays in culture and to see the cultural diversity that exists in the society.

Traditional and social media contents should be channelled to finding avenues to peaceful and harmonious co-existence and not for stigmatisation and negative stereotyping of people. According to Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, culture is "the way people express themselves, think, love hate …it is every aspect of human existence". Thus, Intercultural Dialogue is the ability to find a common language for understanding and respecting cultural differences. Like the youth in other parts of the world, the Nigerian youth is confronted with a lot of issues such as terrorism, natural disasters, racism, poverty, xenophobic attacks and so on, which has continued to alter his understanding of the globalised world and his ability to have respect for diversity and the consciousness to live peacefully with others. How the youth relate with other people from different backgrounds in a society that is dynamic and evolving is crucial to the growth of democracy since they are seen as change agents.

The campus is a melting point for this multicultural, multi-ethnic group

of students. The administrative policy of every university is such that the catchment area for admissions reflects this multicultural picture of the larger society. So even at the larger society, if intercultural dialogue are not promoted because of a backward or illiterate society, the university environment, which is more literate automatically, engenders tolerance and acceptance. An example of this is the formation of diverse ethnic associations on Nigerian campuses. When each of these associations have their cultural days, they invite other people from other cultures and they explain their cultures and ways of relating with each other. This is hardly found in larger society. It is thus evident that cultural tolerance and transmission among students is more open on campus than in the larger society where there are certain restrictions. Likewise, students are allowed to perform their religious obligations and activities freely and to accord respect to other religious rites of other groups without hindrance. In this way, young people are able to strengthen their understanding of cultural and religious diversities and hold on to broader worldviews as they grow. It is in the light of this therefore that the focus of UNESCO's Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID), and the Universities Twinning Network (UNITWIN) become exemplary in its attempt to contribute to finding solutions to misunderstandings, inequalities and other growing complexities of our modern societies, even within the universities where more young citizens are learning about themselves as individuals and the interconnectedness of society and how to apply their rights as members of a global community (MILID Yearbook 2013).

As a lecturer, this author has over the last four years taught a course called "African Communication Systems". The course is designed to help students understand the myths, legends, and channels of communication and how to apply culture in information dissemination. As a practical aspect of the course, what makes the lecture interesting and valuable to the students is when each student is expected to provide before other classmates in a class performance, a knowledge of his/her cultural /religious beliefs, attitudes and other ethnic dispositions. What this does is to create knowledge of similarity of cultures and appreciation of other people's perceptions and ways of life. It is also symbolic of the fact that culture is an inevitable aspect of life and is not isolated. With this knowledge also the students are able to respect each other's diversity and dialogue from an informed position when the need arises. UNESCO's focus and action plan states:

Safeguarding and promoting cultural heritage as a shared resource for

dialogue and sustainable development, fostering creative diversity, countering ignorance and intolerance, strengthening intercultural competencies: all play a determinant role for intercultural dialogue". Ahmimed and Quessada-Montano (2019) (UNESCO, 2002, Articles 1, 2 & 3).

All people have the right to cultural expression in their language of choice, and have the right to access the means of expression and dissemination of their culture (Articles 5 & 6). Intercultural dialogues are considered a tool to develop more inclusive societies and prevent exclusion, stereotyping and discrimination (García Agustín 2012).

The current context of the global digital media environment demands that access to quality information sources constitute a key factor for sustainable governance and economic development. Among the youths, active use of the Internet in socially interactive platforms that provide them with pleasure and a relative level of autonomy have been on the increase. This new context of social interaction is narrowing the physical relationship between young people and their immediate environment and alienating them from other people and the society (World Youth Report, 2003).

In Africa, democracy has experienced critical challenges particularly in the areas of leadership, transparency and accountability, which have hindered good governance, and participatory democracy in the political system (Igali, 2014). Among the youths, there has been an increasing political apathy in the democratic process, which has hindered their participation in civic activities. Evidences abound as to the involvement of youths in political participation prior to independence in Nigeria and afterwards in order to contribute and bring about changes in the political system. So, throughout history of most nations, the youths are the most influential and creative group and should be seen as fundamental to every democratic process. Of note and most recently is the "Not too young to run" movement which created opportunities for increased youth participation in politics. The signing into law the bill by president Muhammadu Buhari in 2019 as part of amendments in Nigeria's electoral law reduced the age for presidential candidates from 40 to 35 and from 35 to 25 for candidates into the national assembly.

As a result of the Bill, there is a positive trend in youth participation, with youth candidacy increasing from 21% in 2015 to 34.2% in the 2019 elections. Despite these changes, the number of youths aged 18–29 (based on the youth definition given by the National Youth Policy organisation), voted into elective positions in Nigeria is less than 1%. Further, there are no youth in the new

cabinet formed by President Buhari, and neither is there a youth in the National Assembly. This is despite youths making up over 67% of registered voters, on average, which means that whoever they decide to vote for is sure of winning the election (Adojo-Adebanjoko, 2019).

The participation of youths in democracy largely depends on a lot of factors, which include economic and socio- cultural factors. Youths have constantly been faced with challenges of unemployment, poverty, lack of education as well as discrimination. The necessity of using the youth as a creative force to challenge the existing conditions through a democratic process that ensures inclusiveness cannot be over-emphasized. Within the tertiary institutions in Nigeria, youths have been known to carefully chart their path towards future political participation by active involvement in the Student Union Government (SUG) and the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS). It is from these formations that a miniature Nigeria or society with its diversity in terms of ethnic, religious and cultural differences collides. From these emerged associations of students from different states each with its political and socio-cultural makeup for instance, National Association of Plateau State Students etc. and each has a nuanced understanding of the other in preparing for future political democratic participation. It is at this point that the youth voices are reflected as active and meaningful to the global development agenda. Participation and dialogue is indispensable to democracy; for democracy to succeed therefore, it is imperative that an avenue for dialogue is created for young people to participate in the democratic process.

The political dimension of MIL requires that media literacy education is needed to provide the cognitive and social support for civic engagement by youths. This conception of MIL can only be actualized through effective collaboration between the government, educational institutions and other civil society organisations in developing pedagogies that promote youth engagement in the respective communities where information is created and interpreted for the purpose of political empowerment (Tuominen, & Kolainen, 2012).

The recent unbundling of the curriculum of mass communication studies in Nigerian universities opens up new frontiers for the youth to engage with pedagogical tools and incentives or opportunities that will assist in democratic participation effectively. Similarly, the role of the media in this regard is the recognition of the right of youths to have full access to accurate information and their ability to participate in political issues that directly affect their lives.

Young people spend a lot of time on social media sourcing for information but rarely political information. However, lately there has been a migration from conventional blogs to social media blogging. Most students and young people find platforms like Facebook or Instagram a ready-made channel to air their views on socio-political and economic issues. The comments spark an online debate among friends with many sharing such posts on other platforms. One of the largest social media blogging group is PLATEAU "INTELLIGENSIA" where almost on a weekly basis group members post opinions that generate discussions on Nigerian and Plateau state politics. Currently, posts about Southern Plateau Senatorial seat contest is on the front burner. Other youth navigate their way on these platforms mostly downloading and forwarding audio and visual massages and texts mostly from unverified sources, rather than using the technology for civic participation. This trend has contributed in no small measure to increase in hate speech, fake news, propaganda, especially during political rallies and elections and other types of misinformation in the society.

Civic engagement can arise from digital media use, media organisations can therefore encourage youth participation by:

1. Creating awareness and interest on how media and digital information systems work in supporting good governance initiatives in their communities.
2. Helping young people to develop a critical attitude and knowledge of the importance of interacting with journalists and editors of various media through the new digital media environment.
3. Encourage youths on the need to demand media quality of information sources particularly on governance issues in order to encourage them to participate in the decision-making processes of their communities.

   Participatory democracy is inclusive in nature and rests on the notion of a community of citizens who are united by a common purpose to perform their civic duties (Lawal, 2019). Young peoples' inclusion in this process is important, as it will enable them to realize their potential and build self-confidence in the governance structures of their communities.

3. What are MIL sustainable development strategies to enhance freedom of information, intercultural dialogue and democratic participation of young persons?

Youth as change agents in the development of societies and growth of democracy implies that they are not simply beneficiaries, but also stakeholders in the socio- economic, political and cultural conditions of their societies. As active voices in the political sphere, the media creative processes can be successful if young people are allowed to participate by lending their voices in democratic societies using their creative skills to organise, and mobilise others to express themselves freely and to be tolerant and avoid self-seeking ideologies. This is the most effective way to achieve stable and sustainable peace. In developed climes, youths have found non-violent ways of confronting their non-inclusion in governance because they are given the right information that recognises their basic human rights as well as the chance to exert their influence appropriately.

MIL is a lifelong learning process and all encompassing. Within the University system therefore, MIL processes should be extended to all units and divisions. For instance, non-teaching units closely related to young people, the Student Affairs Directorate. Since the directorate is responsible for allocating hostel accommodation to students among other duties, under no circumstance should students of the same religious or ethnic background allocated the same room.

Allocations are expected to reflect the ethnic diversity of the country. This will foster intercultural awareness, tolerance, unity, identity and peaceful coexistence. Student's common rooms in the universities are meant to be where students can meet-up, interact watch or listen to media programmes. There they also share thoughts and ideas together in harmony. The common rooms are hardly functional in most cases. The common rooms should be resuscitated, and students allowed to take ownership of it by management of universities and other tertiary institutions. In this way an avenue is created for conversations to take place and reduces the level of radicalisation and marginalisation on our campuses.

There have been debates about the role that students can play in the academic advancement of their teachers. One of the aspects of the debates is allowing them to assess their teachers or lecturers for promotion by the quality of teaching rendered, mentorship, amount of paper and research with students, the ratio of students who failed course as assessed by external examiners. This is commendable because it shows that young people are important contributors to producing an intellectual group for the improvement of societies.

Similarly, allowing students to have a say in the selection Vice chancellors

implies that the students are equal partners on the selection who is responsible for them. Since young people are dynamic innovators of audio and visual texts and images on the social media, the Ministry of Youth Development can harness their competencies by opening up new online applications like youth information management system on its websites that are youth friendly to allow youths engage in national conversations. This would be on the authorities' dashboard for easy analysis and policy guide for youth engagement without compromising the future of democratic growth and development.

Training and retraining of young people at the State youth councils would expose the youths to negative trends where older politicians form pseudo party platforms to play to the gallery for money and hijack state youth councils, recruit them as thugs to settle political scores with opponents. Youth councils should be allowed to run independently.

Conclusion

From the foregoing therefore it can be seen that the media and MIL are important tools for freedom of information, intercultural dialogue, and democratic participation. Having access to such tools on the one hand and the ability to process information as well as transform it into a robust conversation immensely challenge African youths. Popular youth culture lacks coordination, institutionalisation, this is revealed in weak legal framework as seen in the "Not Too Young to Run" bill that is not practically feasible considering the youth gender gap and access to resources.

Democratic participation for the youth is a way to express themselves and their opinions. The social media platforms serve as a welcome channel for these expressions. Youths remain key to developments around the world; therefore, all youth populations must be reached and included in decision making. This will enhance young people's interest and propensity to engage in community development, political actions or other forms of public engagement. The youth can also provide relevant information with regards to policies that affect young people such as roads, hospitals, education, security, poverty, employment etc.

Understanding MIL will increase the competence level of young people to create a more accurate and subtle understanding of other people, compelling them to respect pluralism and avoid stereotypes as well as applying media content critically for citizen empowerment.

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MEDIA & INFORMATION LITERACY & FREEDOM OF INFORMATION: FUNDAMENTAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE ADVOCACY FOR DIALOGUE AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

BY
IFEDOLAPO ADEMOSU

Introduction

Technological innovations have fast tracked the digitisation of information and this has transformed the way people live and do business. The most visible impact has evolved [come] from the large-scale effect of digital innovations on information and knowledge production and distribution across the world (Andersson, Dalquist & Ohlsson, 2018:9). Those innovations are referred to as 'new media' or digital media which represents the computer, communication technologies and software's that have been developed because of the latter. While some aspects have been positive, quite a few have raised concerns and none more so than the crises of misinformation, disinformation, and fake news. In an era where information [and the data it represents] has become the new currency, and the potential it has to be used for the greater good or bad, it becomes imperative to address the issues in such a way as to steer all stakeholders especially young people in the right direction.

The transformation caused by these technologies have permeated not just the media and information landscape, but extended to the socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts that guide the dissemination process as well. Digital/new media platforms, advantaged by speed, tendency for believability, and inclination [by design] to cut across geographical and other related barriers has become the most used platform for information and media content dissemination.

According to UNICEF research (2017) on children and the digital culture, youth within the ages of 15–24, are the most digitally connected age group. This view is reinforced by Kalogeropoulos (2019), who stated in a study conducted in USA and the UK, that young people are the most ardent consumers of information and these group which covers the millennials [generation y (25-34) and z (18 -24], born in the 1990s and upwards, are considered to be highly reliant on their phones. The UNICEF study indicates that 71 per cent of young people are online compared with 48 per cent of the total population; with an estimate of one in three internet users around the world being children and adolescents under 18. A growing body of evidence therefore suggests

that children are accessing the internet at increasingly younger ages. In some countries, children under 15 are as likely to use the internet as adults over 25. Smartphones are fuelling a 'dependent culture', with children and youth accessing online platforms with little or no supervision.

This increased access has led to an increase in consumption of online content; and it cuts across all age groups. The increased consumption caused by the development of "smart" technologies and the explosion of social and digital media has led to profound changes in young people's media practices, which includes the way they acquire information, entertain, and communicate (Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017). On the heels of increased access by young people, have followed concerns on the kind of information they are privy to, especially without any form of guidance on how to differentiate the authentic from the fake. This guidance is needed based on the premise that technologies are value neutral but in the hands of any individual, easily aligned with their values and beliefs to serve their specific purposes. And in recent decades, these technologies and the platforms that have been linked with a rise in misinformation, disinformation, and fake news. The gravity of these issues were raised in the aftermath of accusations of misinformation, fake news, as well as social media manipulations, that attended the 2016 USA election, the 2019 Nigerian elections, and the increasing polarisation of individuals engaged in the discussion of such matters. While these challenges have always been there, the continuous integration of constantly evolving technologies have changed the landscape of how people access and engage with information on any subject and made the problem more visible.

Young People and Information: Establishing the need for Media and Information Literacy

The availability of digital and the open access to all and sundry has implications for the divisions that used to exist between sources, genres, channels and contexts; now the lines that used to ensure that people could tell who was authorised to give information and could be held to account for same has become muddled. The attendant proliferation of digital and social media platforms, comprising of registered media houses and individual content providers have made it more difficult to distinguish between authentic and fake information. Ademosu & Oyeleye (2019:21) posit that with the increased proliferation of information and discussion on social media, there have been increased disagreements and polarities of views, and fuelled by

misinformation, the conversations quite often move into the territory of hate speech, which has been on the rise. Surprisingly, some of the cries on fake news and misinformation, come from top government officials, sometimes followed by arrests of journalists on those same accusations, further clouding the views of young people on media credibility.

In a 2017 South Korean study, Lee, Shin & Hong found that although there was no direct effect of social media use on polarisation, the increased use of social media platforms indirectly led to increased political engagement which contributed to polarisations. Qureshi, Bhatt, Gupta & Tiwari (2020) concur with the issue of polarisation being a constant feature of the digital dispensation, explaining that the presence of partisan news and polarised discussions as a result has 'challenged the principles of equity, diversity, and right to free and fair discourse and debate'. As a result, individuals are likely to exist in 'bubbles' where they seek out information that reinforces their existing beliefs, attitudes, and subsequent behaviour. There is a need to ensure young people who are easily influenced by friends [peers], and sometimes trends on social media do not get sucked into the pool, more so, when teenagers can create social media accounts at the age of 13 to socialize, and to access information and news. The consequence of what is being reinforced is of interest as it portends dangerous implications and outcomes, which threaten the peace and security of nations if left unchecked over time, and thus needs to be addressed.

While for adults, it is possible to see a number of people capable of reasoning and thoroughly dissecting any information they engage with, not all young people have picked up on the necessary skills to dissect the information they engage with daily, much less verify the credibility of the information source. Abbasi & Huang (2020) citing the Reuters Institute study, state that 51% of the young respondents mentioned that they use social media as a news and information source. Given the nature of the platforms which usually have headlines of different new items showing on their platform, it means that asides those who intentionally search out news content on these platforms, others are also indirectly exposed to different news items as they scroll through the platforms. Additionally, beyond the news headlines, trending news content can be picked from the discussions of social media influencers during the day. Kalogeropoulos (2019) dissects the Reuters data which shows why the issue of digital literacy is very pressing for young people. From the study, in their search for news, those over 35 are likely to go directly to a news site via an

app or the mobile browser (39%), while Gen Z [18 -24] are more likely to turn to social media and messaging apps (57%). In other words, news brands are less important for this group than for over 35s. Gen Y [age 25 -34] are somewhere in the middle, with 43% getting their news via social media and messaging apps and 33% directly. The study also discovered that Facebook is equally popular as a first destination with both groups, and Instagram has become more popular in the last few years as a first destination. Interestingly, Twitter is twice as popular with Gen Z users compared to Gen Y users. while Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat are used significantly more by Gen Z news users than millennials or by users over 35 [Kalogeropoulos, 2019]. Of course, today, there is TikTok increasingly popular with all age groups including generation Z.

Young people are therefore exposed to not just news from authentic media houses [platforms] but also user generated content designed around news/information, all of which have implications for cultural norms and the socialization process especially for young people.

With all this information at their disposal, Metzger, Flanagin, Markov, Grossman, & Bulger (2015) emphasize that studies of young people's critical evaluation skills have found them to be largely uncritical[undiscerning] and using the wrong evaluation scales when judging the quality of online information. Children and teenagers and even youth without the requisite skills are unable to differentiate news from an authentic source and one that has been manipulated. Yet they are challenged by information from click baits, fake news and misinformation manipulated for selfish ends, Hence, in celebration of the 2017 Youth day, UNESCO (2017) pointed out that because youth are content creators [present and future] in an age of digital media technology, they need to be provided with the necessary tools [identified to be lacking by Metzger et al.] that equip them with the competencies to be propagators of peace, respect for the rights of all, and intercultural engagements. Their lack of these skills has been ascribed to their development and limited life experience which would have given them some, if not all the skills. They need to be taught media and information literacy that enables them acquire the necessary digital literacy competencies, because without it they are vulnerable and may find it difficult to easily discern and or navigate what is right and aligns to the principles of fairness, with all the information they encounter on the digital platforms.

Media and Information Literacy [MIL] – What and Why?

The concept of literacy has existed for an exceptionally long time, and in various forms – media literacy, information literacy, audio-visual literacy, and in the recent past, library literacy, museum literacy and digital literacy amongst others. Lin, Li, Deng & Lee (2013: 161) trace the origins of media literacy to early in the twentieth century, when Leavis and Thompson decided to teach students in the UK how to differentiate between the regular culture and the rise of popular culture trends caused by the increase in the printing of literature at the time. It switched to the USA at about the 1950s with the acknowledgement of the rising impact of mass media [radio and television] on people's lives, activities and their everyday interactions at home, school, and work. Within the introduction of new media also calling for digital literacies, lies a trend that new technologies always cause some form of anxiety or panic, due to shifts in the knowledge base and all the possibilities that it offers to its users. For every shift in technology, a form of literacy programme was involved to address the knowledge base and anxiety of the citizens. Yet, traditional literacy such as was used to address the introduction of new technologies in the early 1950's, is incapable of addressing the needs for new media technologies today.

Media and information literacy in the view of Lin et al covers the ability of an individual to engage with the media at different levels, understand the ideas of others, develop the capacity to produce media content [messages and artifacts] using the tools available to them. They believe it also captures the ability of the users to analyse, evaluate and critique media content in such a way as to extract the content available to them.

The Rublinski & Retneck (2015) definition pretty much aligns as they explain MIL as the 'ability to access, analyze, and create media content. In their view, citizens possession of these skills, equips them to understand their rights, which include freedom of information and expression, right to participate in governance etc. as well as their responsibilities. MIL is particularly important because audiences including children and the youth do not have the same opportunities to access information, or even these platforms, much less the ability to create content. The availability of multiple digital platforms and channels have further widened the differences between audiences based on educational, economic, and socio-cultural factors. As such, those who lack proper access to digital platforms and all the knowledge it offers are not equipped to handle the overload that is bound to happen when they first encounter these platforms.

Other definitions of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) cited on the Nazarbayev university Library site include that of the Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy (2012) which described it as the "combination of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices required to access, analyse, evaluate, use, produce, and communicate information and knowledge in creative, legal and ethical ways that respect human rights"; while the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2016) defines it as the "set of competencies designed to search, critically evaluate, use and contribute information and media content wisely; knowledge of one's rights online; understanding how to combat online hate speech and cyberbullying; understanding of the ethical issues surrounding the access and use of information; and engage with media and ICTs to promote equality, free expression, intercultural/interreligious dialogue, peace, etc."

From the above definitions of MIL, certain elements cut across – it intends to teach skills and competencies, which include the ability to search for information[knowing where to look], access the right information [knowing how to judge the value of the information they find and narrow down to the right one], using that information appropriately [to make the right decisions per time and situation], producing information that helps others and ensures they become better and productive individuals in society.

These elements can be divided into four according to Lin et al., and they are (a) functional consuming, which represents the ability of audiences to gain access to relevant media content and understand its basic meaning. FC refers to the ease with which audiences [young people inclusive] know what platforms to go to in search of information and their ability to understand what it contains on a surface level without delving into the ideologies that possibly informed its creation. The second type of media literacy is described as (b) Critical consuming. This involves the audiences or users' ability to interpret the media content within their specific social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. What this means is that every digital information or content posted by online media houses and under user generated content have embedded meanings defined by the environment within which they were created as well as the values or ideologies of the content creator.

Everyone, including young people are therefore expected to be able to decipher the underlying meanings of the content based on the culture, social and economic values prevalent at that time. While MIL may not provide all the answers, it equips digital users with tips on what to look for when

consuming media content at a deeper level. The third aspect of MIL moves to the production level and is called functional prosuming (FP). This refers to the ability of users to create media content. Here they are taught and equipped with the necessary skills to use digital media platforms and the tools to develop content they can share with others. Here participation in the process is the main skill taught and expected of users. The last type of MIL is the critical prosuming (CP), which focuses on the ability of users to contextualise their content, fully aware of the level of impact their content can have on society. The content is therefore designed to ensure their audiences synthesize necessary information to be upstanding citizens and go out to add value in their own way.

The definitions and types of MIL make it pertinent to question the need for MIL, or more specifically, the gap MIL intends to fill. UNESCO (2019) explains that individuals [young people inclusive] make decisions based on the information they have per time. As such, the quality of information they consume would affect the quality or type of decision they make at any time and would in the short and long term determine to some extent their perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes towards different issues. This information could come from any source which includes the media, libraries, archives, museums, publishers, or other information providers on the Internet. With the dramatic increase in access to information via the internet and quantity of information being produced regularly, there are disparities; some people have access, while others do not have the same level of access or any at all to information platforms. Moreover, it is difficult to tell the difference between media and user generated content.

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is structured in such a way that it intends for individuals [in this instance young people] to develop an aptitude for answering the right questions whenever they encounter content from any source and they include: How can young people access, search, critically assess, use and contribute content wisely, both online and offline? What are the rights of young people both online and offline? What are the ethical issues surrounding young people's access and use of information? How can young people engage with digital media content to promote equality, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, peace, participation in governance, freedom of expression and access to information?

As a way of answering these questions, Lin et al (2013) highlight that media and information literacy education is implemented for three main reasons –

(a) to foster democracy, participation and active citizenship (b) promote the knowledge economy, competitiveness and choice and (c) encourage lifelong learning, cultural expression and personal fulfilment.

In essence, media and information literacy (MIL) is not an end in itself, it is a means to an end – for young people, it is a tool to ensure that as consumers of information, they become responsible members of society [citizens], and have the necessary skills to make a living and live at peace with others.

Young People, Media and Information Literacy, Freedom of Information, Promotion of Dialogue and Participatory Democracy

Freedom of information (FOI) is an integral part of the fundamental right of freedom of expression, as recognized by resolution 59 of the UN General Assembly adopted in 1946, as well as by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states that the fundamental right of freedom of expression encompasses the freedom to "to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

This infers that all people, children and youth inclusive have the right to search for information and speak or impart their ideas through any media of their choice. FOI posits that all citizens [including young people] of a country have a right to information from governments and governmental institutions, with such information legally withheld only for privacy and security reasons. Although more than 90 countries including Nigeria in 2011, have adopted the law, the implementation is at different levels dependent on the status of the democracy in those countries. While the proliferation of digital media platforms is in alignment with UNESCO's mandate in the 1945 Constitution to "promote the free flow of ideas by word and image", it calls for a sense of responsibility in the sharing of same.

More importantly, young people have a right to freedom of information as well as freedom of expression; what with universal access to information perceived as building blocks of inclusive knowledge societies. The peculiarity of the situation is that digital platforms have caused blurred lines between media generated and user generated content, a proliferation of authentic and false information from different credible and non-credible sources. Within this context is the concern that young people have been determined to lack the technical know how to make the necessary discerning choices on the type of information, where to search and choice of source. MIL helps them do this by showing them what to look for, where to look for it and how to spot the

fake from the authentic. With MIL young people can ask questions like who developed the content? Where? Why was it developed? What did the source intend it to achieve? Does it meet their information needs? Is it authentic? Or a mashup of information to achieve misinformation or disinformation? What MIL intends is that young consumers of information and media content should always maintain an active mindset rather than passively consuming any content they are exposed to. As they search for information and pass through a myriad of sites, MIL would prepare them to identify when the information shared is against some people or designed to get them to think or act in a certain way. It helps them identify when media houses are being objective or biased.

Beyond searching for information to meet every day needs, young people are required to use their information search to develop themselves such that they are able to participate in the building of their societies, and speak up where they need to and in an appropriate manner. This requires them first to understand their connection as citizens to either the physical or e-societies. Citizenship represents the individuals [youth] relationship to the government of the society s[he] resides in. In order to build that connection, young people rely on information from agents of socialization within those communities; these agents include the family, friends [peers], schools, religious bodies, the media, digital platforms including social media. They receive clues on what their country is like from the perspective of these agents and eventually this shapes their perception, also built on their experiences, no matter how small. Gradually, their world view gets formed. In countries like Nigeria, young people are buffeted on an on-going basis with comments on the challenges of governance, the many problems of politics and the pointlessness and dangers of participating in governance.

MIL enables young people to ask questions about the nature of their rights and responsibilities within their countries, whether it delivers on its promise to them or not. They can question the commentaries that encourage them not to participate in governance or attend town hall meetings and ask questions of the elected representatives. There is nowhere in the constitution where it says only adults can ask questions at town hall meetings, or that young people cannot deploy the tools of digital media to question the status quo. Greta Thurnberg did not think she was too young to add value. True the power distance exists at different levels in different countries. However, it must not deter you from speaking up. The country the adults create, is the country you live in. If you fail to start making your input to change the narrative, then the adults get to

create the world they like, and the ones who are apathetic to governance [get to continue sitting and complaining about all the things that are going wrong. Greta is said to have started her journey by first convincing her parents to make environmentally friendly choices. Once she had successfully done that, she took her message much wider – at the age of 15, she would go to the front of the Swedish parliament to ask them to make better decisions on climate change. She carried a placard or signpost with the phrase 'School Strike for climate' [in her native tongue of course]. Other students joined her and from there, she has attended several international meetings to speak to heads of states and institutions on the need for a more concerted effort to stem climate change. She chose something that was important to her and which she knew would affect her future.

As a young person, being media and information literate would give you that sense of purpose, because you are able to objectively look at different issues based on the authentic information you may have acquired. Greta could only achieve this because she possibly engaged with the relevant information on what was important to her. MIL helps you search out that information and then as young people ask the questions that put the issue of governance, sustainability or environment or health in perspective, you are able to spot loopholes in the arguments offered and ask questions to counter them [politely of course!]. MIL is not about animosity; it encourages civil discussions because even if we have different ideas on issues, we remain people with the same need for growth, development, security and peace. We may not agree with what people say, but we disagree in a polite manner. The people are not our enemy, it is their mindset, attitude or behaviour we want to change. So, we engage the people to change their mindsets and not attack them. Suffice to say, young people can participate in town hall meetings or engage officers in governance creatively. MIL competencies offer youth the opportunity to deploy digital tools to engage the officials in government and heading different institutions.

However, in displaying their rights to express their thoughts, ideas and values, they must be conscious of the laws within their societies – laws of libel, slander, defamation etc. Young people need to know that their voices matter. Media and Information Literacy competencies helps them find their voice and give it expression in the ways they can but without breaking the law. Furthermore, they would gain a critical understanding of digital technologies and how to use them to express their opinions. They would learn the ability

to use multimedia elements to push for more equitable representations and represent the diversity better.

In a bid to encourage more young people to participate in governance and embrace their rights and duties as citizens, from an early age, young people have been socialized in educational systems in different countries on the concepts of citizenship, governance, and participation in the process, through courses like social studies at grade school and junior high school levels, government and history at senior high school level and GST courses on citizenship and civic duties at university level, there have been commentaries that young people have an apathy for governance and participation in any way or form.

MIL fills the gap here. With continuous exposure of young people to the MIL process as designed into the UNESCO MIL Curriculum, they are bound to develop the competencies that ingrain in them what citizenship is about, and what is possible if they participate in the process of governance within their societies. It educates them on the kind of information they need to look for with regards to their role in their country as well as their responsibilities despite and within the status quo, as well as what to look for in choosing a representative. Media and information literacy would break down all the concepts related to democracy and governance, describe to young people what should be and how they can participate in the process using many approaches – role plays amongst themselves, knowledge of digital tools and content creation to help them educate not just themselves but others who do not have as much access to information and the platform tools as they do.

Over time, discussions around governance and participatory dialogue have turned ugly. Identity has become weaponized at all levels and forms – race, education, ethnicity, religion, party affiliation, candidate supported, etc., across Africa and on other continents. (Eyakuze & Said, 2020). This has led to polarized discussions all over social media and in some instances led to deadly physical confrontations. One of the principles and skills that MIL teaches all including young people is the understanding that everyone is important no matter their status. It teaches people that everyone deserves to be heard and treated with respect. It does this by teaching young people that how people are represented in media spaces and online platforms affects how others see them and how they are seen affects or determines how others react to them. MIL shows young people that information is presented in different ways and that anybody can be a victim of wrong depiction and perception, based on

years of wrong and biased representations in traditional media and online spaces. Young people are taught the power of descriptive words and images and how it can change the lives of people when used as a weapon. It teaches them tolerance of other people who are different from them, to accept that there is beauty in diversity, and that uniqueness should bring people together rather than separate them.

Part of this comes from ensuring they develop the understanding that any information they encounter in the online and offline media and information space has a context – socio-cultural, economic, religious, political etc. And this information comes from a variety of sources, who have their own contexts and special reasons for designing that information. An MIL compliant youth, questions where every information they encounter is coming from – who is the source? and what experiences have shaped the way that person or organisation designs the information that they ae putting out there? The questions helps young people recognize a source who produces information from an expert point of view and based on actual truth and with genuine intentions, from someone who takes the same position but manipulates the way it is presented to achieve nefarious purposes. They can distinguish content that has integrity from one that contains false information, or true information manipulated in noticeable ways.

Conclusion

It is important for young people to note that Media and information literacy can be broken into several steps but is a lifelong process. It is not a literacy to acquire in one sitting. It is not an end as explained earlier but a means to ensuring that individuals from an early age can become a responsible citizen who understands not just their duties but their rights as well. It prepares them to creatively use digital competencies learnt to solve problems all through their lives. As is evident, even those technologies would evolve. The advantage is that MIL would keep young people at alert and prepared to evolve with it and apply the knowledge they have to those new levels. In teaching these competencies, young people would become more discerning each time they go online.

As more young people embrace the principles and skills of MIL, it would be easier for them to politely question and look beyond the surface when examining information in terms of how balanced it is, the presence or absence of bias and accuracy of the data it contains, irrespective of the form it takes.

For young people, content may be the answer to a question, a work of art that inspires creative thought, or a map to help find the way to a destination. Through MIL, it is intended that they know that effective decision making is a function of the type of information they consume. But more importantly, that each time they assess information or content, they realise that the contexts would vary among cultures or societies and judge it accordingly from that eye view of tolerance.

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YOUTH POLITICAL INCLUSION: HOW TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN AGE AND PRINCIPLES

BY
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Introduction

Youth participation in politics is very important in the development of modern societies (Pruitt, 2017). The low level of youth participation in political life is one of the biggest challenges facing representational democracy across the globe. In democracies; participation is not only about voting, it goes beyond that. It should be noted that youth participation varies and differs. While some young people are willing and eager to participate, some others are deprived of support for participation or may not have adequate knowledge about how to participate. Basically, youth need to be informed above all for participation to be ensured. In other words, young people have to acquire participation skills to become influential and active citizens (Mayer, 2011; Arches and Fleming, 2006). Inclusion in politics ensure the participation of individuals who have difficulty in participating due to reasons including poverty, lack of education, religion, language, and race in social life. Young people are also considered to be among the disadvantageous groups contained in social inclusion (Carstensen & DeLiema, 2018).

In recent years, many countries have seen a sharp increase in their youth population. Over half the world's population of 7.9 billion is currently aged between 20 and 44, in Africa, a combination of high fertility rates and low life expectancy has resulted in a "youth bulge" (Weber, 2019). According to Sommers (2010), about 70 per cent of the continent's population is under the age of 30. Because the level of engagement in politics by youth remains lower than that of older generations, Africa's youth bulge is leading to an emerging crisis of representation. Youth constitute a fifth of the World's population (Sommers, 2010). Meanwhile, their participation in the political discourses is very limited. Globally, the average age of parliamentarians is 53. The minimum age for competing to the parliamentary candidacy is 25 years (Gherghina & Chiru, 2010). This puts into question the inclusion of young peoples in the political spheres and processes. Youth have been recognised for their creative skills and innovative ideas. If we look critically, at major political changes and

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dynamism, youth are at the furculum. They mostly serve as catalysts for the changes of undemocratic governments and their political systems. However, due to unfavourable legal architectures, low economic conditions and different discriminatory practices, their contributions and roles in the political arenas were extremely limited. As a result, their involvement in the political process is informal and not yet well recorded.

Youths are often excluded or overlooked as political candidates. Politics is typically regarded as a space for politically experienced men, young people are systematically marginalised because of their young age, limited opportunities, and projected lack of experience. The Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU) (1996) reports that people between the ages of 20 and 44 make up 57% of the world's voting age population but only 26% of the world's Members of Parliament (MPs). Youths under 30 represent 1.9% of the world's MPs and more than 80% of the world's upper houses of Parliament have no MPs aged under 30 (Joshi, 2013). While youths often play central and catalysing roles in movements for democracy around the world, they are less engaged than older generations. McAllister (2014) report on youth participation in national parliaments 2016 shows that: Young people under 30 make up less than 2 per cent of the world's MPs. About 30 per cent of the world's lower houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30. More than 80 per cent of the world's upper houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30. Not a single upper house of parliament anywhere in the world has more than 10 per cent of its members aged under 30. 1.9 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 30 – up from 1.6 per cent in 2014. 14.2 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 40 – up from 12.9 per cent in 2014 (Joshi, 2013). 26 per cent of the world's MPs are aged under 45 – up from 23.9 per cent in 2014. Male MPs outnumber their female counterparts in every age group. Ecuador, Finland, Norway and Sweden are the only parliaments in the world where more than 10 per cent of members are aged under 30. Andorra, Denmark and Ecuador have the highest proportion of MPs aged under 40 in lower or single houses of parliament. Belgium, Bhutan and Kenya have the highest proportion of MPs aged under 40 in upper houses of parliament. More than 60 per cent of MPs in the unicameral parliament of Andorra and in the lower houses of parliament of Ethiopia and Oman are aged under 45. More than 80 per cent of MPs in the upper house of the parliament of Bhutan are aged under 45 (Rosenqvist, 2020).

Given the fact that Africa is young in democracy and its political institutions

are not well established, youth are excluded from important decision-making processes. Most often than not, governments and policy makers in Africa are reluctant to include youth in the formal political systems. Nowadays, however; a marginal improvement has been shown in Africa, partly because of the rising consciousness of states and the external pressures including globalisation and democratisations, which give due emphasis for the youth participation in the political and economic spheres of influences. Indeed, the young population in Africa is growing at an alarming rate. Nonetheless, this segment of the population is unemployed and lives in an extremely discrepant way of life. That is why most young peoples of the continent get into violence than harnessing positive and real changes in their communities. Nowadays, it is common to find that most African youth are drawn into gangs and predatory activities (Kynoch, 1999; Reno, 2007). Scholars pointed out that this could be a response to their marginalisation and social and economic exclusions. Inclusive political participation is not only a fundamental political and democratic right but also is crucial to building stable and peaceful societies and developing policies that respond to the specific needs of younger generations. For young people to be adequately represented in political institutions, processes, and decision-making, and in particular in elections, they must know their rights and be given the necessary knowledge and capacity to participate in a meaningful way at all levels.

Recognising the potential of youth, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed its first-ever Youth Strategy (2014–2017), called "Empowered Youth, Sustainable Future", in line with the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth (2013) which calls on young generations to become more involved and more committed in development processes. In 2016, as a joint initiative of a number of partners including UNDP and IPU, the "Not Too Young To Run" global campaign was launched to elevate the promotion of young people's right to run for public office and address the wide-spread issue of age discrimination.

Conceptual Clarification

Youth: A Conceptualisation

Human life consists of different periods: babyhood, childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Youth is the state or time of being young – young men and women. This period is melancholic due to the young person's search to

find his ego, personality, and identity. He experiences the pain of exploring himself and changing shell. Various ideas and explanations have been put forward about "young" and "youth". However, there is not an absolute consensus on these definitions and ideas. UNESCO (2001) defines youth as the period in which a person develops capabilities and social skills required to be ready for the self-worth and responsibility to be brought by the status of adulthood. Accordingly, youth can be deemed as a special period of life with unique social, economic, psychological, and political characteristics.

The growing commitment to the involvement of the youth in global development process is a clear recognition of their potentials as change agents within the society which attracted scholarly attention in an attempt to clarify and articulate a conceptual category for youth. In most literatures, scholars have often employed the criterion of age to define the youth (Pain, 2003; Wallace & Bendit, 2009). However, sociological studies have shown that this criterion is fluid and therefore vary from one society to another (Furlong, 2013). The way in which a nation defines its youth is related to the object conditions and realities that exist on the ground especially historical and contemporary socio-economic and political issues that need to be addressed (Earl et al., 2017). 18 – 35 years represents the most active, the most volatile, and yet the most vulnerable segment of the population, socio-economically and in other respects (Henn at al. 2018). Persons within the age range of 6-36 years as youth. Other scholars employed the age bracket of 15-30 to define youth (Uhunmwuangho & Oghator, 2013). It is also helpful to add that progressive-mindedness is one of the defining characteristics of youth. Therefore, the current thinking is that people beyond the age of 36 who share the ideals of a progressive society are also considered as youthful. Whatever the age limit, youth are men and women considered to be young, energetic, vibrant and resourceful, who are often engaged in social enterprises that requires physical strength and mental capacity. The UNESCO (2013), for statistical consistency across regions, defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States.

Youth are group of people who want justice to be ensured and inequalities to be eliminated in the society immediately without regard to the facts of life. They have such strong tendencies in this matter that they easily rely on simple solutions and trail behind false leaders to accomplish their goals. Also, they adopt a critical attitude towards all the moral, religious, traditional, and political principles which, they believe, come from their parents (Haan et

al., 1968; Huitt, 2004). "Youth" is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group. However, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment. Therefore "youth" is often indicated as a person between the age where he/she may leave compulsory education, and the age at which he/she finds his/her first employment. This latter age limit has been increasing, as higher levels of unemployment and the cost of setting up an independent household puts many young people into a prolonged period of dependency.

Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. That's why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because 'youth' is often referred to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job. The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by member states. The Secretary-General first referred to the current definition of youth in 1981 in his report to the General Assembly on International Youth Year (A/36/215, para. 8 of the annex) and endorsed it in ensuing reports (A/40/256, para.19 of the annex). However, in both the reports, the Secretary-General also recognised that, apart from that statistical definition, the meaning of the term 'youth' varies in different societies around the world. When the General Assembly, by its resolution 50/81 in 1995, adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond, it reiterated that the United Nations defined youth as the age cohort of 15-24 (Naidoo, 2016).

Politics: A Conceptualisation

Politics as a concept is a contested concept. It is defined as exercise of power and as social and public activity. While these definitions are distinct and in some cases contradictory, they do also overlap and they certainly don't correspond to mutually exclusive realms of political activity. Engaging in political activity in the narrower sense, for instance by voting or becoming involved in party politics, does not preclude one from engaging in political activity in the broader sense, for instance, by participating in protests or boycott campaigns. Politics is ubiquitous. Avenues for political involvement are multiple.

Looking at the distinct definitions of politics, it encouraged critical engagement and it actually fall squarely towards the narrow or broad side of the definitional spectrum. Indeed, while some definitions were certainly narrower (or broader) than others, it also depended on how other concepts are defined – such as power, violence or conflict – which can themselves be contested concepts. Although it might at first appear that debates over the meaning of concepts are quite far removed from our everyday lives, people all over the world and throughout history have sacrificed their lives and livelihoods for concepts such as democracy, equality and freedom. Although wars have not been fought exclusively over the definition of politics, different understandings of who counts as a political being (in other words, as 'doing politics') are in no small way related to different understandings of politics. In turn, who counts as a political being has significant implications for whose voices are heard, whose concerns matter and which actions are valued or considered legitimate and which disparaged, trivialised or even criminalised. David, Easton (1969) argued that politics is the authoritative allocation of values.

Scholars once said that politics could as well be seen as a methodology and activities associated with running a government, an organisation or a movement (Ball, 1988; Hague & Harrop, 2004; Johari, 1982). Politics refers to a set of activities associated with the governance of a country, or an area. It involves making decisions that apply to members of a group. It refers to achieving and exercising positions of governance – organised control over a human community, particularly a state. Nigeria as a nation operates as a democratic nation. This paper is to carry out a study on Nigerian Youth inclusion in politics.

Youth Political Participation in Africa

Generally, in Africa, the youth are those young men and women within the age brackets of 15-35 years that participate actively in politics (Adebayo, 2018). Youth are politically active populations of Africa. The long-established structures of power in Africa persistently exclude the youth from political systems (Resnick & Casale, 2014). Undoubtedly, African youth are a political force. Nothing evidences this fact more in contemporary times than the Arab Spring and other movements of political contestation, resistance or revolt led by young people in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Niger, Togo and South Africa, among other countries. However, young people's political activity is not a novel phenomenon; young people played a political role in pre-colonial

African societies and, notably, were the vanguard of the pro-independence movement and the anti-apartheid struggle in the twentieth century. History also records that young people's political activity has often been both circumscribed and co-opted by others. Sadly, youths in the continent are excluded from meaningful participation in governance systems (Van Gyampo & Anyidoho, 2019) but are recruited to "fight dangerous political wars" (Ahwoi, 2008: 32; Ahwoi, 2006), often as "foot-soldiers" of political parties (Press, 2012). In extreme cases, they have been lured or conscripted into armed conflict and terrorism.

It would be too simplistic to present the youth as being without political agency. Even while their energies are employed by political parties and other powerful influences for their own ends, young people themselves approach these activities as avenues to the jobs, money and social capital that they seek (Abbink 2005; Dawson 2014; Honwana 2012; Peters and Vlassenroot 2013). Jeffrey (2010) described youth politics in terms of a "culture of political entrepreneurialism". Moreover, young people take initiative to influence and disrupt existing political structures or to seek political voice and economic power outside of these structures (Bob-Milliar, 2012; Van Gyampo, 2012). Vigh's (2006) concept of "social navigation"—that is, young people's attempts to construct meaningful lives within an unpredictable and constantly-changing socio-political terrain—is helpful to understanding youth politics as it contains both the idea of young people's purposeful actions towards desired ends and as well acknowledges the structures that constrain young people's political participation.

In Africa, youth participation in voting and election processes has shown a decreasing trend since few years ago. Whether in political parties or social institutions, youth are less participating. The non-inclusivity of the political parties' program is one of the fundamental reasons for the low participation of the young peoples in such relevant areas. For example, according to the UNDP (2011), the youth voter turnout of African countries revealed that youth voters are less participated than older citizens. Clearly, young people's actions are important in shaping the continent's political future, not least because they on the average, are about 60 percent of Africa's population (UNECA, 2009), and constitute about 75 percent of the continent's labour force and voting population (Ahwoi 2008). Consequently, there have been calls by several scholars to truly engage the youth as partners in politics and in development (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2015). In political and policy discourses

also, there is an increasing focus on young people as documented in the African Union's African Youth Charter (2006) and the United Nations' Development Programme on Youth (2013), among others. Over the past few decades, the policy formulation to involve youth in the decision-making process has increased tremendously.

Even though youth' participation is not much pronounced in Africa, but their will and desire in the day to day social, economic, and political activities of their countries remains high. So, if there is a favourable legal ground for youth, they can invest their efforts, knowledge, and skill in those aspects. However, what has existed in Africa is mostly unfriendly and uninviting. Politicians are not usually interested in young people and they see youth as their power-grabbers. In the political history of Africa, it is rare to find a president or prime minister who is below 60 years old. This is a problem by itself. Youth may start to lose hope and consider that they have no any part in the political aspects.

Youth politics in Africa today shows some continuity with a history of co-optation of youth in the service of formal political authorities (be it chieftaincy, the state or political parties) but also evidences a disengagement of the youth from formal politics that contrasts with their enthusiasm at independence. While the continent has undergone significant political and social change, patriarchy and gerontocracy still permeate political institutions in ways that disadvantage young people. Relatively lacking in social and political capital, the youth find themselves on the periphery of power even while hiring themselves out as 'voting machines' and party apparatchiks (Honwana, 2012; Bob-Milliar, 2012; Gyampo, 2012). Some youth, disillusioned with formal politics, may disengage with the political system altogether (Booysen, 2015; Honwana, 2012). However, Honwana (2012: 136) argues that "what may appear to be apathy and depoliticisation represents a conscious move away from traditional arenas of party politics towards other forms of engagement with society and the global world". The idea of youth engaging in "unruly politics" (Richards, 1995) is consistent with a theme in youth literature on generational tensions that suggests that young people have an inclination to resist or disrupt the status quo (Honwana, 2012).

Thus, there are therefore two extremes in the discourse of youth politics—full, vocal and sometimes aggressive participation or, on the other hand, complete disengagement. However, many young people are likely to be somewhere in between these two extremes (Farthing 2010). The picture overall

is that young people are less interested in constitutional politics and less likely to engaged in conventional political actions than older citizens and, second, that there has been a decline in youth participation in constitutional politics over time (Lekalake and Gyimah-Boadi 2016). Meaningful democracy requires the meaningful participation of youth. Young people have much to offer societies – from innovation to creativity to new thinking. Their participation in democracy promotes active citizenship, strengthens social responsibility and can enhance democratic processes and institutions. And today's young citizens are tomorrow's leaders and decision-makers. Broadly speaking, young people who have low incomes, lack decent or full employment, have little education, and live in rural areas tend to be more marginalised from formal political processes (Vlassenroot et al. 2020; Ebata et al., 2005). The forms of political activity also vary among youth. For instance, in her study of local politics in a South African township, Dawson (2014) shows that even while youth residents were united in their material conditions and feelings of exclusion from politics, they took on differentiated roles as 'leaders', 'brokers', and 'protesters', determined in part by their educational histories, their employment and living situations, and their motivations and preferred tactics.

Historical Overview of Youth Participation in African Politics

The portrayal of the youth in Africa's political history is also inconsistent and contradictory. In both research literature and in policy, the depiction of youths as agents of change and hope for the future of African countries are oddly juxtaposed with their framing of disinterested, disenchanted and disempowered (Konteh, 2009, Asante & Oppong, 2012). The literature is replete with negative representations of African youth and references to a "youth crisis", with the label "lost generation" specifically applied to young people in countries that experienced protracted civil wars or the long struggle against apartheid and who are now facing social and economic marginalisation (Ebata et al., 2005; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012). "Youth" has thus become synonymous with exclusion, disadvantage and vulnerability (Gore & Pratten, 2003; Abbink, 2005) and, less sympathetically, with violent (male) thugs and dangerous malcontents (Dawson 2014).

As a result of their material and social conditions, young people are often portrayed as distrustful of the state's disposition or capacity to meet their needs and therefore politically indifferent. Alternatively, the youth may be presented as politically active, but exclusively engaged outside the arena of constitutional

politics and occupied with political agendas that are more global than national, and requiring 'smaller, intensive, personal actions (Farthing 2010). A clear understanding of young people's political activity would embrace both notions of youth engagement and disengagement, and would also contend with the reality that, despite the ability to engage in alternative agendas, forms and spaces of political involvement, many young Africans live lives and envision futures that intimately involve the state and their immediate communities.

Youth Politics in Pre-Colonial Times

In pre-colonial times, African political systems were generally organised around seniority, with authority vested in family or clan heads and chiefs who governed with the assistance of councils of elders. In such gerontocratic societies, youth accepted subordinate social, political and economic roles within institutions established on respect for the rule, views and counsel of the chief and the elderly (Awoonor, 1990). In particular, young people were employed as labour on family farms and other economic enterprises. Through age associations, male youth were responsible for defence and public services within the traditional communities (Uzoigwe, 1977). Thus, while the youth were not generally involved in decision-making in traditional societies, they had a sense of ownership of such decisions and participated in their successful implementation. Another aspect of young people's political importance in the period prior to the encounter with colonialism was their right to offer public criticisms of traditional authorities who violated the public trust.

Youth Politics During Colonial Rule

The Second World War gave an impetus to the expansion of youth organisations, which was linked to the process of decolonisation (Bhatia, 2020). Among the new youth organisations formed in Nigeria were Nigerian Youth Movement, the Young Men Christian Association (YMCA), the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA), and the Catholic Youth Organisation (CYO) (Waller, 2006). Colonialism exacerbated generational tensions that had been largely contained in pre-colonial societies. The British system of indirect rule practiced in West and East Africa used traditional authority structures as a conduit and enforcer of colonial power at the same time as education, wage labour and urbanisation loosened the influence of traditional social systems on young people's identities, cultures and prospects (Bhatia, 2020). In particular, young people's migration into urban spaces, their perceived

alienation from traditional mores, and their immersion in youth cultures were a source of aggravation for both colonial and traditional authorities (Cooper & Frederick, 1996).

The development of trade and education enhanced opened up young people to doctrines of personal reward, private property, and the right of bequest. In British West Africa, the monetisation of the economy and the further development of trade and enterprise produced a cadre of youth who were financially independent enough to actively resist both traditional leaders and the colonial officials (Vaughan, 2006; Afigbo, 1972) who, in turn, attempted to constrain the youth. While young men were frequently the target of restrictions to their physical and social mobility, Allman (2002) provides an instructive analysis of the collusion of traditional chiefs and colonial officials to manufacture a moral crisis around the increasing numbers of unmarried (young) women, which actions camouflaged anxieties over women's increasing economic and social independence.

1.1 Youth Politics at Independence

African youths were both the intellectual and ground forces in the nationalist and Pan-African movements. As early as 1929 in the Gold Coast colony, many of whom had studied law in Britain and had been active members of the West African Students Union (WASU), advocated the formation of a "National Assembly of Youth to study the problems facing the colony and to think and act together as one people (Yusuf, 1998). The Fifth Pan-African Congress in 1945 in Manchester, which was considered to be one of the most important for the liberation movement, was attended by many youth participants who would go on to lead independence movements in various African countries (Adi, 1997; Yusuf, 1998).

Younger nationalists such including Nigeria's Nnamdi Azikiwe, Guinea's Sékou Touré, Mali's Modibo Keita and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah organised the youth to resist colonial rule, often preferring different strategies to older nationalists (Martin, 2012). Nkrumah, for instance, broke rank with the United Gold Coast Convention on the question of how expeditiously and through what avenues independence should be achieved. He formed the Convention Peoples' Party (CCP) in 1949, aligning the party with the Committee on Youth Organisations (CYOs) whose members were composed mainly of the youth, among them school leavers, junior civil servants, petty traders and young shop assistants (Nel & Pretorius, 2012). Similarly, the Democratic Party of

Guinea under the leadership of Sékou Touré was mobilised around the youth who were the main agents of Guinea's fight for independence (Adi, 1997).

By 1965, thirty-seven African states had won independence (Young, 2012). Of the states south of the Sahara, the Gold Coast, now Ghana, was the first to gain independence in March 1957. Upon attainment of independence, youth groups pledged their allegiance to the regimes that led them in the fight against colonial rule. The politics of the new nation-states was underpinned by old patriarchal and gerontocratic ideologies that evoked ideals of family and community in service of the grand project of nation-building. In Ghana, Nkrumah co-opted traditional youth associations into the CPP while other new youth groups such as the Young Pioneer Movement were formed to defend his government (Hess, 2001). The dynamic of youth groups organising to defend the administration of the new regimes occurred in other countries, including in Ivory Coast where President Felix Houphouet-Boigny established a party militia of both young people and veterans (Gavin, 2007). The centralization of youth organisations by governments after independence provoked resistance from youth groups that operated outside the control of the parties in power. For instance, the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) came into conflict with the CPP government's agenda to co-opt youth organisations (Van Gyampo et al. 2016). Similar motivations were behind attempts by student groups between 1962 and 1964 to overthrow Houphouet-Boigny, with the support of key political party officials.

The Challenges of Youth Inclusion in Politics in Nigeria

The Nigerian political landscape is replete with crass opportunism in which youths are engaged in shameful romance with bankrupt politicians to destabilize the polity. The growing culture of violence among youth organisations like the Bakassi Boys, the Movement for the Actualization of a Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Egbesu Boys, the O'odua Peoples' Congress (OPC) etc are clear indications of the systematic militarization of our democratic environment. Furthermore, Omelle and Gana admitted that "the activities of these group of mostly unemployed or underemployed youth constitute a major source of recent ethno-religious strife and violence in the Nigerian Federation (Okpanachi, 2010). The prevailing conditions have seriously extenuated the potentials of the youth as agents of social change. These challenges range from the economic and social to the cultural. The treacherous triangle of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment in which the

bulk of Nigerian youths are currently trapped, has severely challenged their sensibility and has in the long run given rise to what sociologists term attitudes of fatalism, resignation and acceptance of the situation (Bruce, 2001). The persistence of these social problems has created an environment where youth are cheaply available for manipulation by self-seeking politicians. Poverty, illiteracy and unemployment are interrelated conditions that generate human needs and therefore constitute a state of deprivation. In an apparent indictment of Nigerian politicians, Togbolo (REF) observed: "They take advantage of the poverty-stricken nature of the country to exploit the people, politicians are fond (sic) of using the youth restive nature as a political strategy to have their way" (Togbolo, 2006:8).

Other challenges of youth inclusion in Nigeria include limited capacity, skill, resource, and tools as hindrances. Inadequacy of political knowledge, interest, efficacy and sense of civic duty, and a growing number of citizens (including young people) have little trust in formal political processes, political institutions and leaders; perhaps because they feel they are not representative of their interests. In Nigeria, there are no wider political spaces for youth to have a chance to make their voices heard and to shape their future destinies. When youth are continually excluded from decision making processes, on their own and societal affairs by and large, they will face the psychological trauma of hopelessness and misery in their life. Nigeria is known by its repeated promises for its youth. Better education, good jobs, political room for youth is the common slogans of politicians.

The first barrier for youth participation is the minimum voting age requirement set for national elections at 18 in most countries, which disenfranchises younger citizens. The second barrier for youth participation is the minimum age for eligibility to run for office, which is often set higher than the age to vote. As youth (15-35) encompasses "minors without voting rights', "minors with voting rights' and "young adults with voting rights' some electoral laws penalize political parties who use minors for campaigning. It can be a challenge to both protect youth and encourage their participation at the same time. Increased costs for candidate nomination and campaigning and the lack of political finance regulations make it even more difficult for youth to start a political career. Similarly, if parties are not giving financial support to young candidates at the same rates as for older candidates, they are disadvantaged.

In most societies, politics has been for centuries a domain of older, often

male and wealthy citizens, a situation that has resulted in the systematic exclusion of young people from political debates and decision-making and thus contributed to the under representation of youth. Despite a broad consensus that young people have an important role to play in political processes, the participation of youth in politics remains a sensitive issue in some regions. While participation of all citizens at the local level is the cornerstone to build healthy democracies, it is often at the local level that young people are not given the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes.

Young women are in many countries subject to "double discrimination" based on their age and gender. They also often experience additional obstacles compared with men. Because of social conventions and/or insecure or unsafe environments, women still face serious barriers to get registered as voters and to cast their votes. In spite of the above enumerated challenges and obstacles the prospect for participatory democracy has received a boost by the active participation of the younger elements in the Nigerian political space with the introduction of the Not Too Young to Rule Bill. Some of the Governors who won election were in their late 30s. The National and State Houses of Assembly also parade some members of the youthful population in the 1999 election. At the local government level, youth, most of whom were school teachers and young graduates also became Councillors and Chairmen of their Local Councils (Angulu, 1999).

Youth Ideological Disposition and Guiding Principles

Most Nigerian youths share a common feature of ethno-regional ideology, seeking to capture and consolidate power in their respective spheres of influence/region. They are also driven by a commitment to power struggle, though in varying degrees. This development has serious effects on youth ideology and principles stance in the country from the 1960s to date. In terms of ideological orientations, there were no fundamental differences in party politics and activities, as the country was "once again mired in a vituperative and vicious politics" (Omotola, 2009). Political vagrancy permeates the political landscape, leaving in its wake youths without ideology and principles (Omotola, 2010).

If youths of previous republics (First, Second and Third) were found wanting on ideological stance and commitment, those of the Fourth Republic are obviously worse. And for the future, "they raise more questions than answers to the lingering political problems for Nigeria". According to Ghali Umar NaAbba former Speaker House of Representatives, youths have nothing

to learn from the politicians, the PDP, for example, draws its founders from "all and sundry political persuasions: conservatives, radicals and progressives" (Ghali – Na'bba, 2001), most of whom supported the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election and flirted with the military during the annulment and in the post-annulment period; including some serving as ministers or members of the ING or as member of the Abacha undemocratic constitutional conference or as leaders of some of the five political parties set up and managed by General Abacha's aides that finally endorsed him as the sole presidential candidate in April 1998 (Omoruyi, 2002:8-9). The APP or ANPP and later APC did not differ in any respect as its founders also served as ministers or as aides in different parts of the country under Abacha.

It was perhaps the foregoing faulty origin and precarious foundations of these parties that have been largely responsible for their seeming ideological barrenness. Although, the PDP and APP (ANPP) were status quo parties, given their capitalist and conservative dispositions, none of them seems to have clear policy positions as a basis of popular mobilisation and legitimacy of their actions. Judging by their activities, it has been observed that "there's almost nothing to choose between PDP and other parties in terms of ideological learning" (Iyare, 2004:92). Simbine (2002:2005:23) has also observed that their manifestoes were "essentially the same in content", as they were not crafted differently, and the strategies for achieving objectives did not differentiate parties from each other. In a seeming self-indictment passage, Jerry Gana, a former Minister of Information and PDP stalwart observes that "in terms of cohesion and firm ideological learning, there is a problem but PDP will be transformed, PDP will be strong, PDP will be strengthened ideological, PDP will be more organised, PDP will be in power for 30 years" (Iyare, 2004:94).

Nigerian parties, despite their pretence through party manifestoes, do not have clear cut political ideologies. "An overview of the manifestoes of political parties in Nigeria shows that their objectives and strategies are not radically different from one another in their planks and are all virtually addressed to the same issue their manifestoes are almost a carbon copy of each other with the only difference discernible in them being the emphasis that they give to the programmes articulated or in few cases, the strategies for carrying out the objectives (Aleyomi, 2013)." Consequently, youths and older politicians have found it extremely difficult to emphasise politics of issues. Rather, they have been largely driven by ethnicity and religion, as much as the influence of money politics. These forces, more than anything else, also determine the

pattern of party politics. In the circumstance, parties have suddenly descended to the level of being used to promote personal and sectional interests at the expense of the collective good especially national integration and development. Moreover, Nigerian parties have not been able to attain a reasonable degree of institutionalisation especially in the areas of internal cohesion and discipline. The level of crisis at both levels of party relations is worrisome.

The poverty of political ideology that has come to envelop Nigeria over the years, coupled with its attendant crisis and contradictions, has been of dramatic effect not only on the parties, but also on the entire project of national rebirth, integration and sustainable democracy and development, instead Nigerian youths have been reduced to tools for promoting sectionalism and opportunism at the expense of a steadfast dedication to well-defined beliefs and principles of action. In the short and long run, it is the accompanying politics that suffers, crippling as it does, to midwife sustainable democracy. What we have encountered so far is the resort to the politics of "trial and error", based on the manipulation of ethnicity and religion and the dominance of money politics. Having proved to be very effective in mobilisation and legitimisation, the place of political ideology has been relegated to the background.

Youths need to define their values - what do they stand for and why? This will help them identify with parties and ideology of interest for their pursuance. There is need to ensure that you are engaged for the right reasons and that they are approached as partners focusing on adherence to the values. Youth should be approached as active agents who have the right to participate and be heard. Engagement should enable young people's ownership and leadership in governance processes. Activities to enhance youth political participation should be as youth-driven as possible. Young people themselves can decide on their priorities, methods, and tactics. The environment and working methods can be adapted to youth capacities and needs – meeting youth where they're at.

All young people are to be encouraged to participate, regardless of age, background, religion, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, geography, and mental health. This requires an acceptance and embracing of diversity, and efforts to build upon young people's diversity and experiences. Youth should be opened to new ideas and have a willingness to take risks and challenge existing established processes and structures. Youth agency should be strengthened by supporting capacity development for young people, youth organisations, networks, and movements, to enhance mutual responsiveness, trust, and collaboration.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The youth dividend in Nigeria is significant. Meanwhile, the attention given to it is considerably limited. If the young population in Nigeria is utilised properly, it would be a potential resource to uplift the nation and to see the Nigeria as everybody wants. Worthy of note is that youth in the country are largely excluded from the political discourses of the nation, hence, the need to bring them into the political foray and to utilise their immense potential. From the global to the national and local levels, the youth-related issues should be the priority areas. Though policy adoptions are important steps towards youth inclusions, their implementations are of paramount importance. Therefore, in every developmental agenda, youth should be placed in the forefront. In effect, it could be possible to utilise the full capacity of these politically and economically active segments of the population. The nation and individual states have to involve youth in all levels and areas of policy making and developmental plans. For doing so, a national disaggregated data about the youth and their participation is highly required. If Nigerians can do that, it will be able to make informed and evidence-based decisions.

The role of youth in political participation and development cannot be over emphasised as they should be involved in the processes that shape their future, sustain political and developmental process in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general. The movement toward participatory democracy the world over has necessitated the urgent need for greater involvement of the youths. Since the youth constitute a significant proportion of the population, their contribution in this process is vital to democratic consolidation. Nigeria with over 180 million people and with over sixty percent of youths cannot afford to lock out the youths if they must compete politically, technologically and scientifically in order to align itself with the sustainable development in African in particular and the developed world in general.

Nigerian youths have presented a contradiction with respect to ideological dispositions. As such, the enviable roles of ideology have been hijacked and perverted by the forces of identity notably ethnicity and religion as well as the influence of money politics. The implication has been that politics in Nigeria has become dominantly an elitist affair for the disempowerment of not only the masses, but also the state. There must therefore first be an aggressive and sustained system of social mobilisation, socialising and educating people of the ills of ideological barrenness, emphasising the need for change. The civil society in particular has a responsibility for the socialisation, education,

conscientisation and mobilisation. Then some ideological sanity can be returned for sustainable democracy and development.

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INTERROGATING CRIMINAL LABEL AND THE SCOURGE OF INSECURITY IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

BY
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Background

Criminal Justice System (CJS) is an essential part of any civilised nation to ensure justice, fairness, the practice of the rule of law and the institutionalization of a democratic system. The CJS is a system comprising of many bodies, groups, institutions or agencies that have been charged with the responsibilities of ensuring social agreement and mass compliance with the law, and deciding whether or not an individual is guilty of violating the laws of the society, and the appropriate punishment to be meted to such an individual (Olonisakin, Ogunleye and Adebayo, 2017). Crime is an act that brings about offences and it is punishable under the law. Major crimes in Nigeria include rape, kidnapping, murder, burglary, fraud, terrorism, robbery, cyber-crimes, bribery and corruption, money laundering and so on (Oguntunde, et. al, 2018). Deviance or crime is concerned with the process whereby values, beliefs, norms, actions or conditions come to be viewed as deviant or criminal by others. Deviance and crime can be observed by the negative, stigmatising social reaction of others towards these violations. Criminality, corruption, conflict, cultism, violence and terrorism, and all illegalities, oppression, exploitation and extortion of the common man, can be deviant behaviours. The issue of power cannot be divorced from a definition of deviance or crime because some groups in society can deviantise or criminalise the actions of another group by using their influence on legislations (Goode, 2004).

Political instability, citizen alienation, terrorism and violence define the Nigerian crime scene.

Nigeria has recently been included among the countries with the least peace in the world, according to the Global Peace Index. It is the 17th less peaceful state. In addition, Nigeria is the third country most affected by terrorism, based on the Global Terrorism Index. One further serious threat in Nigeria is the risk of mass killing, or genocide. Nigeria is the second country in Africa with the highest risk of genocide and the sixth worldwide. This risk

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is influenced by a population of over 200 million people, a high child mortality rate, on-going battle-related deaths, the country's own history of mass killing, and its ethnic fractionalisation (Simona, 2021).

The security of lives and properties, the security and defence of territorial integrity are dimensions of the security role of the state. Security is not a static phenomenon as it has manifested in different forms and dimensions associated with the transient nature of societal development and changes. Security is a concept and phenomenon that is constantly undergoing metamorphosis from traditional to modern and post-modern trends. Africa and most developing economies are bedevilled with myriads of crimes and security challenges majorly because they still maintain the state centric notion of security thereby neglecting modern trends and the complex nature of crime and security (Adejoh and Adeniji, 2020).

The political history of Nigeria vis-a-vis her geopolitical arrangement is in no small way associated with the galaxies of crimes and security challenges bedevilling the country. Nigeria has six geopolitical zones with each having one form of peculiarity or the other in terms of geographic and demographic characteristics. North eastern Nigeria is grappling with Boko Haram terrorism, North West is grappling with armed banditry, cattle rustling and kidnappings, North Central is faced with the challenge of pastoralist-farmers conflicts, South West with kidnappings, South-South with militancy and South East is grappling with kidnapping, ethnic and secessionist agitations (Adejoh and Ukhami, 20213).

It is important to note that the increasing rate of crime and criminality in Nigeria has not only worsened the pace of insecurity but has also brought about the localisation and labelling of crimes to particular ethnicity, people, groups, tribes or state. The issues of corruption, terrorism, banditry, robbery, cybercrime, militancy, secessionist agitations, human trafficking for sexual exploitation amongst others are crimes that are prevalent in Nigerian and are associated and tagged to some groups. This type of labelling now determines the way people are viewed by their societies. While social labels generally constitute a part of the cultural framework that people use to define and categorise the social world, deviant labels are special in that they are stigmatising labels or markers. This assumption is fundamental to labelling theory. Deviant labels, criminal labels in particular, are associated with *stigma*, which means that the mainstream culture has attached specific, negative images or stereotypes to deviant labels (Link & Phelan, 2001). Negative

stereotypes of criminal offenders are manifested in the mainstream culture (Becker, 1963; Goffman, 1963; Scheff, 1966).

This paper is therefore is an attempt to examine the nexus between criminal labelling and the scourge of insecurity in contemporary Nigeria using the herder–farmer conflict, banditry, terrorism, secessionist agitations and the trafficking of persons for sexual exploitation as case studies. This paper is organised into several sections; the first section deals with the general background and introduction, the second section contains both conceptual and theoretical perspectives, the third section deals with the nexus between crime, labelling and insecurity in Nigeria, the fourth section contains the conclusion and recommendations.

Conceptual and Theoretical Parameters

Concept of Crime

There are different perspectives to the concept of crime. It is a concept that is relative in time and in space. It refers to actions that are forbidden by law; offence against the state, conducts such as committing murder, stealing property, resisting arrest, driving while under the influence of alcohol and possessing or selling illegal drugs are seen as an act that violates a political or moral rule; an act of a single individual acting from personal motive, or may be organised activity whereby gangs of mobsters seek to enrich themselves at the expense of the general public, and resort to violence and murder in order to achieve their goals (Adesina, 2013).

Concept of Security

The concept of security is plethora in nature. Several attempts have been made by several scholars to conceptualise security from different perspectives. There has been a paradigmatic shift in the understanding of security. In the view of Gallie (1995:167), the term 'security' has become, to use words, an 'essentially contested concept' in that there are no assumptions of agreement as to its meaning and that this lack of agreement constitutes a widely recognised ground for philosophical inquiry. Wolfer (1962) points out the importance of perceptions within the meaning of security:

> . . . security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked.

The two main notions of security in international relations have shaped scholarly discussions about this term: realist and idealist-inspired security ideas. The realist school sees security as a derivative of power: an actor with enough power to reach a dominating position would acquire security as a result. On the other hand, the idealist school see security as a consequence of peace: a lasting peace would provide security for all (Buzan, 1991). Lipmann (1943:32) defines it by stating that "a nation has security when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interest to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war. To Baldwin (1997), seven specific questions are important for the analysis of the security concept. The questions are: (1) Security for whom? (2) Security for which values? (3) How much security? (4) From what threats? (5) By what means? (6) At what cost? (7) In what time period?

In redefining, widening and deepening of the concept of security, McNamara situates his analysis of security in relations to development. Hence, the security development nexus. Security is development and without development there can be no security [...] development means economic, social and political progress. It means a reasonable standard of living, and reasonable in this context requires continual redefinition (McNamara, 1968). To Buzan (1998), the concept of security extends beyond military security. He claims that there can be other dimensions to security such as economic, political, societal, and environmental security along with military security. The UN Secretary-General echoed the same sentiments when he stated that, "In an increasingly interconnected world, progress in the areas of development, security and human rights must go hand in hand. There will be no development without security and no security without development (Annan, 2005).

Theoretical perspectives

There are several theoretical perspectives that bother around the issue of crime, deviant or anomie. Theories such as Emile Durkheim are Anomie, Robert K Merton's strain theory and the labelling theory. This paper will however adopt the labelling theory by Tannenbaum, Mead, Becker, Lemert, Scheff and Goffman.

Emile Durkheim's (1893/1984) ideas provide a theoretical background to this study. Durkheim argued that the inevitability of crime is connected to the heterogeneity of population in modern societies. Using the concept of anomie – a state in which the social norms, values and customs have broken

down and there exist norm and role confusion – he explained how social forces create an environment where crime is bound to occur (Kunnuji, 2016). If there is gap between the people's desired goals and what the economic and political realities allow them to achieve, the result is a state of normlessness or anomie (Kunnuji, 2016).

The Labelling theory

The labelling approach cannot be regarded as constituting a well-integrated theory. Rather, its advocates have taken a common viewpoint in analysing criminal behaviour. Among the best known names in the field are Becker, Lemert, Scheff and Goffman. In Sweden, Lunden and Nasman have published contributions. Labelling theory has become very popular. It has reached a great number of people and been widely accepted as an explanation for criminal and other deviant behaviour. As a theory of this kind provides a certain view of reality, such acceptance means that the approach has lain behind many contributions to discussion and to some extent it has influenced criminal and social policy. When a good theory is adopted, it offers favourable opportunities for constructive action (Knutsson,1978).

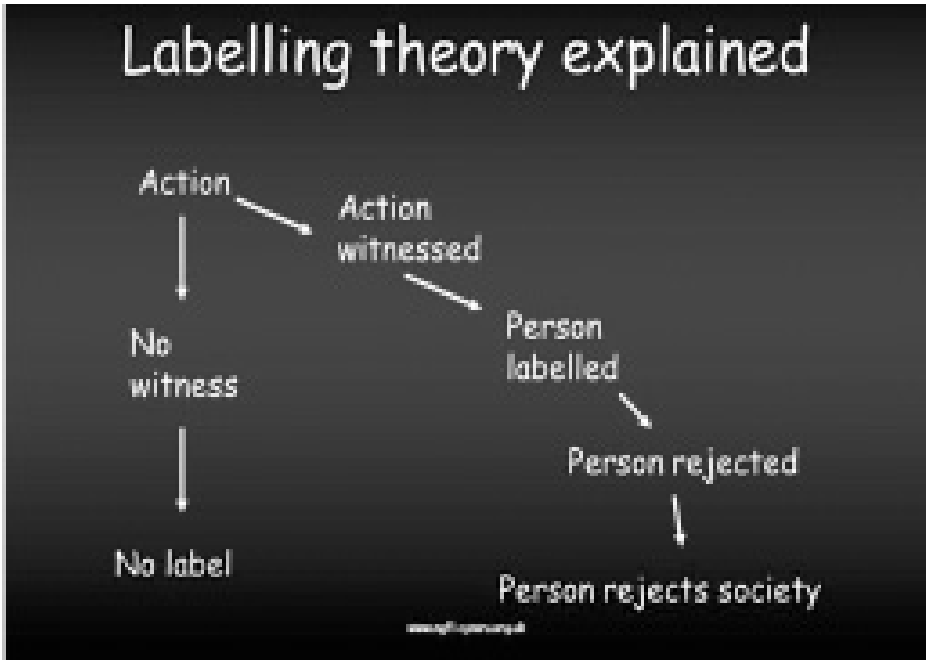
Tannenbaum is best known for his "dramatisation of evil" concept. That term denotes the process whereby the definition of certain behaviour as evil is extended to include the individual involved - he, too, is characterised as evil (Knutsson, 1978). Labelling is a process of social reaction by the "social audience,"(stereotyping) the people in society exposed to, judging and accordingly defining (labelling) someone's behaviours as deviant or otherwise. It has been characterised as the "invention, selection, manipulation of beliefs which define conduct in a negative way and the selection of people into these categories" (Jensen, 2001).

Mead was a pioneer of symbolic interactionism. In the view of this school, self-awareness is created in the individual through interplay between him and his environment. He is treated in a certain way, as a person with certain characteristics, and by accepting the image of himself thus conveyed he acquires a self-concept.

Mead distinguished two aspects present in this self-awareness: "me" and "I". "Me" is a social product and consists essentially of the image conveyed by the societal environment. It is through "I" that the individual integrates the environment's view of him. This "I" represents the person's conduct and has a biological foundation. While "me" can be predicted by charting the individual's environment and establishing the way in which he is treated by it,

"I" is impulsive and creative, representing what is spontaneous and unpredictable in the individual. Lemert (1972) developed the idea of primary and secondary deviation as a way to explain the process of labelling. Primary deviance is any general deviance before the deviant is labelled as such. Secondary deviance is any action that takes place after primary deviance as a reaction to the institutional identification of the person as a deviant (Macionis and Gerber, 2010).

This theoretical perspective is concerned with how behaviours come to be conceptualised as crime, the way members of society assign criminal labels, whether differences exist in the assignment of those labels, and the degree to which labels result in additional stereotypes (Payne, Hawkins and Xin, 2019).



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Understanding the Nexus between Crime, Labelling and Insecurity in Nigeria

This section attempts a thematic analysis of some selected forms of crime and deviant behaviours in Nigeria, their security implications and their

associated labels with a view to appreciating the relationship between Crime, Labelling and Insecurity in Nigeria. Individuals labelled as criminals or delinquents tend to be set aside as fundamentally different from others, and they tend to be associated with stereotypes of undesirable traits or characteristics (Goffman, 1963; Link & Phelan, 2001; Simmons, 1965-6).

Becker (1963) has argued that the deviant status may become a master status for the person, that is, the negative images attached to the deviant label can override other attributes a person may have. "To be labelled a criminal", Becker (1963) writes, "carries a number of connotations specifying auxiliary traits characteristics of anyone bearing the label" (pp. 33-34). Bernburg and Krohn (2003) have suggested that formal labelling may be more likely to trigger stigma for members of racial minorities and the impoverished, because such groups are already associated with stigma to begin with.

Pastoralist-farmers Conflict and Banditry: Between the Killer-Herdsmen and Terrorist Label

Nigeria national security ambience has been quite tense and volatile over the years. While the north east is still under the siege of Boko Haram, the North West is steadily sliding into the morass of rural banditry. Just like Boko Haram insurgency, rural banditry in north-western Nigeria has metamorphosed from a sporadic onset to a rapid upsurge in the recent years. Again, quite like the insurgents, the bandits have become not only stationary but also sedentary in the frontiers and hinterlands of the North West (Okoli and Ugwu, 2019).

Rural violence particularly pastoralist-farmer conflict in Africa is one that has become an issue of great concern considering the wanton loss of lives and properties and its implication for national integration and food security. Pastoralist-farmers conflict in Nigeria is one that has generated a lot of reactions bearing in mind the catastrophic impact of this conflict (Adejoh, 2021).

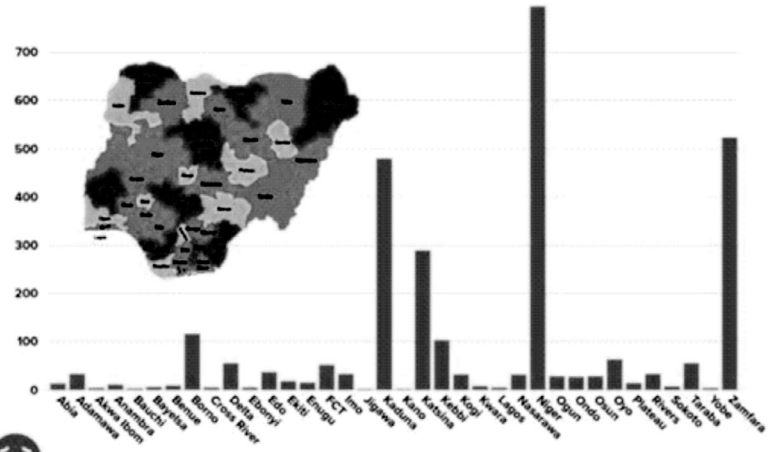
Environmental and demographic factors, economic factors and land tenure system, the proliferations of small arms and light weapons are major stimulants of the conflict. There is an increasing fear and label for Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria. The wanton killings, stereotypes, prejudice, Link with and similar characteristics with terrorism and the ethno-religious dimensions of the pastoralist-farmers conflict are the major precipitators of phobia and hatred towards Fulani pastoralist in Nigeria. The involvement of Fulanis is banditry and kidnappings for ransom on most major Nigerian high ways and schools have further enhanced this fear. Hence, there is now a change of

perception, orientations and lens from which Fulanis are viewed. Fulanis are now labelled as terrorist and bandits. There have also been increasing agitations for the Federal Government of Nigeria to proscribe open grazing and to declare Fulani herdsmen as terrorist organisations. On the 29th of September, 2021 the Nigerian Senate asked president Buhari to declare bandits as terrorist. By implication it means they are to be formally labelled as terrorist.

The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) placed the Nigeria's Fulani herdsmen as the world's fourth deadliest militant group for having accounted for about 1,229 deaths in 2014. While Boko Haram was associated with about 330 casualties in the first quarter of 2016, the Fulani herdsmen accounted for nearly 500 deaths and have shown no sign of slowing down. As such, it has been predicted that the Fulani herdsmen might well surpass Boko Haram as Nigeria's most dangerous group (Burton, 2016; GTI, 2015). In 2014 alone an estimated 1,200 people were killed by Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria and nearly 500 deaths in the first quarter of 2016 was attributed to Fulani brutalities in the same country (Burton, 2014).

By analysing data collected through the Nigeria Security Tracker (NST) between 2015 and June 2021, HumAngle (2021) observed a growing trend in the number of mass abductions as well as the total number of people who are victims of kidnapping in the country. While in 2017, there were 484 kidnapping victims, the figure grew to 987 the following year, then 1,386 in 2019, and 2,860 in 2020. Between Jan. 1 and June 30, 2021, at least 2,944 people have already been reported kidnapped — making 2021 the worst year yet based on this security index. The table below indicate the rate of kidnapping in Nigeria:

Kidnapping in Nigeria between January and June 2021



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
North-Central	25	42	46	51	228	613	942
North-East	515	38	172	313	180	392	211
North-West	6	68	40	383	597	1449	1405
South-East	16	8	9	17	25	86	77
South-South	68	134	149	161	271	201	140
South-West	27	57	68	61	85	119	169
Total	**658**	**347**	**484**	**987**	**1386**	**2860**	**2944**

www.humangle.ng info@humangle.ng @HumAngle_ HumAngle

Source: HumAngle (2021).

According to SBM Intelligence analysed data Between June 2011 and the end of March 2020, at least $18.34 million has been paid to kidnappers. It is germane to not that regardless of the brutal killings of Nigerians and the catastrophic impact of pastoralist-farmers conflict in Nigeria, all Fulani's are not militias or terrorist. The activities of some Fulani militias have brought about a re-branding of the Fulani race and a generalisation that has made innocent Fulanis victims. This generalisation and rebranding has led to the demonisation of the Fulani's. The mass media especially in this age of social media has in no small way promoted this rebranding and demonization. The media plays immense role in agenda setting and opinion formation. Several newspaper headlines carry descriptive captions such as ***"killer herdsmen", "terrorist***", etc. which have become name tags for any fulani out there (Adejoh, 2021). Abdulbaqi and Ariemu (2017) identifies "solution-oriented frames," in the reports of four Nigerian newspapers that reported the herdsmen-farmers' conflict. The study argues that newspaper reports appeared "more violent, specific and narrowed," when referring to the herders as "killer herdsmen," "gun-carrying herdsmen," or "Jihadist herdsmen."

Egwu (2016) reports that over 60,000 cattle were stolen and over 2,000 herders were killed at the Nigerian middle belt in 2013 alone. The account of killings of the herders hardly appears on the headlines of the Nigerian media… the Nigerian press succeeds in creating the killer herdsmen "script" with which the herders and their activities are frequently evaluated, and this forms the general perception of the herders, including those (herdsmen) that may have been victimised. This demonising account of the herders not only creates the general atmosphere of apprehension and tension in the herders and farmers' relation, but also establishes the spate of uncertainty in the land (Chiluwa and Chiluwa, 2020:23).

This phenomenon has some similarity to islamophobia (fear and hatred towards Muslims and Islam). The activities of Islamist terrorist has portrayed Islam and Muslims in negative light. Some people now see Islam as a religion that synonymous with violence and terrorism hence the phobia and hatred for Muslims and Islam. The actions of a few have brought about a generalisation of the whole.

Showing the similarity between islamophobia and the fear for herdsmen, Kukah (2017) identified the implications of pairing, prejudice and generalisation about a people as a result of the actions of a fraction when he said:

> The danger here is that if the matter (terrorism and islamophobia) if not dealt with, people could end up demonizing innocent people or a particular group of people. If you do not handle it well, you will just assume that every Muslim is a terrorist. It is like the Fulani herdsmen crises where other innocent Fulanis have become victims… we need to focus on our common citizenship (Bishop Kukah, cited in Adejoh, 2019:228).

Separatist Agitations, IPOB and the Terrorist Label

Labelling of crime and the scourge of insecurity in contemporary Nigeria can also be seen within the context of secessionist agitations in Nigeria particularly the quest for People's Republic of Biafra. Separatist agitations in Nigeria are based on popular dissatisfaction, mainly with the inability and inefficiency of the government in addressing the needs of the people. the origin of separatist agitation groups in Nigeria such as the O'odua People's Congress (OPC), Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Arewa People's Congress (APC), Egbesu Boys and other ethnic militias can be traced and linked to political marginalisation, unemployment and poverty, collapse of social infrastructure and state welfare programmes and also the inefficient and corrupt state systems (Ezemenaka and Prouza, 2016).

Osaghae et. al. (2007) pointed out that agitation linked to social movements often manifests from grievances and social discontent against dominant practices, behaviour and conduct in the political economy such as exclusion, marginality and inequity. Boyle and Englebert (2006), indicated that groups facing discrimination are the most likely to resort to separatist violence.

The resurgence of ethnic agitations in Nigeria including ethnic militias such as MASSOB/IPOB of Eastern Nigeria, shows a major problem with unification and a sense of oneness in Nigeria, a problem which the government has failed to aptly manage (Jonathan, 2008).

In pursuit of its perceived mandate to champion the secession of the Igbo from Nigeria and their emergence as an independent political entity, IPOB embarked on massive grassroots mobilisation of the Igbo in support of the Biafra dream. With access to funding from within and outside Nigeria, Nnamdi Kanu's IPOB printed numerous memorabilia and other Biafra evoking emblems including flags, T-shirts, hand fans, bracelets, face-caps, key holders amongst other. There was also established by Nnamdi Kanu, a Radio Station

called 'Radio Biafra' for propagating the Biafra message to millions of Igbo who were persuaded to believe that the sovereign state of Biafra is realisable (Najaaku, 2017).

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) are pro-Biafran group that agitates for self-determination from the Nigerian government. The group agitates for self-determination from the Nigerian State for the independence of the Biafra Republic. It is worthy of note that the Republic of Biafra was a secessionist state which existed during the period of Civil War in South-Eastern Nigeria between the period of 30 May 1967 and 15 January 1970 which undoubtedly affected economic activities (Nafziger, 1972). Weller (2009) sees self-determination as the people's right towards the freedom of determination of the state of their politics and at the same time follow up with the evolution of their economy, social well-being, and their culture.

The activities and missions of IPOB was tagged criminal hence the kinetic approach employed by the Nigerian state. According to Obasi (2017), the use of force by President Muhammadu Buhari in responding to the IPOB's agitations has not been productive as it inflames passion and increases people's sentiments on separation that may eventually lead to political instability. The Nigerian army's invasion of Nnamdi Kanu's home happened 24 hours after it announced the commencement of its operation Python Dance (Part Two) in the South-Eastern states (Ogbonnaya-Ikokwu, 2017).

On the 20th of September 2017, Justice Kafarati with an order proscribed IPOB and designated it a terrorist group upon an ex parte application by the attorney general of the federation and minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami. According to Major General John Enenche, the Nigerian Army was constrained to declare IPOB a terrorist group on the following ground:

> The formation of a Biafra Secret Service, claimed formation of Biafra National Guard, unauthorised blocking of public access roads, extortion of money from innocent civilians at illegal road blocks and illegal possession and use of weapons, stones, molotov, cocktails, machetes and broken bottles and others on military on patrol on September 10,2017.12

The proscription of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as a terrorist organisation by the federal government following the ex parte order granted by the Federal High Court Abuja, remains one of the most politically divisive action taken by the current Buhari government. That singular act seems to

have blurred the visible lines between separatism and terrorism. To treat IPOB as a terrorist group is to politicise terrorism and weaken the efficacy of the Terrorism (Prevention) Act (Adangor, 2018).

It is important to note that regardless of the label and proscription of IPOB, there activities have continued to worsen the security situation in the South Eastern as they now seem to be living the terrorist tag. IPOB has continued to terrorise the South-eastern Nigeria. This development forms part of the argument of the labelling theory which claims that when a group or individual is labelled, they tend to live out their labelled especially in the case of formal label. According to TheCable news, As the world marked Easter, gunmen invaded the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCS) facility and police command headquarters in Owerri, Imo state capital, on Monday. 1,844 inmates were said to have escaped during the attack, and the police pointed an accusing finger at the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) (TheCable, April, 7, 2021). There have been an increase in the rate of attacks on both police man and police infrastructure in the south east. The sit-at-home order on every Monday has further affected the economic activities in the South East as it has witnessed a higher level of compliance precipitated by fear of been killed or attacked by IPOB.

Terrorism in Nigeria, the Jihadist Label and Islamophobia

Nigeria is, arguably, a country under distress. The country's woes are most evident in the torrential spate of armed violence and criminality in various parts of the country. Nothing explains this awry situation better than the apocalyptically volatile security ambience in the wider northern Nigeria. The north-eastern Nigeria is still patently under the Boko Haram scourge, amidst the precarious counter-insurgency endeavours of the government (Okoli 2017; Zenn 2018).

The phenomenon of terrorism and its impact on international security has been the focus of several works by different scholars in social sciences and other related fields of endeavour. Attempts have been made to examine the concept of, nature, impact and implication of terrorism as seen for instance in (Lambert, (1990); Schmid, (1983); Williamson, (2009); Wardlaw, (1982); Kydd and Walter, (2006); Steven, (2002); and Hoffman, (1993).

The objectives and activities of Boko haram such as the wanton killings of Nigerians, bombing of churches and Mosques, the use of girls and women as suicide bombers, kidnappings and other forms of human rights violations

has brought about the fear of Islam in Nigeria and it is manifested in different forms and dimensions. Nigerians have become so security conscious and conditioned to feel unsafe in public places where there are Muslims, especially women who dress in hijab, niqab, and burqa and put on face veil or men who are bearded (Adejoh, 2020). It has killed an estimated 20,000 and displaced over 2.2 million in the wider Lake Chad region.

Islamophobia is associated to the pairing of Islam with terrorism. The wide spread of Islamist terrorist activities within the international system is the springboard upon which Islamophobia thrives. Grosfoguel and Mielants, et al., conceived of Islamophobia as a form of religious, cultural, orientalist, and epistemic racism that is not merely additive but constitutive of the "modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system." This means that, while Muslims are increasingly the subject of hostility and discrimination, as well as governmental racial profiling, surveillance and targeting by intelligence agencies, their status as victims of racism is frequently challenged or denied. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to suggest that, instead of highlighting and alleviating anti-Muslim discrimination, the complaint of anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia has conversely but, frequently, invited criticism upon Muslims themselves (Meer, 2008; 2007; 2006).

This prejudice was born out of the perception that Islam is a religion that encourages conflict and that Muslims are conduit pipe for political instability in most part of the world that they are found. This perception is further encouraged by the argument that majority of terrorist organisations and groups have Islamic connotations and the Middle East and the Arab world constitute the heart domain to terrorism. According to Alabi (2018:384) ever since, the Arabs and Muslims were viewed with suspicion in the West, Islam became object of attack and seen as a threat to world peace.

The spread of islamophobia in Nigeria predates the emergence of the Boko Haram terrorist sect. It is a combination of several religious conflicts and the role of some religious sects in Nigeria vis a vis their impact on national security. The atrocities perpetrated in the North by the militant groups were destabilising (Adejoh, 2020). Such occurrence include, among others, the Maitatsine uprising in Kano city in December 1980, the Bulunkuttu uprising in Maiduguri in October 1982, the various religious riots in Kaduna in October 1982, Jimeta, Yola riots1984, Katsina riot, Gombe riot 1985, the Kafanchan riots, Tafawa Balewa, Zango Kataf and the violent demonstrations in Sabon-Gari Kano by the Muslim Students Society (MSS) in October 1992 (Kukah, 1993).

Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation: Matters Arising from Edo State

Records of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Nigeria shows that majority of victims are from Edo state. This has generated a form of label for Edo state as a state dominating in prostitution and human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Human trafficking is a major security challenge that has exposed a lot of Nigerians to different forms of danger. Human trafficking is defined by the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (The Palermo Convention and Protocol) as follows: Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. Trafficking for the purpose of sexual or economic exploitation is considered a contemporary form of slavery, and a serious violation of women's human rights.

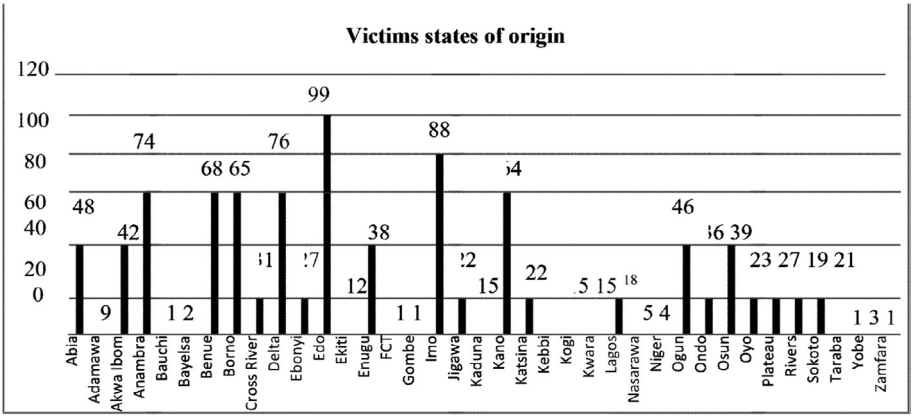
NAPTIP data show that in 2019 41.8% of the victims they rescued were victims of exploitation outside Nigeria. 417 out of 1 152 individuals were victims of 'Procurement for Foreign Travel which promotes Prostitution' or 'Procurement of Persons for Sexual Exploitation or prostitution externally'. However, the total number of victims rescued by NAPTIP in 2019 – 1 152 individuals – constitutes only a fraction of the estimated total number of Nigerian individuals who are trafficked on an annual basis; in view of the above-mentioned Global Slavery Index 2018 which mentioned 1.4 million Nigerians as victims of modern slavery.

These women originated predominantly from the south of Nigeria, particularly the state of Edo, of which the capital, Benin City, has been the central hub for sex trafficking from Nigeria to Europe for the last decades. The previous European Asylum Support Office, (EASO) report on sex trafficking of Nigerian women (2015) indicated that most women who were trafficked from Edo belonged to the Bini, the dominant ethnic group in Edo.

A study carried out in 2020 with (returned) trafficking victims in Benin City indicated that Edo State is still an important departure point for victims of overseas sex trafficking, but that many of the women and girls who pass

through Benin City are not from Edo themselves.83 As was mentioned in the 2015 EASO report on sex trafficking, research indicated that many victims from Edo State were aware that they will work in the sex industry in Europe. An overview of projects to curb sex trafficking in Nigeria identified 39 awareness-raising campaigns that had been launched between 2010 and 2019, most of which targeted Edo State, with a focus on urban areas. With respect to women trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation to Europe, an estimated 94% are from Edo State in Nigeria while the remaining are from Delta, Kano and Borno States. Nigerian women have been forced into commercial sexual exploitation in Italy, Spain, France, the Netherlands, Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa (U.S. State Department, 2004, Okojie,2004).

The chart and table below explain this phenomenon further:



Source: NAPTIP 2019 Data Analysis By Research And Programme Development Department

Table 2 - State of origin of repatriated persons from various countries, 1999-August 2001

Date	Country	Total No. of repatriated Persons	Total No. of females	No. of females from Edo State
1999				
16-3	Italy	64	47	58 (M+F)
25-10/ 12-11	Italy	84	84	71
3-12	Italy	77	75	59
2000				
16-3	Italy	77	75	68
7-6	Nether lands	39	20	21 (M+F)
3-7	Togo	47	47	10
4-7	Mali	4	4	4
19-7	Italy	86	86	79
8-9	Italy	24	24	24
18-11	Italy	24	24	19
1-12	Italy	47	47	10
4-7	Mali	4	4	4
19-7	Italy	86	86	79
8-9	Italy	24	24	24
18-11	Italy	24	24	19
1-12	Italy	121	107	104
2001				
30-1	Italy	9	8	6

2-2	Italy	6	6	6
3-2	Italy	5	5	5
22-2	Italy	4	4	2
26-2	Italy	6	6	6
27-2	Italy	8	7	6
9-3	Italy	3	1	1
10-3	Italy	4	2	-
16-3	Italy	2	2	2
5-4	Italy	92	87	82
10-4	Italy	10	10	9
12-4	Italy	4	4	3
15-5	Italy	120	-	-
9-6	Abidjan	7	6	6
10-7	Abidjan	14	14	14
13-7	Nether lands	12	3	3
2-7	Spain	57	-	44
17-8	Guinea-Conakry	33	33	26
21-8	Algeria	92	50	65 (M+F)

***Source**: Task Force on Human Trafficking, Alagbon Close, Ikoyi.*

The Edo state government in an attempt to address this has put in place several measures and strategies such as the 2017 Edo State Task Force Against Human Trafficking, 2017 Edo State Workshop on Human Trafficking and the Edo State Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Bill (2018) amongst others.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Crime is an integral part of every society but in terms of degree in varies

from one state to another. Just as there are precipitating factor for crime, there are also implications of crime on national security. The Nigerian state like most states in Africa is witnessing series of crime and criminality which have challenged the security architecture of the state. Crimes such as cybercrime, terrorism, banditry, corruption, human trafficking, arm robbery, kidnappings, drug trafficking etc have worsened the state of insecurity in contemporary Nigeria. It is pertinent to state that there is a causal relationship between crime, criminal labelling and the scourge of insecurity in Nigeria. The nature of crime and the policing system in Nigeria vis-à-vis the criminal justice system has brought about tags and label for certain forms of crime and the group or people mostly associated with such crime or deviant behaviour.

Apart from the criminal justice system formally attributing crime to a particular group of people, the society has also contributed in labelling crime. It's like giving a dog a bad name to kill it. Regardless of the increase in labelling, there seems not to be any tangible improvement in the security of the Nigerian state. The declaration of Boko Haram and IPOB as terrorist organisations has not in any addressed the insecurity in Nigeria. The activities of Fulani herdsmen and bandits are worst trends in Nigeria's security history. Several schools have been attached with children kidnapped in north-western Nigeria posing serious threats to the already disadvantage north in terms of education. The Fulani ethnicity is now labelled as killer herdsmen and bandits.

The ganger of criminal labelling lies in the generalisation that comes with it. For instance, the labelling of IPOB as terrorist organisation tends to have negative effect on Igbos in general seems such label constitute the lens from which the society will see some other whether they are IPOB members or not. There is also a tendency for security agents to tag other criminals as members of IPOB even they are not. The same apply to the Fulani ethnic group. Their label as bandits and killer herdsmen and the increasing agitation for the federal government to declare them as terrorist organisations will rob on the entire Fulani race thereby exposing them to all forms of prejudices, hate and stereotypes.

It is the recommendation of the paper that:

The Nigerian criminal justice system and the government should take into consideration the larger picture of labelling certain form of crime that is seemingly peculiar to a group of people, tribe or ethnicity.

Security agencies should always base their actions on investigations and

fact rather than prejudices and stereotypes especially when it has to do with crime associated with certain tribes or ethnicity to avoid punishing innocent people.

There is a need to deploy information communication technology (ICT) in the fight against crime and insecurity in Nigeria iv. The state needs to focus more of crime prevention and this can be achieved if the factors leading to crime and criminality is addressed.

Threat analysis and intelligence gathering are the major missing link in the fight against crime and insecurity in Nigeria. hence security against need to improve in the areas of threat analysis and intelligence

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EXTREME LABELS AND THE SCOURGE OF INSECURITY IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examines criminal labelling and (in)security in Nigeria. Through a desk-based review of relevant literature and content analysis, it provides a conceptual background to explore the growing linkages between criminal labelling and (in)security. Using the labelling and securitisation theories, the paper argues that deviance is a social construction, as no act is deviant but only become so when it is so labelled. The paper made the point that the extreme labels often ascribed to certain actions and actors by the labelling authority are responsible for the climate of insecurity as experienced today. The logic behind this position is that a group labelled terrorists have the inadvertent responsibility to terrorise in line with the principle of self-fulfilling prophecy. The politics surrounding the process of labelling by the Nigerian state has further deepened the country's vulnerability. The paper concludes that though, the state has the responsibility to protect, criminal labelling as a strategy of protection is rather undermining national security and the paper rather submits that the integration of dialogue and negotiation, unbiasing and ascribing soft labels, good governance, and justice into the state strategy of managing insecurity remains a veritable option in managing issues that undermine national security.

Keywords

Bandits, Criminal, Deviant, Labelling, (In)security, Militants, Self-Fulfilling Prophecy, Terrorist.

Introduction

The phenomenon of insecurity in Nigeria has gained traction especially since the return to democracy in 1999. It was hoped that the return to civil rule would create conditions conducive to the full attainment of the primary essence of government which is the protection of the lives and property of its citizens (Obi, 2011). Poverty, unemployment, corruption (Obi and Sovereign,

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2018), ethnicity, religion, and bad leadership (Obi, 2018) are some of the factors that have predisposed the country to the scourge of insecurity. These factors have over the years, interacted with other conflict elements within the polity to further entrench the menace of insecurity. Sustainably, the scourge of insecurity in Nigeria has changed form - actors, issues and to an extent context all of which have principally, provided the oxygen for the dynamics of insecurity in Nigeria. The climate of insecurity in Nigeria, however, seem to have been sustained through criminal labelling. The politics behind labels such as Unknown Gunmen, Bandits, Herdsmen, Terrorists, Insurgents, Militants, Secessionists-Agitators (IPOB, O'ODUDUWA) etc. presents a mix bag of meanings to people.

It is, however, apposite to probe at this point if the scourge of insecurity in Nigeria is because of criminal labelling or criminal labelling is because of insecurity. That is, the protracted insecurity in Nigeria is caused by criminal labelling of certain actors or criminal labelling is a strategy by government and its agents to stem the tides of insecurity. What immediately leaps to mind from the above puzzles is the deduction that a mutually reinforcing relationship exist between criminal labelling and (in)security. Inherent in this mutual relationship is the understanding that:

- Criminal labelling has the predisposition of creating conditions conducive to (in)security
- Criminal labelling creates an enemy image in those who are labelled On the flip side, those who are labelled see the labellers as enemies thereby, becoming objects of attacks.
- Conversely, the labellers deploy criminal labelling as a strategy to stem the tides of insecurity.
- The activities of the labellers and the labels have implications on the security landscape of Nigeria.

Empirical studies have however, been conducted to determine the relationship between criminal labelling, heightened crime rates and reoffending as well as insecurity in different contexts and it was established that a significant relationship exist between criminal labelling, deviant behaviour, reoffending, and insecurity. The works for instance of Besemer, Farrington, and Bijleveld (2017), Thornberry (2009), Van de Rakt, Nieuwbeerta and Robert (2009), Scheff, (1984, 1974), Lemert (1967) and Berker (1963) all made the point

that criminal labelling and criminal justice interventions amplify offending behavior and typically predispose the context to insecurity. Although, there is avalanche of literature on criminal labelling and deviance in society, the link between criminal labelling and (in)security in Nigeria has however, received little systematic attention.

Within this context, the general objective of the paper is to examine the relationship between criminal labelling and (in)security in Nigeria. The paper, therefore, attempts to answer the broad question; what is the relationship between criminal labelling and (in)security in Nigeria? The paper is organised around nine subtitles. The introduction is followed by theoretical consideration of issues. Other themes include conceptualising and contextualizing the notion of (in)security, interrogating the politics of criminal labelling and (in)security in Nigeria, interrogating the labelling alternatives deployed by the labelling authority; Bandits or Terrorists? Terrorist or Soldiers of Allah? Secessionists, Agitators, Terrorists, or Freedom Fighters? Militants, Freedom Fighters or Advocates for Resource Control and Development? The paper concludes with a statement on how to fill the gaps in Policy and Strategy of dealing with insecurity through criminal labelling. Data for this paper was generated through an objective review and examination of extant relevant literature on the subject matter. Materials from where data were collected included published works such as books, articles, reports, verifiable electronic materials as well as unpublished lectures and reports.

Theoretical Standpoint

A theory is considered appropriate if it has explanatory and predictive relevance. The labelling theory of crime is therefore, considered suitable for explaining the nexus between criminal labelling and (in)security in Nigeria. Labelling theory argues that criminal and deviant acts are a result of labelling by authorities – and the powerless are more likely to be negatively labelled (Thompson, 2016). Clearly therefore, an asymmetrical power relation exists between the labelling authority and the labelled with deviance been defined by the labelling authority. This presupposes that in the context of this study, the Nigeria Government reserves the exclusive right to label certain actors as terrorists, bandits, militants, unknown gunmen, herders, insurgents etc.

The labelling theory of crime which is associated with interactionalism propagates the view that people do not become criminals because of their social background, but rather argue that crime emerges because of labelling by

authorities. They see crime as the product of micro-level interactions between certain individuals and the police, rather than the result of external social forces such as socialisation or blocked opportunity structures (Thompson, 2016). The point must be made here that whenever people are labelled, for instance as Unknown gunmen, bandits, or militants, etc., such labelling has the propensity of creating self-fulfilling prophecy, a situation whereby, those labels advertently or inadvertently work toward fulfilling the prophecy of the labelling authority. The killings associated with the unknown gunmen, the kidnappings for ransom and killings associated with bandits, economic sabotage and kidnappings associated with the activities of militants and the rapacious activities associated with herders are all suggestive of prophecies that have been fulfilled thereby, strengthening criminal careers and deviancy amplification.

Building on the foundation laid by the French sociologist Émile Durkheim and his 1897 book, suicide, the Austrian American criminologist Frank Tannenbaum furthered the labelling concepts in his work Crime and Community in 1938. This was fostered by Edwin Lemert and popularized in 1963 by the sociologist Howard Becker in his book outsiders. The central philosophy of the labelling theory reinforces the position that a "member of society will commit a crime by virtue of the fact that they are called a "criminal". In other words, the label is what they are – they have no choice but to act in that manner or have been given grounds to think they should act in that manner" (Police Study Guide, 2020). On the flip side, the point should be made that despite the argument that those labelled may work toward fulfilling the prophecy, the theory fundamentally, conditions and structures the behaviour of those labelled, most time in the direction of deviance.

The theory, therefore, demonstrates how the self-identity and behaviour of individuals may be determined or influenced by the terms used to describe or classify them. This supposes that a person labelled a bandit, unknown gunman or militant, etc. has an identity already constructed with implications on the security landscape of Nigeria. A salient point to note here is that the primacy of the labelling theory is not the crime that is alleged to be committed but the (re)action after the crime has been committed. This suggest that deviance is in the reaction to the crime by the labelling authority than the crime itself. This explains why there appears to be a clamour by different sections of the Nigerian public and especially, the speakers of the 36 state Houses of Assembly (Adesina, 2021) calling for the labelling of bandits as terrorists by the federal

government. This call, which is in line with the above theoretical standpoint, is only coming as a reaction to the crimes allegedly committed by the bandits.

The labelling theorists hold the view that labelling can be divided into primary and secondary deviance. Primary deviance is considered an initial violation of societal norm which only becomes a source of concern once it is labelled as problematic. Secondary deviance is where an offender is publicly labelled as a criminal, which in turn may cause the offender to take on a deviant selfimage that leads to further and more serious criminal activity (Truecrimetheories, 2017). It is, therefore, the focus of this paper to structure its logic and analysis on the philosophy of secondary deviance.

The labelling theory is however, not without its inadequacies. While the labelling theory can be hardly seen as a magic wand for crime control, it however, offers some instructive insight into crime and (in)security management. The theoretical application and relevance are that the theory attempts to explain why crime and insecurity happens in the society and suggest what can be effectively done to reduce it. This position agrees with the opinion of Police Study Guide (2020) where it was declared that the primacy of the labelling theory is the understanding that crimes and insecurity can hardly be eliminated but it is possible to reduce crime to an appreciable level by reducing social shaming.

The labelling theory in this context is supported by the securitisation theory which Eroukhmanoff (2018) declared that according to securitisation theory, political issues are constituted as extreme security issues to be dealt with urgently when they have been labelled as 'dangerous', 'menacing', 'threatening', 'alarming' and so on by a 'securitising actor' who has the social and institutional power to move the issue 'beyond politics. So, security issues are not simply 'out there' but rather must be articulated as problems by securitising actors.

Conceptualising And Contextualising the Notion Of (In)Security

Security may mean different things to different people depending on their context and status. To a man who is starving, security may mean his ability to feed himself, while to the someone who is jobless, security may mean ability to secure a gainful job, to government security may mean the capacity of government to create conditions conducive to the protection of lives and property as well as the provision of the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people and to the citizens, security may mean their capacity to

have a predictably safe space for their livelihoods.

Beyond these hypothetical conjunctures, there are two broad perspectives to understanding the concept of 'security'. In military terms, security means a condition where designated information, material, personnel, activities, and installations are protected against espionage, sabotage, subversion, and terrorism as well as against loss or unauthorised disclosure (Karim, 2011). This perspective leaves a lot to be desired in conceptualising security in the context of interrogating the link between criminal labelling and insecurity in Nigeria. To help structure the analysis of this subject matter, security must therefore, necessarily revolve around the human agency and protection of his basic needs from disruption and harm. In this regard, human (in)security according to UNDP (1994), Human Development Report is the aggregate of threats in the areas of economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, education, and political needs. Security is, therefore, a broad term as it encompasses the whole domain of human activities. Drawn from this conceptualisation, a context is deemed to be secured when the basic human needs are reasonably guaranteed by government. It goes without saying therefore, that the indicators for human security as advanced by the UNDP Human Development Report are all at various levels of threats occasioned by the activities of those who have been labelled bandits, terrorists, militants, insurgents, herdsmen, etc. by the labelling authority. The National Security Strategy (2019), identified national security threats to include terrorism and violent extremism, armed banditry, kidnapping, militancy and separatist agitations, pastoralists- farmers conflicts, etc.

Interrogating the politics of criminal labelling and (in)security in Nigeria

The Lasswellian conception of politics is adapted for this analysis because of its relevance to the subject matter but modified to describe politics as the process that determines "who gets what, when and how" (Lasswell,1936) and fundamentally, who is left out. The emphasis on who is left out highlights how relative deprivation can fuel discontent that leads to frustration and aggression thereby, further undermining national security. When this happens, the labelling authority is quick in assigning labels without appropriately addressing the root causes of the threats to security.

Government attempts at labelling has therefore, generated, and sustained suspicion amongst different ethnic nationalities and further created conditions conducive for protracted insecurity in Nigeria. Why for instance, does it seem to be an attempt by some clerics against labelling bandits as terrorists?

Why are the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and Oduduwa labelled terrorists and proscribed? Why are the marauding herders who are labelled the 6th deadliest terrorist group in the world not labelled terrorists in Nigeria? Why are those demanding self-determination considered to have committed felony and outlawed? Why are those demanding for resource control labelled militants and treated as such? What has been the implication of the strategy of selective labelling by the labelling authority on national security? Has labelling undermined or strengthened our national security?

These conundrums constitute the focus of this section. In trying to deal with these puzzles, it is appropriate to highlight the thinking that there is probably something about labelling that makes certain persons, groups and sectors oppose it. The point should, however, be made here, that the opposition to criminal labelling is due to the understanding that the label attached to a person or group determines how those labelled are treated. For instance, the state will deploy all its military might to crush those labelled as terrorists without being seen to have breach any international law. The politics of labelling is therefore, highlighted when consideration is given to the understanding that the state response to criminality is dependent on the label attached to it.

Bandits or Terrorists?

The raging contention surrounding the labelling of bandits as terrorists appears to have pitched certain persons against certain interest in Nigeria. It is on record that the civil society sector and the 36 states Houses of Assembly (Adesina, 2021) have called for the labelling of bandits as terrorists by the labelling authority, but this has determinedly been rebuffed by certain interest including the Nigerian state. The obvious fear of those against labelling bandits as terrorists is that once labelled terrorists, the level, and intensity of state response to their activities will be restructured.

The link between labelling and (in)security was aptly captured by the Kaduna based Islamic Cleric

Sheikh Admad Gumi when he acknowledged that "declaring bandits as terrorist will come at a price". Making sense of his declaration, he further stated that despite the evidence that the acts the bandits are committing in the Northwest have the trappings of terrorism, they should however, not be labelled terrorists because such labelling will further expose the country to an uncommon level of vulnerability and make the now labelled "terrorists bandits" a bride of global jihadist movement. In his words

> the moment bandits are termed Terrorist – Islamic for that matter, the direct foreign Jihadist movements will set in in force. And many teaming unemployed youths may find it palatable and attractive. Shouting 'Allahu Akbar' plus AK47 against a 'secular' immoral society where impunity reigns are the magnet for extremists and downtrodden – the majority of our youth. Already these deadly terrorist groups are fighting for the soul of these bandits. This will give criminality a spiritual cover and remove the stigma of discrediting them with such crimes since now they are fighting a 'Jihad' as they will claim.

This extract from Sheikh Gumi's declaration establishes and compellingly cements the relationship between labelling and (in)security. A few points deducible from the Gumi's statement in relation to (in)security is that

- Once bandits are labelled terrorists, the now terrorists' bandits become attractive to the global jihadist movement.
- As part of the global jihadist movement, they now constitute an international network through which they can access relevant terrorist trainings, finance, arms, and ammunition.
- As jihadists, they former bandits would now transcend the realm of local banditry to wage a Jihad with no conventional rules of engagement against the Nigerian state. • With Jihad declared, insecurity will become the new normal in Nigeria
- It is better to have bandits as bandits than as terrorists.

Though, there seems to be a consistent attempt by certain interests in opposing the labelling of bandits as terrorist, the label bandits already ascribed to this group of non-state actors has serve as a motivation to the group to engage in and execute activities that are expected of bandits. This self-fulfilling prophecy of bandits conforming to the philosophy of banditry reinforces the primacy and relevance of the labelling theorists. The dynamics of insecurity occasioned by the activities of bandits are commonplace as banditry constitute 40% of incidences of national insecurity in Nigeria (National Security Strategy, 2019).

Oluwole (2021) made the point when he noted that banditry in Nigeria has over a century-long history going back to a notorious incident in 1901 when bandits attacked 12,000 camel-laden caravans travelling between

Hausaland and Tahoua region, stealing goods worth £165,000 and killing 210 traders. Banditry in its current form and is noted to have been activated by a lone criminal gang in 2011 and grew from a single cell, mainly operating in Zamfara, to over 120 gangs across six states in 2021 (Oluwole, 2021, Murtala, 2018). There has been a progressive transformation from its rudimentary and isolated roots to a complicated transnational and rapidly spreading security threat (Oluwole, 2021). The internationalization of local banditry suggests that the activities of bandits cannot be confined to the borders of Nigeria, and this supposes that the level of national vulnerability is deepened by the changing nature of the activities of bandits.

The attacks of bandits on locations especially in the northern Nigeria leaves much to be desired.

The attack on the Nigeria Defence Academy (NDA) (TVC News, 2021) and a military base in Zamfara state (Premium Times, 2021) that resulted in the killing of 14 officers, abduction of an officer and the cartage of military weapons (Oluwole,2021). The abductions of students in Kankara community, Katsina state (NewsDiary, 2020), Zamfara state (Abubakar, 2021), Niger state (Priscilla, 2021; Saharareporters, 2021), Kaduna State (This Day, 2021; SaharaReporters, 2021a) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja (This Day, 2021a) are demonstrative of how those who have been labelled bandits have become a potent threat to national security.

The rapidity with which bandits attack locations around the country has affected livelihoods and deepened humanitarian needs (Claire, 2021). Oluwole (2021) observed that since 2011, nearly 200,000 people have been displaced within northern Nigeria, and at least 6,319 people were killed, 3,672 were kidnapped and more than 500 villages were burnt by bandits in Zamfara from 2011 to 2019. Over 6,000 persons were also injured from bandit activities, with more than 250,000 cows rustled, and over 3,000 hectares of arable land, more than 600 commercial stores and 336 vehicles (Premium Times, 2018). The insecurity posed by banditry is highlighted when consideration is given to the understanding that with the threats to livelihoods, economy, food, health, environmental, personal, community, education, and political needs, all the human security indicators as put forward by the UNDP (1994), Human Development Report have been undermined.

Terrorist or Soldiers of Allah?

Terrorism in Nigeria is very often associated with the activities of Boko

Haram and the splinter Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP). Often traced to early 2000 (Virginia, 2017; Saskia, 2019; & Chitra, 2019), an alternate position suggest that the origin of Boko Haram can restrictively be traced to the activities of one Ammi Hassan (deceased), an Algerian national and his son Ali Hassan who were banished by the Algerian government because of their alleged links with AlQaeda terrorist group and they fled to the Niger Republic where they were expelled based on warnings from the government in Algiers. According to the source, "the duo thereafter made entry into Nigeria and were received by one Yakubu MusaKafachan, a Nigerian Islamic Cleric who hails from Bauchi State but was based in Katsina" (Ochogwu, 2020). Ochogwu further noted that it was in 2005 that Mohammed Yusuf was anointed as the Amir Daulatallslamfin Nigeria (Leader of Islamic Republic of Nigeria) but the activities of Boko Haram gained currency in 2009 when Mohammed Yusuf was killed.

While this background may appear a bit boring, the point to be made here is that it was until Mohammed Yusuf was killed in 2009 and the group labelled a terrorist group that its activities changed form, rapidity, intensity, and scope. This position is reinforced by the securitization theorists who argue that issues are structured to be dealt with urgently when they have been labelled as 'dangerous', 'menacing', 'threatening', 'alarming' and so on by a 'securitizing actor' (Eroukhmanoff, 2018). This, therefore, presupposes that the labelling of the Mohammed Yusuf group as a terrorists group restructured the state response to the activities of the group and conversely, inadvertently redefined and expanded the activities of the group in terms of rapidity of attacks on the Nigeria state, tenacity, and scope with sustained security implications.

The activities of Boko Haram which have left more than 20,000 dead and displaced at least 2,000,000 (Wilson, 2018) have deepened the humanitarian crises in northern Nigeria with the rapidity of attacks that have resulted in avoidable deaths and dislocation of livelihoods (The Guidance, 2021; Reliefweb, 2012). Global Conflict Tracker (2021) records that the activities of Boko Haram accounts for nearly 350, 000 people killed since 2009; 3,000,000 reportedly displaced in the Lake Chad Basin and left more than 310,000 as refugees.

Reportedly established with the aim of creating an Islamic caliphate in West Africa (Wilson, 2018), would the state response to the activities of the group been different were the group to be labelled as soldiers of Allah? and would the intensity and nature of the activities of the group be different were

they to be so labelled?

Secessionists, Agitators, Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?

Self-determination is a right that is enshrined in many international instruments guaranteeing those who feel dissatisfied with the structuration of the country to seek independence. The reasons for self-determination are many but especially, marginalisation and injustice appear to be the primary reasons put forward by self-determinists. Aakash, Akhil & Apoorv (2015) made the point that the principle of self-determination has been widely seen in the cases of independence of colonial states all over the world. These scholars further their position by declaring that the ideology of self-determination has been enshrined in the UN Charter and is also recognised in a number of international conventions, such as The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Territories and Peoples, 1960 and The International Covenants for Human Rights, 1966."

This is in addition to the inclusion of the right to self-determination in the International Covenants on Human Rights and in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. The inclusion of the ideology of self-determination in the various international legal instruments as highlighted suggest that self-determination is an integral part of human rights law which has a universal application. The concept has however, been given different interpretations depending on one's social class and interest. It has been argued (Aakash, Akhil & Apoorv (2015) that it can be used to successfully build states out of people facing oppressive measures but can also be used against these very states and cause their breakdown.

Despite the codification of the ideology of self-determination in international legal instruments, to which many nations including Nigeria are signatories, self-determinists have been described with different labels in Nigeria - Secessionists, Agitators, and Terrorists. These labels have structured state response to the demands of those seeking self-determination and has also on the flip side, intensified and redefined the actions of the self-determinists in inadvertently fulfilling the prophecy of the labelling authority.

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) led by Mazi Nnamdi Kanu started out by calling for self-determination for the people of Biafra due to perceived acts of marginalisation and injustice from the Nigeria state since the end of the civil war in 1970 and especially, the return to democratic rule in 1999. After several attempts and interventions including the now infamous

'operation Python Dance' by the state to oppress and suppress the voice for self-determination, the group was eventually labelled a terrorist group (Jibueze and Robert, 2017) and proscribed. It is on record, that the tactics deployed by IPOB since after its declaration as a terrorist organisation have changed with avoidable social, economic, political and security implications. One of the obvious tactics deployed by the IPOB after its labelling was the establishment of the Eastern Security Network (ESN) (Amnesty International, 2021; The Cable, 2021) as its militant wing to wage war against the Nigerian state thereby, expanding the insecurity ecology of the country. The acts of arson, killings, disruption of economic activities because of the IPOB sit-at-home order with current losses put at $121 million (Chijioke, 2021) are testaments and domino effects of the labelling of IPOB as terrorist organisation. In the southwest are the activities of Sunday Igboho calling for self-determination/ Oduduwa republic with implications on national security.

Again, would those seeking self-determination be treated differently were they to be labelled 'freedom fighters' by the labelling authority and would they have acted differently if they were so labelled?

Militants, Freedom Fighters or Advocates for Resource Control and Development?

The politics surrounding the call for resource control and sustainable development of the Niger Delta region have often interacted with negative energy within the context to predispose the region and indeed, the country to certain sustained degrees of shocks and vulnerabilities. While the region has had a long history of agitations (Obi, 2020) from the days of Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro's twelveday revolt of 1966 and the government retaliatory clampdown to the Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni struggle (Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), in the 90s, the agitators who describe themselves as freedom fighters and advocates for resource control, have been labelled militants by the state and treated as such. The activities of this group have brought to the forefront, two dominant security perspectives. The first is that the crisis occasioned by the activities of the 'militants' in the Niger Delta region poses a fundamental challenge to peace and stability within Nigeria and the second perspective suggest that the crisis threatens global energy security and the core geo-strategic interests of major oil importing countries such as the United

States and its Western European allies but also emerging powers like

China, India and Brazil (Ukeje, 2010) and has conditioned international business transactions along the Gulf of Guinea corridor.

The intensity of attacks on strategic oil installations in the region perhaps explains why Simbine (2006) declared that violence in the Niger Delta have become an industry and a veritable source of livelihood for many people, resulting in the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Despite huge investments in securing oil installations, the militancy in the Niger Delta seems to have intermittently punctured such investments by their repeated attacks (Simbine and Obi, 2018).

Part of the economic losses occasioned by the restiveness in the Niger Delta is put at N7.8billion daily (Chief Oyibo, 2006). The part to be worried about is that there are no fewer than 32 so called militant groups (This Day, 2016) with different agenda in the Niger Delta. The labelling of the advocates for resource control and sustainable development of the Niger Delta region as militants and the consequential state response to their demands have emboldened this group of persons who now deploy subterranean tactics in sabotaging oil supply and disrupting the petrol economy of Nigeria with severe economic, developmental, environmental, social and security consequences.

Again, would this group of persons in the Niger Delta have been treated differently if they were perceived as advocates of resource control and sustainable development of the region, and would they have acted differently, if they were so labelled and engaged as advocates of resource?

Concluding Remarks: Filling the Gaps in Policy and Strategy

The dominant policy and strategy of state in engaging those perceived as outlaws and deviants is two-prong. First, is to label the perceived deviants and second, deploy state instrument of coercion and violence after them. Admittedly, distinct patterns have been instituted to determine processes leading to, and acts that are considered 'deviants' and qualified to been ascribed a 'label' by the labelling authority. In the Nigerian context however, certain negative energies bordering primarily on interest and politics have interacted with the context to politicise the labelling process and the consequential actions. This potent gap that smacks of seeming favouritism and inaction by the labelling authority in ascribing labels to certain groups for reasons already highlighted has been exploited by other groups that have been labelled to deepened and expand the ecology of insecurity. This is in line with the principle of 'self-fulfilling prophecy', implying that a terrorist should terrorise

by unleashing terror, thereby, fulfilling the prophecy.

The policy and legal framework deployed in managing criminality is such that it ascribes a label to an action/actor and activates the instrument of state after the alleged deviant with little recourse to the individuality of the actor. When this happens, those labelled are logically alienated from society and often take to the life of crime, again extending the frontier of terror and undermining economic, social, and political processes. The downside of labelling is that it can lead those labelled to be humiliated, shamed, stigmatised, and alienated from society. Once this happens, people begin to see those labelled as having a new overriding identity-terrorists, bandits, militants etc. and may facilitate the process of self-fulfilling prophecy.

The pathways to addressing the domino effect of criminal labelling is a reframing of the state policy and strategy of tackling criminality through labelling. The approach must, therefore, be multipronged. One understands that relevant laws exist, but the laws must have both kinetic and non-kinetic components. Dialogue and negotiation should form part of the non-kinetic component to identify the core needs of 'perceived deviants' with the intent of mutually reaching an understanding on how those needs can be addressed while the kinetic component of military option should be an issue of last recourse.

The understanding that those labelled terrorists for instance, have a responsibility to probably, terrorise, presupposes therefore, that the labelling authority tinker with the idea of desisting from extreme labels to avoid driving those labelled underground where they become enemies of the state, alienated from the society, faceless and difficult to dialogue with and track.

The labelling authority must demonstrate some level of unbiasing in the process of labelling because there are indications that part of the security issues in Nigeria today are caused by an analogical situation where patients suffering the same ailment are administered different drugs because of their body size and age. A situation where the labelling authority is quick in ascribing labels to certain groups and act with sustained restraint in ascribing same labels for same tendencies by others has only fuelled suspicion and sustain insecurity.

Lastly, the overarching policy option and strategy in addressing issues related to criminal labelling and (in)security remains good governance and justice. Where these are guaranteed, factors that create conditions conducive to criminality, labelling and (in)security will expectedly, be decapitated.

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MOVING THE ENDSARS PROTEST FORWARD THROUGH YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

BY
DR RUTH CALEB LUKA

Introduction

One of the challenges facing Africa today is how to provide opportunities for a continent with more than 200 hundred million youths so that they can have a decent life and contribute to the socio economic and political development of their countries (Genyi, 2016). According to the United Nations (2021) Africa's population as of 2021 was estimated at 1,381,495,107 billion and is expected to double by 2050. Africa's population is equivalent to 16.72% of the total world population. About 70% of African population is 35 years of age or younger. In 2021 youths who are defined here as those between 15 and 35 years of age, constituted 22.7% of more than 1 billion people in Africa, whereas another 42% was less than 15years old. Slightly more than half of the African youth population is female, and there are more rural dwellers than urban dwellers. With such a large proportion under 15 years of age, African youth population is expected to grow in the years to come while the youth population in other parts of the world shrinks (Elaigwu, 2005).

Since Nigerian independence in 1960, Nigeria has been struggling to install a viable and durable democracy but its dismal politics characterised by consistent inability to conduct credible and transparent election in which its citizens have access effectively protected opportunities to exercise their franchise but in the choice of their leaders have made the agenda of democratic sustainability largely a mirage. This accounts for the so many failed attempts at democratic transitions (Oluwale 2020). Youth political participation captures the involvement of youths in responsible and challenging political actions that meets genuine needs of the people with opportunities for planning and decision-making affecting others in the political system. That is to say a political participation which involve the recognition and nurturing the strength, interest, and abilities of the young people through the provision of real opportunities for them to become involved in decision making that affects their daily lives (Mike,2018). Youth political participation fosters a sense of citizenship and make policy processes more transparent and accountable towards young people at the same time helps the youth builds self-confidence, develop a sense of initiative and acquire and test skills that are relevant for the work place, such as communication, negotiation or team work, in a practical

environment (European Education and Culture Executive Agency, EACEA, 2010/03).

A close observation of the degree of political participation and training of youths in Nigeria tend to reveal that they have not been actively involved in the process of sharpening the political system. It is rather unfortunate that with the large population of youths and the kind of influence they can weigh on national development, they have been relegated to the background as the elderly politician use them for various vices.

Nigeria is living witness to the fact that some youths are used as political thugs and touts during campaigns and election periods. In other instance they are recruited as personal bodyguards to corrupt politicians and some are being deployed as campaign agents for crowd mobilisation at rallies to chant political slogans and for successes at elections. Even some positions they naturally deserve like the national youth leader are assigned to people whose age are far outside the scope of a youth.

After elections, the hopes and aspirations of the youth are usually ruined. All campaign and pre-election promises of vital appointments and jobs made by the so called elderly politicians, which mostly entice the youth to engage in sometimes untoward activities at campaign rallies remain largely unfulfilled after elections. It is noteworthy that on the rare instance those promises are fulfilled. But since the youth have a future ahead of them, they have to strive to seize such opportunities so as to secure their future in public life. It will be wise to have youths in various advisory boards, commission, ministries, etc.

The youths are proclaimed as leader of tomorrow. This ordinarily ought to brook no contradiction, in the contemplation of reality as governed by the natural laws of succession, in which one generation plays out its role, and yields the stage for another as a way of advancing the course of human experience. Questions around leadership, the provenance of those able to aspire to attain and exercise it, have captured some of the most vexing and disturbing concerns in Nigeria today as it did in recent decade. If anything, it is clear that the youths of Nigeria are intends on no longer being bystanders in the fair of governance and how their country is being run, particularly between the purview of the sustained fallen and older citizenry or power elites that have been described as a "wasted Generation" by Wole Soyinka in 1981. Contrary to the earlier aphorism the youths no longer want to be leaders of tomorrow, but those of today. The recent expression of youth discontent through public dissent, as exemplified in the EndSARS protest of 2020, also

loosely connected to a previous yet highly structured rally towards political advantage, evident in the #not too young to run Champaign offer striking instances of the more recent political determination of youths to take their engagement with Nigeria more seriously.

An Overview of #EndSARS Protest

SARS was created in 1992 as a response to violent crime, particularly armed robbery. However, the police unit has come to be known for its high-handed tactics and gross violations of human rights. Transgressions cut across a range of human rights including the right to life, freedom from torture, right to a fair trial, right to privacy, and freedom of assembly, all of which are rights protected by the Nigerian constitution. #EndSARS started as a call for the disbandment of Nigeria's Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit of the Nigerian Police Force that has earned notoriety for its brutality and human rights violations. It was first used in 2018 to raise awareness of allegations of violence and exploitation by SARS officials. The government announced structural changes to SARS but the alleged human rights violations and exploitation continued. In October 2020, reports of an unprovoked shooting of a boy in the streets of Delta State by SARS operatives were shared on social media. Although the Nigerian Police denied the shooting in this particular case, it was not enough to quell public anger as more videos of police shootings were shared across social media platforms. Celebrities and activists rallied for support on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook and in a matter of days, protesters lined the streets of Lagos and Abuja demanding an end to SARS. Pressured by the publicity that the protests had generated, the Nigerian government swiftly announced the disbandment of SARS. This move, however, was not enough to appease the protesters in light of similar pronouncements made previously by the government.

In response to the #EndSARS protests, the government swiftly announced that it was disbanding SARS and replacing it with a new Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team. This announcement further provoked protestors who were concerned that SARS personnel would simply be drafted into the new SWAT team. Rather than ending the protests, the announcement intensified public demonstrations across several states in Nigeria. On October 20, 2020, the Nigerian government cracked down on the protesters. The crackdown was preceded by the declaration of curfews in nine states across the country. One of these states was Lagos, the commercial hub of Nigeria. At nightfall, the

Nigerian army opened fire on peaceful protesters at Lekki Toll Gate, Lagos, the symbolic centre of the protest. (Ololade, 2020) Videos of soldiers shooting and protesters trying to revive fallen compatriots were broadcast on Instagram Live and viewed in real time by hundreds of thousands. Forty-nine persons were reported to have died in clashes across the country.

Media outlets reported that "hoodlums" had hijacked the protests and were looting stores and malls. Several warehouses across the country housing Covid-19 relief materials were raided. The looting of stores for food again brought to the forefront the economic plight of many Nigerians. In 2018, Nigeria was reported to have overtaken India as the poverty capital of the world with an estimated 90 million people (about 50% of the population) living in extreme poverty, i.e., on less than $1.90 a day. Critics faulted the government for simply storing relief materials and failing to distribute them to the needy.

As the protests spread across the country, the anticipated crackdown on protesters by the security forces started, leading to arrests of many of the activists, who were locked up in Police cells in a number of states of the federation. While the protests still persisted despite these, it began to deeply affect economic activities in many urban centres, inviting the brokerage of negotiations with the #EndSARS movement by concerned citizens and civil society actors.

Issuing from this, a Charter of Demands, known as the 5-for-5, was drawn up by the movement, which if government acceded to, the protests would be terminated. The 5-points raised in the Demands were: (1) Release of arrested protesters; (2) Justice for victims of police brutality; (3) Prosecution of police 'bad eggs'; (4) Retraining of ex-SARS members; (5) Police salary increase. While the government, through its negotiation team, the Presidential Panel on Police Reform, quickly consented to the demands of the youth, as a way of bringing the protests to an end, it however seemed that the youths had gone through a re-think, anchored on two primary reasons: First, the history of government dishonesty in earlier negotiations, whereby after protests are called off, the authorities either back-tracked on the agreements or never did anything to implement the understandings reached. For instance, that was the fourth time that the government was making pretences at banning the police unit, as this never happened in the real sense. Secondly, having realised the potentials of the mass action embarked upon, the youths who were generally and deeply disenchanted with government, and more so the Buhari administration at this point, due to its numerous failings in creating pathways out of widespread,

unemployment, hunger, and the absence of social provisioning, embraced the #EndSARS protests further as a platform for pressing for the real address of their concerns. Even, a section of the involved youths was already calling for a transformation of the protests into a political movement that would seek power on behalf of the youths, as others were calling for President Buhari to resign from office, for being unable to execute the mandate given him by the people. Hence, the first Charter of Demand crafted was then upped into a wider demand for good governance and public accountability.

Youths as Agents of Political and Social Change: A Lesson from the Arab Spring

Political and Social changes remain permanent features of our contemporary world. Political change and social transformation in the form of revolution have radically altered the course of human civilisation and history. Even today as the 21st century approaches, the world is witnessing political and social changes arising from the desire of the people all over the globe for greater freedom and a say in the way their societies are governed and a qualitatively better standard of living. Political and social change refers to alteration (transformations) in human behaviour, norms and politico-social institutions. Such changes are often a collective response to the need to change, or as a tacit recognition to a shift in the prevalent power relation in the society. In most cases political and social changes are caused by certain factors or reasons, which push people to collectively organise themselves to struggle for a change in the existing power relations or even to capture political power in the hope of making life better for the generality of the people. There are two broad forms of political- Social change: non- violent and violent. Non- violent or peaceful change include political and social reforms such as elections lobbying peaceful demonstration, campaigns, public opinion as expressed through the media. Violent change on the other hand is often viewed as a forcible, illegal, unconstitutional and bloody method of effecting political-social change. Examples of violent change includes revolution, coup d'état, mass insurrection and counterrevolution. Such violent change is effected through, or involves the use or the threat of the use of force, mass uprising, assassinations, terrorism and mobilisations of the people through a radical ideology.

To participate according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is 'to take part in' or become involved in an activity or event. There are however

types and levels of political 'participation'. A person may actively participate in a politics, passively participate in politics thing or become totally indifferent to it. There could also be direct and indirect participation. Socially and politically speaking, participation refers to the platform and the mechanisms for the public to express opinions and ideally exert influence, regarding political, economic, management or other social decisions. Democracy has tremendously enhanced people's participation in Nigeria and all over the world. This is why democracy is seen as the best form of government, at least in the area of participation. For well-informed participation to take place, some version of transparency is necessary by the decision makers, while knowledge through information seeking is required on the part of the populace. Participation can build public support for governmental activities; it can also facilitate useful information exchange regarding local conditions. It further enables individuals and groups to influence governmental decisions in a representational manner. At the utmost, it may lead to an evolutionary change in government as witnessed in Nigeria at the last election or revolutionary change in government as witnessed in the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring, also called the Arab Awakening, Arab Uprising or Jasmine Revolution was a term used to refer to the wave of peaceful protests, demonstrations, and civil unrest that swept through the Arab world and North Africa. It started in 2010 when youths demanded an end to authoritarian regimes, poverty, corruption, and marginalisation. Though the Middle East and North Africa saw the bulk of the disturbances, the widespread agitation against regimes in those regions gave rise to similar movements or the speculation thereof, in countries without majority Arab populations. The effect of the Arab Spring was felt in places as far away and diverse as the United States, Europe, Russia, Mali, Senegal, and Zimbabwe, to name but a few.

According to Reuters, "the Arab Spring began in Tunisia where anger snowballed into a revolution, sparked by the suicide of a young, unemployed man, Mohamed Bouazizi on the 17th of December, 2010, after officials seeking bribes blocked his attempts to make a living selling vegetables." Bouazizi who must have been frustrated by the harassment, took the most extreme form of protest -self-immolation, voluntary sacrifice of oneself, by dousing himself with gas to burn in public due to a sense of hopelessness. This singular act sparked mass protests that spread across the country.

The regime of Ben Ali resorted to repressive tactics such as blocking the internet, cutting off telecommunication, beatings and shooting to quell the

mass protests. The governments' tactics failed, largely due to the people's willingness to circumvent conventional media and resort to posting their content online, through social networks like Twitter (X), Facebook and YouTube, using their mobile phones to upload pictures and posting messages to mobilise and expose the situation on the ground. This period coincidentally coincided with the unprecedented revelations of corruption within the Presidents inner circle and family.

After initial hesitation by world leaders and weeks of anti-regime pro-democracy protests, the protesters succeeded in eliciting international sympathy and inspired similar, pro-democracy activists and protesters across other Arab countries. President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali (who was also the Prime Minister of Tunisia), quit office on 14 January, 2011, and fled to Saudi Arabia with his family. Along with his wife, he was later charged with corruption, tried, and sentenced in absentia for 35 years. INTERPOL then issued an international arrest warrant for him. Thousands of senior members from Mr. Ben Ali's party were banned from running for subsequent elections. In the face of overwhelming odds, the courage of Tunisians, added to people-power, culminated in the ousting of President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, after more than 23 years in power." The United Nations (UN) estimated that the crackdown on protesters by the regime in Tunisia cost the lives of more than 200 people.

The Arab Spring was unique from other uprisings that came before it in the region, due to the ability of the youths to work around government censorship of the media by organising and sharing information via the internet and social media apps. The protesters were able to easily upload pictures and videos of government oppression against protesters by using Twitter (now X) and Facebook to share information and YouTube to stream videos. The traditional 24-hour satellite news networks, such as Al Jazeera, BBC and CNN, were also at hand to report and share information globally on events as they occurred.

The Arab spring and the #EndSARS protests have some very fundamental similarities, such as; the protests were youth led and social media was widely used to share content and organise. And so, ten years after the Arab Spring, the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria have shown that the Nigerian government ignored the lessons from the Arab Spring. The Nigerian government must wake up and realise that the #EndSARS protests are a taste of what could come, because the conditions that fuelled and sustained the Arab Spring share glaring similarities with the situation that fuelled the #EndSARS protests in

Nigeria. More so, if the Arab Spring is a harbinger of things to come, the government ought to act quickly to increase interaction with the youths that will help them change their mind-sets, for just as they can easily be moulded towards violence, so can they be moulded towards peace.

In all of the occasions mentioned above, youths took the centre stage and brought about the changes. Youth participation in politics can therefore be mobilised at the personal or group level, which is youth groups in schools, churches, mosques, age grades, street youths, town youths, State, national, and international, etc. Presently in Nigeria and in most parts of the world, social media also plays a significant role in youth orientation and mobilisation.

History of Youths Political Participation in Nigeria

Youths have played important and significant roles in the social and political organisations of society across the various nationalities and groups in Nigeria, from the historic to more recent times. These roles have straddled the pre-colonial to colonial and post-colonial periods, with continuities and variations to different extents. The various indigenous systems of governance in place through traditional institutions, while differently constructed from the more modern constitutionally recognised governmental structures, were principally utilised in the administration of people in earlier times (Akinrinde and Omotola, 2020).

These created and allowed for salient roles for the youths who, in such a representative sample as the Hausa society, performed these according to the determination of systems of authority at the ward, district and emirate levels (for instance, under the Mai Gida). Similar roles were carried out through different age grade associations and the general assemblies in Igbo communities, and through the Egbe Odo or youth wings in the Yoruba system (Mike, 2020). In the succeeding colonial period, much of the nationalism informing the campaigns and struggles of a range of actors and institutions against imperialism, and towards decolonisation, found expression in the activities of youths. These, in turn, led to the rally of youths, which dovetailed into political mobilisation and organisation, the formation of movements, and thereafter the quest for political power in the newly independent country.

Some of the youth movements formed leveraged on the political insights availed to African youths who had gone to seek the Golden Fleece in a place like England, who then came together to establish an omnibus West African Students Union (WASU) in August 1925. This Union, which catered for

students from countries across the sub region, and sensitised them about the ills of imperialism, while serving as a pressure group for the protection of their interests, had in its membership such notable Nigerians as Herbert Macaulay and Julius Ojo-Cole, WASU subsequently succumbed to the forces of attrition and dispersal, yielding to the formation of other groups such as the Gold Coast Youth Conference in Ghana and the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) in Lagos. As possibly the most prominent youth group of its time responding to anti-colonial nationalism, the NYM was founded in 1934, and had as leading lights the likes of Samuel Akinsanya, Eyo Ita, Adeyemo Alakija, and Kofo Abayomi, who was once its president. Also, Ernest Ikoli, who became its vice president; and H.O. Davies, its secretary. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo and Samuel Ladoke Akintola, were also members of the NYM at overlapping points. While it had as crucial to its objective the fostering of political advancement and enhancement of the social and economic wellbeing of Nigerians, it was equally reputed as being a multi-ethnic group that had a highly national outlook. As it transmuted into a political party that contested the 1938 elections into the Lagos Town Council, upsetting the dominance of Herbert Macaulay's National Democratic Party in that election, the NYM served as forerunner for the emergence of other youth movements into political parties in the country. These included the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) in 1944; the Action Group (AG) in 1950; the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) in 1950; and the Northern People's Congress (NPC) in 1949.

As such, most of the pre-Independence political parties engaging the likes of Anthony Enahoro, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Obafemi Awolowo, and Ahmadu Bello, were all previously youth movements involved in the anti-colonial struggle. And those mentioned, alongside many others, were youths who played pivotal roles in the emergence of what became independent Nigeria. As an instance, Anthony Enahoro was only 30 when he moved a motion for the independence of Nigeria in 1953. Also, Aminu Kano was 30 when he founded NEPU, like Isaac Adaka Boro, who was in his late 20s when he formed the Niger Delta Volunteer Force to fight for the right of his people in the 1966. Since the advent of Independence, youths within the political and governance space have had fairly complex, if not contradictory, roles that were both progressive and less than fortunate. They occupied both a messianic and destructive continuum. The youths took over government from the colonial powers, and not only did they drive huge national advancement, in terms

of human and infrastructural development, it was equally a youth, aged 29, Major Kaduna Nzeogwu, who led the first military coup on January 15, 1966. This became construed across a section of the country as some form of ethnic cleansing of Northern leaders, thereby setting loose the tide of recriminations that motivated the counter-coup of July 1966. This accentuated the slippery slide of Nigerian politics into the ethnic cauldron. It was also youths who initially led the transition from civilian to military rule, in the coup immediately following the actions of Nzeogwu and his cohorts in January 1966. Power had then temporarily come into the hands of General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, till the July of that year. Emergent upon the counter-coup of July 1966, it was a Nigerian youth, Major General Yakubu Gowon, in his early 30s, who became the Head of State, and led the country through a three-year civil war with the forces of the Republic of Biafra. Equally, governments headed by the youthful Generals, Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo, had emphasised the uniqueness and greatness of Nigeria on the international scene.

In this period, many youths were more so in the frontlines of radical politics in the country, through the students' union movement across many of Nigeria's tertiary education institutions. Whereas the era of activism of Nigerian students had commenced in 1956, with the founding of the National Union of Nigerian Students (NUNS), which also came after the unravelling of the West Africa Students Union (WASU), the unprecedented activist role of NUNS in the Ali-Must-Go protests of 1978, its subsequent banishment, and the setting up of the successor National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), positioned the country's youths in the vanguard of progressive social action. Yet, it was during the Second Republic, starting in 1979, that the frontline public roles of youths began to diminish, as the era of sit-tight leaders, who ironically arose to power in the First Republic as youths, began. Thereafter, youths were consigned to "youth wings" of political parties (Amzat and Abdullahi, 2016). From then, the roles of Nigerian youths transformed into those of tools in the hands of the political elite, who have been using them as thugs and enforcers during violent electoral campaigns, and as agents of destabilisation through political violence, etc., ever since. Similarly, due to the angst that has surrounded the existence of many youths due to numerous failings of the state, they have also been associated with restiveness in areas such as the Niger Delta, and the South-East, whilst further distorted into the constructs of 'area boys', 'agberos', the 'Yan Daba' in other zones of the country. It has been pointed out that, essentially, it was the deployment of

youths as vectors of violence that led to the termination of the First and Second Republics (Amzat and Abdullahi, 2016).

Despite the foregoing, some of the noblest roles played by Nigerian youths were those in the trenches as pushback against authoritarian military rule and the siege to freedom and human rights, during the years of the locust. From the activities of youth activists in the students' union movement, civil society and professional groups, the media, etc., the Nigerian youths positioned themselves as a durable bulwark against oppression, in spite of the numerous consequences they bore for this.

Factors Limiting the Political Participation of Youths

While youths have been observed as being the dominant demography in the Nigerian electoral process, constituting over 50 per cent of registered voters in the country (Bukky, 2018), and being highly instrumental to political change, nevertheless various factors have restricted their political participation in the past decades.

Besides being a sizeable voting bloc, they are still largely precluded from participating directly in the decision-making processes that comes with political representation. They are the voters who the system in place does not allow to be voted for, due to various restrictions they have encountered, from legal and political structures. In addition, they are excluded as significant beneficiaries of political decision-making, as their concerns are never the primary considerations of the political elite, after being voted into power.

The marginalisation and limited political participation of the Nigerian youth is evident in the facts that since the return of democracy to the country in 1999, referred to as the beginning of the Fourth Republic, the cabinets at the federal level have not been "youth-friendly". Most of the members of the Federal Executive Councils have been older politicians, who had served in government in one form or another since the 1970s. The average age in the cabinets has been 50, with other members being in their 60s, and some in their 70s. Also, it has been noted that from 1999 to 2016, no Minister for Youth has been a youth (Amzat and Abdullahi, 2016). In spite of having a National Youth Policy that lays out a very bold vision for harnessing the potentials of youths, and signposts how strategy could be built for empowering the demography to make far-reaching contributions to national development, yet no concrete role has been designed for youths to attain political power.

A number of the key factors hindering the political participation of

youths have included poverty, resulting from the failure of the state to attend to the welfare of the people, which is the primary purpose of government. As such, the lack of adequate social provisioning for education, health and decent housing has put the youth at the disadvantage of being fundamentally distracted by existential issues.

However, when programmes and schemes are put together to tackle poverty, the persistence of corruption detracts these programmes from working optimally in achieving their desired objectives. Linked to poverty is the unfortunate situation of youth unemployment, seeing many lacking access to the opportunities for providing meaningfully for themselves, and those who depend on them. As much as many youths are not trained enough to have skills that make them employable, others are yet routinely offloaded from tertiary institutions into non-existent labour markets, which were destroyed by the poor economic policies of government. This has served as basis for many in the political elite to consider youths as only being suitable for roles as political enforcers, purveyors of violence and other nefarious purposes.

Moreover, the commercialisation of politics, which is now regarded as a business with anticipated returns and no longer primarily about public service, has put the political selection process at the discretion of merchants of power, the godfathers, who wield near absolute control over political party machineries and processes. This has been an enduring form of restriction, requiring aspirants to toe the line of approval of these godfathers, as the main route to endorsement and political participation.

There are also the eligibility restrictions preventing youths from participation in the country's political processes. In Nigeria, this had basically been viewed by a section of the youths in the form of the limitations for seeking political office on the basis of the age criterion. Before the amendment of the Nigerian constitution in 2018, the age requirement for those vying for the office of the President was 40 years; that of governor was 40 years; senator, 40 years; membership of the federal House of Representatives, 30 years; and the state Houses of Assembly, 30 years. The contention here was that if the youths constituted the largest voting bloc in the country, and that according to the Constitution, the voting age is put at 18 years, signifying enough mental capacity and maturity for that particular decision-making, why then should the eligibility age for contesting political office be much different, appealing to a different criteria and signposting discrimination? Essentially, as already reiterated, the youths can be a creative force championing innovation in politics

and governance in society, but when they are alienated from politics and the decision-making process, they can equally be made to lend their skills and energies to illicit acts, such as electoral brigandage and violence.

Conclusion

What the #EndSARS protests have shown is the capacity of the Nigerian youths to now organise for change in society in more resilient ways. It shows that the youths will no longer stay complacent in the face of governmental abuse and dysfunction, as they are aware that change is what has to be struggled for, as it never comes around by mere wish-making or simple rhetoric. Indeed, about half of the registered voters in Nigeria are aged between 18-35 meaning the youth will hold a lot of electoral sway in the 2023 election, in which case, if they effectively organise, they could topple the current political establishments both the major parties of the All Progressive Congress and Peoples Democratic Party and generate genuine democratic change in Nigeria. For the lessons of the #EndSARS protests, many Nigerian youths are now keenly aware of the powers they have as a pressure group, and they appear poised to use this continuously in demanding for change – even despite the gory fallout of October 20. They have the numbers, the skills, including the technological savvy to coordinate sophisticated campaigns. The fund-raising capability exhibited during the protests shows the possibility that they can channel into politics to overcome traditional limitations. While the 'leaderless' nature of #EndSARS protests might have been problematic for some, it equally points at some political sophistication. However, as mentioned, its gains will still be limited when not aligned to a structured political purpose.

The #EndSARS protest across the country has come and gone. But the message it has communicated is simple and clear. Far beyond narrowing it down to the Nigerian youths protesting against the brutality of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Nigeria Police, the entire downtrodden masses are grossly dissatisfied with the world of their time except we want to deceive ourselves. The widening gap between the leaders and the led epitomising uneven distribution of national wealth informed the masses' absolute dissatisfaction with exploitative governance put in place by the leaders. The protests have brought anxiety to Nigeria's political landscape and an opportunity for creative internal reformation. The space for a new kind of politics has to expand to include fresh progressive ideals. The political elites of course will not enthusiastically make space for young blood. It is for the youths to carry on creatively chipping away at the system by creating new

spaces of social and political kinships until the balance of power shifts.

They are on the margins, watching, waiting, and being shaped by the realities around them. The #EndSARS movement can channel the current awakening towards a sustained engagement with the coming elections that leads to the entry of a new generation of progressive Nigerian politicians ready to transform legislative politics from within. We saw this process with the rise of millennial voters in the US elections. From using social media platforms to mobilise voter registration to physically challenging nationalist bullies attempting voter suppression and rallying behind progressive candidates, young Americans have conspicuously changed the landscape of their nation's politics.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the political leaders have failed the citizens over the years. The cumulative consequence of leadership failure is the expression of anger and frustration as conspicuously demonstrated by the protesters. At this juncture however, it behoves all and sundry to put the ugly past behind us and forge ahead.

Recommendations

The above makes this paper recommend the way forward as follows:

- The retirement age of 60 years for civil servants in the country should also be applicable to Political office holders (both elective and appointive) except for advisory roles when the need arises. The government should come out with an appropriate legislation that pegs maximum age limit of political office holders to 60 years. This will give more room for youths to participate in governance.
- The government should introduce a National Action Plan (NAP) on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250, (UNSCR 2250), on Youth, Peace and Security. The resolution which was adopted by the UN Security Council in 2015 recognised that youth should actively be engaged in shaping lasting peace and contributing to justice and reconciliation, and that a large youth population presents a unique demographic dividend that can contribute to stability and economic prosperity across nations.
- The tenure of Political office holders at every level should be limited to eight years (two terms) after which they are not qualified to contest for another office. The practice of governors, after serving eight years

in office, becoming automatic senators should be discouraged and legislated outlawed.

- The momentum of the #EndSARS protests can be used to rally voters behind alternative, independent candidates who can challenge the old establishment and deliver on much needed local solutions to local problems. It can help build a new political consciousness among Nigerians which redefines citizenship as not just a set of rights but also of responsibilities – to demand one's right from the state but also to have the responsibility to do one's part in transforming it for the better.
- With the momentum of the EndSARS protest the youths can dominate political offices as it is done in advanced democracies. This can be done by encouraging the formation of youths to emerge as the presidential candidates of the leading political parties.
- As part of the anticipated electoral reforms, presidential nomination forms should be made affordable. This will discourage and disallow moneybags and godfathers from hijacking the process in the name of sponsorship. Government should begin the process of integrating more qualified and competent youths into governance. This is achievable by discouraging moneybags and godfatherism starting from 2023.

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RADICAL SOCIAL CHANGE BEYOND #ENDSARS PROTEST: MOVING THE #END SARS STRUGGLE FORWARD

BY
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Introduction

Over the decades, economies around the world have been experiencing mass protests by disgruntled citizens, especially youths. Such demonstrations have often involved tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of people, largely, as a result of bad governance instituted by self-serving leaders. It has been observed within the recent Arab Spring demonstration that started in Tunisia, and later manifested in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain. According to Abdul and Muhammad (2017), Arab Spring mobilised people with majority of youth population to protest against authoritarian rulers, brutality of law enforcement agents against masses, poverty, unemployment, inflation etc. Though the protests were peacefully conducted in all of the Arab countries that staged the spring protest, demonstrators were vehemently annihilated by the powers of the governments protested against. Correspondingly, in an emerging economy such as Nigeria, full and active youth participation political protests have often been disregarded since the inception of democratic governance.

When Nigerian youths team up for a just cause, in relation to evolving political trends across the world that are makings tremendous statements which are geared towards strategic social change, government is more often than not apprehensive toward such intent by youths. Prior to #ENDSARS protest, active citizen participation, particularly youth participation has not really been elusive against the backdrop of re-circled gerontocracy that is characteristic of the political system in Nigeria. #ENDSARS protest is one of the most remarkable experiences in the history of youths in Nigeria. It opened many people's eyes towards different realisations in law enforcement. Before the #ENDSARS protest, a large number of people were ignorant of the amount of dehumanisation and abuse of human rights suffered by many Nigerians in the hands of law enforcement agents, particularly the disbanded Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). SARS was a unit of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF)

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set up to respond to armed robberies and violent crime. SARS would harass Nigerian youths who use sophisticated phones (iPhone, Samsung Galaxy etc.), arrest those on dread locks or even shoot at unarmed civilians. When a human being is pushed to the wall and there is no option left, he turns to fight back, because for every action, there is a reaction. The accumulated anger by many Nigerians that was occasioned by police brutality in the country thunderously echoed the voice of the voiceless as expressed in the #ENDSARS protest.

The Amnesty International (2016) had reported that SARS was responsible for multiple human rights abuses, unlawful tortures and killings, degrading treatments of Nigerians among other inhuman behaviours of the group against fellow humans. #ENDSARS protest got its inspiration from the tweets by Segun Awosanya and other Nigerian activities on the brutality of SARS in Nigeria and moved for the disbandment of the Force (Ochi and Mark, 2021). The campaign was popularised through online and offline demonstrations of people against the brutality of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF). Not less than ten thousand Nigerians signed a petition written to the National Assembly to disband SARS upon the demeaning treatment of its law enforcement agents against many Nigerian youths. Following this demonstration by the aggrieved Nigerians, nothing changed within the NPF. Rather than causing a positive change of behaviour within which SARS agents discharge their duties, the agitation by Nigerians against them served as the sparks that escalated the situation (Ujene, Orji and Obianger, 2018).

Videotapes of SARS officers shooting a young Nigerian and driving off in his car went viral on social media on 3rd of October, 2020. This propelled the movement of #ENDSARS calling for action against the viciousness of SARS against Nigerian youths. As such, nationwide protests, which commenced on 7th of October, 2020, starting from cities across Nigeria. The researcher's experience of being a part of #ENDSARS movement was an unprecedented one. History was made alongside other Nigerians who voiced out their grievances which were indeed popular. Many Nigerians felt the sense of citizenship and genuine comradeship. The spirit of belonging to Nigeria as a nation rather than as a sect of people in Nigeria was awaken. At the initial stage, the protests were peaceful demonstration by youths, celebrities, human rights activist and other concerned Nigerians. At some points, the protest turned haywire as some hoodlums hijacked the activities. There were series of attacks and reprisal attacks between the hoodlums and the peaceful protesters. Oshinnaike (2020) observed that at the peak of the peaceful protest, NPF and

their accomplices intervened by throwing teargas and shooting sporadically leading to the death of some unarmed protesters.

A number of world leaders have expressed their criticisms on the situation of #ENDSARS and the response of Nigerian government. Former Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo condemned "the use of excessive force by military forces who fired on unarmed demonstrators in Lagos," calling for Nigerian security services to, "show maximum restraint and respect fundamental rights and for demonstrators to remain peaceful" (Congressional Research Service, 2020).The #ENDSARS campaign revealed the in-depth and essential role social media play in social movement, social mobilisation, agitation for good governance, and respect for human rights in Africa (Raimi et al., 2021). Through various social media platforms, the #ENDSARS activists were able to reach out and organise massive movements calling out to thousands of Nigerians to action and holding Nigerian authorities to account, at the same time, catching the attention of the international communities in support for the #ENDSARS campaigns (Iyorza&Nsa, 2020).

A number of international celebrities addressed the Nigerian government to yield to the agitation of the #ENDSARS protesters (Raimi, 2021). Musicians in the international space such as Seun Kuti, Boyce, DJ Switch, Saaki, Davido and other local celebrities were part of the movement. Also, international stars such as Beyonce, Rihanna, John Boyen joined the global world to stand in solidarity with Nigerian protesters and made their impact on social media on #ENDSARS movement. The United Nations responded to the cold-blooded killing of the innocent lives of Nigerian youth protesters killed by Nigeria Police and Army on October 20, 2020 by calling on the Nigerian government to immediately put an end to this violent act. The statement was echoed by the U.S president, Joe Biden, stated that the Nigerian president and Nigerian Army should end the brutality and work towards a more inclusive country that is sustainable for its citizens (Raimi, 2021).

Furthermore, social media platforms were used to raise financial supports to feed the protesters, pay for the hospital treatment of those wounded in the struggle and pay for the services of their defence lawyers. It was also used to enable lawyers to be called to go to court at short notice for protesters, coordinating logistics about upcoming protests in terms of timing and location (Oginni, 2015). Most importantly, social media was using real-time updates to keep people informed about what was happening. It is against this background that this paper seeks to assess the radical social change beyond

the #EndSARS protest and to find a way forward in moving the #EndSARS struggle in Nigeria. The paper adopts the qualitative research methodology via the use of content analysis. This is informed by the dual precepts of conflict and functionalist theories. It is hoped that the findings and positions of the discourse shall open new vistas for finding a way forward in moving the #EndSARS struggle in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The two models of social change adopted for this paper are Conflict and Functionalist theories. Conflict theory is spearheaded by the contribution of Karl Marx who pointed that society is by nature unequal and competitive. Marx mentioned that the uneven distribution of wealth in human society makes it possible for the 'haves and powerful' to control the rest of people in society by exploiting vulnerable groups. This reality causes conflict among members of society whereby oppressed people are pushed to the point of retaliating (Afonja&Pearce, 1984). The functionalist perspective has its origins in the works of Emile Durkheim, who was especially interested in how social order is possible or how society remains relatively stable. Notable theorists include Herbert Spencer, Talcott Parsons, and Robert K. Merton. Durkheim envisioned society as an organism since each component plays a necessary role but can't function alone. When one part experiences a crisis, others must adapt to fill the void in some way (Durkheim, 1952).

In functionalist theory, the different parts of society are primarily composed of social institutions, each designed to fill different needs. Family, government, economy, media, politics, education, and religion are important to understanding this theory and the core institutions that define sociology (Anele, 1999). According to functionalism, an institution only exists because it serves a vital role in the functioning of society. If it no longer serves a role, an institution will die away. When new needs evolve or emerge, new institutions will be created to meet them. In many societies, the government provides education for the children of the family, which in turn pays taxes the state depends on to keep running. The family relies on the school to help children grow up to have good jobs so they can raise and support their own families. In the process, the children become law-abiding, taxpaying citizens who support the state. From the functionalist perspective, if all goes well, the parts of society produce order, stability, and productivity. If all does not go well, the parts of society must adapt to produce new forms of order, stability,

and productivity.

Black Radical Social Movements and #ENDSARS

Many decades ago, most likely between the bracket of fifteenth to nineteenth century, the race of black people known as Africans were victims and captives of the then Euro-American hegemony. At that dispensation, diplomacy was substituted for coercion. The dominant power wielded was nothing close to the use of attraction or persuasion in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives. Rather, policies were made to forcefully move away able-bodied black people and their cultural artefacts crossing the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas for slavery. This was the first time Africans partook in Cross-Atlantic international trade relation; only that the relationship was one that transferred wealth from Africa to Europe. Rodney (1973) succinctly captures the politics of transatlantic slavery when he notes that:

> From the beginning, Europe assumed the power to make decisions within the international trading system. An excellent illustration of that is the fact that the so-called international law which governed the conduct of nations on the high seas was nothing else but European law. Africans did not participate in its making, and in many instances African people were simply the victims, for the law recognised them only as transportable merchandise.

Subsequently, several movements abolished slave trade but in the actual sense, colonisation took the garment of a disguised slavery. History records that Africa was partitioned in the Conference held in Berlin in 1884. The aftermath of the scramble of Africa brought about the vulnerability of Africans in the hands of their colonial masters. Again, this period experienced the reality of subjugation, segregation, oppression, manipulation, cultural exploitation and an unconcern attitude toward human and civil rights.

The MajiMaji movement was an experience that dates back to the period of 1905-1907. It tells the epic history of nationalists in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) during the time of colonialism. Germany colonised four African regions to include; Togo, Cameroon, Namibia and Tanganyika (now Tanzania). Series of impositions by the German colonialists led to the rise of rebellious spirits among the natives of Tanganyika. Following the establishment of its control, Germany imposed; high taxation on the black people, kill kings who resisted German occupation, forced labour, among other ruthless policies

(Greenstein, 2010). When the people reached the peak of their endurance, they became rebellious. The rebellion spread throughout the colony, eventually involving twenty different ethnic groups all of whom wished to dissipate the German colonisers.

A prophet known as KinjikitileNgwale, claimed to know the secret to a sacred liquid that could repel German bullets called "MajiMaji," which means "sacred water" (Molefi, 2007). The apex of the rebellion came at Mahenge in August 1905 where several thousand MajiMaji warriors attacked but failed to overrun a German stronghold. On October 21, 1905 the Germans retaliated with an attack on the camp of the unsuspecting Ngoni people who had recently joined the rebellion. The Germans killed hundreds of men, women, and children. This attack marked the beginning of a brutal counteroffensive that left an estimated 75,000 MajiMaji warriors dead by 1907. The Germans also adopted famine as a weapon, purposely destroying the crops of suspected MajiMaji supporters (John, 1967).

The Mau Mau rebellion confronted the British colonial authorities in Kenya with a complex array of challenges. Earlier policies to develop the country by promoting European settlement dispossessed natives Kenyans (particularly the Kikuyu) from their traditional lands, leading them to move to the cities in search of work. Cities such as Nairobi grew at unsustainable rates, becoming centres of crime and recruiting grounds for increasingly organised and radical protests. The work of European Christian missionaries undermined traditional values and practices leading to further dislocation and conflict (Throup, 1988). In all the turmoil, a variety of local political programmes emerged. Some sought to improve their lot by working within the framework of the colonial administration. Others began to formulate a solution that transcended any particular tribal, linguistic, or ethnic group and offered a vision for Kenya as a whole. Still others, like the Kikuyu people whose lands bore the brunt of European settlement, pursued a traditional tribal focus (Robert, 1989).

The original Kikuyu Central Association, founded in the 1920s, was disbanded for security reasons with the outbreak of World War II and was eventually replaced after the war by the more politically aggressive Kenyan African Union. At the same time, some 100,000 Kenyan veterans returned home from war service, no longer impressed by the mystique of the white man, more politically aware than their predecessors and facing the challenge of reintegrating back into society (Shamsul, 1988). The intersection of these

complex trends gave rise to what came to be known as the Mau Mau rebellion. Centred on the Kikuyu people and often directed as much as against other Kenyan groups as against the British colonialists, resistance took ever more radical and violent forms in both the cities and the countryside (Maloba, 1998).

Arab Spring was yet another fiercely popular movement that started from December 18th, 2010 and extended to different countries across the Arab world (Terrill, 2011). It was against the long-term despotic rules of the authoritarian rulers, continuous state of emergency in which Police and the Interior Ministry had excessive powers to crush the people, unemployment, poverty, inflation, etc. Social media was used in all countries where there these protests took place to get the attention of world community. All the regimes which were affected by the Arab Spring used their powers vehemently to crush the demonstrators and consequently the peaceful protesters also became violent. The common slogan of the protesters throughout Arab Spring was "the people want to bring down the regime" (Aissa, 2012).

Human Rights Denial

Violations of the right to life have come in various forms such as extrajudicial killings, shooting of protesters and other random undeserved killings. The Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) found in a 2010 report that extrajudicial executions are a routine feature of policing in Nigeria. Human Rights Watch estimates that over 10,000 people were killed by the Nigerian police in the eight years spanning 2000 through 2007 (Human Rights Watch, 2017). The head of the Enugu State division of SARS allegedly told a researcher of the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria that he ordered the extrajudicial executions of only persons whom he knew to be guilty (Olatunji, 2012). These killings do not always happen secretly, hidden away in police cells and dungeons. In August 2019, videos surfaced showing men of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) executing arrested suspects in the streets of Lagos. The suspects were alleged to belong to a criminal ring that disguised themselves as phone buyers to lure and rob unsuspecting victims. The police arrested two of the suspects, only to have their summary execution recorded shortly after. Amateur clips of the police shooting the victims in the full glare of the public went viral. In reaction, the Nigerian police announced the arrest of the officers involved (Samson, 2019).

Again, SARS, as well as other units of the Nigerian Police, routinely lock up suspects, sometimes for years, without trial. The average length of

pre-trial detention in Nigeria is three years and ten months (Olatunji, 2012). Such prolonged detentions are usually done through the use of a "holding charge," whereby the police bring a charge against an accused before a lower court lacking jurisdiction to try the offence, pending advice from the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Nigerian Court has held this practice to be unconstitutional, though the practice persists (Adamu, 2020). SARS personnel, ironically hired to tackle violent crimes, assumed the mandate of fishing out so-called "Yahoo Boys" (internet fraudsters). This they did by stopping mainly young men in the streets and demanding to go through their phones. Mere ownership of an iPhone is enough to make one a suspect. Victims have reported being arrested for owning iPhones and laptops or for refusing to grant the police access to their phones (Peace, 2020).

Beyond #ENDSARS

The #ENDSARS moved from a protest against police brutality to a movement for social justice and government reforms. The protests have been described as a "vector" for broader dissatisfaction with Nigeria's political class (Christ, 2020). Protests and riots continued unabatedly for weeks. The important issue moving forward was to adequately address the issues raised by the protesters as well as those that were unravelled during the protests. The disbandment of SARS and restitution of victims are necessary starting points. The people, as shown through their dissatisfaction with the mere disbandment of SARS, called for more.

#ENDSARS and the Way Forward

The government needs to develop a human rights policy approach to addressing these issues. Firstly, there is the need to address the systemic abuse of civil and political rights by the police and other government agencies. The government needs to commence intensive human rights training for all law enforcement officers. Officers should also be regularly appraised on their human rights compliance and erring officers prosecuted. In order to effectively protect the rights to life and freedom from torture, the government must ensure that it treats reports of violence, torture, and extrajudicial killings with the gravity they deserve. Such reports must be duly investigated through transparent means such as public inquiries and inquests, and victims should be adequately compensated. On the right to fair trial, the government must also initiate reforms to ensure that suspects are not detained without trial. The

right to privacy can also be better protected by the government taking a clear stand on routine stop and search operations which appear to be an avenue for extortion by the police.

This human rights approach may also be extended to address calls for social justice that have trailed the protests, especially in the aftermath of massive lootings across the country. The Nigerian government can respond to these calls by working to protect basic socioeconomic rights. As things stand, the oil-rich Nigerian state is shielded from any form of judicial accountability by the provision in Chapter II of the country's constitution which states that socioeconomic rights are mere "objectives" and "directive principles" (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Indeed, the Nigerian Court of Appeal has interpreted this provision as meaning that socioeconomic rights are not legally enforceable and that the "arbiter" for any breach would be the legislature or the electorate (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). It has been suggested in the aftermath of the protests that the government prioritise "pro-poor policies" such as investments in education and youth empowerment to engage the country's teeming youths (aged below 30 years) that account for 70% of the total population (Funke and Uche, 2020). #ENDSARS was birthed by gross human rights violations and sheer disregard for human life. It is only reasonable that future policies make room for effective human rights protection to address the many problems the campaign has highlighted.

The choice of dialogue is proposed in addressing the issues of police brutality and other persistent challenges in the country. To say violence begets violence is not best strategy for progressive change. Nigeria is a multi-ethnic country with unique and diversified mode of understanding. The best way to co-exist is by respecting, tolerating and accommodating one another despite the differences. The status of majority or minority should not be a yardstick for division rather people should be seen first as human beings who are equal before the Supreme Being who created us all. With this, the researcher agrees with late Kafewo (2010) that, "for us to get to the level of exchanging violent 'venom' for peaceful 'venom' as advocated in this paper, those promoters of violence ought to do better".

An expanded people's capacity and skills is necessary to gain access and control factors that affect their basic needs, hence empowering them. In such a scenario, people must become the protagonists of their own development, otherwise not much would be achieved from any amount of

investment that would improve their living in a sustainable way. Most of the development interventions today put into place participatory means of engaging stakeholders. This has seen participation becoming a key component in addressing issues that place civilians against law makers. As such, this paper recommends an inclusive communication approach (like Theatre for Development, Participatory Communication, Participatory Learning and Action) towards addressing societal challenges.

Conclusion

This study on #ENDSARS showed that an effective government ought to have listening ears to its people. For many years, Nigerians continue to experience communication gap between the leaders and their people. The #ENDSARS protest made it known that effective government is not about the provision of what is perceived to be social amenities, but by listening to the fears of the people. The protest created awareness. Till date, there are still many Nigerians who do not know their rights. Maybe some people actually know their rights, but then, many dread the outcomes of claiming rights in a country where collective acceptance of ignorance is regarded as normalcy. However, the ENDSARS protest did not only create awareness on abuse of human rights, it also woke people up from their states of slumber to take action against a government they perceived was not working. The protest broke the jinx of the culture of silence inherent in many Nigerians. People were seen coming out to talk about their experiences with SARS. The protest also brought people to the know that they have the right to question the activities of those they voted into power.

Finally, the protest informed Nigerian governments about their shortcomings. SARS was a machinery used by the government to enforce law and order; it is however abysmal that the same SARS broke many laws it was supposed to keep. Yes, people died in the course of the protest, but then, there is no just cause without a life-threatening fight. With the experience of the protest, many people are more aware than they ever were. Presently, there are eyes (both local and international observers) on the activities of the Nigerian government than what used to be the status quo. Is there a better way the protesters would have done what they did? Yes. The better way would have been placing more emphasis on sensitising people about their fundamental human rights through inclusive communication approach (TfD, participatory communication, PLA, etc.). By that, some Nigerians would not be fighting for

a just cause while some other Nigerians would allow themselves to be used to sabotage the efforts of the former. The experience of ENDSARS protest, not withstanding, showed that there is still hope for a better Nigeria!

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SECTION 2: DIALOGUE & PEACEBUILDING

PROMOTING PEACE THROUGH TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES, CITIZENS CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA

BY
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Introduction

Peace is a highly priced commodity. Nigeria needs peace in this democratic dispensation. Since independence in 1960, there have been several breaches of peace. One has led Nigeria to a three-year war of secession between Biafra (the Eastern Region) and Nigeria from 1967 to 1970. There have been other breaches like the three military interregnums. In contemporary times, the Boko Haram insurgency is there, particularly in the North East zone. The bandits hold sway in many parts of the country too, not only in Katsina and Zamfara States. The indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), are harassing people in the South-East, and the O'odua group is seeking the self- determination of the Yoruba people.

Peace can be promoted through reliance on traditional authorities, with their leaders who are conferred with the culture of the people. Also, citizens' consultation promotes peace by expanding the political space and improving the trust of the citizens of their government. Participation of women and youths is very imperative for an inclusive governance which consolidates democracy and promotes peace and development.

This paper relies on secondary data to do a descriptive analysis of the subject of study. The aim of the study is to examine how peace could be promoted by traditional authorities, citizens' consultation and participation in Nigeria. Peace is needed in Nigeria now to keep Nigeria one. Military or kinetic method alone cannot bring peace. Other instruments of peace building should be discovered and used for the benefit of the country.

The Concept of Peace

The concept of 'peace' will be more appreciated, when paired with its antonym 'war' (conflict). Individuals, groups and nations want peace as a desirable virtue. The more they desire it, the more it is slippery. Notwithstanding, it is cherished by many. Peace like any other social science concept has no universally acceptable definition. As noted by Manus (1992),

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peace is founded on love and justice and it is a necessary ingredient in inter-personal relationship. Peace, according to Tabet (1989:18):

> Provides for all… common platform for which to work out together ways and means to preserve the fundamental spiritual and human values forming the moral fabric of every nation, to struggle to eliminate hunger, poverty, ignorance, persecution, discrimination and every form of enslavement of the human spirit, to foster freedom.

We are warned by Ikenga-Metuh (1992) that peace in its true meaning does not comprise solely the absence of physical insecurity or absence of war and conflict. Wholesome peace from him should deal with all the concentric relationships between the individual and individual, individual and community, community and community, nation and nation and man and the universe. Then, what peace is should be the concern of this paper.

Howard (1987) is of the view that peace is primarily concerned with the creation and maintenance of a just order in the society. In line with this, Wortley (1967) sees peace as a state of order in the society in harmony with man's reasonable nature. Therefore, breaches of peace are directly linked to law and order. Pope John XXIII (1963) added God as new dimension to it. Thus inter alia: "Peace on earth, which all men of every era have most eagerly yearned for, can be firmly established only if the order laid down by God be dutifully observed".

Cukwura and Sylvester (2006) differentiated true peace from false peace. Citing Justice Chukwudifu Oputa, true peace results from true order (tranquillity and order). An order imposed by force, oppression, fear, threats, blackmail; etc is a false order (tranquillity of slavery). A false order is merely tolerated. True peace provides for the welfare of all men. It produces a society that is free, harmonious, honoured by all, cultured and religious. In this context, it is justice in action (Cukwura and Sylvester, 2006:2).

This paper adopts Abbas (2018:4)'s broad definition of peace as "the absence of violence or war, the presence of justice, equality and development, the existence of rule of law, respect for human life and dignity and tolerance among and between people, maintenance of a balanced ecosphere and more importantly, having inner wholeness".

Breaches of Peace in Nigeria

Since independence in 1960, there have been several breaches of peace

with defined patterns. The greatest breach of peace in Nigeria has come from the political class of all dispensation whether in Agbada (traditional regalia of royalty) or khaki (military uniform). The members of the political class from their selfish orientation have privatised the commonwealth of the nation into their pockets. That has resulted into all sorts of dissentions and conflicts against the system.

The evolution of the Nigerian state clearly reveals the privatisation of the wealth of nation. It is for that reason they want power at all cost. According to Anifowose (1982:332):

> On the part of those who govern, high premium is put on the acquisition and retention of power, hence their political intolerance, unbridled partisanship, political corruption, disregard for constitutionalism, the rule of law, transparency and accountability. In short, the political class uses the coercive instruments of the state to enforce their rule and to perpetuate themselves in power. On the other hand, within the Nigeria pluralistic society, there are deep cleavages, cutting across ethnic, religious and socio-political lines.

The Republics and the Breaches of Peace

Nigeria has gone through four republics. There have been breaches of peace here and there. In the first republic, breaches of peace occurred a few years after political independence. Such crises included the 1962/63 Census crisis, the Action Group crisis of 1962, the Federal election crisis and the Western election crisis of 1965. These crises were rooted in personality clashes, electoral malpractices and violence that led to apathy among the ordinary Nigerians. The situation led to the fall of the first republic on 15th January, 1966.

The second republic ushered in on October 1, 1979 after a legal contest of the election result, had Alhaji Shehu Shagari as the President. The crises were further reinforced, according to Suberu (1988:14):

> by a system-destroying elite attitudinal pattern which predisposed political actors to a systematic violation of institutional procedures and which turned political competition into an intensely combative and perilous display of brinkmanship… Most importantly, forces and pressures unleashed by intra-elite competition for scarce resources (patronage, appointments, amenities) needed.. for personal material

consolidation.

The political class during the second Republic violated the law in every aspect of their contest for power. The members particularly of the ruling party used thugs, assassins and bandits to terrorise, torture, rob and murder people during the 1983 elections, as in the first republic. The rights of the people were abused by the thugs and government, even with the support of the Police. FEDECO, the electoral umpire disenfranchised several electorates, apart from the accusation of rigging the elections.

Nwolise (1988:47) presented the collapse of the second republic graphically thus:

> In short, the activities of the political parties and politicians negated the whole spirit and letter of even the motto of Nigeria: "Unity and faith, Peace and Progress". Their utterances and actions especially the manipulation of religious and ethnic sentiments as well as the perpetration of injustice created numerous lines of division in the country. The consequent violence and brutality that they unleashed on the citizens of Nigeria was not conducive to peace and their financial irresponsibility (misuse of public fund) destroyed the wheel of economic progress.

The still-birth third republic had its own breach of the peace from the Khaki political class. The members manipulated the Agbada political class to maintain their corporate interest in politics of sharing the commonwealth as they wish, against the people. Chief Moshood Abiola of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) defeated Alhaji Bashir Tofa of the National Republican Convention (NRC) in the undeclared June 12, 1993 Presidential election.

The June 12 election annulment was a major breach of peace in Nigeria. Even the institution of the Interim National Government of Chief Ernest Shonekan and the stepping aside of General Babangida from his eight-year rule on August 27, 1993, did not heal the wound. Nigeria was at the precipice of break up.

The Fourth Republic came with several breaches of peace. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo of People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged as the first President of the Fourth Republic on May 1999. West-Idahosa (2010:41), has presented a picture of the breaches as:

> The problem with the politics of the Fourth Republic appears to be

> the political class itself. They have turned out to be what can safely be described as Nigeria's natural disaster. For them, politics can be played with religion such as the sudden introduction of the Sharia legal system in a few Northern states or the promotion of ethnic militia groups… and various militant groups.

Threats to peace in the Fourth Republic are escalating. The Boko Haram terrorists have aggravated the problem of insecurity in Nigeria. The bandits are there. The farmers – herders clashes cannot be ignored. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) are harassing people, threatening secession in the South-East and the O'odua group in the South-West are struggling for self-determination. The breach of peace in the Fourth Republic is widespread in Nigeria. In addition, there is a high level of unemployment and poverty.

The Military Interregnums and Breaches of Peace

The threats of peace with the three military interregnums were not different from that of the civilian administrations in Nigeria. The military political class were in charge. They tested the benefits of political power and were not ready to leave it. The first military intervention came with the Major Kaduna Chukwuma Nzeogwu coup of 15th January, 1966, which brought General J.T.U. Aguiyi-Ironsi regime into power.

There was nothing much the military in government did to solve the problems identified for their intervention. The reasons were corruption, tribalism, nepotism, religious fanaticism, repression of political opponents and lack of public accountability. In the words of Major Nzeogwu after he seized power in Nigeria in January, 1966:

> Our enemies are the political profiteers, the swindlers, the men in high and low places that seek bribes and demand 10 percent, those that seek to keep the country divided permanently so that they can remain in office as Ministers or VIPs at least; the tribalists, the nepotists, those that make the country look big for nothing before international circles; those that have corrupted our society... (Joseph 1991:71).

Following the elitists tradition, the military regimes did not solve the above problems because they were beneficial to them. The first interregnum of 13 years of Ironsi, Gowon and Murtala/Obasanjo regimes plunged Nigeria to a major breach of peace. According to West-Idahosa (2010:99), Gowon was

destined to preside over the "bloodiest" phase of "Nigeria's history". After thirty months of a bloody civil war that claimed over a million people, the secession of Biafra came to an end in 1970". Obasanjo's regime organised elections that returned Nigeria to civil rule in 1979.

The second interregnum started with the coup of Gen. Muhammadu Buhari on December 31, 1983, that removed the Shagari administration and ended the Second Republic. The regime breached peace from its high handedness of the media, political elite and the general suffering of the people. Gen. Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida coup displaced the Buhari regime on August 25, 1985. The regime embarked on a transition without end, which itself was a serious breach of peace. It ended with eight years of Babangida reign that also ended the second military interregnum with the annulment of June 12, 1993 Presidential election and the enthronement of the Shonekan Interim National Government, on August 27, 1993.

Gen. Sani Abacha started the third military interregnum by shelving the Shonekan administration, that he was a member of, through a palace coup on 17 November 1993. His plan to transform to a civilian President generated a lot of opposition from the elites particularly from the West. After his death, Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar became the head of state. His priority was the transition to the Fourth Republic by May 29, 1999, under Obasanjo of PDP the winner of the election.

In all, military rule in Nigeria, following their civilian counterpart, entrenched authoritarianism through military dictatorship. As observed by West-Idahosa (2010:115) "Every level of society was abused by the military. The seeming stagnancy and the overall underdevelopment of the nation and its economy has been traced to the profligacy characterising public expenditure patterns inherited from military rule."

Peace within and peace without is a delicacy that needs nurturing and promotion by all. A variety of methods aimed at terminating conflicts and maintaining peace exist. That requires the promotion of non-violent behaviour, non-hostile attitudes and a change of the structure of interpersonal relations to cordiality. Peace can be promoted depending upon the culture of the people using traditional authorities, citizens consultation and citizens participation, beyond the use of kinetic approach.

Promoting Peace Through Traditional Authorities

Nigerians still relish in their tradition. As such, most people respect their

culture. Everywhere traditional authorities exist. They derive their legitimacy from the culture of the people. Most communities in Nigeria have traditional rulers, called Emirs, Obas or Ezes with traditional powers to maintain peace in their domain. They are in control of the grassroots. Their potentials could be exploited by the government to promote and maintain peace in Nigeria.

The gate of peace has crashed in Nigeria. The mismanagement of resources and political power is responsible for violence in most communities in Nigeria. The unequal distribution of wealth among the people threatens peace. Government is slow in responding to the needs of the youths in education, health and employment. These are frustrating situations for the youth. Unemployment of youths reinforced by social, political and economic exclusion leads to poverty, underdevelopment, violence, extremism and instability (Abbas, 2018).

Government alone cannot handle the security challenges in Nigeria. Traditional rulers as the custodians of the culture and tradition of the people, are respected and honoured by the people in their domain and beyond. Terrorists, bandits, militants and trouble makers can be talked to and appealed to change. According to Igwubor (2021:203):

> The terrorists and militants belonged to an ethnic group that has a king. They listen to the traditional rulers because of the respect they have for them. The government need to back and encourage the traditional rulers to talk to their people to shelve violence, just as the government did in the Niger delta recently through the Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF) which persuaded the Niger Delta militants to shelve and suspend all actions of militancy in the region which they did.

The methods expected from the traditional leaders in promoting peace in their domain can be categorised under Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategy. A more humane way of resolving conflicts is ADR which is in line with the traditional African way of resolving conflict. This requires resolving conflicts without using force or going to Court, but reconciliation. Abbas (2018:14) presents ADR as the application of non-conventional peaceful methods of settling dispute and solving conflict situation using the least expensive methods that satisfy both parties as well as ways to preserve and protect the relationship after settlement have been reached."

In addition to the above, the traditional rulers apply the strategies of negotiation, mediation and arbitration to resolve conflicts in their communities

(Abbas, 2018). Negotiation involves a discussion between two or more parties in a case directed at reaching agreement. Similarly, mediation is a situation where parties to a case have a third party as a facilitator that helps the parties in dispute reach an agreement that settles the matter. Arbitration is a situation a neutral third party based on the evidence on ground issues a decision that settles the matter. The traditional leaders use any of the above methods to promote peace in their domain.

The government should seize the opportunity of traditional rulers being bridge builders to maintain the cordial relationship among the different ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria. Igwubor (2021:208) recommends a relevant method the government should encourage to promote peace in Nigeria. The traditional rulers especially the first class chiefs from the geo-political zones, such as the Sultan of Sokoto, Oni of Ife, Alafin of Oyo, Oba of Benin, Obi of Onitsha etc can come together to undo the North-South dichotomy, promote peace, reduce tension, hatred and suspicion among the peoples of Nigeria.

Government has successfully experimented on a similar organisation for electoral peace of 2015 and 2019 with a non-governmental organisation, the National Peace Committee formed in 2014. The membership includes the Sultan of Sokoto, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Chairman and other eminent elder statesmen in Nigeria. They have the mandate to contribute towards a smooth and peaceful conduct of elections, devoid of any breakdown of law and order before, during and after the electioneering process (National Peace Committee, 2018).

Peace can be promoted and maintained in Nigeria by the traditional authorities. The government can encourage these institutions that mark the traditions, culture and norms of the people and the leaders who symbolize these institutions to legitimately moderate peace and discourage criminality in their domain. The people still honour their traditional leaders who are close to the grassroots. It is not difficult for the people to obey their indigenous leaders. They look at their rule as reliable and not isolated from their needs and interests. They can easily mobilize the people to achieve their communal good that will promote peace and development.

Citizens Consultation and Peace

Citizens consultations promote peace in the society. Consultation according to Oni, et al (2020:1), is the method by which citizens requests, principles, hopes and worries are taken into account in the decision making process … Public

(citizens) consultation explores different processes that enable citizens impact on public policy through detailed dialogue on policy ideas before decisions are made. Citizens consultation is a true operationalization of democracy that agrees with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 16, which aims at promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies. Such societies enhance political stability and sustainable development.

Citizens consultation is used by democratic governments to increase the participation of citizens in governance and to build up trust for government officials and politicians. That makes the government more inclusive and decision making more legitimate. Several methods are used for citizens consultation. In Nigeria, community conferencing has been used by the government to consult the citizens. It "is a form of structured conversation involving members of a community (offenders, victims, families, friends, etc) affected by a dispute or a crime. Using a script, the facilitator invites people to express how they were affected and how they wish to address the harm inflicted" (Abbas 2018:15).

The Federal Government is aware that citizens consultation enhances peace. In line with that, the Presidency has proposed town hall meetings in the six geo-political zones in response to the growing insecurity in the country. The objective of the government is to generate ideas on the way forward from the meetings. For that purpose, the National Security Adviser will be leading a delegation of heads of federal law enforcement, security and intelligence agencies to the geo-political zones to hold town hall meetings with the state governors, traditional and religious leaders, members of the legislature, non governmental organisations (NGOs) youth and women organisations (Nwezeh 2021).

From the meetings, direct assessment of the security situation, local feed back and recommendations, encourage geo-political synchronization of efforts of the states and create a pathway to lasting peace and security. The programme kicked off on February 15, 2021 with seven governors of the North-West states. The commitment of the federal Government to strengthen the capacity of the security agencies and employ a multi-pronged strategy that involves political, humanitarian, economic and security measures to tackle the current spate of criminal activities are made known in these meetings.

Information and communication technology (ICT) has made the problem of citizens consultation easy world over. According to Oni, et al (2020:1), "governments across the world are now utilising ICT tools to better consult

with citizens in the public policy process … E-consultation brings bottom-up approach in policy making by providing additional channel for greater public voice in the policy making process… cardinal to achieving sustainable development goal of just, peaceful and inclusive societies in Nigeria".

E-governance was launched in Nigeria with the Nigerian National Information Technology (NNIT) policy in 2000. The policy was to use IT to solve social problems in education, wealth creation, poverty, job creation, governance, health and agriculture. The adoption of e-governance was to provide better service delivery to citizens in a systematic and cost-effective manner (Abasilim and Edet, 2015). However, this policy has not been adequately employed to do e-consultation that will promote peace in the troubled areas of Nigeria.

Promoting Peace Through Participatory Governance

Mbaku (2020) has clearly demonstrated that without inclusive participation of citizens in their governance, peace will be at bay. For him "fighting poverty and improving human development in Africa must begin with the creation of wealth, a process that requires the existence of a robust entrepreneurial class. Unfortunately, weak and dysfunctional governance structures continue to prevent many African countries from creating and sustaining the necessary enabling environment for peaceful coexistence, entrepreneurship and wealth creation."

He observed that peace and security will return to unstable countries with the provision of participatory and inclusive governance structures, that will strengthen the governance. Weak governance, create opportunity for the politicians and civil servants to act with impunity, to embezzle the public resources, that could be used for education, healthcare, infrastructure, water provision and technology. Peace endures with the participation of the marginalised groups in both the economic and political systems of their countries. The institutional reforms should emphasise the inclusion of marginalised women and youth in governance, to empower them for peace.

The political space is so narrow in Nigeria, that there is no way it will not breed violence. The political class are not more than ten percent of the population. For peace to reign, the political base should be broadened to include the marginalised groups. Women in management, business and public service (WIMBIZ), have proclaimed the obvious, that the proportion of female representation and participation in public service and politics including both

elective and appointive positions in Nigeria is low.

A communiqué by WIMBIZ from a seminar addressing the issue, speaks for itself. Women participation in elective and appointive positions is merely 6.7 percent far below the African regional average of 23.4 percent. This is despite the provisions of the National Gender Policy (NGP), "to build a nation devoid of gender discrimination, guaranteeing equal access to political, social and economic wealth creation opportunities for women and men."

The communiqué revealed that the present administration appointed in 2019 seven women only (16.7%) as Ministers. In the National Assembly, women constitute only 6.5 percent in Senate and 5.6 percent in the House of representatives. There is a general underrepresentation of women everywhere, leaving a wide gender gap in the political offices and the public service. If Nigeria is truly democratic, there is a great need for the participation and inclusion of women in political and public offices. Since women make up 50 percent of the population, they must be granted access to elective and appointive positions towards their due. Women should insist that through affirmative action, that at least 30 percent of elective and appointive positions should be theirs. This should be passed as a bill by the National Assembly, to give a legal backing to women for their inclusive right. It is such inclusiveness of women that will promote peace in Nigeria.

Youths are also marginalised in Nigeria and that fans the embers of violence. The inclusion of the youth who constitute about 70 percent of the population, in governance imperatively promotes peace. The ENDSARS (police brutality) protest of October 8, 2020, is a lesson to the government. It was the biggest youth protest against the Nigerian state. It drew out tens of thousands of young people from 26 states and in 100 cities across the country. Lagos was the epicenter of the protest (Lawal and Ibrahim, 2021).

The Nigerian youths have been the victims of the failure of governance and mismanaged economy. This has encouraged different types of crises in several communities in Nigeria. Lawal and Ibrahim (2021:8), observe that: "The dwindling economic situations and poor governance which have jointly impoverished the majority of the population, have also engendered social crises. This is expressed through insecurity and crime, such as communal clashes, herders-farmers conflicts, terrorism and organised crimes (drug trafficking, human trafficking, kidnapping, hooliganism, armed robbery and cultism)".

The Nigerian youth must continue to engage the government, the political

class and policy makers by participating actively in the political process. They must protect their interests peacefully. Government should involve the youths in politics in the area of their interests. Further, the government should stop profiling the youths as criminals. Rather, the youths should be positively engaged and included in governance based on their demographic culculus.

Youths are like fuel. Proper use of fuel will generate energy for domestic and industrial work, improper use of fuel will blow up domestic and industrial structures. Youths properly focused will build up the nation. On the other hand, any misdirection of the youth destroys the nation through thuggery, violence, crime, kidnapping and robbery. For peace to reign in the nation, the youths should be adequately mobilized by the system to build the nation. They should participate in politics and made to fill their place not only in voting, but in elective and appointive positions in governance.

Conclusion

Peace is a worthy virtue that leads to development. Nigeria is a plural society and only peace can keep Nigeria one. Peace which is the absence of war has been severally breached in the four republics through the actions of the political class in Agbada. During the three military interregnums, there were a lot of breaches of peace by the political class in khaki (the military). Generally, the political class (civil or military) have marginalised Nigerians. The class structure in Nigeria is categorised into two, the rich and the poor. The middle class has been wiped out. The situation is that violence is the order of the day in various forms.

To heal the wound, the various marginalised groups have to be included in the system. The economy has to be revived for the benefit of all. Given the claim that Nigeria is democratic, there should be equality of citizens and no discrimination of groups. The traditional authorities encouraged and supported by the government are instruments of promoting peaceful coexistence of citizens. Women constitute 50 percent of the demographic structure of the population. Talking about democracy, they should be included in governance to that level. Meanwhile, that is not the case. The women have to fight for their right for their participation in politics to be recognised and honoured.

The political class has made the socio-economic environment unconducive for the youth in Nigeria. The youths should wake up to their responsibility to prove to the system that enough is enough. The ENDSARS protest is a lesson for the political class and the youth, that their participation in governance can

change things. They should not only vote, but be voted for. They constitute majority of the population. Therefore, they are entitled to a proportional elective and appointive positions in governance for peace to reign.

Recommendations

The following recommendations if implemented will promote peace in Nigeria.

i. The government should work with traditional institutions in Nigeria to maintain peace in their locality by providing them with the legal and constitutional backing for their roles.
ii. Government should implement the affirmative action of at least 30 percent women inclusion in elective and appointive positions in governance.
iii. Government should involve the youths in governance by allocating 20 percent of elective and appointive positions to the youths for a start.

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THE IMPACT OF HISTORIC TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE ON PEACEBUILDING: COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

BY

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Abstract

The devastating impact of the experience of different forms of violence have exposed families, communities, and even countries, to historic traumatic conditions which in turn have caused in them emotional and psychological injuries. Such experiences are transmitted across generations within a community. This paper found out that community-based approach in peacebuilding among others, prevents, reduce and can even stop violence. It also improves relationships between and among people. The paper recommends among others; the need to invest in strengthening local analytical capacity to effectively address violence and historic trauma. Furthermore, foundational knowledge and understanding of historic trauma be made part of healthcare education at all levels and disciplines.

Introduction

Until recently, the international community showed limited interest in the problem of violence in local societies. If it was not part of an international conflict or an expression of internal political turmoil, violence in its different forms – criminal violence, inter-communal violence, gender violence, famer-herder conflict, kidnapping, etc. was considered inconsequential to the international system, not relevant enough to influence international policy and those of the state. With the end of the Cold War in 1991 with the disintegration of the former United Socialist Soviet Republic (USSR) however, it became evident that these forms of violence threaten security and development both at the national and international levels. Despite an increased commitment to peacebuilding on the part of donor nations, agencies as well as other international organisations, the world has become more violent in the past decade, (IEPGPIB, 2018). Maybe because peacebuilding at that level is concentrated more on post conflict interventions, rather than being proactive and preventive.

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The violence experienced at various levels has exposed individuals, groups, communities etc, to trauma. Since creation, it has been known that traumatic events such as disasters or wars do change human reasoning and behaviour. What is interesting, despite the passage of time, reactions to traumatic events are not very different now from what they were in the past. Furthermore, psychopathology (the scientific study of mental disorder) following such events is almost the same and since 1980 it has often been described as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Exposure to traumatic events is ubiquitous worldwide and it has a well-established deleterious impact on health and wellbeing. For the past five hundred years, entire indigenous communities have been traumatised by multiple deaths from diseases, expulsion from their homelands, violence, loss of economic and self-sufficiency, removal of children from their homes, assimilation tactics and incarceration in residential schools. Historic experiences of trauma were compounded by loss of ceremonial freedom, dance, song and other methods that would have helped indigenous people express and grieve their losses (Kehoe, 1989; Sullivan, 1989; Ross, 1992). It is understood today that massive suppression, when it is resorted to because of imposed hegemony, is particularly important to address, since it predisposes individuals to repeated traumatisation in very specific ways (Freud, 1985; Furst, 1967; Figley, 1985; Wilson, 1989), as defined in Herman's (1997) Trauma and Recovery. Psychologists have stressed that no traumatic event is ever wholly assimilated and, to some degree, an increased vulnerability invariably persists, if only to create repetitions of the original trauma (Freud, 1985; Greenacre, 1958). Various peacebuilding approaches e.g., community-based approach, have been initiated in order to address the challenges of violence and historic trauma confronting individuals and communities.

Conceptual Clarification

Historic trauma: is referred to as a cumulative emotional and psychological injury, as a result of group traumatic experiences transmitted across generations within a community (Mohatt, 2004). The term refers to a complex and collective trauma that is experienced over time and across generations by a group of people who share an identity, affiliation or circumstance (for example, the experience of the Igbos during the Biafran Civil War between 1967-1970). Informed by theories of social epidemiology, historical trauma is linked to health through psychosocial stressors (threat to social status or self-worth) that

create susceptibility to disease as well as act as direct pathogenic mechanisms. Trauma is a psychological process that is distinct from the traumatic event itself. As such, a number of authors refer to trauma as a "representation" of a traumatic event (Mestrovi, 1985).

Violence: The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation (World Health Organisation, 1996). The inclusion of the word "power", in addition to the phrase "use of physical force", broadens the nature of a violent act and expands the conventional understanding of violence to include those acts that result from a power relationship, including threats and intimidation. The "use of power" also serves to include neglect or acts of omission, in addition to the more obvious violent acts of commission. Thus, "the use of physical force or power" should be understood to include neglect and all types of physical, sexual and psychological abuses, as well as suicide and other self-abusive acts. This definition covers a broad range of outcomes– including psychological harm, deprivation and mal-development. Violence, according to Walters & Parke (1964), is culturally determined. Some people may harm others but, based on their cultural backgrounds and beliefs, do not perceive their acts as violent.

Peacebuilding is a term of relatively recent coinage, created by the international community to identify a policy and operational approach with which to help countries escape the cycles of recurring conflict and build sustainable peace. While there are different interpretations of the term, often conflating it with peacemaking, peacekeeping or conflict resolution, there is convergence around the notion that it refers to the process of strengthening "local and national capacities for peace (values and attitudes; social processes and relationships; political and social institutions) necessary to incrementally and effectively overcome the dynamics of conflict that lead to polarisation, violence and destruction" (Interpeace, 2015a, 2). Peacebuilding is therefore about long-term, endogenous (internal) and holistic processes of conflict transformation that rest on two key principles. Firstly, peacebuilding strengthens endogenous social agency for peace through inclusive and participatory engagement of all stakeholders across social and political divides. Secondly, peacebuilding identifies collaborative strategies that simultaneously aim for the tangible outputs (political declarations, peace accords, adequate legislation, intelligent policies, well-equipped government offices, trained

civil servants, etc.) and the intangible outcomes (trust between individuals and between groups in society, legitimacy of political institutions and processes, non-violent values, attitudes and behaviour) that underpin peaceful societies (Interpeace 2015a, 2015b).

Community-Based Approach

Sources Of Historic Trauma

Alan Young (1995), argues about the particularity of trauma being a disease of time in the etiological sense. That is: "the pathology consists of the past invading the present in re-experiences and re-enactments and of the person's efforts to defend himself from the consequences" (as cited in Antze and Lambek, 1996). The following are sources of historic trauma: Contact – disease, colonisation– alcohol/drugs, traumatic events, banned religion– no ability to mourn, dislocation/loss of land – loss of economy, boarding school – children kidnapped, destroyed family system, physical violence, rape, language loss, spirituality threatened extinction, Forced relocation & termination, loss of justice system and authority - assimilation policies & erosion of tribal and individual sovereignty and Un-recognition of this trauma – no justice.

How Historic Trauma Manifests Itself

According to Estrada, (2004), the following are ways that historic trauma manifest itself:

Unresolved grief: individuals, groups, communities experience trauma because of their inability to resolve their differences as a result of a conflict (example of Liberia).

Disenfranchised grief: this is the grief expressed as a result of the death of a friend, a child or a pet. It could also result from the loss of property such as a home. Often times, this kind of grief goes unnoticed by society.

Difficulty with trust/intimacy: this leads to challenging attachment with children.

Internalised oppression: oppressor such as a terrorist, inflicts fear into people, communities and groups thereby traumatising them.

Impact Of Historic Trauma

Societal/Environmental impact

Young notes that: Our sense of personhood is not only shaped by our active or conscious memories, it is also shaped by our conception of "memory" which means that it is not only direct traumatic experiences that can create negative effect, it is also present in the interpretations of events that can continue to impact our lives (Young, 1995:4). Some of the societal impact includes: higher domestic violence and sexual assault, high number of child abuse, overrepresentation in the child welfare systems and Limited education and employment.

Psychological impact

When loss is converted into absence, one faces the impasse of endless melancholy, impossible mourning and interminable emporia [sic] in which any process of working through the past and its historical losses is foreclosed or prematurely aborted (LaCapra, 1999:2).

Wig (2001), argues that psychological symptoms are very common among the survivors of disaster and the symptoms are often serious and they last a long time, disrupting life's routine and causing considerable suffering. The immediate reactions to disaster are often most disturbing.

One … [may have] suffered physical injuries … [may have been] exposed to extreme danger, [may have] witnessed death of dear and near ones or [may have] seen mass deaths and destruction. During a disaster, one experiences the feeling of helplessness.

There is often the feeling of guilt associated with the conflict of saving oneself or saving others. Maladaptive psychological reactions during a disaster include paralysing anxiety, uncontrolled flight reaction and group panic (Wig, 2001:3). Different emotional reactions may occur after a disaster.

In the beginning, many people feel numb. Some may even feel elated or relieved that they have been saved, but soon the enormity of the tragedy becomes obvious [and] [t]he effects of mental stress start showing. Post-disaster reactions include an intense feeling of anxiety, accompanied by "flashbacks" or frightening memories of the painful experience. Nightmares are usual in which the person wakes up with a frightening dream and the feeling of panic. The suffering individual remains tensed all the time and fearful that something terrible may happen again. He or she tries to avoid any reference to the events of the disaster. Other common symptoms are the loss of sleep, poor

appetite and social withdrawal. Some become very sad and depressed, losing interest in all activities. Various kinds of bodily symptoms also appear (Wig, 2001:3). Some of these impacts include; highest weekly alcohol consumption rate, high rate of re-occurring disorders related to substance abuse and mental health disorders and high rate of mood disorders and PTSD.

Physiological Impact

Violence in most cases results to traumatic situation which leads to famine, which is often accompanied with diseases. Since no one was left to hunt, gather food and prepare it, food supplies decreased dramatically. Already, people who are ill with a dramatically compromised immune system do not have strength to survive hunger. Johnston quotes from the Jesuits' chronicles that give terrifying snapshots of what had happened during or after conflict:

A very ill Huron being regarded as though already dead and therefore virtually ignored; a man, being ill for months and very poorly nourished; a little girl convulsing almost all night; an old grandmother, coping with three sick grandchildren (the mother having died), losing her sight and strength, and becoming too ill to grind corn or get firewood; a sick woman convulsing all alone in her cabin; a pregnant woman delivering her premature baby in the hot sun and then dying; an abandoned baby dying out in a field; and a very ill girl without a mat to lie on or a fire to keep her warm, and without sufficient covering (1987:17).

It is well documented that when an entire population experience any of such debilitating losses and if a balanced epidemiological, nutritional and reproductive system is not immediately restored, it is outside the limits of a population's tolerance: the cumulative effect of multiple stressors over a short period of time threatens a group, as it may become extinct or no longer existing as a culturally distinct unit. These may lead to; shorter life expectancy and overrepresented in areas of heart disease, tuberculosis, STDs, and diabetes among others.

These physical changes caused profound alterations in social structures and cultural identity of people, changing everything from marriage rules to lineage relationships, from belief systems to psychological make-up of the groups. Initial psychological reactions to the physical damage that were sustained must have been severe distress, fear and feelings of uncertainty. People did not know what caused the crisis, they did not know how to treat the ill and they did not know what to expect.

Historical Trauma and Health

The mechanisms for this linkage are complex, and a variety of pathways have been proposed. Sotero (2006), describes four distinct assumptions that link historical trauma and adverse health: (1) mass trauma is deliberately and systematically inflicted upon a population by a dominant group, (2) trauma is not limited to a single catastrophic event but continues over an extended period of time, (3) traumatic events resonate for the entire population creating a universal experience of trauma, and (4) the enormity of the trauma experience deranges the population's natural, projected historical course, resulting in physical, psychological, social, and economic disparities that span generations.

Some examples of this follow below. Estrada set forth a conceptual model for the Mexican American population that is likely applicable to other minority groups in the US; he suggests that historical and social events have created institutions and perceptions that are racist and discriminatory toward Mexicans and Mexican Americans. This, in turn, negatively influenced their eligibility for health insurance coverage and access and availability to healthcare through cultural or institutional barriers that prevent them from obtaining care when needed. Over time, with limited or no access to healthcare, generations of Mexicans and Mexican Americans have begun to show increased rates of substance abuse, hypertension, metabolic syndrome (condition that increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes), anti-social personality disorders, and type 2 diabetes mellitus. In turn, these diseases are influenced by the psychosocial stressors (e.g., anti-Mexican sentiment, discrimination, and racism) that generations of Mexicans and Mexican Americans have experienced from the dominant culture, Estrada (2004).

Other examples suggest that historical trauma impacts on health and well-being by disrupting or jeopardising culture-based resilience and protective factors, like social support and parenting knowledge, resulting in mass unresolved grief (Mohatt et el, 2014). To illustrate this concept, research among indigenous peoples in North America ("Native Americans") has shown that historical trauma, in part mediated by the mid-nineteenth-century practice of forcing children into boarding schools, may be in part responsible for substance use and health disparities (Mohatt et el, 2014).

Holistically the impact of historic trauma affects the body, mind, emotion and spirit of the individual, group and community.

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Roots Of Violence: An Ecological Model

No single factor explains why some individuals behave violently toward others or why violence is more prevalent in some communities than in others. Violence is the result of the complex interplay of individual, relationship, social, cultural and environmental factors. Understanding how these factors are related to violence is one of the important steps in the public health approach to preventing violence.

Individual

The first level of the ecological model seeks to identify the biological and personal history factors that an individual brings to his or her behaviour. In addition to biological and demographic factors, factors such as impulsivity, low educational attainment, substance abuse, and prior history of aggression and abuse are considered. In other words, this level of the ecological model focuses on the characteristics of the individual that increase the likelihood of being a victim or a perpetrator of violence.

Relationship

The second level of the ecological model explores how proximal social relationships – for example, relations with peers, intimate partners and family members – increase the risk for violent victimization and perpetration of violence. In the cases of partner violence and child maltreatment, for instance, interacting on an almost daily basis or sharing a common domicile with an abuser may increase the opportunity for violent encounters. Because individuals are bound together in a continuing relationship, it is likely in these cases that the victim will be repeatedly abused by the offender (Reiss and Roth, 1993). In the case of interpersonal violence among youths, research shows that young people are much more likely to engage in negative activities when those behaviours are encouraged and approved by their friends (Thornberry, 1995). Peers, intimate partners and family members all have the potential to shape an individual's behaviour and range of experience.

Community

The third level of the ecological model examines the community contexts in which social relationships are embedded – such as schools, workplaces and neighbourhoods – and seeks to identify the characteristics of these settings that are associated with being victims or perpetrators of violence. A high level of residential mobility (where people do not stay for a long time in a

particular dwelling, but move many times), heterogeneity (highly diverse population, with little of the social "glue" that binds communities together) and high population density are all examples of such characteristics and each has been associated with violence. Similarly, communities characterised by problems such as drug trafficking, high levels of unemployment or widespread social isolation (for example, people not knowing their neighbours or having no involvement in the local community) are also more likely to experience violence. Research on violence shows that opportunities for violence are greater in some community contexts than others – for instance, in areas of poverty or physical deterioration, or where there are few institutional supports.

Societal

The fourth and final level of the ecological model examines the larger societal factors that influence rates of violence. Included here are those factors that create an acceptable climate for violence, those that reduce inhibitions against violence, and those that create and sustain gaps between different segments of society or tensions between different groups or countries. Larger societal factors include: cultural norms that support violence as an acceptable way to resolve conflicts; attitudes that regard suicide as a matter of individual choice instead of a preventable act of violence; norms that give priority to parental rights over child welfare; norms that entrench male dominance over women and children; norms that support the use of excessive force by police against citizens; norms that support political conflict. Larger societal factors also include the health, educational, economic and social policies that maintain high levels of economic or social inequality between groups in society.

Complex interactions - war, sectarian violence, societal collapse, famine, disaster, etc.

Types Of Violence

The typology proposed here divides violence into three broad categories according to characteristics of those committing the violent act:

Self-directed violence

Self-directed violence is subdivided into suicidal behaviour and self-abuse. The former includes suicidal thoughts, attempted suicides – also called "para-suicide" or "deliberate self-injury" in some countries and completed suicides. Self-abuse, in contrast, includes acts such as self-mutilation.

Interpersonal violence

Interpersonal violence is divided into two sub-categories:

Family and intimate partner violence – that is, violence largely between family members and intimate partners, usually, though not exclusively, taking place in the home.

Community violence

Violence between individuals who are unrelated, and who may or may not know each other, generally taking place outside the home. The former group includes forms of violence such as child abuse, intimate partner violence and abuse of the elderly. The latter includes youth violence, random acts of violence, rape or sexual assault by strangers, and violence in institutional settings such as schools, workplaces, prisons and nursing homes.

Collective violence

Collective violence is subdivided into social, political and economic violence. Unlike the other two broad categories, the subcategories of collective violence suggest possible motives for violence committed by larger groups of individuals or by states. Collective violence that is committed to advance a particular social agenda includes, for example, crimes of hate committed by organised groups, terrorist acts and mob violence. Political violence includes war and related violent conflicts, state violence and similar acts carried out by larger groups. Economic violence includes attacks by larger groups motivated by economic gain such as attacks carried out with the purpose of disrupting economic activity, denying access to essential services, or creating economic division and fragmentation. Clearly, acts committed by larger groups can have multiple motives.

The Nature of Violent Acts

Physical: women are usually the immediate victims of gender violence; the consequences of gender violence extend beyond the victim to the society as a whole. Gender violence threatens family structures; children suffer emotional damage when they watch their mothers and sisters being battered; two-parent homes may break up, leaving the new female heads of household to struggle against increased poverty and negative social repercussions.

Sexual: rape is experienced during violence, women are always the

victims, this act damages women's confidence resulting in fear of venturing into public spaces (this can often curtail women's education, which in turn can limit their income-generating opportunities)

Psychological: Psychological scars often impede the establishment of healthy and rewarding relationships in the future. Victims of gender violence may vent their frustrations on their children and others, thereby transmitting and intensifying the negative experiences of those around them. Children, on the other hand, may come to accept violence as an alternative means of conflict resolution, communication or self-expression. It is in these ways that violence is reproduced and perpetuated.

Deprivation or neglect: violence deprive students from getting the required knowledge they deserve, it impedes economic activities, free movement, access to health facilities among others.

Impact Of Violence

Death or disability: In all parts of the world, deaths represent the "tip of the iceberg" as far as violence is concerned. Admitting to having experienced certain violent events, such as rape, may in some countries result in death. In certain cultures, the preservation of family honour is a traditional motive for killing women who have been raped (so-called "honour killings").

Economic impact: violence leads to destruction of farms and animals, business structures, lost of jobs and workforce, thereby making it difficult for production of goods and services in the affected community.

Mental illness: victim of violence often are traumatised, due to rape, unwanted pregnancy, contraction of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), as a result of violence in their communities.

Those affected by violence: individuals, children, community, ethnic or minority group, etc.

Precipitating factors of violence: war, robbery, mental illness. Contributing factors: drugs and alcohol, poverty, culture, emotion, psychosis, etc.

How Can Violence Be Prevented?

The first two steps of the public health model provide important information about populations requiring preventive interventions, as well as on the risk and protective factors that need addressing. Putting this knowledge into practice is a central goal of public health. Public health interventions are

traditionally characterised in terms of three levels of prevention:

Primary prevention – approaches that aim at preventing violence before it occurs.

Secondary prevention – approaches that focus on the more immediate responses to violence, such as pre-hospital care, emergency services or treatment for sexually transmitted diseases following a rape.

Tertiary prevention –approaches that focus on long-term care in the wake of violence, such as rehabilitation and reintegration, and attempts to lessen trauma or reduce the long-term disability associated with violence. These three levels of prevention are defined by their temporal aspect whether prevention takes place before violence occurs, immediately afterwards, or over the longer term. Although traditionally, they are applied to victims of violence and within health care settings, secondary and tertiary prevention efforts have also been regarded as having relevance to the perpetrators of violence, and applied in judicial settings in response to violence.

Researchers in the field of violence prevention have increasingly turned to a definition of prevention that focuses on the target group of interest. This definition groups interventions as follows (Tolan & Guerra, 1994):

Universal interventions – approaches aimed at groups or the general population without regard to individual risk; examples include violence prevention curricula delivered to all students in a school or children of a particular age and community-wide media campaigns.

Selected interventions – approaches aimed at those considered at heightened risk for violence (having one or more risk factors for violence); an example of such an intervention is training in parenting provided to low-income, single parents.

Indicated interventions – approaches aimed at those who have already demonstrated violent behaviour, such as treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence. Many efforts to date, in both industrialized and developing countries, have focused more on secondary and tertiary responses to violence. Understandably, priority is often given to dealing with the immediate consequences of violence, providing support to victims and punishing the offenders. Such responses, while important and in need of strengthening, should be accompanied by a greater investment in primary prevention. A comprehensive response to violence is one that not only protects and supports victims of violence, but also promotes non-violence, reduces the perpetration of violence, and changes the circumstances and conditions that give rise to

violence in the first place.

Peacebuilding, Violence and Historic Trauma

In order to bring people out of traumatic situation as a result of violent experience, peacebuilding initiative plays the following role:

- Regenerating or reigniting cultural traditions & ceremonies: trauma and violence in most cases stop people and communities from practicing certain aspect of their culture. Peace builders organise or sponsor programmes or events such as cultural festivals that will bring the affected communities to ignite their tradition and ceremonies, thereby taking off the negative impact of violence and trauma.
- Collective grieving and healing: this is a situation were affected individuals, groups, and or communities, are brought together in order to resolve their grievances and establish a cordial and harmonious relationship. It encompasses, forgiveness, reconciliation, healing and restoration.
- Knowledge/education is empowering – understand the history and source of trauma in order to proffer lasting and comprehensive solution to the victims.
- Reclamation: in most violent attacks, people are forced to relocate to other places thereby leaving their ancestral homes. Peace builders mediate such conflicts and make sure people are relocated to their respective homes (DREP worked out a similar arrangement in the conflict between Irigwe farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Bassa Local Government of Plateau State).
- Reinstituting traditional justice at the community level that has the capacity to resolve conflicts and bring healing and restoration.

Who Does Peacebuilding?

There is some debate over which actors should lead peacebuilding efforts: either third party (international) actors or local constituencies. It is widely held that the resources and staying power, as well as the neutral role, of third-party actors are crucial for successful peacebuilding interventions. Yet some place greater emphasis on the requirement for local ownership, leadership, and meaningful participation, thus building peace from the inside out or from the

grassroots in a way that tends to be cheaper and more sustainable. If efforts to prevent, resolve, and transform violent conflicts are to be effective in the long-term, they must be based on the active participation of local civil groups committed to building peace.

Both perspectives have their weaknesses: third party interventions can be top-heavy and short-term whilst local ownership may entrench existing inequalities and injustices. Most commentators agree that a balance is required whereby the distinct but complementary resources of each are utilised and exploited.

Dimensions Of Peacebuilding Interventions

There are many ways of categorising the different dimensions or aspects of peacebuilding activities and there are many assumptions relating to the basic causes and drivers of conflict (Waldman 2009). It is possible to identify a number of key areas of intervention which become the focus for peacebuilding activities:

- **Providing security:** includes security and military measures, security sector reform, and law enforcement.
- **Preventing spoilers:** includes deterrence, intelligence, and successful DDR. • Promoting development: social and economic development, resource distribution, physical reconstruction, aid, and market reform.
- **Promoting political and judicial institutions and processes:** includes rebuilding or strengthening legitimate political processes and institutions, governance, promoting civil society, elections, combating corruption, and judicial reform.
- **Addressing the psychosocial dimension of conflict:** includes trauma healing and interpersonal/ inter-communal reconciliation.

Alternatively, it is possible to conceive of the different dimensions of peacebuilding processes in terms of three key areas: those which seek to reduce or contain violence directly, those which seek to transform relationships, and those which seek to build capacity. It is worth looking at these three areas separately.

I. Containing violence

This dimension encompasses those processes which attempt to stop the

cycle of violence through restraining offenders and creating a safe space in which other areas of peacebuilding can develop. This might involve ceasefire agreements, the establishment of safe areas or displaced people's camps, military intervention by external actors, deployment of peacekeepers, or the development of robust judicial and law enforcement institutions. Violence might also be mitigated by timely and politically sensitive distribution of humanitarian aid (Necla, 2003).

II. Transforming relationships

A central aspect of peacebuilding is the effort to transform relationships at all levels away from being largely destructive and conflictual, towards being constructive, rights-respecting and non-violent. This can be attained through processes which heal trauma, encourage reconciliation, foster democratic communication, and promote justice. This dimension encompasses processes at various levels including psychosocial activities, forums for constructive dialogue, principled negotiation, and mediation. Restorative and transitional justice processes can also powerfully promote reconciliation in the right circumstances (Zeeuw, 2001).

III. Building capacity

It is crucial for sustainable peace, that countries develop the social architecture, structures, institutions and organisations to support it in its transition, as well as developing the necessary human resources and abilities. Training and educational programmes, social, economic and political development, and security sector reform (Necla 2003).

Levels Of Peacebuilding Intervention

Intervention in peacebuilding can take place at varying levels, often referred to in the literature as Track 1, 2. or 3. Track 1 is the domain of official international diplomacy and government agencies involving political and military leaders (top-down, official diplomacy). Track 2 involves mid-level community leaders who have links to, yet are somewhat distanced from, the top echelons of government (inclusive, mid-up and mid-down approach where mid-range leaders provide a link between the people and political leadership. Track 3 concerns the population as a whole (bottom-up, grassroots leadership). Most commentators suggest a need for multi-level and holistic approach whereby all levels are integrated in a complementary and mutually reinforcing process.

Core Peacebuilding Activities

A wide-range of activities makes up the practical reality of peacebuilding. Also, it should be noted that there are many possible ways to categorise the various activities involved in peacebuilding.

One useful model proposed by Lederach visualises the intervention structure as a pyramid. The apex represents the top military, political and religious leadership and involves high-level negotiations, ceasefire agreements, and mediation. The middle-level encompasses problem-solving workshops, conflict resolution training, and peace commissions. The lowest level involves local grassroots training, prejudice reduction, psychosocial work, and post-war trauma recovery. (Lederach, 1998).

Another way to conceive of peacebuilding interventions (proposed by Bock and Anderson, cited in Waldman, 2009), is to distinguish between 'pro-motive' and 'pre-emptive' approaches. Promotive approaches create a foundation of trust between people of varying identities, engender an appreciation of communal harmony, and lay a foundation for the prevention of future conflict. Pre-emptive approaches are designed to divert and prevent conflict when communal tensions are high and violence seems imminent.

Peacebuilding Toolbox

Peacebuilding toolbox include: Official diplomacy (mediation, negotiation, conferences, etc), Non-official conflict management (peace commissions, workshops), Military measures (deterrence, security sector reform, DDR of ex-combatants), Economic/social measures (humanitarian/development assistance, economic reform, trade, investment, aid, sanctions, agricultural programmes), Political and governance (party/institution building, electoral reform, civic society, elite training), Judicial/legal measures (tribunals, judicial reform, police reform, arbitration, human rights reporting, monitoring and advocacy) and Communications and Education (media, journalist training, peace education).

Impact Of Peacebuilding: A Community-Based Approach

According to Vernon, 2019, preventing, reducing or stopping violence; improving relationships between and among people and peoples (i.e. 'horizontal relationships'); and Improving relationships between people and those who govern them ('vertical relationships') are the major benefits of

peacebuilding in addressing violence or traumatic situation. Community-based initiatives are particularly effective in situations of persistent, chronic conflicts taking place in the wider context. Such initiatives prevent local disputes from escalating, improve local governance, improve representative decision- making, give excluded people a voice, and improve relationships and communication within and between communities.

Recommendations

1 Promote the emergence of local leadership: Local ownership is about facilitating the emergence of local will and capacity to address the problems in society, not about convincing local actors to adopt externally defined policies. The particular interests of international actors with regard to issues of armed social violence should be put on the table and openly discussed with local stakeholders. External input in the form of specialized know-how, comparative experiences and policy frameworks should be shared without the development of locally defined and designed strategies being inhibited.

2 Invest in the strengthening of local analytical capacity: The most important capacity required for effectively addressing violence and traumatic problems resides not at the level of the international community, but within the societies facing these challenges.

3 Invest in strengthening local facilitation/mediation capacity: The success of peacebuilding strategies reaching out to engage violent actors in violence mitigation and transformation processes requires local expertise in the design and implementation of action research and dialogue processes. Fostering the development of such capacities in practitioners' networks will render these capacities more readily accessible.

4 As with any other highly contagious disease, the paper recommends that foundational knowledge and understanding of trauma be part of healthcare education at all levels and disciplines. This must be coupled with universal trauma precautions to prevent retraumatisation in medical settings and to mitigate transmission and spread between individuals, within families, among communities, and in the healthcare workforce. To do this requires a commitment on the part of our healthcare institutions and systems of care to regular training on trauma including, its current definitions and concepts, prevalence, the mechanisms through which

it manifests in the body and drives disparities. This knowledge must be continuously reinforced and applied to enhance and sustain trauma-informed practices.

Conclusion

While trauma is a part of the human experience, it is clear that we are in the midst of a public health crisis. Healthcare clinicians, peacebuilders, administrators and leaders have a critical role to play in responding through identification and prevention of poor health out-comes for their patients. In an ideal context, a bottom-up, locally led process would be adopted by all stakeholders addressing large-scale violence issues, whether they do so from a development or security perspective. In this sequential process, stakeholders would aim to: understand the problem at a societal level and map actors and issues in it; gather all the relevant state agencies and social actors for a multi-stakeholder analysis of the situation and the design of a comprehensive and holistic strategy; and design and implement corresponding responses that span across relevant policy areas and provide their own platforms for state-society collaboration.

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IMPACT OF HISTORIC TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE ON PEACE BUILDING: COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

BY
DR JULIET YOP PWAJOK

"Victims of torture and other human rights violations often have a feeling that no-one would believe them if they told their story – just as they often have been told by their perpetrators" (Lone & Martins, 1998).

Introduction

The paper investigates the impact of historic trauma and violence on peacebuilding. The assumption is that there is an indication of unbearable suffering which persists in the lives of people living in a society coming out of war or long-term violence. This pattern of suffering could be found at individual, community or even national levels. From gender analysis perspectives, men, children and women are affected differently during violence and humanitarian disasters, for instance, during war; men suffer more fatalities as they are mainly fighters while male civilians often get targeted during armed violence. On the other hand, women when faced with the aftermath of armed conflicts often get exposed to different levels of vulnerability as a result of change in gender roles which exposes them to being targets of sexual violence. Due to their lower social and economic status, more often women's vulnerability is increased in complex emergencies like displacement.

Stunned by horrific experiences of killings, maiming, internal displacements and series of terrifying events of violence, conflict survivors (men, women and children) are faced with startled reactions or nightmares as reflections of painful events. Caruth (1996) argues that this made Freud wonder at the distinct and at times weird methods in which dreadful experiences appear to recur for people who experience painful and traumatised events. Among survivors, these repetitions are predominantly outstanding because they seem not to be initiated by the persons or community actions, however, they appear as the ownership of some people by a sort of providence, a succession of throbbing events to which they are put through, and which appears to be entirely external to their wish or control. These feelings most often manifested as intrinsic symptoms, hyper arousal and symptoms of conscription and avoidance (Dagona, 2013).

The design and implementation of any post conflict intervention located from the past experiences of victims and survivors of violence has the potential to engender sustainable peacebuilding processes, because studies and

experiences have demonstrated that post-conflict environments always nurture new behavioural patterns towards parties within the first five years of cessation of violence, therefore, it will be important to note that multidimensional support activities that empower victims and survivors become key components of post violence peacebuilding. Often times, trauma studies pay emphasis on the historical trajectories of the violence or war, this is basically to unbundle the very conditions that gave rise to violence in the first instance. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that confronting a violent path filled with human rights abuses, a history of devastation and moving peacefully into the future is daunting; whether at individual or community levels. The recipes within the other studies to undergo this process include a variety of options ranging from dimensions of political, economic, legal, cultural, spiritual, as well as a change in thought patterns and identity change: reorganisation of devastating, negative and extreme views among the population.

However, one of the fundamental questions that preoccupy students of conflict resolution as well as the international community is how to overcome the psychological barriers that are a major obstacle to peacebuilding in post-conflict societies. On individual levels, traumatic experiences do not disappear through silence. As Hamber (1998) writes: "…psychologically, sleeping dogs do not lie; past traumas do not simply pass or disappear with the passage of time". Psychological trauma research has shown that it is of great importance to heal traumatic wounds in order for life to continue without the trauma becoming cemented in physical and/or mental disorders.

Feelings of grievances, bitterness and insecurity along with destructive attitudes and beliefs constructed during the period of conflict serve as an impediment toward attaining sustainable peace and peacebuilding programs. The anger and devastation need to be changed by a means which enhance circumstances that may lessen these emotions (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). The risks for relapse into violent conflicts among societies are lowered when destructive feelings and tensions are transformed. Therefore, the main thrust of this paper is predicated on the assumption that historic trauma and violence may have implication on peacebuilding processes, hence, the question this paper seeks to answer is: what is the impact of historic trauma and violence on peacebuilding. But before then, the paper reviewed some theoretical perspectives and attempts to make clarifications of the concept of trauma and how scholarship has shaped the discourse on the impact on peacebuilding.

Theoretical Perspectives

There are several paradigms that have attempted to contribute to the study of trauma; however, the paper only pays attention to the three major theoretical perspectives that deal essentially with the issue of trauma in a post war/crisis environment. These basic theories are:

Psychoanalytic theory: Freud Sigmund was the founder of psychoanalysis, later contributors include Caruth, (1996); Faulkner, (2005). The basic assumption of the theory is the childhood experiences of individuals and how they overcome social challenges that shape our today's world. Those who grew up with negative stubbornness and could not overcome it are the ones causing trouble. For instance, every child born in Plateau State after 2001 is a post conflict child and is being influence by the post conflict environment. According to the theory, to end the cycle of violence in Jos today, we must first address the area of traumatic experiences among these set of people.

Behaviouralism: Pavlov, Skinner, and Watson, are the founding fathers of behaviouralist perspective of psychology. The central assumption is that, parental influence shapes the behaviour of people in the society. Thus, when parenting fails, the result is to have young people that can be used for the perpetuation of violence. Furthermore, parents today are said to be over protective of their children to the extent that when they grow up, they can't protect themselves. For instance, parents trekked for kilometres to and from school in the olden days, but today, same parents ask their children/ wards to stay at home when they are unable to afford fuel in their vehicles or transportation fare.

Cognitivism: This theory was propounded by, Aeron T. Beck, the theory posited that the society or people react to issues based on the way they think. And so long as we always think violence, violence will be with us at all times. Until we begin to think differently, the cycle of violence in Nigeria is a product of our thought process.

In the book turbulent peace, Janice Gross Stein (2001), contributed on *The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, she stated that "Cognitive psychology theories applied in social psychology address the origins of and triggers to the collective fears that prepare the grounds for violence" Therefore, cognitivism gives us the entry point to discuss historic trauma by trying to contextualised the origin and triggers of violence in Nigeria in an effort to

understanding the interplay between trauma, violence and how it's impacted on peacebuilding. The main focus will be the extrapolation of the general country survey to the specifics of community approaches.

Conceptual Discourse

Trauma studies originated in *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* One (DSM-I) (1962) and was mentioned as stress. In 1968 DSM-II mentioned it as situational stress. The word trauma was invented in DSM III in 1980 (APA, 1980); while by DSM IV 1994 uphold the word and also added Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). DSM V came on board in September, 2013, in the manual, trauma was defined as a situation of intense fear and anxiety, and this is often manifested in the following symptoms:

1. Intrinsic symptoms: e.g. nightmares, flashback, day dreaming, rape, feeling of guilt, shame etc.
2. Symptoms of conscription and avoidance: e.g. people try to avoid thoughts that remind them traumatic situations and also places that remind them of certain happenings that traumatise individuals physically and or the community.
3. Hyper arousal symptom: e.g. startled reaction, insomnia etc.
4. Some basic symptoms of PSTD are: staying away from family work, social gathering and other important engagements. Sometimes derealisation symptom led a traumatise person to question his environment. Similarly, victims can also exhibit symptom of depersonalisation where an individual begin to question his existence (Dagona, 2013).

Trauma can be broadly categorised into – acute, chronic and delayed. Acute trauma occurs within the period of the first one to three months of traumatisation, but when it last between three and six months is metamorphoses to chronic and when it exceeds six months and above is refers to as delayed trauma. Trauma is emotional injury/scare after manmade or natural disaster (APA, 2001). Bracken (2002) a psychiatrics who worked in northern Africa (Uganda, Kenya) wrote on trauma and culture. According to him, African women don't carry the hyper arousal symptoms of trauma; their capacity for resilience is stronger than other women. African women can go to bed and sleep even after losing their husbands. According to him, when African women show symptoms of trauma, it is as a result of grieved reactions. However, the question remains if the Bracken position is true about African women.

The layers of trauma are multidimensional. The concept as mentioned earlier was introduced in 1980, however, Young (1995) asked: where was trauma prior to 1980? In response to Young's research question, Zelizer (2008) traced the history of trauma to date back to the story of creation and human existence, however, Zelizer argues that trauma first manifested during World War I where 30 million lives were lost. Going forward, trauma was intensified during World War II where about 100 million lost their lives. During the Second World War, veterans were treated with shame therapy to return to combat position. In the 1970s the American veterans in the Vietnam War were traumatised and returned to their country as beasts, maltreating their wives and other women like lower animals. The period also witnessed the rise of global feminism (Dagona 2013). These veterans' plights were quickly identified and responded to by the state. In 2014, about 401 children were given birth to out of wedlock in IDP camps in the north-east by camp administrators.

One important question posed in the trauma studies is whether trauma is a political entity. Kleinman (1998) argued that trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are fallacies being created by man. Scott, 2001 was in agreement with Klenman, but digressed slightly using professional nomenclature that trauma is medicalisation of social problem. As started earlier, trauma was pronounced in 1970s and was included in DSM III 1980. Nation-states suffer collective trauma as a result of historical trajectories of violence or condition that traumatise the people. A useful definition of collective trauma has been provided by sociologist Alexander (2004). Who explained community trauma as the outcome of a sociocultural, act of constructing traumatic experiences. Studies have played a major part in what Alexander termed "trauma process": the path that provides a narrative structure and meaning to "harmful or devastating phenomena which are believed to have deeply harmed collective identity" (Alexander, cited in Visser, 2015).

To contextualise the trauma process from the perspective of postcolonial theory, the concept included the creation and examination of the colonial and non-colonial past experiences and views. Colonialism forms part of the traumatic process (Alexander, 2004; Visser, 2015). It is a known fact that post trauma, colonialism has persisted till today. As Achille Mbembe remarks, "In African self-writing *the colony* is depicted as an original scene which does not merely occupy a space of remembrance, as if reflected in a mirror" also "one of the significant matrices of language, operating on the past and the present, identity and death" (Mbembe cited in Andermahr, 2015). Therefore, Visser

(2015) concluded that 'there's no contending the fact that literature emanating in the postcolonial times construction that comprises the trauma process as explained by Alexander. Postcolonial fiction essentially dramatises the view that trauma that emanates from colonial experiences must be dealt with. From this point, let's attempt to investigate at what point Nigeria got it wrong? And how post-colonial trauma debate and/or argument can be situated within the context of collective trauma the country is presently undergoing.

What went wrong in Nigeria?

Nigeria got her independence in 1960 from the British. Prior to colonialism, the country was relatively peaceful with zero high intensity violence, but shortly after independence, in an attempt to maintain neocolonial exploitation of the country's **resources/dominance** in a somewhat divided society, the colonial powers introduced some basic instruments that gave them opportunity to exploit the post-independence economy of the country. These are – **Ethnicity, Religion and Geography**. Once this was achieved, foreign goods began to infiltrate the post-colonial markets while the war on religion, ethnicity and geography continues unabatedly. For instance, at the basis of the Nigerian civil war is a combination of several factors, however, the geographical factor was the most significant. This started in 1922, when the Clifford constitution splinted the country into three regions (North, East and West) to suite the colonial politics of divide and rule. Since then, geographical factors have featured consistently in national agitations, conflicts, and in some cases, resulted to large intensity violence that left hundreds of thousands of people devastated and or traumatised.

Every region has peculiar challenge(s) of insecurity that trigger the traumatisation of a vast majority of the people or virtually every member of the community. Let's consider each of the regions to give us a national grip of historic trauma in Nigeria. The country has six geopolitical regions – in North Eastern part, since 2009, the activities of the notorious Boko Haram accounted for the single factor that has caused traumatic experience not only to the region but the country as a whole. Thousands of people have been gruesomely murdered by the terrorists. Another hundreds of thousands are rendered refugees in other countries, or internally displaced persons camps. Young school girls were kidnapped in different schools to which up to this time some are yet to regain their freedom. All these experiences, culminated to a condition that have traumatised the country and beyond.

Closely related to the above are the activities of bandits and kidnappers in North West and Central parts of the country; the euphemism of farmer – herders clashes which is almost experienced in the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory. From the South - South to Eastern and Western regions, peculiar challenges of armed militia/militants, inter-ethnic wars, kidnappings, baby factories, armed robbery, area boys, vandalization of national infrastructures and oil pipelines, cattle rustling, drug production, peddling and consumption, cultism etc. have become the common characteristics of the regions. From this point, one can conclude that with the role of the media in transmitting some of the gory pictures of murder/execution and rapping of minors, every Nigerian is traumatised.

In the same vein, ethnicity and religion are the most notorious factors that aggravate, trigger or escalate conflict and violence in the country. Consequently, several communities are being uprooted and sources of livelihoods shattered. For instance, in Plateau state, most communities in certain local governments such as Barkin Ladi, Riyom and Bassa have been uprooted. Men, women and children are being affected and live with the conditions of historic trauma. These victims do not have the opportunity to tell their stories of hurt, depression, fear and painful experiences daily. This has confirmed the statement by Lone and Martins (1998) who posited that "*Victims of torture and other human rights violations often have a feeling that no-one would believe them if they told their story – just as they often have been told by their perpetrators"*.

Trauma has become key to the multiple approaches of peacebuilding. The conflict/violence in complex emergencies does not only lead to consecutive and increasing injuries to individuals (Kornfeld, 1995), but is generally geared towards demolition of social, relational, and institutional structures (Lykes, 2000) and in some instances entail other elements (e.g. poverty, human rights abuses, racism, gender discrimination etc.) which downplay the potential for development and peacebuilding during and in the aftermath of conflict.

Violence brings about conditions of negative narratives and influences the thought processes of all post conflict children. For instance, every child born in Plateau state after 2001 can be described as a post conflict child and is been influence by the post conflict environment. This is so because, since after the 2001 crisis in Jos, people who were known in the past to live in peace and harmony regardless of religious differences began to see each other as enemies. This is what psychologists refer to as the "enemy mirror" perception

of people in post-conflict environment. According to the theory, to end the cycle of violence and engender a sustainable peacebuilding programme, we must first address trauma, because young people growing up within this period are learning negative narratives that have been influenced by religious ethnic conflict which has further been compounded by the proliferation of segregated settlements along religious or ethnic identities. Those that lost their homes, loved ones and were physically hurt during the crisis are believed to be traumatised.

To this end, it will be safe to conclude that so long as victims/survivors of violence live with the pain, hurt and sense of guilt without the ability to tell their stories, violence in the country may continue to recycle. Perhaps, for one to begin to talk about peacebuilding in Nigeria, it becomes imperative to note that the sustained violence is a manifestation of historic trauma therefore, peacebuilding would be possible when the country pays rapt attention to transforming the colonial legacy of historic trauma. To reiterate the statement by Hambers, "Psychologically, sleeping dogs do not lie" … Trauma doesn't just disappear, as time passes, it has to be healed for the community to be stable and peaceful. However, the question is what kind of community-based approach to peacebuilding is best in a society ravaged by historic trauma?

Community-Based Approaches to Trauma Healing

There is a growing concern over the poor mainstreaming of gender considerations in the design and implementation of community-based approaches to peacebuilding. This challenge owes its origin from the patriarchal structuring of the African society. However, several studies have documented that women are the most vulnerable, most traumatised and the most victimized subjects during armed confrontation or violence. Unfortunately, majority of the women do not feel any sense of relegation as most of them were proud that their culture gave their male counterparts enormous powers to decide on the overall welfare of women and the protection and upbringing of their children especially the girl child. This assertion was validated in a pre-research mock interview with a respondent in an internally displaced persons camp in Riyom Local Government Area of Plateau state who stated that "our culture forbids women and children from participating in critical decisions that involve our communities as men equally double as heads of their families, they make the decisions for women and also ensure that they guide the girl child from molestation and sexual activities before marriage".

Therefore, the paper argues that most community-based approaches to peacebuilding may have failed overtime, largely in part, due to the relegation and disempowerment of women in the design and implementation of peacebuilding projects on the one hand, and on the other, that patriarchal systems have made peacebuilding a man's affair. This cycle needs to be broken because women are not only survivors or victims of violence, but they should be considered as driving forces that facilitate all practical approaches at sustainable peace such as trauma and healing programmes. Furthermore, a wide range of healing strategies have been used in different contexts, and they can be useful sources of inspiration and guidance when building a healing programme. However, two points to bear in mind are that: (a) all approaches should ideally emanate out of local contexts and should be gender sensitive; and (b) multiple strategies should be utilized simultaneously. Here are some healing programs which are typical after conflict situations.

Truth Telling Approach

"Truth – the road to reconciliation" (Tutu 1994 cited in Skaar, Gloppen, and Suhrke, 2005).

What impact does truth have in terms of reconciliation? Is openly determining the truth necessary for reconciliation? Is a history of atrocities, human rights abuses and armed violence best left unhandled and forgotten or should the dark sides of the past be drawn into the light? These are dilemmas faced by all post-conflict societies in the transition from war to peace when deciding how and to what extent the historical memory should be revealed.

Through the perspective of the engagement approach, when states decide to actually confront a history of violence, acknowledgment and truth telling are seen as central (Amstutz, 2005). Truth-telling is closely connected to many of the reparation measures as they will in most cases require some form of recollection of facts for their implementation. Without the knowledge of wrongdoing there can hardly be any reckoning of past abuses. Nevertheless, there are risks and it is up to each one to face the dilemmas whether to openly determining a violent history. The most common way to do so is the creation of truth commissions (TCs) in post-war societies. The establishment of the truth and reconciliation commission in South Africa (TRC), where perpetrators exchanged stories of truth for amnesty, is a commonly used example when highlighting the importance of truth as a way to reconciliation. This assumption is clearly demonstrated in the official slogan of the commission; "Truth the

road to reconciliation" formulated by archbishop Desmond Tutu, chairperson of the TRC. By openly declaring the truth it seemed to bridge the divide by facilitating a meeting place for victims and perpetrators during hearings and testimonies, as well as dealing with the past by opening the wounds caused during the apartheid era.

Even though TRCs were previously promoted based on their style of being investigative and for their documentary and fact-based capabilities, they subsequently have shown connection with efforts to propagate peaceful coexistence by bringing opposing parties back together by providing healing in the aftermath of conflict. (Hamber, 2006; Hayner, 2001). The South African incidence is seen as an ameliorative TRC for individuals and communities alike. The Chilean and South African TRC seek some form of new political and moral order in South Africa by enhancing "truth, healing and reconciliation" (de la Rey & Owens, 1998). Providing opportunities for survivors who are able to tell their stories, it was assumed that the South African TRC could encourage both individual and collective healing thereby giving room for survivors to be heard and by connecting their past experiences to a wider perspective. Revelations were then thought to be cathartic in all cases, as one of the TRC's guiding suppositions was that South Africans encountered traumatic reactions by the experience of apartheid. (Hamber & Wilson, 2002). The South African response was thought to have an interchanging correlation between individual and collective healing, and between psychology and larger political goals: public acceptance of individual travails would lead to individual healing, which would later be steered by individual narratives of suffering in the context of the society. Testimonials in turn by persons would provide an avenue for the discussion about memory and previous experiences, and collectively these experiences could together "heal" those who are "traumatised" in the South African nation.

Healing Programmes and Strategies

There are different healing strategies that can be used depending on the context and cultural environment. Some of the post-conflict strategies seen in post-conflict circumstances are:

- `Psychological and Social intervention programmes;
- Individual Counselling and support interventions;
- Skills acquisition training programmes to the communities through

psychosocial means.
- Self-help and personal support groups; and
- Symbolic or figurative forms of healing.

Intervention is generally described as psychosocial when the relationship between the person's psychological state and social situation are valuable and highly connected. The promotion and rebuilding of the psychosocial procedures do confront the issues that are related to post-conflict populations by creating opportunities for growth in the social and cultural contexts. There are different dimensions and approaches in this area, we have impressions due to creativity through arts, and storytelling, The methods used in such programmes can vary as sometimes it just entails providing resources, creating platforms for meeting and networking, and as the case may be, simply providing safe and comfortable environments so that people who have been affected by these crisis one way or the other would engage in interpersonal relationships while planning their daily lives together. Sometimes reburial rites, development of self-help groups, skills acquisition, and the reintegration of displaced persons from the crisis back to the communities is of huge essence to peaceful coexistence and peacebuilding mechanisms. At certain times, locating such programs within certain ethnic groups or neighbourhoods would do just fine and may produce positive results. In Sri Lanka, women from different ethnic groups and from the opposing sides to the conflict took part in the reconciliation process by lending their ill feelings and grievances which would then translate into healing channels and which also would provide a proactive fight against the conflict which had victimised so many (Bloomfield, Barnes and Huyse, 2003).

Forgiveness as an Approach

"I am ready to forgive, but I need to know whom to forgive and for what" (Rigby, 2001).

This was a statement made by a survivor of Rwandan genocide during the Gachacha programme in the aftermath of the 1994. Forgiveness is a very important component of post conflict peacebuilding and an important mechanism for the removal of historically painful memories from the minds of victims of violence. Forgiveness is slightly different from Truth Commissions. this is so because, while truth commissions depended upon facts without a following apology of repentance, forgiveness brings perpetrators and victims

together in a highly remorseful atmosphere. From this aspect apologies or political forgiveness as sometimes referred to, has been an area of interest and seen as part of the road transforming historic trauma in the aftermath of violence and war. Forgiveness can be defined as the following: "The foreswearing of resentment, the resolute overcoming of anger and hatred that are naturally directed toward a person who has done an unjustified and non-excused moral injury" (Pruitt, & Rubin, 1986). One of the dilemmas and controversies lies in the difficulty to discuss the role and need for forgiveness without a connection to a religious tone and by that it seems to lose its meaning in the political context. That it is still closely connected to its religious roots can be seen in Amstutz explanation:

> Although forgiveness is not uniquely a religious ethic it receives its most powerful human expression in Christianity a faith that is rooted in God's forgiveness of human sin and the corollary obligation of human forgiveness…The Christian approach to forgiveness, which calls on people to forgive one another even as God in Christ has forgiven them involves two distinct emphases - first the priority of love in the human relationship and second, the need to forgive offenders (Amstutz, 2005).

The idea of political forgiveness is connected to the psychological transformation and identity change described earlier as it aims at transforming perceived identities about one self and the other as a way toward reconciliation and peacebuilding. Long and Brecke (2003) share this view when interpreting reconciliation as part of a forgiveness process which transforms beliefs about oneself and the other and thus opening possibilities of new improved amicable relations. Based on a theory which derives from evolutionary psychology Long and Brecke (2003) assumes that forgiveness and reconciliation is something which is a natural part of society and the individual mind. It has developed over time and is required within society as a problem-solving function. They present a general forgiveness hypothesis by assuming that the mind has certain tactics to solve recurring problems such as how to maintain social relations through integration of emotion and reason (Long and Brecke, 2003).

Symbolic Actions and Commemoration Approach

Seen as an accompaniment to the above-mentioned forms of healing measures, symbolic measures may be very effective in terms of reconstructing the history of post war society. Symbolic actions take various forms such as

memorial days (e.g. Hiroshima, US in World Trade Centre and February 7 every year by the Plateau state government as a day of forgiveness and the subsequent building of garden of forgiveness), monuments (e.g. South Africa, US and France), sacred sites or museums (e.g. US, Rwanda and South Africa), commemoration or education (e.g. Rwanda, South Africa and Sierra Leone) and their strength lie in the ability to be adjusted to respond to the needs of the local environment (Danieli 2004 in Krizt, 2004).

The wave of history may have a robust effect when presented with the perspective of culture and tradition of the people compared to the publicity of truth commission reports and this is something that can be encouraged through symbolic measures. There are other factors that make symbolic measures useful and complement other forms of acknowledgment as formulated by Marc Howard Ross:

1. Direct apologies may appear difficult, then, symbolic action should be easier for former enemies to express
2. Sometimes words are quite difficult to utter, or appear as taken for granted symbolic actions can be viewed as more sincere.
3. While verbal apologies are more cognitive, symbolic interpretations could be more sincere (Ross, 1998).

Community actions should have symbolic dimension plays out in different contexts and should be experimented to compliment other approaches of post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation, they should be able to reach out to a wide range of stakeholders in the community and not only to individuals. In Hiroshima after the atomic bombing the creation of a memorial peace park with a memorial museum exemplifies the creation of a symbolic communal mourning site. The names of all affected victims in the terrorist bombing of the World Trade Centre in the United States are carved in bronze as a symbol for National morning day in the US history.

The Interactive Problem-Solving Approach

As a social-psychological method of intervention, the interactive problem-solving approach was developed by Herbert C. Kelman. This approach was conceived after his meeting with John Burton in the 1960s, and learning about his innovative workshop approach that Kelman started to elaborate on social-psychological concepts and methods relevant to conflict resolution, especially within the framework of protracted conflicts.

This approach is an informal method for post conflict peacebuilding and healing of the past hurts. Interactive problem-solving approach is a third-party kind of intervention where mediators facilitate reconciliation among party in conflict. This is basically a framework that is aimed at availing opportunities for parties to reach a level playing ground. Social scientists lead the conversation by allowing the opposing sides sit face to face with one another in a workshop setting. The participants are carefully selected from people who are within the mainstream of their communities and who are the centre of politics (Kelman, 1991). This selection brings about solutions that are meaningful and impactful especially considering that this may lead to policy formulation. The method is essentially based on social-psychological concepts, which is its main differentiator from the traditional approach. The main aim of this process is to resolve problems, enhance communication, and to come up with a community approach that is owned by them. The workshops are designed to produce changes in mindsets and perceptions of the influential individuals by way of developing a genuine understanding of the opposing sides and their needs, priorities and constraints. It is expected that with this the participants will produce and create solutions that will address the concerns of both sides. (Kelman, 1991).

Reparative Justice Approach

The goal of reparative justice is to heal the past trauma and to also repair the damages caused to a society as a result of prolong violence. Reparative justice pays rapt attention to the healing and recuperation of victims. This is achieved by way of offering compensation measures for the harm done as against traditional variant of retributive justice that focus on the punishment of the perpetrator. The term reparative justice is similarly used with restorative justice referring to a more modern approach of dealing with the consequences around the offence of a crime (Riesenfeld, 2008). This is also referring to a practical means of reparation measures such as methods of truth-telling, the role of forgiveness, economic compensation and locally rooted actions of symbolic nature (Merits, 1928).

Restorative Justice Approach

Restorative justice is considered a new development in the field of victimology and criminology (United Nations, 2006). Admitting that crime leads to injury to people and communities, it considers justice to be a cardinal

point in injury repair, and so the parties involved should be allowed to participate in the process. This strategy is closely related to the interactive problem-solving approach propounded by Kelman. Central to the philosophy of restorative justice system is the platform that provides the victim, the offender and affected members of the community to be directly involved in responding to the crime. They become central to the criminal justice process, with government and legal professionals facilitating the process that aims at offender accountability, and a wholistic participation by the victims and offenders within the community. The restorative *process* of involving all parties – often in face-to-face meetings – is a powerful way of addressing not only the material and physical injuries caused by crime, but the social, psychological and relational injuries as well. In the event that one of the parties shows no interest in participating in the meeting, other approaches can be taken to achieve the restorative *outcome* of repairing the harm. In addressing offender accountability and feedback these methods may include restitution, community service and other reparative sentences. Victims may be provided with material, emotional and spiritual support. A definition of restorative justice that emphasises the importance of both restorative processes and outcomes is the following:

Restorative justice is a theory of justice that emphasises repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behaviour. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders (Restorative Justice Briefing Paper, 2005).

This approach has related outcome to the contemporary criminal justice administration, because it is more inclusive. It does see criminal acts as all encompassing.

Distributive Justice as an Approach

Distributive justice is an approach that helps in bridging the gap between the haves and the have not. This approach is most situated in transforming the past hurt caused by resource conflict. Inequality could be situated as one of major factors that precipices conflict in most African states. Yet this can be expected only if reasonable terms are proposed. This is based on the assumption that since everyone's well-being depends upon a scheme of social cooperation without which no one could have a satisfactory life (Nozick, 1973:89), conflict that occurs as a result of how resources are distributed might be a protest against the structural inequality. The Nigerian state has been in types of squabbles for

long, especially in the Niger Delta region of the country, where the indigenes have engaged the Federal Government and the oil exploratory companies for resource control and inequality.

Distributive justice emphasises fairness to all in a state, the principle does not emphasise equality of the unequal because all cannot be equal in a society. In fact, there may be nothing as unequal as the equal representation of the unequal. Perhaps, this justice practice gives to everybody according his/her need and collects from everybody according to his ability.

Economic Compensation

This variant of healing or post-conflict peacebuilding is much more concrete and has direct impact on the sources of livelihood of the victims of past atrocities compare to other forms of transforming historic trauma. Economic compensation empowers victims with a new source of livelihood to help them leap through the future. The monetary forms of restitution are repayment and indemnity. In international legal practice; indemnity aims to "compensate for all the damage which results from the unlawful act, including a profit which would have been possible in the ordinary course of events, but not prospective gains" (Mani, 2002 in Riesenfeld, 2008). Compensation is defined "reparation in the narrow sense of the payment of money as a valuation of the wrong done" (Mani, 2002 cited in Riesenfeld, 2008), (e.g. Kaduna episode and the recent call by the Shi'ite groups to Federal Government to compensate the families of their members who lost their lives during the clash with the Nigerian Army Chief's convoy in 2015). When money is given, it is done to alleviate suffering and damages being brought about by the conflict and which may help the victims to have a sense of belonging and dignity. This does not just appease the victims but creates a level playing ground for peaceful coexistence and harmony between the parties involved.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Devastating beliefs are likely to cause real anxiety and disunity amongst members of a community. In order to achieve peaceful coexistence and stability, these tensions and emotions need to be dealt with and or erased. (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004). These are experiences that continue to cause disunity and other social challenges in places like Plateau state, Israel/Palestine as the lingering crisis situations continue to bring negative and devastating memories which have brought about destructive stereotypes among the Muslims and

Christians in plateau state, Israel and Palestine, which have continued to stand as a barrier to peaceful coexistence and peacebuilding. This has also been seen in the Bosnian situation where devastating memories from past experiences of "the other" did not just drag and deepen such by raising the disharmony between Croats and Serbs but also hindered peaceful coexistence between the opposing sides.

To strike out or to remove destructive and painful memories entails engaging conflicting parties in a functional peacebuilding process. This is an ongoing process; it does not just happen at the pronouncement of peace or a resolution statement. On the other hand, this takes time and entails continues engagement of the parties involved and also by including all levels of society. Peace commissions that come up in the aftermath of crisis and having arrived at peaceful measures are likely to be widely accepted and may produce opportunities and the roadmap for meaningful change. Approaching and paying attention to the victims in the South African TRC has produced better outcomes than focusing on perpetrators through trials. Thus, according to Bar-Tal (1998) Psychological and interpersonal processes in the reconciliatory exercise are needed to change ill feelings and emotions, goals and aspirations about the conflict and those involved, these are said to preserve the continuation of the conflict and certainly need to be erased. Reconciliations are likely not to be achieved through structural means alone, even though the psychological process may be enhanced and or propelled by the rearrangement of these structures (Bar-Tal, 1998).

The psychological processes which both sides of the conflict need to undergo include not only a change in beliefs about the goals of the group but also a changed perception about the situation and identity of oneself. Bar-Tal and Bennink (2004) make this evident by applying a psychological framework which both parties can undergo to make the necessary changes in perception about one-self and others but ultimately, to healing the wounds and removing not only the trauma, but the structural conditions that give rise to the violence in the first instance.

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ROOT CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF FARMERS-HERDERS CRISIS AND ITS IMPLICATION ON WOMEN AND GIRLS IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Introduction

The farmers-herders crisis in the north central Nigeria is no longer news in Nigeria, Africa and the International community. This is because overtime the airwaves, offline and online media have been replete with negative news, horrors and bloodshed from different farming communities in Nigeria, most especially in Benue State, where the Governor consistently cries out for intervention in the crisis. It has become so prevalent to the extent that many Nigerians have formed assumptions and conclusions in trying to understand the real causes and the aims behind their persistence. One Writer opined as follows:

"The driving force of the clashes is the competition for available resources, especially grazing land. It seems that the government has abandoned the grazing reserve system created by the Northern region government in 1965. Then, the government created over 417 grazing reserves in the north. Under the grazing reserve system, government provided space, water and vaccinations for the livestock while the herdsmen paid taxes to the government in return. However, the discovery of oil and subsequent exploration and export made Nigeria an oil economy, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. Subsequently, the grazing reserve system was abandoned due to the neglect of the agricultural sector as the mainstay of the country's economy.[1]"

However, several causes have been identified and highlighted by numerous researchers, who discovered that there was no one major cause but several factors arising at different times in history, some of which include

1 Understanding the Herder-Farmer Conflict in Nigeria By Ugwumba Egbuta: https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/understanding-the-herder-farmer-conflict-in-nigeria/

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encroachment on farmers' lands, destruction of crops, disintegration of grazing routes, cattle rustling, lack of grazing areas, etc. Nevertheless, the genesis of this conflict in north central Nigeria has been traced back to 1999[2] where it was reported that its emergence and development was as a result of socio-economic, religious and political factors.

Often times when discussing the issues surrounding the farmers-herders conflict, discussants and observers unconsciously or ignorantly leave out its impact on women and children, particularly girls, both aged and young. In fact, some of them almost completely forget to account for women victims in their narratives. In reviewing the book, 'The root cause of farmers-herders crisis in north central Nigeria' by Plangshak Musa Suchi, and Sallek Yaks Musa, this gender perspective to the crisis exposes the social impact, economic impact and the political impact on women and girls, the effects of the continued and unabated crises on women and girls and the legal implications. Thus, this paper highlights the consequences of the farmers-herders clashes on women and girls.

Background

Historically, farmers and herders have enjoyed peaceful co-existence in the north central region of Nigeria for years. It has been reported that farmers and herders have lived harmoniously from generations to generations and that there existed an understanding as to the responsibility of both divides, in ensuring that there is mutual respect and prevention of rancour. However, this mutual relationship began to dissipate and take on a negative outlook in the north central region of Nigeria in recent years, particularly since 1999 when it was reported that the problem began to intensify and gained recognition by the government and the media[3]. For instance, it was recorded that between 2012 and 2016, over 2,500 people were killed in the farmers-herders clashes.[4] While the media continued to report the deathly relationship between the farmers and cattle herders, it was recorded that not less than 150 women were

2 Gbamwuan, Asor. (2022). FARMER- HERDER CONFLICTS AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PREDICAMENTS OF WOMEN IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA. Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal. 9. 90-105. 10.14738/assrj.96.11318. https://bit.ly/3RcodCa (accessed 29th June 2022)

3 Ibid and https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/301429-how-nigerian-govts-failures-fuel-farmers-herders-conflict-causing-nearly-4000-deaths-amnesty-international.html (accessed 1st July 2022)

4 Amnesty International, 2018

victims of the clashes between 2014-2020[5] and amongst these where reports of a pregnant woman slaughtered with her husband in Takende Village, Guma Local Government Area (LGA) of Benue State in 2020, 13 women in Mkovur Buruku LGA of Benue State shot in 2017, over 20 women killed in Riyom LGA of Plateau State in 2015, over 15 women shot in Awe, Keana, Obi, and Doma LGA of Nasarawa State in 2018, over 15 women killed in Jandeikyula village in Wukari LGA in Taraba State, etc. The resulting bloodshed becomes not only a burden to the immediate society but also to the country as a whole. These clashes continue to pose security challenges in Nigeria and particularly for the North Central Region, which seemed to be the centre stage, considering that it consists of one of the most fertile farming grounds in Nigeria, Benue State, known as the food basket of the nation.

The Conflict and Consequences

In the States of Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau, different accounts were taken from traditional heads, local chiefs, both male and female representatives of the communities. They recounted different perspectives of the cause of the crises, raising issues and allegations, backed by witnesses' accounts, in which the farming community claimed that herdsmen allow their cows to destroy farm produce and refuse to take responsibility for the destruction, while the herders claimed that the absence of grazing routes have been mainly responsible for the problem of crop destruction and that if grazing routes were provided for their cattle, crop destruction will not arise. Some herders have also claimed that farmers conspire to steal their cattle which provoke them to attack these communities. In circumstances where encroachment arose and the farmers took action to protect their produce, either by beating up the perpetrators or by seizing the cattle, the herders usually resisted and fought, which then degenerates to situations like revenge attack, where vulnerable women farmers, or wives and children of the farmers are attacked. Some women were raped, kidnapped, tortured and killed.[6] There was also a report of a long-established war between the Fulani herdsmen and the Tiv ethnic community of Benue and Nasarawa States[7] arising from crop destruction and

5 https://bit.ly/3RcodCa (accessed 29th June 2022)

6 Journal, IERJ. "Causes And Consequences Of Herders-Farmers Conflict And Its Gender Implication In Plateau State." International Education and Research Journal (2018): n. pag. Print. https://www.academia.edu/45296733/causes_and_consequences_of_herders_farmers_conflict_and_its_gender_implication_in_plateau_state (accessed 29th June 2022)

retaliatory attacks. In order words, the conflict results in meaningless killings and loss of lives, insecurity of innocent lives and properties, loss of agricultural produce, displacement and threats to national security.

Gender Implications

In all of these accounts, the perpetrators of these heinous crimes are usually male Fulani herders and mostly male farmers and at the centre of it all are women and children, who become widowed, displaced, and orphaned. Women and children are categorised as vulnerable groups during crisis, and their frailty or vulnerability are usually exploited. For instance, the researchers[8] pointed out the testimonies of Chief of Usha, in the community of Agatu LGA, Benue State (KII with the Chief of Usha, Usha, 21/10/2020), that women were killed by Fulani herdsmen and they ran off. There have also been reports of rape, kidnapping, etc. All point to the fact that women continue to experience highest levels of gender violence and inequality. As these criminal events continue to unfold and remain unabated, there is not a doubt that women and girls are at a disadvantage in the confrontations, mostly because they are unarmed and dependents of the male farmers who lose their lives in the conflict. Apart from the use of arms, women and children cannot match the physical strength of these male violators, who do not hesitate to plunder and destroy with pleasure. Thus, women and girls have to survive different forms of violence from the moment of the crises till afterwards when the perpetrators have moved on. This is because generally, women and girls are categorised as vulnerable and so ordinarily, odds are stacked against them in different societies were there's relatively peace.

A review of 'the root cause of farmers-herders crisis in north central Nigeria' by Plangshak Musa Suchi, and Sallek Yaks Musa and some few other papers referenced here, expose the consequences of the confrontations between the two factions on women and children in the following subheadings:

a **Sexual Violence**: Sexual violence encompasses sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment and sexual intimidation. Graphically, this means that herders/farmers compel, force or threatens and in fact overpower women and girls to forcefully have sexual intercourse with

7 'The root cause of farmers-herders crisis in North Central Nigeria ' by Plangshak Musa Suchi, and Sallek Yaks Musa (2021)

8 Ibid

them without consent. The Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act 2015 defines sexual violence as follows:

i "sexual abuse" means any conduct which violates, humiliates or degrades the sexual integrity of any person;

ii "sexual assault" means the intentional and unlawful touching, striking or causing of bodily harm to an individual in a sexual manner without his or her consent;

iii "sexual exploitation" occurs where a perpetrator, for financial or other reward, favour or compensation invites, persuades, engages or induces the services of a victim, or offers or performs such services to any other person;

iv "sexual harassment" means unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex or gender which is persistent or serious and demeans, humiliates or creates a hostile or intimidating environment and this may include physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct.

These elements are experienced by women and girls at different stages of the conflict. First women and girls get raped on the farm[9] and it was further reported that conflicts occur on the farm where cutlasses, machetes, and guns are involved and women farmers are raped.[10] The attendant outcome is one of shame; stigma and some women are rejected by the family and the community. Where a woman has undergone rape or loss of their breadwinner, they move away from that community and in a lot of cases into Internally Displaced Persons' (IDP) camps, where it has been sufficiently reported that women and girls continue to experience all manner of abuses from the male occupants in the IDP camps and men outside these camps. It has been reported that teenage and underage girls are daily abused and exploited in IDP

9 See testimony of the leader of the farmers' association in Mbawa community in Guma LGA of Benue State (KII with Leader of the Farming community in Mbawa, Daudu, 20/10/2020)

10 KII with Women Leader, Keana LGA of Nasarawa State, 24/10/2020

11 https://guardian.ng/opinion/abuse-of-women-in-idps/; https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/407902-special-report-how-boko-haram-displaced-women-girls-are-sexually-abused-at-idp-camps-1.html; https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352645942_Coverage_of_Gender-Based_Violence_in_IDP_Camps_A_critical_Analysis_of_select_Nigerian_Newspapers/download and https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262229579_ The_Prevalence_of_Sexual_Violence_among_Female_Refugees_in_Complex_Humanitarian_Emergencies_a_Systematic_Review_and_Meta-analysis (accessed 1st July 2022)

camps[11] but rarely will they speak out about it in order to protect their dignity. Furthermore, the Legal Defence and Assistance Project (LEDAP) reported that 'women and girls are randomly raped in exchange for food and water and that the incidences occurred mostly in the host communities and the Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs camps located in Borno, Adamawa, Yobe states and Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory.'[12] It was also reported that these attacks have targeted women and girls travelling to displaced persons camps or to towns, leaving the relative protection of those locations to collect firewood, water or other items, and taking these goods to market to sell in exchange for necessary family items.'[13] These outlandish situations not only leave women and girls to suffer physically but also compel them to suffer emotional and psychological violence without access to therapy or psychosocial support. In a lot of cases, these survivors do not seek mental health support and in reality, such support services are rare in the country. The ripple effect of silence is later experienced by the society should the survivors continue to live through repeated trauma, through revictimisation or repeated exposure to abuse.[14]

According to a United States report by the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)[15], after conducting several investigations, 'sexual violence can have long term effects on victims and manifest in the forms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during the two weeks following the rape, symptoms of PTSD 9 months after the rape, contemplation of suicide, attempt of suicide, and it stated that approximately 70% of rape or sexual assault victims experience moderate to severe distress, a larger percentage than for any other violent crime. It also stated that people who have been sexually assaulted are more likely to use drugs than the general public, sexual violence also affects victims' relationships with their family, friends, and co-workers; Victims are at risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).'[16]

b **Socio-Economic Impact**: The conflict situation deprives women of their livelihood and in this case women and girls are forced to

12 https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/03/boko-haram-women-girls-randomly-raped-in-idps-camps-in-exchange-for-food-water-ledap/

13 https://guardian.ng/opinion/abuse-of-women-in-idps/

14 https://www.healthline.com/health/revictimization#the-effects

15 A US based anti-sexual violence organization that carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help survivors, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice. https://www.rainn.org/about-rainn

16 https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence (accessed 29th June 2022)

experience economic violence, which is defined under the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act 2015 to include: "…the unreasonable deprivation of economic or financial resources to which any person is entitled or which any person requires out of necessity and the unreasonable disposal or destruction of household effects or other property in which any person has an interest…" Women and children in crisis infested areas are deprived of their economic sustenance. In fact, due to manifest insecurity in their communities, they flee their farms and are unable to access the farms afterwards to harvest their crops, which may have produced or in other cases these become spoilt or are destroyed by cattle or harvested by other people. In addition, the hardships women experience during and after violent confrontations negatively impact their significant role of sustaining communal cohesion and social capital, in that, the loss of family members, disruption of the family structure, and breakdown of intergroup relations along ethnic and religious lines directly threaten women's capacity to sustain the societal bond and togetherness.[17]

According to the reports of Plangshak Musa Suchi, and Sallek Yaks Musa[18], due to the farmers-herders clashes, a lot of people have been displaced in the north central Nigeria and they reported that there are four large IDP camps in Benue which reveals the intensity of farmers-herders crisis. The International Crisis Group in 2018 reported that in 2018 alone, about 300,000 people were displaced in communities in Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue, Adamawa and Taraba States in the violence and reprisal attacks flowing from the farmers-herders clashes. The situation is so dire that it was reported that a 70 hectares farmland cultivated to help internally displaced victims of Fulani attacks was reportedly destroyed by Fulani herders using over 300 cattle in a strategically planned overnight attack in Rotsu village of Miango District in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State[19] Amongst the displaced persons are women and girls who then find it hard to make ends meet, more so where they have lost their husbands or forced to separate from

17 https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Policy_Brief_on_the_Impact_of_Farmer_Herder_Conflict_on_Women_in_Adamawa_Gombe_and_Plateau_States_of_Nigeria.pdf

18 The root cause of farmers-herders crisis in North Central Nigeria (2021)

19 Gyang, 2020).ibid pg 6

men who usually provide for them. There are also situations where the clashes result in permanent injuries on the women, making it impossible to provide their basic needs. In addition, most of these women are uneducated and the community is unable to support them because in most cases, the community as a whole is also affected.

c **Widowhood**: Generally, in Africa, this serves as a significant change of living condition in women's lives. African widows, irrespective of ethnic groups, are amongst the most vulnerable and destitute in the region.[20] Widowhood entails the observance of certain rites by women and these rites differ culturally in Nigeria. It is commonly regarded as a test of the woman's fidelity to her late husband and a cleansing ritual to free the woman from curses attached to his death. Various tribes and cultures in Nigeria have diverse ways of practicing rites pertaining to burial which usually is hard on women. The loss of the spouse, usually the main provider for the family, results in the loss of social status and reduction or complete loss of economic status. In violent clashes that result in the death of the male provider, this generates a lot of stress for the woman because in most cases, she is forced into unpleasant cultural widowhood practices in the community. A lot of widows in the north central region are forced to experience discrimination of varying degrees whether under the traditions or religion they practice. Widowhood forces women, apart from being direct victims themselves, into carrying the burden of caregiving and household responsibilities without adequate family, societal and governmental support. For instance, in Idoma land, Benue State, the widow mourns in sack clothes for at least one year. She then performs the cleansing ceremony assisted by her age grade before she is allowed to re-marry within or outside her dead husband's family. Under this custom, only a man's brothers inherit him and not his wife.[21] In Ilorin, Kwara State, where indigenes are mainly Muslims and the major ethnic groups are Yoruba, Fulani, Hausa and Nupe, widows are prevented from going to the farm and market during the mourning

20 https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/public/wom_Dec%2001%20single%20pg.pdf (accessed 3rd July 2022)

21 Widowhood: Between a rock and a hard place (1): https://bit.ly/3Ia5O4y (accessed 3rd July 2022)

period. In fact, she is prevented from performing household chores and some are prevented from eating certain kinds of food, or changing clothes during the mourning period.[22] Ultimately, these practices force women into isolation as she no longer fits into that society. Some women even decide to flee to cities or other parts of the country while some remain indoors to avoid further violence. In order words, a widow and her children will have to suffer both the loss of her husband and the discriminatory practices from the society in which she resides.

d **Health:** Health involves the ability to function physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. In the aftermath of the violent conflicts between farmers and herders, women and girls encounter different health challenges. A lot of these women and girls suffer physical injuries due to gun shots, hours of migration and relocation or injuries sustained during flight from the herdsmen, hunger and malnutrition and psychological disturbances such as nightmares and trauma.[23] For those who are forced to perform widowhood rites, they experience physical hardship due to the constraint compelled on them, emotional instability, and psychological trauma.[24] For some young girls, going back to school becomes a huge struggle because of the fear of abduction and sexual harassment. For women and girls who suffer sexual violence, they are faced with certain health threats due to their biological makeup. This could be in the forms of sexually transmitted diseases; unwanted pregnancies and forced childbirth; complications arising from unsafe abortions; vaginal traumas such as vesico-vaginal fistula, mutilation, and scarring; uterine problems; loss of sexual urge or pleasure, etc.[25] Then there is the issue of stigma and suffering in silence which could result in depression and insanity and so many other physical and mental health issues.

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22 Practice and Correlates of Widowhood Rites in A City in North Central Nigeria: https://www.academia.edu/40479147/Practice_and_Correlates_of_Widowhood_Rites_in_A_City_in_North_Central_Nigeria (accessed 3rd July 2022)

23 IMPACT OF FARMERS-HERDSMEN CONFLICT ON THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF GIRLS AND WOMEN IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA Ruth Ochanya Adio-Mosesa and Tajudeen A. Akanjia a University of Ibadan, Nigeria Statement of the problem. (accessed 28th June 2022)

25 Violent Traditional Gender Practices And Implications For Nation Building Process In Nigeria: https://iiste.org/Journals/index.php/PPAR/article/viewFile/2935/2973

e **Singlehood:** As the men go into conflicts, everything in the household and community is left in the hands of women. Women immediately take up the roles of solely fending for the family. When their men are killed in the conflict, it becomes clear that they are the heads of the family. In most African society, once a woman or girl is single and without a male protector, she becomes a prey for violence. Where women farmers lose their sustenance or the male provider and are forced to take up different odd jobs to make ends meet, they become a target of perverse male desires. In most cases they are prevented from owning lands and this forces them to look for different means of providing for their households. In cases where the lands are available for cultivation, there's always still the threat of farming on the same land, the subject of the crisis which led to the loss of their men. Most times for fear of their lives and the trauma associated with the land, they avoid venturing into the same farms. Apart from these, they experience different forms of discrimination, such as they lose protection and freedom of movement, they are exposed to violence and abuse, they are forced into marriages, forced to be pregnant, forced to have abortions, forced into trafficking, etc.

Responses and Solution

According to Plangshak Musa Suchi, and Sallek Yaks Musa, the Nigerian government's responses to the farmers-herders crisis have been "…the deployment of security forces especially the army, the police and Civil Defence to restore and maintain peace in the affected communities and…is widely adjudged by the affected communities as reactionary and grossly ineffective in most cases". In fact, there have been allegations by research participants that security agencies are complicit. This was also reported by Amnesty International in its 2018 report, ***"Harvest of Death: Three Years of Bloody Clashes Between Farmers and Herders***", which recorded facts documenting clashes between farmers and herders from January 2016. According to its country Director, Osai Ojigho, "The Nigerian government has displayed what can only be described as gross incompetence and has failed in its duty to protect the lives of its population and end the intensifying conflict between herders and farmers. The authorities' lethargy has allowed impunity to flourish and the killings to spread to many parts of the country, inflicting greater suffering on communities who already live in constant fear of the next attack…our research shows that these attacks were well planned and coordinated, with

the use of weapons like machine guns and AK-47 rifles. Yet, little has been done by the authorities in terms of prevention, arrests and prosecutions, even when information about the suspected perpetrators was available." Some of the research participants in these North Central States also believe that the government's actions over the years have contributed largely to the conflict. Some cited "…government policies allocating land to rich individual farmers at the expense of herders; violent activities of farmer- allied vigilante groups known as yan sa kai (volunteer guards) and herder- allied militias known as yan-bindinga (gun owners); complicity of community members and politicians; and state authorities' negligence/lack of leadership in dealing with the crisis".[26] In addition, "Eye witnesses, victims, local officials and others that were independently interviewed have recounted several incidents where police and soldiers have either ignored credible warnings of impending attacks and/ or abandoned people during or just before deadly attacks by heavily armed groups, suspected to be members of herder or farmer communities"[27]

This obviously reveals that the people do not have faith in their government and that can also continue to serve as a huge problem for the region because people will still choose to resort to self-help rather than put their lives and properties in the care of the government that they believe has not protected them in the past. Ultimately, this is a critical problem for women and girls in those States, who are forced into harsh circumstances that can easily be avoided if the government shows commitment to resolving the root causes by taking responsibility for the role it played and still plays and identifying and punishing its complicit state forces.

Although it needs to be on record that the government has deployed strategic responses to the conflict in the past, such as the Creation of Grazing Reserves in 1965, Establishment of the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) in 1989, The Use of the Armed Forces to Curb Internal Security, The Great Green Wall Agency of the Federal Government, Establishment of the National Grazing Reserve Bill 2016, Cattle Ranching System 2018, Legislation Prohibiting Open Grazing; it seems that these have been unproductive as the conflict persists.

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26 Crisis Group Africa Report, 2020

27 'The root cause of farmers-herders crisis in North Central Nigeria by Plangshak Musa Suchi, and Sallek Yaks Musa (2021)

Conclusion And Recommendations

At this stage in the crisis between the farmers and herders, there can't be a one-way solution to the problem. The government will have to adopt a multistakeholder approach to finding a lasting solution.

Intervention Strategies for Women and Girls

Firstly, the farmers-herders clashes have been particularly onerous on women and children considering that the kinds of victimhood they experience are driven by the simple fact that they are weak and can't truly defend themselves. This paper has addressed in details how women suffer different forms of violence from the inception of the crisis and continuously after all have been destroyed and displaced. At the forefront of all discussions to resolve the crisis should be the protection of women and girls who are survivors of the unaddressed carnage. Government need to set up 24hrs free psychosocial support centres with toll free hotlines to encourage access for women who have undergone these traumatic experiences. The government needs to also work in hand with the Women Affairs Ministry and Commissions and women based civil society organisations operating in the North Central region to empower women and girls survivors. This is because the acquisition of skills can cushion the effects of the abrupt loss of their means of livelihood. Furthermore, the federal government needs to collaborate with the State and Local governments to set up local factories that will give women and girls job opportunities. These factories should be subjected to the oversight supervision of states, national and international civil society organisations for accountability and transparency.

The government can also establish small and medium scale businesses for women by providing capitals and also put in place mechanisms for ensuring the proper management of those businesses by employing monitoring business staff that will supervise and act as business counsellors for the women. These staff strength could be drawn from successful entrepreneurs with proven achievements or graduates with more than five years' experience in practical business administration.

Young girls and teenagers should be compelled to attend tuition free schools, with government sponsoring all their educational necessities such as uniforms, books, feeding and transportation. For transportation, the government can provide school buses with designated drivers, whose qualifications and backgrounds have been properly scrutinized. This is to ensure that the drivers do not become easily influenced by corrupt state forces who would want to

lure them into their nefarious activities.

Security and Peace building

Security must continue to be the first priority of the government. Security should be improved for both herders and farmers to prevent further break down of law and order. In fact, the government needs to put in place structures that will guarantee proactive responses to the crisis. Then the government has to carry out arrests and punish offenders. This is one step to rebuilding trust in the government.

Another security measure which has strong merits is community policing. Government needs to encourage existing structures within the community such as vigilante groups, to provide information that would assist security personnel in arresting culprits. Such groups also need the protection of government enforcement agencies and this should be provided with adequate mechanisms for checking the activities of the latter to ensure compliance and efficiency.

On peace building, women and girls should not be underestimated and tossed aside. They shouldn't only be seen as victims of the conflict but included in the conflict prevention efforts, post-conflict transition and reconstruction processes. The government must ensure that women are consulted during the peace negotiations in order to put into perspective their experiences and obtain firsthand information on ways to address and resolve the problems.

Social and Economic infrastructures

The government also needs to be committed to providing standard social and economic infrastructures in IDP Camps. Those communities need to be a priority for the government who should provide top notch security that will protect women from post trauma abuses.

Lasting Solution

The government must find a way to train, sensitise and educate herders through their traditional and religious leaders to embrace the ranching system that has proven to work in other climes. They should be trained to understand that business models in the 21st century have progressed beyond the nomad system. Society as we know it today can no longer support open grazing and this should be the stance of any progressive nation. Cattle rearing must be seen as what it is, a business and every business owner needs to take adequate steps to acquiring all that is necessary for that business to thrive. This includes the purchase of available land, fencing of the land in order to prevent

encroachment and the purchase of all tools and materials that would allow that business to be self-sufficient and Herders should not be exceptions to this model.

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WHICH TALK IS NOT ENOUGH? INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND VIOLENT CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

BY
BENSON OHIHON IGBOIN*

Introduction

Although 'talk' is frequently used as a word, it is infrequently practiced as an act. Despite this, talk precedes every conflict and comes after it. People and nations talk before they go to war and return to talk after the war. This suggests that talk is less understood or practiced as a veritable human engagement capable of restraining humans from conflict. But even if talk is verbalized and acted upon both in theory and praxis, the manner it is conducted is critical to the goal it is set to achieve. In addition, the 'talker' is also instrumental to whatever consequence eventually results from talking. I would like to add that talking as an act has peculiar cultural, social, psychological, religious and political terrain that it can fruitfully thrive in. As such, when a form of talk is done in a different context, the expected result might not be harvested. In fact, this is one of the reasons that interfaith dialogue is less fruitful in most parts of Africa as expected. This also would be the basis for me to reiterate a more cultural form of talking – palaver – peculiar and instantiated in traditional Africa, nay, Nigeria, that I argue, should be practised in the process of dealing with conflict situations in Nigeria.

Mbillah captures this thought when he notes that "historical experiences and cultural differences mean that interfaith relations from one continent, region or country cannot be exported wholesale to another continent, region or country. They may be shared in other areas, to enrich or inform, but they should not be transposed as if they were the norm everywhere."[1] This will thus suggest that, we need to identify the kind of talk that is not enough, and why an alternative to it is imperative in the search for harmonious and peaceful coexistence amongst people of diverse religions and cultures.

Conflict in Nigeria

Many studies have been carried out on violent conflict in Nigeria. From

1 Johnson A. Mbillah, "Interfaith Relations." In *Africa Public Theology*, S. B. Agang, D. A. Forster and H. J. Hendricks (eds.), Bukuru: ACTS, 2020, 260.

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historical, sociological, psychological, economic, political to religious studies, violent conflict has been well researched in Nigeria. Again, it is important that we understand the contexts of the conflict in order to proffer suitable remedies. However, as it has been generally observed in Nigeria, one form of violent conflict, more often than not, nosedives into another. For instance, a purely personal conflict taking place between individuals in a region of the country can quickly be interpreted and transformed to assume ethnic or religious conflict. The same is true of political violence that is also commonplace.

Of course, we must acknowledge the fact that Nigeria is a state, not a nation. Even though many people for different reasons will prefer to regard it as a nation, this does not vitiate the fact that it is not yet an organic nation. Each of the disparate nations is an organic nation. We can talk about Yoruba, Tiv, Edo, Fulani, Igbo, Hausa, and so forth as organic nations within the Nigerian state. These ethnic, organic nations have more solidarity and patriotism among their people and most likely will rise against others when there is a competitive or compelling need to do so. This is precisely what Nigeria is going through today with regard to Fulani herdsmen who invade and effectively occupy the lands of the farmers in the Middle Belt and southern parts; the bandits who take over territories and exert taxes, destroying lives and property in the north west and central, Biafrans in the southeast who believe that their continued coexistence in the country does not benefit them, the rise of Yoruba nation in the southwest as a counterforce to invaders trying to dispossess them of their ancestral lands. Except we intently trace the sponsors and perpetrators of these acts of violence to their personal religious believing and belonging, we can hardly argue that they are outright religious conflict. These are unlike Boko Haram in the northeast that has holistic religious undertone and goal – the establishment of a separate state where sharia will be the sole law.

The definitions of conflict are not static; they are dynamic and contextual. Conflict is defined in terms of its goal, that is, whether positive or negative. Some people perceive it as a natural occurrence, but others prefer to view it as behavioural, yet, some believe it is a necessary condition for development. Etymologically, conflict is derived from the Latin word, *conflictus*, which means collision or clash.[2] Some have posited that conflict is the "existing" state of disagreement over a view or position.[3] I have stressed the word existing

2 See "Understanding Conflict," https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261899/3-Understandingconflict.pdf/0f63c846-6942-4e8f-83c0-3626f2f73dfa

3 Sheriff Folarin, "Types and Causes of Conflict," http://eprints.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/3241/1/Folarin%2025.pdf

again because it does not seem to capture the whole essence of what we are dealing with. The view being emphasised here is that conflict is perpetual or persistent. Practically, we do know that there should be a state of no conflict before a conflict situation started. Conflict is a product of time; it comes through behavioural or structural condition that is enacted by authorities or parties as a result of claim to rights and needs. These behavioural or structural conditions were once not there or now interpreted in ways they were not hitherto conceived or crafted, or exercised in ways that now result in contest.

In what follows, I argue that the attitude and style of talking is important for a particular conflict situation. I will endeavour to explain each of these in order to establish the fact that in Nigeria many talk-patterns are confused with dialogue, and that dialogue itself as a form of talk, may have to be contextualized in palaver for it to be meaningful and result-oriented in Nigeria.

Talking to and Talking with

In a recent class, I asked my second-year students to define the word, is. I caused some unease by the seemingly simple question on one of the most frequently used 'small' words. Of course, I can posit that all of them have at one time or the other in their education/conversation/examination used the word correctly and confidently. But coming to ask them what it means was so perplexing that some of them were looking at the sky as if the answer would fall down from there. The import of this is that, when one talks about talk, it appears easy to assume that it is simple and straightforward. It will also imply that even though most people claim to be Christians or Muslims, they can hardly explain the thrust of their belief, making it difficult for interfaith talk to productively take place. In addition, of course, everyone talks. But the manner and intent of talking is critical to the concept of talking itself, and therefore, needs to be examined in context.

I try to distinguish between 'talking to' and 'talking with.' Many English speakers will argue that both can mean the same thing, and can be used interchangeably. Yet, contextually, when one looks at the usages of the two concepts, it is obvious that they sometimes communicate different meanings. More often than not, 'talking to' implies a one-directional talk as in, giving a lecture, explanation, warning, instruction, etc. while the listener(s) may not have the opportunity to respond. In this sense, talking to carries some form of authority – top-down mode of talking, where one dictates to others on specific things that should be done, canvass a position that should not be challenged.

In a talking to situation, it is not that listeners may not talk, but they do that from a position of weakness. In other words, there is something at stake if the listeners talk in the manner the 'talker to' talked to them. It is as a result of this that talking to is described in terms of "power differential."[4]

On the other hand, talking with implies that "two or more people speak with each other about something on equal terms with informative manner…. It is not necessary that the other(s) will acknowledge the point,"[5] but it is important that those who are involved in talking with come to realise that they are in the business of talking together. This is not to suggest that in the talking with situation there is no order. It is the case that each person has the opportunity to air their view conscientiously with the goal of being understood and also contributing to the advancement of the what is being discussed. It is to be noted that in a talking with context, suspicion is less prevalent since a show of superiority and authority is less present. The confidence this builds among people helps to generate ideas that engender peace and harmony in a community as well as help to understand and resolve conflict easier than the talk to model.

When therefore we say 'when talk is not enough,' it is first and foremost important to ascertain whether it is talking to or talking with we mean. But before I further provide more insight into that, at least, from the Nigerian experience, it is crucial to delineate other forms of talking encounters that have been constantly misconstrued with dialogue.

Debate and Argument

When we hear about debate, we immediately think of how to win an opponent, no matter who the opponent may be. Debate is simply the forceful deployment of language to defeat an opponent. "In debate, a person only employs his wit or sometimes appeals to the force of language in order to defeat an opponent."[6] Even though a debater can learn from an opponent, it is certainly not because his mind is open to learning. He only learns from his

4 See "Difference between 'Talk to' and 'Talk with,'" https://englishstudypage.com/grammar/differences-between-talk-to-and-talk-with/

5 "Difference between 'Talk to' and 'Talk with,'" https://englishstudypage.com/grammar/differences-between-talk-to-and-talk-with/

6 Benson O. Igboin, "The Concomitance of Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: Secularity, Tolerance and Dialogue," A. K. Chepkwony and P. M. J. Hess (eds.) *Human Views on God: Variety Not Monotony (Essays in Honour of Ade P. Dopamu)*, Eldoret, Kenya: Moi University, 145.

opponent because he believes he can use such knowledge to counterargue, and thus polemically and subtly flaw the opponent's reasoning to his advantage. Apart from using the language of force, a debater may also resort to the language of persuasion to effectively deal with the opponent. "Winning debates requires merely that you persuade your audience that you've won."[7]

But the question is whether there is anything wrong in persuading opponents to change their views or perceptions about an object, idea or in a conflict situation. Shouldn't we try to convince an opponent to reconsider his position to align with ours? Shouldn't we make an opponent abandon his position because he is not able to persuasively push it? As innocuous as these questions appear to be, they actually subject others' opinions to scrutiny and adjudication. They are meant to evaluate opponents' positions. The measure of success is the ability to effectuate a change of opinion and to curry favourable assessment from the judges or audience. The goal, as it has been stated earlier, is to win. In other words, "in debating you are pitted against others whose exclusive goal is to prevent you from getting what you want."[8] In addition to the fact that you are limited by time to persuade your audience to your side, one is also almost always called upon to debate a topic one may not be suited or what take a side of the debate one is compelled to take. As one debates, one hones one's skills and becomes a persuader in order to increase the chances of winning.[9]

Arguments necessarily cause pain and frustration. They are tasking because they require rigorous processes of logical presentation of ideas. According to Johnson,

> An argument is simply a proposed interpretation of some experience backed by reasons for that proposed interpretation. An argument presents a claim – about what something is, about what relationship exists between things or what value something has – and then offers reasons others should accept that interpretation. We experience something and, because we desire certainty, we present an argument to others that establishes how we think that experience should be interpreted.[10]

7 Stephen L. Johnson, Winning Debates: A Guide to Debating in the Style of the World Universities Debating Championships, New York: International Debate Education Association, 2009, 1.

8 Johnson, 1.

9 Johnson, 2.

10 Johnson, 10-11.

Thus, when one hears of dialogue between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria for instance, the language sometimes betrays the act. Of course, humans are meaning-making beings; they construct meaning from their experiences and want to ascertain such experiences through interpretations. Although human experience is not fixated, it is nevertheless an outcome of choices they make. As rational beings, humans long developed language to explicate and interpret their experiences, an ability other lower organism have not been able to comprehensively develop. But because of freedom humans exercise, they can construct and interpret the world around them in different ways. In fact, there is no exclusively absolute way to interpret an event or the world. There are no concretely fixed meanings either. In addition, expression or communication of our views and interpretations of the world through symbols, e.g.,, language, helps us to minimise the uncertainty that defines the world,[11] and the conflict it generates.

The use of language is not value-free; language is loaded with meaning itself, and it can be used to construct further meanings apart from the obvious ones. As the vehicle that conveys our thoughts and experiences, the framing of language can lead to how we understand a phenomenon individually and collectively. In this sense, language creates the meaning of our experiences as well as distributes power to the creators and controllers of the meaning of our experiences.[12] What is clear is that framing the argument can be influenced by political, national, security, ethnic, religious, diplomatic, social, cultural or ideological persuasion. Two similar events can be framed and argued in different, unrelated ways because of the overarching interest they pose to the interpreters. For instance, President Muhammadu Buhari in his Independence Day speech on 1st October, 2021 announced to the country that the government has identified the sponsors of Nnamdi Kanu and Sunday Adeyemo, popularly known as Igboho, two citizens agitating for the creation of their ethnic nations out of the existing country. While Kanu has been arrested, Adeyemo was intercepted and detained in Benin Republic after his house had been invaded in the night by the government security agents. In fact, Kanu's house was also invaded by the military in 2017, leading to his escape out of the country until he was arrested in Kenya in 2021. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has since been declared a terrorist group. But the argument is, why has the

12 Johnson, 9.
13 Johnson, 10.

same government maintained a philosophical silence about the sponsors and perpetrators of acts of terror in the north? In other words, it is clear from their operations that the 'bandits' in the north should have long been declared a terrorist organisation. Even the framing of these organised criminals as bandits has generated a lot of controversies. The claim that the bandits have established a parallel government in some communities has been refuted by the federal government, arguing that the bandits only collect taxes from those communities. But the question is, who is legally empowered to collect taxes from the citizens? The Fulani herdsmen have been regarded as the fourth most dangerous terrorist group in the world, yet the Nigerian government has continued to regard it less than a dangerous group. The point is, these examples demonstrate how and why arguments are created and distributed as a form of power, but made to be accepted as valid form of collective experience. Johnson summarises it thus:

How we choose to interpret our reality affects us. How, then, do these interpretations come into being? How are they created and spread? How does an entire society come to regard one attack as a crime and another as an act of war? If language choice does the work of initially describing these events, then arguments are responsible for convincing others to accept these descriptions.[13]

This thus means that people's experience of reality can either be validated or invalidated by argument. As it has been made clear, arguments are systematically organised thoughts, presented to convince people to accept the validity of an experience or reality, even though such reality may stand contrary to the people's experience. The official position on reality or experience in any society enjoys wide acceptance in national and international spheres, but the rise and doggedness of civil movements and social media, alternative narratives and arguments based more closely on the reality are filtering in the central space, and also influencing how official arguments are constructed. So, when debate and argument as a form of talk are framed as dialogue, we can suspect that the aim is not to learn a new thing but to force a judgment on people that may be victims of some conflict.

Negotiation

Another form of talking is negotiation. Negotiation occurs daily in both informal and formal settings. Almost everyone gets involved in it either consciously or unconsciously. Negotiation usually results from conceiving

11 Johnson, 5.

something as distinct and yet part of the same thing. This presents a picture of diversity and dynamism which have to be taken into serious consideration in the art of negotiation.[14] It also portrays a picture of conflict of interest which has to be resolved or managed by talking in order to reach a consensus or compromise. What is clear in negotiation is competitive interests and stubborn or subtle hold to those interests. This thus instantiates the fact that power is critical to negotiation. The decision on what, how, when, where and why to negotiate is an apodictic demonstration of power. Power has been defined in many ways as the ability to modify other people's position or give and withdraw privileges, and even rights. In a more nuanced way, power is conceived as critical influence that results in changing another's values, goals or attitudes through either coercion, reward, legitimacy, expertise or referent.[15]

A powerful negotiator in conflict, acting from his position for instance, can more accessibly identify compatible interests than a low-power negotiator in a conflict situation. The former can stoutly negotiate a win-win situation where there are compatible interests, allowing for integrative agreement with the opponent. But where there are no compatible interests, he may act on self-interest privileging on his position, and reject integrative agreement. Even at the relational stage of negotiation, power and respect define how both sides relate. This affects the second stage, which entails identification of problems to be negotiated. At this stage there are exchanges of information on issues and interests, with the belief that they are honestly presented. The third stage is one that sees negotiators bring their strategies into play in order to attain the goal of negotiation. The last stage is reaching agreements. All of these stages are characterised by influence.[16] This presupposes that in negotiation, the idea of give and take cannot be ruled out, even though what is given away or taken over can result in another round of negotiation or conflict. That is why in some instances, there is either a win-win or win-lose results. But how this situation is ultimately maintained and sustained depends on how both parties behave subsequently. In addition, how the negotiation reaches and attains its set goal and agreement is contingent also on the behaviour of the

14 Galia Patt-Shamir and Ping Zhang, "A Confucian-Jewish Dialogue." In *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*, Catherine Cornille (ed.), Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013. 464.

15 Andre Maiwald, "Power, Negotiation Type and Negotiation Tactics," Unpublished Dissertation submitted to the University of Twente, The Netherlands, 2015, 4.

16 Maiwald, 6.

17 Benson O. Igboin, "Strike as Social Action in FGN-ASUU Relations: A Moral Quest for Alternative,"

parties. Comportment of both parties is crucial to the conduct of negotiation. In Nigeria, negotiation often breaks down or deadlocked because of insincerity and dishonesty of one or both parties in dispute.

Several negotiations in Nigeria have collapsed because of some of the reasons adduced above. In addition, the concept of credible disability seems to have almost completely been eroded from the psyche of the people and government, as well as religious bodies especially when the negotiation involves government. Credible disability is a concept that states that even if one is unable to execute an obligation or agreement (temporarily or even permanently) on the basis of sincere scientific evidence, the recipients or parties involved will genuinely believe the other negotiator's incapability to be true and not deceptive. In this instance, social capital must have been built over the years between the negotiating parties. Both parties must have produced evidence of abiding by the terms of agreement reached previously rather than dubiously reneging, abdicating or denying the existence of such agreements.[17] Interfaith relations can only be sustained when the interfacing faiths abide by agreements reached previously. But it must be noted that negotiation is not dialogue in the true sense of it.

Mediation

Everyone, faith or community has had cause to resort to mediation as a form of talk at one time or the other. Mediation has been defined as "the process by which participants, together with the assistance of a neutral person or persons, systematically isolate disputed issues in order to develop options, consider alternatives and reach a consensual agreement that will accommodate their needs."[18] As a co-operative problem-solving strategy, mediation helps parties to constructively find agreeable solutions to their disputes without necessarily resorting to the enforcement of their legal rights.[19] Since legal rights have to be 'compromised' in order to intervene, mediation thus artfully employ intuition, subtlety and vision.[20] Mbillah argues from a normative point

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ASUU Journal of Humanities, 2/1 (2012): 57-80.

18 See Rural Assistance Authority, "What is Mediation?", www.raa.nsw.gov.au (accessed 29th October, 2021).

19 Rural Assistance Authority, "What is Mediation?"

20 Amy L. Smith and David R. Smock, *Managing a Mediation Process*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2008, 5.

of view when he said that "faith communities involved in violent conflicts have no moral ground whatsoever to mediate in other conflicts."[21] In other words, mediation is morally possible and warranted only if faith communities are themselves free from violence that they intend to intervene in when it concerns others. After all, you cannot give what you do not have. The burden here is heavy because if a mediator is known to have a history of involvement in violent conflict, they cannot normatively be trusted to intervene. This thus points a finger at Christians and Muslims in Nigeria.

The employment of a mediator immediately suggests that talks between parties may have broken down, that is to say, there is no talking with, or that there are no gainful talks. What therefore the mediator is expected to do is to try as much as possible to be a trustworthy person whom both parties can confidently relate with. The quality of being an objective and confident mediator plays immense roles in the ability of a mediator to either help the parties to resume talk or he himself isolates the contested or conflictual issues in dispute. This tortuous job could involve learning and understanding the cultural, social, legal, economic, religious, political or ethnic underpinning of the dispute. The mediator thus has to develop options to resolving the dispute by allowing the parties to actively participate in the processes in order to reach a consensus that incorporates their needs and interests.[22] However, the time frame for mediation is not elastic; it has to be done within a reasonable time so that the built-up tension can be dispensed with as quickly as possible. For instance, Moshood Abiola in 1985 almost caused a religious violence between Muslims and Christians in the University of Ibadan when he ordered the demolition of the white cross at the Catholic chapel. His claim was that the cross that had stood there since 1954 was too close to the newly commissioned mosque. The consequence was that there was a 'talk to' situation from both parties that would have inflamed the fire of violence by students who before now had been co-existing peacefully. But the intervention/mediation of the federal government averted the looming violence as compromise had to be reached: "the cross stayed, but a concrete screen was erected to block the mosque's view of the cross, and a Muslim emblem (crescent) was erected near the mosque."[23] That mediatory role was able to hold together the opposing

21 Mbillah, 262.

22 Rural Assistance Authority, "What is Mediation?"

23 Marloes Janson, Crossing Religious Boundaries: Islam, Christianity, and 'Yoruba Religion' in Lagos, Nigeria, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 41.

parties in "a generative, asymmetrical relation to each other."[24]

Dialogue

Dialogue is a meaning making process that involves talking with, having discussions about a mutual concern to which partners are committed even though they may have different ideological, religious or political persuasions. It is not just that one is talking about one's deepest convictions with others, but also attentively listening to other people's convictions with equal commitment. Although they may not agree with one another, they surely will come to understand, appreciate and respect one another's beliefs or values. Thus, dialogue could be viewed as a conversation between two or more people on a topic of interest in order to gain more insight, but more particularly to understand why the life of the partners depends on it.

Dialogue is an encounter of mutual recognition of the fact of existence at both formal and informal levels. Dialogue as an encounter can take place in the family, market place, places of worship, school and so on. It is an encounter that generates feelings for those one is dialoguing with, but not on the basis of trying to input or impose one's understanding into the partner's belief or standpoint. It is, in fact, an encounter in which one is called first and foremost to unlearn the mislearning one had previously imbibed about the partner's belief and come to a place to listen with the heart. Dialogue as an encounter is "grounded on natural compassion" putting into the equation the partner's condition, first as a fellow human being who has all the qualities like oneself, despite the acquired or accidental appropriation of values that socially or religiously differentiate and define them. Thus, dialogue poses critical challenges that require courageous engagement in order to navigate the thresholds of the challenges. The spirit of courage opens up new vistas of encountering, understanding, accepting or reconsidering values that are not one's.[25]

Beyond intellectual formalism, dialogue spans wide range of issues undergirded by mutual respect and openness to learning new things in other people's traditions. The goal may differ from simple learning to social transformation and peaceful co-existence. These results are sometimes

24 Mary Anderson, 106.

25 Jenn Lindsay, "Pluralismo Vivo: Lived Religious Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue in Rome," PhD Thesis submitted to Boston University, 2018.

achieved through tension. Dialogue is not as simple as the exchange of views in a relaxed spot; it can, and often, involve debate, argument, negotiation or mediation. Of course, debates are naturally fierce, arguments pointedly logical, negotiation subtly strategic and mediation skilfully artful, in dialogue, they assume new meanings and goals because the end product is to gain new insight and understanding rather than to win or defeat the partner in dialogue. But achieving the goal requires a delicate shift in self-understanding of one's values, beliefs and traditions and openness to the other.[26]

Although dialogue is to be understood as a talking with process, it is also to be viewed as attempting to embody mutuality, respect, sharing and trust across board. Dialogue sees all partners as beings who should be respected as such no matter the degree of difference they may have with respect to their belief and traditions. The existential challenges of all human beings are almost the same irrespective of their religious traditions. For instance, in a country like Nigeria, economic and violent challenges do not essentially distinguish between Christians and Muslims even though they may suspect themselves in other areas of their co-existence. To bring it down more clearly, the market forces do not affect the Christians differently from the Muslims. Even though more violence is undertaken by the Muslims, for example, Boko Haram, Fulani herdsmen, bandits and so on, many Muslims have been adversely affected like the Christians. Dialogue thus attempts to deal with such common existential reality that does not have religious coloration as well as religion-induced conflict. The ethics and sacrality of life, forgiveness, reconciliation, peace and justice, environmental threats such global warming, climate change are cardinal issues that form the thrust of dialogue. So, whether dialogue of the head that seeks the meaning of life through the understanding of other people's religions or ideologies, dialogue of the hand that empowers all to seek and make the world a better place or dialogue of the heart that awfully embraces "the inner spirit and aesthetic expression of the Other," the "magnetic lodestone" of dialogue shifts the world to a new paradigm of talking.[27]

Now, inter-religious dialogue can then be viewed as co-operation and construction of positive interaction with peoples of different faith and

26 Catherine Cornille, "Introduction." In The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue, xii-xiii.

27 Leonard Swidler, "The History of Inter-Religious Dialogue." In *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*, 6; Allan K. Kefa and Ombuge M. Moses, *Manual for Interreligious Dialogue*, Nairobi-Westlands: Chemchemi Ya Ukweli, n.d.

religious traditions. Inter-religious dialogue has become more urgent as a result of pluralism and diversity. Religious diversity and religious plurality are inevitably defining factors in many contemporary societies.[28] Of course, we can also talk about inter-ideological standpoint in discussing pluralism. Pluralism, which many have painstakingly adopted as a safe valve for inter-religious dialogue does not fully appreciate the critical co-presence of religious diversity. While pluralism emphasises unity among different people or ideologies for the public good, it does not sufficiently address uniformity in diversity.[29] But what inter-religious dialogue brings forth is the attempt to build bridges between and across different spectrums of lived religions, constructing relations and leaving no room for exclusion.

However, inter-religious dialogue is not as innocuous as assumed. The issue of "nonnegotiable" faith has raised many critical questions that demand conscious and creative tackling in inter-religious dialogue.[30] For instance, the place of Jesus Christ in Christianity has been viewed as one area of hard dialogue. For Christians, it is a non-negotiable and irreducible belief, without which the thread and essence of Christianity will collapse. Since one has to be secure in one's religious tradition before engaging in inter-religious dialogue, the possibility of impactful dialogue as an encounter for human flourishing may be slow and wobbling. But again, this is not to suggest that in inter-religious dialogue one has to compromise the truth of one's religious tradition in order to impress one's partners. It is rather to converse with one's partners in love and commitment, the truth of one's religious tradition, without foreclosing the doors of learning new things from others. But this is suggestive of identity and how it can be safely negotiated in inter-religious dialogue so that its goal can be achieved. Encountering dialogue is predominantly done from one's own religious identity and perspective. Such a religious identity that has the

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28 Benson O. Igboin, "Religious Plurality, Religious Diversity and Community among the Yoruba," presented at the Lagos Studies Association conference held at the University of Lagos between 19th and 23rd June, 2018; Igboin, "Religious Plurality and Diversity in Nigeria's Religioscape," presented at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, St. Louis, Missouri, United States of America, 25th to 27th October, 2019.

29 James A. Beckford, "Re-Thinking Religious Pluralism." In *Religious Pluralism: Framing Religious Diversity in the Contemporary World*, Giuseppe Giordan and Enzo Pace (eds.), Cham: Springer, 2014, 22-23.

30 Helene Egnell, "Is Pope Francis an Anonymous Feminist?" In *Pope Francis and Interreligious Dialogue: Religious Thinkers Engage with Recent Papal Initiatives*, Harold Kasimow and Alan Race (eds.), Cham: Springer, 2018, 120.

capacity for empathy and sincere receptivity for partners becomes both a requirement and a critique.[31]

Why Inter-religious Dialogue?

Like I pointed out above, pluralism has become a defining factor in contemporary society, where it means the co-existence of different religions, cultures, values, traditions, beliefs, ideologies and so on. Human societies are no longer a monolithic place where absolute and exclusive claim to truth was once unchallengingly possible. These competing and compelling religious traditions and values bring to the fore different appreciable perspectives to the understanding of humanity, from which members of the society learn new things, experience new reality and resolve conflict.

From the Western perspective, dialogue became inevitable because of the scientific revolution that resulted in paradigm shift on how the world is observed and experienced. The Enlightenment also instigated an epistemological paradigm shift that processed how humans understand the meaning and status attributable to truth. The epistemological revolution changed how people conceived, perceived, thought, and even decided action. With these, new ways of viewing what had been considered to be once exclusive, absolute and non-contradictory became debatable, and thus engaged 'pluralistically.'[32] Exclusivism or more particularly religious exclusivism, holds that only one's religion has the truth that leads to salvation. This obviously defines other religions as inferior or false. Since exclusivism shuts the door of salvation against other religions, it thus conceives its truth as the only salvific way, a teaching, which brings about hostile or violent co-existence. Even at its inclusivist standpoint where the concept of anonymous Christians[33] or Muslims, for instance, is canvassed and even seems to be accepted by some, the internal dynamic and praxis of religions still have a way of prompting violence. Even though pluralism is the most widely appealing religious attitude globally, the emphasis on a possible one world with one God, although logically attractive has not completely translated into a peaceful world with the rise of 'violent' religious fundamentalism. Religious fundamentalism is creating a religious nationalism, carving out a separate nation that subsumes

31 Egnell, 120.
32 Swidler, 11.
33 See Egnell, 122.

under strict religious law. It is a challenge to secularization, particularly in the West and its notions of secularity. This therefore makes religious parallelism visible, even though it essentially does not differentiate from religious exclusivism. Religious parallelism holds the belief that all religions do not have a meeting point just as parallel lines regardless of the fact that they may point to the same direction.[34]

The attempt to navigate these challenges of how religions are practiced brings dialogue to limelight. Of course, humans must continue to interact and also view reality from different angles. However, in order to participate in a fruitful inter-religious dialogue, there are certain minimum conditions that partners should meet. The first is humility. Humility is the virtue that recognises the finitude of one's religious tradition. It also helps to appreciate that one's belief can be made more graspable or understandable in listening to other people's religious traditions. The historical and cultural boundaries that separate different religions can be explained in terms of relativity. This is finely illustrated in the story of the six blind men and the elephant. The blind men touched different parts of the elephant and each claimed the parts they touched was the whole. But they soon realised their ignorance of their absolute claims and the relativity of their knowledge of the elephant. And, also, with humility they accepted that each of them has partial knowledge of the elephant that could be made more encompassing by listening to, and learning from, one another.[35] The epistemological humility exemplified by the blind men in reality is sometimes difficult in inter-religious dialogue because partners who hold on to absolute or exclusivist position of their religions will need humility to re-examine their position first of all before fruitfully participating in dialogue. One critical area that practically expresses limitation in almost all religions is mysticism. No one can fully express the experience, and some have argued that all human languages are plagued with inherent limitations.

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34 Innocent O. Umejesi and Benson O. Igboin, "Styles and Attitudes to the Study of Religions: An Appraisal of the Nigerian Religious Universe." In *Human Views on God: Variety Not Monotony*, 119-136.

35 Benson O. Igboin, "Paradox, Knowledge and Religious Violence in Nigeria: A Case for Reverse-thinking." In *Knowledge Economy and Nigeria's National Security: Essays in Honour of Basorun Seinde Arogbofa*, Isaac O. Albert, Babajide O. Ololajulo and Oyesoji Aremu, (eds.), Abuja: Society for Peace Studies and Practice, 2015, 266-281.

36 Cornille, 23; see also Benson O. Igboin, "Esu and the Problem of Evil." In *Esu: Yoruba God, Power, and the Imaginative Frontiers*, Toyin Falola (ed.), North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 101-114.

The encounter with other languages enhances and enriches human languages; this same applies to religions.[36]

Commitment to a particular religious tradition is also required in fruitful inter-religious dialogue. Commitment does not stand alone; it goes hand in hand with openness if dialogue will be meaningful. Openness makes the partners to listen to one another in order to learning new things while not blocking the possibility and opportunity that dialogue offers. Cornille argues that commitment to one's religious teaching or truth in inter-religious dialogue can be helpful because the partners can provide insights and experiences while learning new things about their own religions from the probing questions that may be asked. Of course, such commitment to one's religious tradition is not a strategy for mission during dialogue; in other words, dialogue is not meant to convince others to accept one's religious truth and be converted to it. The posture of convincing partners in dialogue can create suspicion and mistrust which can ruin the goal and fruit of dialogue.[37]

The third is interconnection. A closer look at religions more often than not reveals that there are areas such as doctrine, history, existential reality and so forth, that different religions interconnect with. This means that partners accept that their different religions interconnect in some ways. Partners can thus explore common ground and goal that their religions can serve as incredible resources for human flourishing. However, this does not mean that all religions possess the same experience and goal. The fourth is empathy. Reflexivity and self-reference are important in dialoguing. What empathy does is to provide the possibility of understanding of other people's religious traditions, that is, it stretches one's "religious imagination beyond the categories of one's own religion and gain some understanding of, and resonance with, religious teachings and practices other than one's own."[38]

The fifth condition, as Cornille recognises it, is hospitality. Cornille argues that hospitality involves the recognition of "actual truth" in other's religion and integrating it into one's religious tradition. The recognition and integration of the truth do not entail that all truths found in other's religions are integrable into one's religious tradition.[39] For instance, the appropriation or integration

37 Cornille, 23-24.
38 Cornille, 26.
39 Cornille, 29.

of the concept of "born again" and Pentecostal mode of worship into Islam does not mean that the Muslims that do so have abandoned their experience in Islam and appropriated all the truth in Christianity.[40] The same can be said about Christians who adopted the contemplative religious practices of Asian religions.

The foregoing depicts the fact that inter-religious dialogue stimulates and instigates mutual learning, understanding, appreciation, interconnection, integration of other's religious values. Even though this does not mean, and it is not meant to mean, holistic appropriation of other religions' teachings, any appropriation necessarily shifts the meaning and its boundaries, and thus reflects the reality if dynamism. The insight gained in such experience is useful for religious growth and development which can result in more religious harmony. It is in this regard that Elizabeth Kendal argues that the solution to inveterate religious violence is "more dialogue, not less."[41] However, while dialogue has its advantages that have been emphasised thus far, it is to be noted that we must guard against *dialogueritis*, that is, "an illness described as too much dialogue at a time."[42] This means that dialogue is not creative and innovative, but emphasis is simply laid on its regularity leading to the loss of the spirit of dialogue.

African Palaver

One of the criticisms against dialogue is that it is framed in Western conceptual categories and reflects strong epistemological underpinning that inflects Rene Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* instead of ubuntu and community that define most of Africa.[43] In preventing, managing, and resolving conflict in Africa, palaver has been the most potent conversational engagement, which, unfortunately, has now been regarded as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism, coming behind western court system that ultimately creates

40 Ebenezer Obadare, "The Muslim Response to the Pentecostal Surge in Nigeria: Prayer and the Rise of Charismatic Islam," *Journal of Religious and Political Practice*, 2/1 (2016): 75-91; Abimbola A. Adelakun, *Performing Power in Nigeria: Identity, Politics, and Pentecostalism*, Cambridge: CUP, 2022, 66-72.

41 See Benson O. Igboin, "Theory and Praxis of Religious Tolerance," *OGIRISI: A New Journal of African Studies*, 12 (2016): 293-318. http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/og.v12i 1.16

42 Igboin, "Theory and Praxis of Religious Tolerance," 308.

43 James Ogude (ed.), *Ubuntu and the Reconstitution of Community*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019.

permanent enmity. Palaver as a word and practice is docked in controversies with regard to its origin. While most Western scholars would prefer that it has a Portuguese origin, it has become clearer that it is indeed an African practice. Conceptually, the mutations of the word palaver among the West all recognise that it is indeed their interaction with and in Africa that palaver emerged. It is unambiguous that the Western traders and colonisers regarded the process of transactions with Africans as tortuous, long and in their view never-ending. As such, palaver mutated into barbaric, fruitless, useless, uncivilised, unnecessary, idle, time-wasting talk.[44] In addition, the Europeans, unable to grasp the import of palaver among Africans, described it as meaning trouble, fighting, commotion, noise and nuisance. As Shah noted, to these Europeans, "the word 'palaver' is colloquially associated with useless verbiage and the nuisance of a tediously long, aimless and superfluous debate. At the same time, it insinuates an uncivilised culture of discourse beyond reason…."[45]

Even though Shah was able to recognise the African origin and consequent mutations of the term, she did not observe that the Europeans who so described palaver amongst the Africans were all exhibiting crass impatience, because patience is the basic requirement of an enduring and fruitful palaver. It is the impatience of the Europeans, who as it has long been discovered were exploitative in their dealings with Africans, that resulted in the pejorative ascriptions to palaver as rigmarole or fuss. Of course, Africans were and still interested in clear details of conversations and transactions of all forms. This does not mean that they are incapable of intellectual argumentation and summary, but the communal system entails that members of the community have valuable contributions to make, and should be allowed to talk. This is where the virtue of patience comes in. In this regard, Bujo avers:

> Palaver is by no means superfluous talk or useless negotiation but an efficient institutionalization of communicative action. If an important decision is to be arrived at over matters that affect the people as a community, the wisest representatives of the people are called together for a palaver. These wise men have to be distinguished from the council of elders, which has the task of advising the chief or king in everything. Wise men, who are invited for a palaver, are

44 Mira Shah, "A Word: 'Palaver' and its Transferal Residues," *Word and Text: A Journal of Literary Studies and Linguistics*, 4/2 (Dec. 2014): 68.

45 Shah, 67.

> not members of an official institution. In the palaver only competence and experience count. They are the ones who share daily life with the people, so that their argumentation is concerned with the people's existential interests, often to the smallest detail. In order to find a solution for a problem, they share their experiences, refer to the entire history of the clan community, and consider the interests of both the living and the dead.[46]

The practice of palaver as a resolution system amongst indigenous Africans is instructive for the reason that it has a healing elixir; it is not meant to deal with cases at superficial level but to uproot their causes, deal with their effects in order to restore life to the individuals and community. To be sure, palaver is the traditional African system of dealing with the issues of life. It is a conversational way of discussing, deciding, examining, resolving or even preventing conflict by allowing everyone, without formal qualifications, to say what they have to say. Everyone has something important to talk about a matter. Thus, no one is prevented from coming forth to discuss the issues that affect them.[47]

As a way of life that is hardly recognised by the West, and almost being completely abandoned by many African communities because of the impact of colonialism and missionary religions, "palaver is a cultural and social practice … rooted in communal social, epistemological and metaphysical philosophy that resonates throughout African cultures."[48] The term philosophy is used loosely because palaver does not subscribe to the strict epistemological requirement that undergirds dialogue discussed above. More importantly, African way of being in, or experiencing, the world is peculiarly African, and resonates a composite mode: both physical and supersensible. Therefore, the metaphysical aspect of palaver is a significantly indispensable aspect of the process of dealing with the issue of life in order to maintain or sustain social harmony. At the heart of palaver is the word! "The African traditional mode

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46 Benezet Bujo, The Ethical Dimension of Community: The African Model of Dialogue between North and South, Nairobi: Paulines, 1998, 36.

47 See Igboin, "The Concomitance of Religious Conflicts in Nigeria, 150; Juliette Dubost, "Palaver as a Regime: Study of African traditional Form of Democracy," Dissertation submitted to Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2020, 4.

48 Dubost, 6.

49 Dubost, 7.

of existence is characterised by the valorisation of speech on every level of life…. African civilisation is the transcending desire to build the Man and the world in words…. The privileged place of speech goes hand in hand with a communal vision of the natural and supernatural world, of knowledge, and of society."[49] Spoken word as indestructible force has a metaphysical import in palaver because African community comprises the living and the dead. The presence of the dead in the midst of the living compels and regenerates the word as well as gives meaning to it. Since African traditional universe is an extension of the supernatural world, social harmony being sought cannot be divorced from the latter. The involvement of ancestors in dealing with the issues of life resonates the belief that their lives and experiences are still required in the community. Critical decisions are not made until consultations are held with the ancestors. Again, as Dubost observes,

The intangible but unbreakable link of vital force is present during palaver events. The tree under which palaver often takes place, is not just a cool place where minds are calmer, it is also a sacred tree, sheltering gods and ancestors, to whom members of the society are united through vital force…. In that respect, under the palaver tree, the ancestors' knowledge is accessible when needed. The sacred dimension of palaver plays an important part in the process of its institutionalization as a political practice, because the involvement of ancestors and of their wisdom is an important guarantee for the objectivity and legitimacy of the final decision.[50]

Two kinds of palaver take place in African traditional universe. The first is irenic and the second is agonistic. In the irenic sense, palaver happens as an everyday practice in form of family meeting, business transaction, marriage, illness and medicine and so on. Palaver as a word brings about healing to the persons at the psychological, physiological and emotional level. On the agonistic plane, palaver functions to prevent, reduce, or resolve conflict with words. In a consensus-based community, conflict does not disappear by itself; palaver may become codified and ritualized, judicial and political practice. Even though there is no neat demarcation between irenic and agonistic palaver in practice, the common denominator is recourse to the presence of the ancestor and the healing of the community. Palaver as a way of finding solutions to individual and communal problems and disputes is indeed demanding. It may take some time, yet its results are long-lasting. It is in this process that cases

50 Dubost, 8.

are not just resolved, but relationship restored and sealed by commensal meal which brothers in dispute share to publicly announce that they have indeed agreed to the terms of palaver and to ensure that the peace is maintained. Friendship is thus regained and restored and the community flourishes once more. This immediately suggests that the dispute between two brothers strains and drains the community since the individuals are integral members of the community.[51]

Conclusion

Conflict is inevitable in human society. The burden on humanity is how best to ensure that productive conflict is experienced. Nigeria is not strange to inveterate conflict of different colorations. In its destructive mode that Nigeria is at present undergoing, talk is important at political and religious level. The position that the unity of the country is non-negotiable is self-serving and does not reflect the reality and demand for talk. At the religious plane, talk is also indispensable. But who talks and how the talk takes place are pertinent because talk can bring about peace or aggravate intolerant reactions.

I have argued that many conversational encounters have been confused with dialogue in Nigeria. In a 'talk to' situation, listeners are perceived as active receptors and passive respondents. Taken into a religious conversational mode, one religious leader may assume that he or she must be listened to, and everything said taken as true. In reality, the talker to is not always correct; he stands on a portal that is not entirely free from subjective mode. Debate and argument regard others as opponents who must be won or convinced to shift meaning of what is being talked about. In some instances, so called inter-religious dialogue is characterised by debate and argument that leave people more hurt than healed. The forceful language with which religious leaders sometimes express their experience depicts the tone of debate and argument. This is more so because dialogue should not only be thought of in its formal arrangement. Negotiation also has its inherent limitations as a form of conversation. While it does not regard participants as brothers, it also has recourse to power and politicking that have been the bane of fruitful dialogue in the country. Mediation conceives participants as opponents who cannot come on their own by themselves to finish up their talk. While it has led to some results, the intervention of a third party is a fact of breakdown of talk.

51 Igboin, "The Concomitance of Religious Conflicts in Nigeria, 150; Dubost, 13.

I argued that dialogue is important for harmonious coexistence and in dealing with conflict arising from interfaith encounters, but I also argued that dialogue has to appropriate the cardinal elements of African palaver – a less formal talk format that allows everyone that has something to say to contribute to the process of resolving communal conflict, where each with great patience and attention listens to brothers' sides of the story. Pope Francis just acknowledges this when he proposes that dialogue is "a path that deserves to be undertaken with patience in order to transform competition into collaboration."[52] Pope Francis' charge is against the backdrop that the modern world is characterised by "connections" and yet hardly listens or understands one another. Palaver is autochthonous to Africans and they feel well at home when talking with one another to resolve whatever conflict they experience. They are not just talking about something; the traditional Africans talk from 'something'; they learn from one another rather than talk about one another in resolving conflict. In it, the presence of the supersensible world is felt; the fruit is not just for the brothers in dispute to be healed, but the community as a whole to be restored to flourishing. Whereas all other modes of talking regard the other as opponents or partners, palaver regards them as brothers. This sense of brotherhood is urgently needed in Nigerian interfaith relations and dialogue.

52 Devin Watkins, "Pope: Future rests on Education toward Mutual Respect," https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/new/2021-11/pope-francis-letter-georgetown-university-civilta-cattolica.html accessed 6/11/2021

ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AMIST VIOLENT CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

BY
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Introduction

Nigeria, the acclaimed giant of Africa, is a multi-ethnic as well as multi-religious nation. Unfortunately, the country has become a centre of vibrant ethno-religious intolerance. The challenge of religious crisis in Nigeria is apparently intractable. This is mainly as a result of the presumption that all the outbreaks of violence between two given groups of religionists result from the same cause(s). Thus, solutions mostly proffered centred around "tolerance" and "dialogue" (Akanmidu 2012:34-41). More importantly, it is assumed that tolerance and dialogue as concepts and in practice are clear to every Nigerian in such a way that sermons, talks on radio and television and other forms of social mobilisation are enough to create atmosphere congenial to religious peaceful co-existence. Taking the level of people's understanding and appreciation of the immediate and remote consequences of their actions or inactions for granted has constituted an obstacle to most of the measures put it in place to get over inter-religious bickering and mistrust among Nigerians. In fact, it goes a long way to truncate efforts to address many other challenges confronting Nigeria (Asaju & Egberi 2015:126-134).

No wonder then that some of the challenges keep rearing their ugly heads. It is noteworthy however that over the years, concerted efforts have been made at governmental and non-governmental levels to find lasting solutions to the hydra-headed problem of 'religious' conflicts through the promotion of peace and harmony between Christians and Muslims in the country. In fact, one of the strategies devised by government in this direction was the establishment, in 1999, of Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) with the sole purpose of helping government lay sustainable foundation for peaceful interfaith relations in the country (Ian and Thomas, 2016). Worse still, with all the developmental programmes and amenities put in place by the government to sustain and promote peaceful coexistence among different faiths, issues of ethno-religious crises in Nigeria have continued to hinder the success of these programmes. Schools have been closed down; as well, innocent Nigerians

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have been maimed or killed. Wole Olanipekun (2017:17), states: "of the plethora of issues afflicting us, there is none that is profoundly new…such that has not been around for a generation". Proper attention should be geared towards inter-faith relation so as to curb, as early as possible, any problem that could arise, which may eventually lead to loss of lives and property, as well as disruption of academic calendars. Matters of inter-faith relations should become part and parcel of Nigeria's effort towards establishing and promoting peaceful co-existence among people of diverse faiths.

Literature Review

Many scholars have attempted to address issues relating to religious tolerance and dialogue as a means of achieving national integration in Nigeria. Adewolo (1999:52), while calling for forming a common front across religious divide, urges the adherents of all regions in Africa to "shun fanaticism bickerings, acrimony, trivialities, particularly personal religious aggrandizement, pride and prejudice…" According to Sulaiman (2016), religious violence is violence that is motivated by or in reaction to religious precepts, texts, or doctrines. This to him, includes, violence against religious institutions, people, objects, or when the violence is motivated to some degree by some religious aspect of the target or precept of the attacker. Omotosho (2014) reiterated that religious conflicts are fast becoming a common feature of society, in spite of socio-economic development coupled with the gains of democracy. Religious conflicts occur when there is opposing idea, opinion, feeling and wishes between two or more religious group (Ushe, 2015).

Alanamu, Muhammad and Adeoye (2006:613-614) rounded off their study with a call for making Nigeria a more humane society, addressing educational imbalance among the various groups, cross cultural awareness and dialogue. Ajetomobi and Aduralere (2016:361) analysed the various forms of religious crises in Nigeria. They opined that, Nigerians owe it a duty to commit themselves to the "unity and national integration" by laying emphasis on common grounds instead of differences among the various religion. Ahmed-Hameed (2015:87) opines that, in order to curb religious violence, interreligious dialogue must be strengthened by the use of certain state apparatus that must guide the religious practices in Nigeria, including the proselytization of faith. Hence, these guidelines may be in the form of basic rules and procedures that must be followed in faith propagation. Salawu (2010 np) proposed that there is a link between several factors such as ethnic

identity, economic, and social conditions which constitute the phenomenal clashes and violence in Nigeria. Salawu mentioned that those multitudes of factors often manifest as communal clashes, political crises and ethno-religious crises but are often categorised as religious violence.

Salawu concurs with both Falola (1998) and Adogame (2005) that in view of the above, religion in Nigeria has assumed a fertile soil for breeding violence.

Dialogue is about adapting a mutual approach that brings about an end to existing or intending conflict. It is a key to development as conflict is an impediment to developmental progress. Sulaiman (2016:97) buttressed that the aim of dialogue should not be to obliterate the identity of a participating religious group, rather, its objective should be to discuss the various aspects of the problem that pose as threat to the peaceful co-existence between different religious groups. Dialogue includes purposeful activities of collaboration between religious institutions in favour of social peace and prosperity (Omotosho, 2014).

Meaning of Interfaith Dialogue

The phrase, interfaith dialogue consists of two words: "interfaith (adjective) and "dialogue (noun). The word "dialogue" has its origin in the Middle English "dialoge", from Old French "dialogue", from Latin "dialogus", from Greek "dialogos", from "dialegesthai" meaning "to converse with" ("dia" for "through" and "legein" for "speak") (*Dictionary 2008*). It denotes to:

1. Conversation between two or more people as a feature of a book, play, or film:
2. Discussion directed towards explanation of a subject or resolution of a problem;
3. An exchange of opinions on a particular subject. (*Dictionary* 2009)

"Interfaith" also means inter-religious . The term "interfaith dialogue , thus, refers to cooperative and positive interaction among people of different religious traditions and spiritual beliefs at both individual and institutional levels with the aim of deriving a common ground in beliefs, concentrating on similarities between faiths, understanding of values and commitment to the world. (Md. Sanaullah). Abdur Raheem states (2020):

> Any attempt to bring about mutual understanding among the people of differing faiths on the basis of common grounds is called interfaith

dialogue.

Francis Cardinal Arinze (1990:162) defines interfaith dialogue in the following words:

> Interreligious dialogue is a meeting of heart and mind between followers of various religions. It is communication between two believers at religious level. It is a walking together towards truth and a working together in projects of common concern. (Arinze 1990: 162)

According to Bidmos (2006:4), dialogue:

> connotes an exchange of idea in which the participants make proportionately equal contributions. It usually revolves around a subject matter whereby each of the discussion consider the subject matter from his own point of view. The discussion subsequently leads to a consensus among the parties concerned.

From the above, one can deduced that dialogue can be used as a means of forestalling chaos and breakdown of law and order. It is a special gift to man to resolve differences as a rational being with the ability to express self eloquently and clearly.

This view of interfaith dialogue is echoed by the Qur'an as well. Allah says:

> And argue not argue with the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better …; and say (to them): We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you and our Allah (God) and your Allah (God) is One (i.e. Allah), and to Him do we have submitted (as Muslims). (Q. 29:46)

The most common form of inter-religious discussion is constituted when two individuals, be they friends, neighbours or acquaintances, discuss their religious beliefs in a casual sitting. These discussions can be very valuable in promoting better understanding in them. However, the formal form of interfaith dialogue takes place when authoritative members of at least two religious communities come together for an extended and serious discussion of the beliefs and practices that separate them. The religious experts here exchange information on their beliefs and practices, and seek mutual understanding.

Metaphors and Story for Interreligious Dialogue and Engagement (IRD)

The story of the Elephant and the Giraffe, by R. Roosevelt Thomas. The story helps us to recognise the power of diversity and inclusion – what it really is, how it works and why efforts sometimes fall short.

The giraffe represents the majority – it is his house, his design, his rules. He is in charge. The elephants are the minority. He is warmly invited and generally welcomed, but in the giraffe's home he is outside. The house was not built with the elephant in mind. The story is a metaphor for the experience of many people as they confront systematic barriers that are often unintended but very real.

Here is the story:

In a small community just outside of the city of Artiodact, there was a family of Giraffes. They had worked to build themselves a new house with all of their needs in mind: there were soaring ceilings and tall doorways, high windows with lots of light and narrow hallways that conserved space. It was such a wonderful house that it won the National Giraffe Home of the Year Award.

One day the head Giraffe was working in his basement woodshop when he looked out the window and saw someone familiar. It was an Elephant that he had worked on the Local Parent – Teacher Association Committee with. Giraffe remembered that Elephant was a woodworker and an exciting thought occurred to him, "Maybe Elephant would like to work on some project with me?" Giraffe stuck his head out the window and invited Elephant in. The elephant was delighted; he had liked working with the Giraffe and thought that this would be the perfect way to know him better.

He walked up to the basement door and waited for Giraffe to open it. Giraffe opened the door, greeted elephant but then the two animals were faced with a problem, Elephant could get his head through the door but he could go no further because the door was too narrow. Giraffe wasn't worried – he quickly explained to Elephant that the door was expandable in order to accommodate woodworking projects and equipment. With a pop of a bolt and a slip of a panel, Elephant was able to get through the door. The two acquaintances were happily exchanging woodworking stories when the phone rang. Giraffe saw that it was his boss, and told Elephant he needed to take the call. He told elephant to make himself at home and went upstairs to his office, apologizing that it might take a few minutes.

Elephant decided to take a look around the workroom, saw a half-finished project in the far corner and decided to take a look at it. As he walked through the doorway to get to the far side, he heard an ominous sound as his backend crunched up against the sides of doorframe. He backed out. He decided to join Giraffe upstairs but as he tried to walk up the upstairs, the stairs began to crack. He jumped off and hit the wall and made a huge dent in the drywall. He sat there dishevelled and dismayed until Giraffe came back down the stairs.

Giraffe was surprised and explained, "What on earth is going on?" Elephant replied, looking slightly ashamed, "I was just trying to make myself at home". Giraffe looked around at his workshop and then smiled. "I see what's going on here", he said. "The door way is too narrow for your large backend. We need to make you smaller. There's an aerobics studio in our neighbourhood and if you take some classes, we could get you down to size". Elephant looked like he wanted to shrink into the very wall that he had dented a few minutes earlier. He said, "Maybe…." Giraffe continued, "And the stairs are obviously too weak to carry your weight so if you go to ballet classes at night, I am sure we can get you to a point where you are lighter on your feet. Can you do those things? It would be great if you could because it would be nice to work together". "perhaps", said to elephant, "but to tell you the truth, I'm not sure that a house designed for a Giraffe would ever really work for an elephant, unless there were major changes".

Implication and Lessons

In inter-religious Dialogue and Engagement, we do not intend to turn Elephants into Giraffes or vice-versa. The Elephant does not need to go on a special diet or gym to lose weight in order to fit into Giraffe's house. So also does the Giraffe not need to shorten its neck in order to fit into an Elephant's house. Rather, each should build their house in a way that is more accommodating of others. Interacting with people of other faiths does not require changing uniqueness of each religion. Lakum deennukum wa liyadeeen (…to you is your religion, and to me is mine).

Inter – religious Dialogue (IRD) does not mean that Muslims should become Christians or that Christians should become Muslims. Rather, each maintain their unique beliefs while accommodating others and their beliefs also. Dialogue, is therefore, an opportunity for various group to present their claims and respond to those of others. As a means of forestalling chaos and breakdown of law and order, dialogue may be a necessity.

Brute animals resort to the of force and violence to settle disagreements among them, and this leads predictably to bodily injuries or death. The loss resulting from crisis among human being is more devastating as it may last for decades and extend to cover countries and continents. In most cases, such monumental destructions are brought to an end ultimately through dialogue.

Dialogue should have its objectives.it should not be to impose one's opinion on the other. It is to clarify issues. It is not to make war but to give peace a chance. From the beginning of the attempt, it should be made clear that there is no alternative to peace in order to sustain the community and move it forward. The ultimate aim is to create an atmosphere "to love each other. It means a leadership of cooperative charisma beyond class and tribe and primordial loyalties" (Omotseye 2019:16).

Just like any other necessity of life, effective dialogue cannot be taken for granted. The initiative may come from the groups in contention or a neutral body that may act as an intermediary. Experts in conflict resolution or peace making may be required. Selected members of the opposing group especially those in favour of the peace initiative may champion the dialogue. They may be such members having distinctive qualities such as formal education, experienced government functionaries, foreign individuals or bodies interested in resolving issues at stake. There is no doubt that a lot time is required to make the initiative, formulate its modus operandi and persuade the opposing group to embrace it. Whatever the cost and all things being equal, dialogue mostly proves advantageous and leads to sustainable peace (Bidmos 2006:3). As far as Islam is concerned, the door of dialogue should be kept open always.

This is to create an opportunity to understand the points of view of each other, identify grey areas and differences with a view to ironing them out. In some cases, misunderstandings crop up as a result of communication gap. Rumours spread and ill feelings begin. However, such unpleasant developments are kept at bay if there are opportunities to listen and talk to each other. This was the strategy the Prophet was instructed to use to broker peace with people antagonizing Islam at the time. He was mandated to grant them audience, ensure their security and safety (Q.9:6). The aim here is to provide an opportunity for such people to "hear the word of Allah". If the teachings of Islam were made down to them directly instead of relying on hearsay and misrepresentations being peddled around, they might accept the message of Islam. At least, that would enable them to have a better understanding of Islam and dissuade them from taking up arms and ammunitions against the nascent Muslim community.

Islamic Perspectives of Interfaith Dialogue

There are verses from the Qu'ran advocating the believers of faith the call for religious dialogue. The principle of universalism which is the essence of the Islamic messages was not possible to realise without a sincere openness for others. To deliver our divine messages it is ridiculous to exclude ourselves from the rest of world religions. Allah says in the Qur'an:

> We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures (Q. 21:107).

In Islam, Muslims are told to deal with non-Muslims kindly and justly. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) once said:

> Whosoever is cruel on zimmi or curtails his right or burdens him more than he can endure, or take anything from him against his free will, I shall myself be a complainant against on the Day of Judgment.

The Qur'an prescribed how Muslims should take into account and be able to foresee the different backgrounds of human beings and teach its followers ways and means to deal with these diverse and mixed society. O humankind! We:

> (Allah) have created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you may come to know one another. Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous (or Allah-conscious) of you. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware (Q. 49:13).

Further details of the guidelines and instructions about what dialogue should be are given in the Glorious Qur'an 3:64-68. In fact, Verse 64 of this chapter, represents the most manifest call for interfaith dialogue. Islamic approach to interfaith dialogue and its attestation is primarily based on this very verse.

Say:

> O people of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none put Allah; that we associate no patterns with Him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah.
>
> And if they turn back, say "Ye: "Bear witness that we (at least) are

> Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will). O people of the Book! Why dispute ye about Abraham, when the Torah and the Gospel were not revealed till after him? Have ye no understanding? Lo Ye are those who fell to disputing (even) in matters of which ye had some knowledge? But why dispute ye in matters of which you have no knowledge? It is Allah who knows, and ye who know not! Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but He was true in Faith, and bowed His will to Allah's (which is Islam), and He joined not gods with Allah. Without doubt, among men, the nearest of kin to Abraham, are those who follow him, as are also this Messenger and those who believe: and Allah is the Protector of those who have Faith.

A cursory look at the entire verses quoted above shows that some facts relating to dialogue can be deducted from them.

1. Taking initiatives to make peace moves

The first verse starts with an instruction to the Prophet to invite the "People of the Book", Jews and Christians in particular, to discuss issues of mutual benefits to them and Muslims respectively. Such an invitation was to iron out differences between them and Muslims, and provide an opportunity to compare notes. The instruction was followed to the latter. There were many events like that which took place with such people in Madinah and those outside the city (Haykal, 1976: 475-480). It should be inferred from this that if the other group or a neutral person takes the initiative, one should not hesitate to honour the invitation and do everything possible to ensure the success of the move.

2. Focus on areas of agreement rather than disagreement

In most cases, groups at loggerheads have mutual understanding in areas far more that the few ones in which they have differences. Taking Islam, on the hand, and Judaism and Christianity, on the other, the fact is that they are all monotheistic in their creeds, socially-oriented in their ethics and have strict legal provisions to forestall and prevent crimes and criminality in the society. Of course, they differ in their respective theological concepts of spiritual status and roles of their Prophets (Waardenburg, 2004). Drawing attention to this fact will reveal that there is no basis for religious crises or any other form of crises in a multi-religious and multi-ethnic community like Nigeria. Since the narrow areas of difference do not affect the collaborative efforts to secure the community and sustain its development and progress, the bad blood and

destruction that result from unnecessary mutual suspicious and unhealthy rivalry are an ill wind that blows nobody any good.

3. Making concession

There are no way two groups are involved in a dispute and one will totally be right and the other at the opposing side will be totally wrong. The strength of the argument of each should be acknowledge and recognised. This can be inferred from verse 66 in the quotation above admitting that the people of the Book had knowledge about some of the issues in contention. There should be no argument about this since they are the custodians of the previous revelations to the Qur'an which came from the same source.

4. Logical presentation of point of view

It will not pay any of the groups in crisis to gloss over its point of view and fail to convincingly marshal its points. For instance, the bone of contention may be a parcel and land or a slot of political appointment to serve the community. Each group should have a competent spokesman to present its stand clearly in such a way that a neural body to adjudicate or make peace can have a clear understanding of the issues at stake. One can take the argument in the quotation above with the respective claim of both Jews and Christians that prophet Ibrahim was an adherent of their faiths. Both Prophets Musa and Isa to whom the foundation of Judaism and Christianity is imputed came after Prophet Ibrahim. Therefore, he could not have been a follower of either of them.

5. Discerning principles of action

The quotation concludes with the assertion that identification with Prophet Ibrahim should not be basis of having come from the same place or spoken the same language. It should rather be premised on emulating his sterling qualities in terms of strong faith and righteous acts of worship. Misunderstandings often crop up because of failure to clearly identify issues and categorise them to the groups they properly belong. This is the case in agitating for having access to resources and control.

6. Politeness and difference

No matter how sharp the difference may be between one group and another, one should not take the other as being foolish or stupid. Of course, this does not mean that one believes in what the group believes in. It is to

respect its opinions and beliefs and avoid injuring its sensitivities and feelings. Failure to exercise self – restraint in this respect will exacerbate the situation and complicate the issue. That is why the Qur'an says:

Follow what thou art taught by inspiration from thy Lord: there is no god but He: and turn away from those who join gods with gods: Had Allah willed they will all be believers, but we made thee not one to watch over their doings, nor art thou set over them to dispose of their affairs. Revile not ye those whom they call upon beside Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance. Thus, have we made alluring to each people its own doing. In the end will they return to their lord and We shall then tell them the truth of all that they did (Q.6:106-108).

The above verse showcases the following: The first is that Allah is quiet aware of the multiplicity of religions among mankind. Even though He has the power to force them to practice only one religion, He has given freedom of choice to individuals of what to believe or not to believe. It is on the basis of making right or wrong choices that appropriate rewards will be given. If Allah has not imposed His will on mankind, there is nobody that should appropriate that power to himself or herself.

The second fact is the acknowledgement of the innate sentiments and passion that go with religious adherence. Religious fervour is such that a devotee may not tolerate having his or her object of worship condemned without having consideration for his feelings. Of course, Muslims also exhibit the tendency of protesting against unwarranted attacks against beings and institutions believed to be sacred in Islam. As they would not like any person to say or do anything disparaging to Allah or the Prophet, they are warned here to steer clear of such contemptuous misdemeanour and insensitivity to the feelings of others (Q. 6:108).

7. Patience and Forbearance

Attempts to persuade belligerent groups to dialogue with a view to brokering peace may be tortuous and time-consuming. It calls for commitment, inexhaustible patience and forbearance to make headway. In fact, the emphasis laid on the importance of exercising patience as a matter of principle transcends the issue of making or building peace. It should characterise inter-personal worship between a Muslim and other persons.

Apart from the Qur'anic call for interreligious dialogue, we also find specimens of religious dialogue from the life-stories of the Prophet Muhammad

(SAW) and his companions. The Charter of Madinah set for the citizens of Madinah city state and the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah made with the people of Makkah are two important documents that testify for their dialogic life. In Madinah, all people irrespective of religions had equal rights Mubarakpuri (1999: 212-217) and enjoyed happy, peaceful life verily under the jurisdiction of the Charter of Madinah. On the other hand, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) abandoned the title "Rasulul Allah" (Allah's Messenger) while writing the Treaty of Hudaybiyyiah (with the disbelieving people of Makkah) only for the sake of peace and harmony Mubarakpuri (1999: 380).

The following are some other verses that direct us to interfaith dialogue:

a) "There is no compulsion in religion: Verily the right path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in false deities and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower." (Q. 2:256).

b) "Say (O Muhammad SAW) to the believers to forgive those who (harm them and) hope not for the Days of Allah (i.e. His Recompense), that He may recompense a people, according to what they have earned" (Q. 45:14).

These verses show that Islam not only approves interfaith dialogue for its adherents but also urge the peoples of other religions to come forward for the sake of peace and tranquillity and engage in inter-religious dialogue.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Nigeria's religious atmosphere is volatile due to lack of tolerance and deep understanding of the tenets of both Christianity and Islam among some Christian and Muslim adherents. This paper shows that, interfaith dialogue, and missionary work (Da'wah) both are encouraged and patronized by Islam as they are two independent organs of Islam. Moreover, Islam is the only religion of which the Qur'an calls directly for interfaith dialogue. Since it is practically impossible coerce the citizens to practice only one and the same religion, the only option available is to face the reality on ground which is to learn to live together in peace and harmony. The way to achieve this is to keep the door to dialogue always open with commitment. Without peace, there cannot be stability, progress and prosperity all of which go a long way to make a nation

to take its pride of place in the committee of nations.

The conclusion now becomes urgent that the government should develop more political will to ensure that peace is achieved in the country. Further, the religious leaders should sensitise their followers on the need for peaceful coexistence. Religious groups should be made to lay more emphasis on the common denominators among them rather than their differences. For instance, moral teachings are largely similar in both Islam and Christianity. Government should make necessary sacrifices and take required steps to improve the quality of life for all citizens, the teeming youth will be able to resist any temptation to take to crimes if they have regular legitimate sources of income.

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SECTION 3: DOMESTIC WORK INDUSTRY IN NIGERIA AND ITS CHALLENGES

THE SITUATION OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN NIGERIA: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE WORKING CONDITIONS, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, PROTECTIONS AND GAPS IN LAWS PROTECTING DOMESTIC WORK

BY
DR AWWAL MAGASHI

Abstract

It is an acceptable norm all over the world for a family to engage the services of a domestic worker to help with the house chores and look for kids in consideration for a certain remuneration. Nigeria is not an exception to this long-established practice. Women and children constitute the bulk of this domestic labour and sadly people exploit their vulnerability by taking their undue advantages and subjecting them to all sorts of degrading, inhumane, cruel and demeaning treatment, and above all, a peanut as their remunerations. *A fortiori*, the rush for cheap labour in the domestic circle plunged so many people into the bigger Armageddon of the offence of human trafficking. This systemic abuse has been trending in most of the dwelling homes in Nigeria and appears to be exacerbating without any end in sight. These necessitated the enactment of several legal regimes to curb this menace and salvage domestic workers from the shackles of domestic abuse. This paper sets out to examine the working condition of domestic workers in Nigeria vis-à-vis the legal framework, and apparent loopholes in the legal regimes. Unfortunately, this paper finds that these legal regimes appear to be a toothless bull-dog and therefore bereft of the cutting edge to address the mischief behind their enactments. In the same vein, some of the legal regime put in place has failed to take the complexities and peculiarities of Nigerian society thereby making them almost impossible to implement. The paper, therefore, recommends a holistic review of those legal regimes taking into consideration the cultural and religious nuances as well as the constitutionalism to make them thrive and achieve both the intended and unintended consequences.

Keywords: Domestic labour, Human Trafficking, Fundamental Human Rights, Forced Labour; Exploitation

Introduction

It is beyond any strength of doubt that domestic workers contribute significantly towards the socio-economic nerve of every society. Unfortunately, their sacrifices and hardworking are not appreciated as the society they toil

to serve, treats them with disdain and contempt. Their consideration for their services is a peanut and this pushes them to the brink to earn more by working tirelessly, yet, the end does not justify the means. They have not been embedded into the mainstream formal workforce and this has deleterious repercussions. For instance, since their services do not enjoy the statutory flavour, they are automatically excluded from the scheme of affairs thereby being deprived of all the necessary benefits and protection accorded to the mainstream Labour force. All the associated fringe benefits that accompany employment such as a pension, health insurance, maternity, defined working time, leave, etc, are alien to domestic workers and usually absent from working arrangements. To compound their misery, domestic workers have heavy workloads, inadequate accommodation and food (for live-in workers), job insecurity, exposure to violence, and physical and sexual abuse in the workplace.

Domestic workers in Nigeria encounter numerous difficulties in coping with their daily chores.

Domestic workers are one of the most undervalued and exploited occupational groups in Nigeria. A domestic worker-housemaid relationship is usually centred in a tripartite relationship to wit: the employer, the domestic worker and the employer's family. A relevant legal framework is important for them to defend their rights, but the present *status quo* does not provide a befitting framework and effective institutional mechanism that allows domestic workers to live in dignity and security, or shield them from ill-treatment at the hands of employers or service providers.

This paper seeks to assess the current issues domestic workers face in Nigeria, the basic rights and entitlements accruable to a domestic worker, the adequacy or otherwise of the legal framework, and the apparent loopholes. The paper contributes towards identifying the most appropriate legal framework for the protection of domestic workers in Nigeria, taking into consideration the local peculiarities of the country, and proffering some useful recommendations.

A Glance at the Historical Context

Domestic labour in Nigeria is not a new concept. If one looks at the history of this aspect of African cultures, it is seen that domestic work has been and is far more than just cooking and cleaning. In some parts of Africa, unpaid or "disposable" female servants are as old as civilisation itself. The origin of slavery in Africa cannot be ignored given its prevalence in these regions. However, what is very relevant to note at this point is the manner in which

slavery was practised by some Africans towards their own people for centuries before the advent of modern colonialism.

The issue is not only peculiar to the Nigerian sector or third-world countries but cuts across the entire globe. For instance, Europe, despite its significant level of advancement, is still plagued with the challenges being faced by domestic workers, especially women. As mentioned by the editorial of the European Journal of Women's Studies:

It is now more than 30 years ago since domestic work became a fiercely debated issue for feminists all over Europe; 'salary for domestic work' campaigns were launched in many countries as a result of an (academic) feminist dispute about the role of housework in society.[1]

In the UK the legislative precariousness of domestic workers is historically embedded. Domestic workers were once a group termed 'menial or domestic servants', a category that was found in past British labour legislation. This class of workers was the largest group of workers among all occupations in Britain during the 19th century and until the mid-20th century.[2] During

Victorian times this type of work was performed by 'menial or domestic servants' for middle- and high-class families, and with the decline in domestic servant employment, the weekly cash-in-hand cleaner has become important for professional couples. In the post-war period, a shift occurred from the model of the ideal family with a single-wage earning male head of household, to the ideal family being comprised of dual-wage earners. This new model of family life required accommodations of new patterns of work and family life, which resulted, among other things, in an increasing need for domestic labour.

The vulnerability and susceptibility of human right violation of domestic workers pushed the European Court on Human Rights to make an affirmative ruling in the landmark case of *Siliadin v France*[3] that France violated article 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights that prohibits slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour. France failed to entrench in its domestic legislation punitive measures to criminalise the appalling working conditions of the applicant, which the Court classified as 'servitude, forced and compulsory labour'.[3] The judgment has had a significant impact the world over: it raised awareness about the plight of domestic workers and

1 Helma, European Journal of Women Studies, 2007.

2 C. Steedman, Labours Lost: Domestic Service and the Making of Modern England, CUP, 2009, Chapter 2. 3 [2005] App No. 73316/01

3 Ibid.

gave impetus for change in countries such as the UK, which adopted new legislation criminalizing 'modern slavery.'[4] The watershed decision in the *Siliadin* was renowned for what it accomplished with the recognition that the machinery of criminal law 'might be required to apply in circumstances of grave abuse of a worker.'[5]

The Concept of Domestic Labour

Domestic workers typically work in private homes, performing various household tasks, such as cleaning, gardening and caring for children or elderly people (the latter are also known as

'care workers'). This type of work is precarious and gendered, and most of the time done by women. Domestic work was delineated as a separate area of work when productive and reproductive work got separated.

The positive effect of paid domestic work on contemporary society cannot be underestimated. With changes happening in the labour market, including the growth of the service economy, higher participation of women in the market, the sharing of household tasks by men, and globalisation, it has become clear that having domestic workers is beneficial for family members, the employers and the market as a whole. In today's economic setting, domestic work is vital for the sustainability and function of the economy outside the household. Domestic labour can also be a desirable job for workers who are not highly skilled and might not easily be employable in other occupations. Domestic workers are not always low-skilled, though; they are sometimes educated, and migrate to work in the domestic labour sector in order to send income back to their home countries.[6]

Due to the enormous importance of domestic labour to our daily lives, it is obvious that it remains a vital and integral part of our daily routines. Nevertheless, the legal framework and the institutional mechanism are not commensurate or vibrant enough to squarely address the precarious situation

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4 See s.71 of the Coroners and Justice Act.

5 See Matouvalou V., Modern Slavery: The UK Response, (2010), 39 ILJ 425, and Matouvalou V, 'Servitude and Forced Labour in the 21st Century: The Human Rights of Domestic Workers' (2006) 35 ILJ, 395.

6 H. Lutz, 'Domestic Labour' (2007), 14 European Journal of Women's Studies 187 at 189. Like other jobs, domestic work can be fulfilling: the worker develops a personal relationship of trust with the employee, sometimes to a degree higher than in other jobs, and may feel highly valued for the services provided.

of a domestic worker. The complexities have led to the exclusion of domestic workers from protective labour legislation in some national settings. This can be described as the 'legislative precariousness of domestic workers, which is the special vulnerability faced by them because of their exclusion from protective laws or the lower degrees of legal protection they receive in comparison to other workers.' Examples of such full or partial exclusions are ample the world over: domestic workers are excluded from or afforded lower protection in legislation on the regulation of minimum wage, maximum working hours, trade union representation, as well as labour inspection.[7]

Like any other fellow human beings, domestic workers are embedded with an inherent fundamental human right and have all the deserving liberties for mankind to thrive. Thus, it is not demeaning or stigmatising for anyone to render her or his services as a domestic worker, but the sad reality is that the sector is treated with all kinds of disdain and orchestration, thereby making domestic workers semi or lesser breed of human beings. The consequences associated with this barbaric treatment are numerous such as ill health and other stress-related problems which ultimately lead to emotional instability, especially among many women who are forced to deal with these issues on a continual basis while they could otherwise be enjoying their lives.

Underage girls and women from the bottom rung of the social standing constitute a significant majority of domestic workers, who engage in employment in private households or in nonformal care settings. As observed by one author:

> Of the 83 million estimated global domestic workers, the majority are women and girls employed in private homes as domestic workers and carry out essential household tasks, such as caring for children and elderly members of their employer's family. Domestic workers contribute significantly to the global economy, constituting 7.5 per cent of women's total paid employment globally. Unfortunately, the contribution of the sector to sustainable social development has been socially and economically undervalued and unrecognised."[8]

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7 B. Anderson, 'Migration, Immigration Controls, and the Fashioning of Precarious Work' (Work, Employment and Society 300-317) (2010)

8 Angela Odah, New Standards to Fight Discrimination, Exploitation, and Abuse, available at: https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/related_material/2013ilo_dw_ comnvention_ brocheure. pdf; accessed 17th October 2022.

Of recent, there is a growing disturbing trend, especially in the Gulf countries where African maids are for sale on an "online slave market." In the Gulf, women employed as domestic workers are being sold online by apps, approved and provided by both Google and Apple, which is being called an online slave market. Maids are sold like other commodities such as cars, toys, and other accessories. Prospective buyers are given options to examine and choose their preferred maid, after a thorough examination. Apart from the dedicated apps, thousands of maids are openly sold via other social media accounts such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. A maid costs around $3,000 to &4,000, and once they are trafficked into the country, they are confined in an isolation centre, confiscate their travelling domestics and deny access to any means of communication. As narrated by Urmila Bhoola,[9] has this to say: This is a quintessential example of modern slavery. Here we see a girl child being sold and traded like a chattel or piece of property. This is horrible and illegal and not a violation of Kuwaiti Law, it is a violation of International Human Rights and Labour Standards. She condemned the horrible conduct of Google, Apple, Facebook, or any other companies hosting apps like this, and should be held accountable.

The domestic workers in Nigeria carry a great responsibility of not just looking after their own households, but helping their families thrive. This a huge responsibility that is not always acknowledged by some employers who take advantage of their loyalty and hard work. Domestic labourers are at times subjected to intolerable conditions, wages and other benefits have been greatly neglected over the years. Nigeria currently has one of the highest numbers of domestic workers in the world, with estimates suggesting that there are figures as high as 4.3 million domestic workers in Nigeria.[11]

As of March 2021, about 13 million children were estimated to be out of school in Nigeria, 60 per cent of whom were from the northeast region. Insurgency and insecurity were the factors observed to be responsible for this situation. Due to high rates of poverty, child labour is prevalent in many parts of the country. Children carrying out domestic work is the most common form of urban child labour. Young children are placed in homes to serve as domestic servants, while their wages may be collected by their sponsors. They work in private homes as domestic servants, as well as in small-scale industries and

9 She is the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. 11 Ibid.

mechanical workshops.[10]

Most children working in domestic service are victims of trafficking. Like other parts of the globe, Nigeria suffers from the plague of child trafficking. It is a source, transit, and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation. Within Nigeria, women and girls are trafficked solely for domestic servitude and commercial sex. Boys are trafficked for forced labour in street vending, agriculture, mining, stone quarries, and domestic work. Religious teachers also traffic boys called *almajiri* for forced begging, especially in the Northern part of the country. This longestablished practice is deeply rooted in the cultural norms of the Hausa society and unfortunately, with a religious toga ascribed to the practice.

An Overview of the Legal Framework

4.1 The International Framework

On the 100th session of the International Labour Conference, in June 2011, the ILO adopted Convention No 189 and supplementing Recommendation No 201 regulating the terms and conditions of work for domestic workers. The coming into the force of this Convention was an unprecedented breakthrough moment for domestic workers whose calling within the domestic employment attracts and gains specific international legal recognition in a holistic manner.[11] It was also a landmark moment for the international labour law regime that

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10 Ibid. According to the United States Department of State, Benin is a primary source country for boys and girls trafficked for forced labour in Nigeria's granite quarries. One-third of the trafficked persons end up in forced labour and another third is in domestic work. The United States Department of State stated that Nigeria is among the countries of the world where slavery and involuntary servitude flourishes, with children used for domestic work and commercial sex.

11 Interestingly, international convention has put a considerable attention on the plight of domestic worker, since there are 8 Conventions related to domestic workers to wit: The Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948; The Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949; The Forced Labour Convention, 1930; The Abolition of Forced Labour Convention 1951; The Discrimination
(Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958; The Minimum Age Convention; and The Worst Forms of Child
Labour Convention 1999. In addition to the Convention contained in the ILO summary, the International Community recognises several other international legal norms relating to domestic worker, including among other things: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948; The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) 1966; Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979; The Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; The International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Member of their Families, 1990; and the Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 2011.

incorporated within the ILO documents a human rights approach, which is sectorally based, stemming from the view that although domestic work is 'work like any other,' it should also be treated as 'work like no other.'[12]

Irked by the worrying trends and difficulties, and excruciating agony being faced by domestic workers especially women, the ILO, as an international institution focusing on labour issues, mentioned that:

> The increased participation of women in the workforce, the intensification of work and the absence of strong social policies permitting the balancing of work and family life, ensure the ongoing importance of and increased demand for, domestic workers in most developed and developing economies. Yet domestic work tends to be undervalued and poorly regulated, manifesting the lack of decent working conditions that is particularly characteristic of the informal economy. Thus, domestic workers have enabled many other workers, particularly women with families, to participate and advance in the productive, formal economy, thereby achieving greater affluence; however, they themselves often do not have the rights and protections necessary to ensure that they enjoy conditions of decent work.''[13]

The primary responsibility of every responsible government is to maintain law and order and accord its citizens especially the weaker and vulnerable ones from unnecessary exploitation from the powerful figures in the society. There are plethora of various rights and protections applicable to a domestic worker. However, this paper focusses on the following minimum standards as widely recognised by both national and international law: Basic rights of domestic worker; Information on terms and conditions of employment; Hours of work; Remuneration; Occupational safety and health; Social security; Standards concerning child domestic workers; Standards concerning live-in workers; and Standards concerning migrant domestic workers.[14]

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12 Virginia Mantouvalou and Einat Albin, 'The ILO Convention on Domestic Workers: From the Shadows to the Light', Article in Industrial Law Journal · November 2011, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228146153, accessed on 14/09/2022.

13 ILO, 2012

14 Ani Suryani, Legal Protection for Women Domestic Workers Based on the International Convention, available at: https://www.abaacademies.org/articles/legal-protection-for-women-domestic-workers-based-on-theinternational-convention-7169.html

4.2 The Nigerian Framework

There is a plethora of legal frameworks regulating to some extent the concept of domestic labour in Nigeria. At the international level, the most important legal instrument is the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) International Labour Conference of Convention 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers, to which Nigeria, is a party to, and ratifies it, but not yet domesticated.[15] The legal implication here is that Nigeria, being a dualist nation, is required, pursuant to section 12 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) to enact the legislation domesticating the Convention, before it becomes binding.[16] Nevertheless, there are several pieces of legislation and policy domesticating and entrenching a number of ILO's C189 standards for regulating domestic work.[17] There are policies that recognise paid domestic work including the Labour Regulations.[18]

4.2.1 Who is a Domestic Worker?

The starting point under the ILO Convention (ILO C189), is who is a domestic worker capable of enjoying legal protection under it. In an answer to that it defines 'domestic work' as follows:

Article 1 – "For the purpose of this Convention –

(a) the term "domestic work" means work performed in or for a household or households;
(b) the term "domestic worker" means any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship;
(c) a person who performs domestic work only occasionally or

15 Adoption of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) International Labour Conference of Convention 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers (ILO C-189) was a landmark accomplishment in advancing international standards to provide for the protection of the human and labour rights of domestic workers, many of whom are migrants. This is a Convention eminently applicable to ensuring the protection of domestic workers, including migrant domestic workers in Nigeria, as well as for Nigerians abroad.

16 Nigeria is a dualist state, and pursuant to section 12 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, no treaty shall have the effect of a law unless it is domesticated. See also *Fawehinmi v Abacha*

17 See for instance, The Labour Act; Anti-Trafficking Act; Employee Compensation Act; and the Labour Migration Policy.

18 The National Policy on Labour and Migration (LMP) for Nigeria, recently approved by the Federal Executive Council, acknowledges that "Special attention will be given to vulnerable categories, such as women domestic workers, temporary migrants, and migrant workers in irregular status, who continue to suffer abuses and malpractices at the hand of employers, government officials and the general population.

> sporadically and not on an occupational basis is not a domestic worker."[19]

In the same vein, the term 'domestic worker' is recognised in the Nigerian jurisprudence through various legislative enactments. For instance, Section 91 of the Labour Act, uses the term "domestic servant" to mean "any house, table or garden servant employed in or in connection with the domestic services of any private dwelling house, and includes a servant employed as the driver of a privately owned or privately used motor car". Similarly, section 73 of the Employee's Compensation Act, defines "employee" as a "person employed by an employer under oral or written contract of employment whether on a continuous, part-time, temporary, apprenticeship or casual basis and includes a domestic servant who is not a member of the family of the employer".

Furthermore, Section 9 of the National Minimum Wage (Amendment) Act, defines "worker" as "any member of the civil service of the Federation or of a State or local government or any individual (other than persons occupying executive, administrative, technical or professional positions in any such civil service) who has entered into or works under a contract with an employer whether the contract is manual labour, clerical work or otherwise, expressed or implied, oral or in writing, and whether it is a contract personally to execute any work or labour". For all intent and purposes, this definition is all-encompassing and includes domestic workers as beneficiaries of the provisions of the Act.

Gleaning through these definitions, can we safely conclude that the term 'domestic worker' is clearly defined and within the ambit of law, and as such be accorded all forms of legal protection.

What then is the implication of this definition to the concept of domestic work? Is the domestic worker, for all intent and purpose be considered an 'employee' within the context of employer/employee relations or in other words, does the domestic servant contractual relationship enjoys a statutory flavour similar to that of an employer/employee relation (whether in public or private employment)? It is pertinent that getting the appropriate answers to these rhetorical questions will guide a healthy and fruitful discussion on the status of a domestic worker within the Nigerian legal framework.

In an attempt to answer this poser, it is expedient and necessary to navigate through the legal prisms put in place to regulate the affairs and or condition

19 Article 1 of the ILO Convention

of service of a domestic worker in

Nigeria. The starting point is the extent of Nigeria's international obligation under ILO Convention (ILO C189). As earlier discussed, although the ILO C189, is ratified but not domesticated, nevertheless all the salient principles are embedded and entrenched. The most principal legislation governing the conduct of any form of employment in Nigeria is the Labour Act, which crucially recognises the concept of a domestic worker. Apart from the Labour Act, other legislation are germane and play a crucial role in shaping the fate of domestic workers. The legislation are among other things, the Pension Act, NSIT, Minimum Wage Act; Child's Right Act, NAPTIP, etc.

4.3 Basic Rights of a Domestic Worker

A domestic worker is entitled to the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. These basic rights are sacrosanct and covered under Article 3.2 of the ILO Convention.

Although the Convention is not domesticated, these rights are sacrosanct and accorded protection under the Constitution in the following manner to wit:

(a) Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining:

Section 40 of the 1999 Constitution guarantees freedom of assembly and association to "every person", particularly concerning membership in "any political party, trade union or any other association for the protection of his interests". This provision is expansive and therefore covers all domestic workers.[20]

(b) Elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour

Section 34(b) 1999 Constitution states, "no person shall be held in slavery or servitude", while Section 34(c) states, "no person shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour". The non-exclusive language used should extend these provisions to domestic workers.

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20 In 1960, Nigeria ratified ILO C-87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention and ILO-C98 concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively.

(c) Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation and Effective abolition of child labour

Section 17(3) 1999 Constitution states, "The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that (a) all citizens, without discrimination on any group whatsoever, have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment [...]" and "(e) there is equal pay for equal work without discrimination on account of sex, or on any other ground whatsoever.[...] (f) children, young persons and the age[d] are protected against any exploitation whatsoever, and against moral or material neglect". The protection against "any exploitation whatsoever" would appear to include exploitative child labour and should extend to children working in domestic service.

Furthermore, the prevalent practice of engaging young and underage children in the name of domestic work and subjecting them to servitude, slavery and exploitation is tantamount to human trafficking, which is prohibited and a serious offence as well. Section 22 of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act,[21] provides that: "Any person who [...] (b) employs a child to work in any capacity except where he is employed by a member of his family or light work of an agricultural, horticultural or domestic character, or [...] (d) employs a child as a domestic help outside his own home or family environment..." commits an offence and is liable to the sanctions outlined in the section, in accordance with sections (b) and (c).[22]

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21 Trafficking in Persons Law Enforcement and Administration Act, 2003, amended in 2005 and re-enacted in 2015.

22 Yemi Gbenga-Ogu, Tribune, 10th August 2022, available at: https://www.tribuneonlineng.com; remarked that:

'On annual basis, thousands of people are lured and trapped into some form of neo-slavery and sex slavery. Some even fall victim to organ harvesters. Indeed, statistics from international agencies have shown that human trafficking has, in recent years, assumed alarming proportions especially in West Africa and in Nigeria in particular where there are huge cases of local human trafficking. It is estimated that there are around 350,000 women and children being trafficked every year for commercial sexual exploitation. Apart from being trafficked abroad for cheap labour, a huge number of people trafficked, usually women and children, are internally trafficked for domestic labour, work in farms and factories or as beggars.'

25 The three most common types of human trafficking are sex trafficking, forced labour, and debt bondage. Forced labour, also known as involuntary servitude, is the biggest sector of trafficking in the world, according to the U.S. Department of State. This law prescribes penalty and various imprisonment terms for the trafficking of children for forced begging or hawking; and 10 years to life imprisonment for sex trafficking.

As a corollary to this, the long-established practice (common in the Northern part of the country) of sending underage boys from rural to urban areas under the guise of searching for Qur'anic education otherwise known as '*almajirchi*', engaging in forced begging or hawking, is not only illegal but constitutes an offence of human trafficking, which attracts a punishment of up to 10 years imprisonment. Additionally, it is also a common practice (in the Southern part), where young girls are sent from rural to urban under the guise of working with a big madam or rich family. However, they either end up working in a brothel or even serving as a domestic maid but are subjected to all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation. It is no longer news that underage girls recruited from villages under the guise of working in big cities end up under the shackles of brothels where they end up serving up to 10 men on a daily basis. The most annoying part is that all the proceeds of the prostitution are kept with their Madam (who is their Employer) and other men (posing as securities) guarding the girls to forestall any chance of escaping or spilling the bean.[25]

(d) Right to Compulsory Education:

It is a National Policy that every child is entitled to basic and compulsory primary education. This covers domestic workers below the age of 18 years who are not deprived of this right or interfere with opportunities to participate in further education or vocational training. To put it in proper perspective, this right is guaranteed under S.15 of the Child's Right Act, which provides that: "every parent or guardian shall ensure that his child or ward attends and completes his (a) primary school education; and (b) junior secondary education". The Act further specifies penalties for non-compliance with this stipulation.

(e) Protection against all forms of abuse, harassment and violence:

To properly safeguard the interest of every domestic worker against all forms of abuse and ill-treatment, section 46 of the Labour Act states, "Any employer who neglects or ill-treats any worker whom he has contracted to employ in accordance with this Part of this Act shall be guilty of an offence" and establishes penalties for such actions. Despite the legal protection, domestic workers are subjected on daily basis to all forms of harassment, abuse and degrading treatment. Society looks at them with the utmost disdain and treats them like semi-human being or lesser breeds that deserve no form

of respect, dignity and protection.

(f) Right to Fair Terms of Employment and Decent Working Conditions:

It appears difficult to comprehend this right and put it into real perspective. What is the yardstick for determining fair employment terms and decent working conditions? In a developing world like Nigeria, where workers under formal employment are grappling to get the minimum employment terms and decent working conditions, how much more for domestic workers? The prevalent practice where domestic workers reside in the same household with their masters, it is difficult to entrench decent working conditions vis-à-vis respect for their privacy. They are normally related to the backyard or 'boys' quarters' where basic facilities available in the main house are mostly not there.

Despite the general disenchantment, aberration and moral rectitude towards this right, it still enjoys the backing of the law. Section 65 of the Labour Act states that "The Minister may make regulations providing for (a) the engagement, repatriation or supervision of domestic servants; (b) the employment of women and young persons as domestic servants; (c) the housing accommodation and sanitary arrangements of domestic servants; and (d) the conditions of domestic service generally."

Section 17 (3)(b) and (c) of the Constitution (as amended) states that "The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that [...] (b) conditions of work are just and humane and that there are adequate facilities for leisure and for social, religious and cultural life; and (c) the health, safety and welfare of all persons in employment are safeguarded and not endangered or abused".

The use of non-restrictive language ("all persons in employment") implies the State's responsibility to direct its policy towards ensuring safe and healthy working environments are provided for domestic workers.

Section 88 (1)(b) authorises the Minister to make regulations "requiring employers to report any accident involving the death of or injury to a worker or domestic servant, in cases not coming within the provisions of any other enactment".

Clearly, these provisions manifest recognition of the need to take measures to ensure that domestic workers enjoy fair terms of employment and decent working and living conditions.

(g) Minimum wage coverage, where such coverage exists, and that remuneration is established without discrimination based on sex."

This is provided pursuant to Article 11 of the ILO Convention, which is yet to be domesticated into National Law. Despite the non-ratification of this Convention, as we have seen previously, most of its provisions are entrenched in the Nigerian corpus juris. But the nagging question here is whether domestic workers are entitled to this right. This paper examines the relevant legal provisions to determine whether a domestic worker is entitled to a minimum wage like other formal employees.

Section 2 of the National Minimum Wage (Amendment) Act appears to necessarily exclude domestic workers from the workers to whom employers are required to pay at least the national minimum wage by stating that *this requirement "shall not apply to [...] an establishment in which less than fifty workers are employed" – a situation applicable to almost all domestic workers*.

Section 88(1)(d) of the Labour Act authorises the Minister to make regulations "imposing upon persons who have accepted the services of any worker or domestic servant without paying wages, therefore, the obligation to provide for the maintenance of the worker or domestic servant during sickness or in old age."

The combined effect of these provisions clearly exempts domestic workers from enjoying the minimum wage "domestic servants" or other workers during their period of employment but instead stipulates (only) maintenance during sickness or in old age. This appears to allow a "loophole" to tolerate wage slavery for domestic workers.

Loop Holes within the Legal Framework

Despite the laudable provisions on the protection of the right and interests of domestic workers both at the National and International levels, certain lacunae dot these legal regimes. Apart from the loopholes within the legal framework, the biggest obstacle is the absence or lack of political will and sincerity of purpose to ensure holistic compliance and full implementation of the laudable provisions.

For instance, despite the inclusive definition, domestic workers appear to be excluded from the national minimum wage entitlement under Section 2(a) of this act, which states that the requirement to pay the national minimum wage under section 1 of the act shall not apply to "(a) an establishment in which less than fifty workers are employed [...]" – a situation that applies to almost all domestic workers. This omission is fundamental as it has dashed the aspirations and genuine expectations of domestic workers to earn some

decent pay in the course of their employment.

Nigeria's 2003 Child's Right Act prohibits child trafficking, although only 20 of the country's 36 states have enacted it. Article 35 of the Child's Right Act (CRA) focuses on the prevention of child trafficking for any purpose or in any form. The use of children for domestic work is highlighted in the Amendment to the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) Act of 15 December 2005. The Amendment specifically provides that 'no child (persons under the age of 18) should be used in domestic service outside his or her family.' The importance of this provision is to strengthen the rights of the child as provided in the Child's Right Act and to ensure the full mental and physical development of children. However, the states are not bound to enact Child's Right Act in their respective states since they are not constitutionally bound to do that. This is obvious in the sense that it is within the legislative competence of any state that so wishes, to enact the Child's Right Act as its own law. Lots of misgivings are associated with the Act, while others strongly kick against some of its provisions for being unconstitutional and contrary to their religious doctrines.

One of the most potent legal frameworks to protect and safeguard the interests of domestic workers is 'The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP) Act.'[23] The Act seeks to prohibit and criminalise all forms of violence against persons and proffers penalties against the offenders. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Person (NAPTIP) is the agency, which is saddled with the responsibility of implementing the Act by prosecuting offenders accordingly. The weakness in law enforcement and prosecution has led to continued physical, verbal, and sexual attacks against domestic workers, with the culture of impunity at an all-time high.

These weaknesses in legal and policy provisions relevant to domestic workers in Nigeria are exacerbated in a country where cultural and social attitudes facilitate the stigmatisation and discrimination of domestic workers, along with a lack of formal mechanisms to enforce any existing laws.

Conclusion

Domestic servants are no strangers to all forms of violence, exploitation, demeaning and degrading treatment in the hands of their masters or employers. It is an ancient practice that has been in existence since time immemorial and

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appears to be exacerbating on a daily basis and rearing nasty and ugly heads in different forms. It is difficult to squarely put a blame on the lack of adequate legal frame work to nip in the bud the challenges, rather, what is more apparent to change the negative trend is the sincerity of purpose of the leadership to vigorously and holistically implement the existence legal framework, and also for the society to take a quantum leap by radically departing from treating domestic workers with disdain, but rather with all sense of human feeling and humane treatment. As we have seen, despite the strong legal framework put in place, there are some loopholes that require holistic reform to adequately deal with the issue.

Recommendations

It is a common saying that it takes two to tango, ditto for the protection of domestic workers and accord them all the deserving and necessary protection, requires not only putting in place a salient and befitting legal framework to address the issue but also social recognition of the vital role domestic workers play in the sustainable growth and development of the economy and society.

The scary figures of out-of-school children especially in the Northern part of the country and coupled with the exodus of underage boys into the urban areas under the '*almajirchi*' system, it is imperative to strengthen the legal framework by punishing any family that refuses to enrol its children into basic and compulsory primary and secondary education. Doing that will strike two birds with one stone, by repealing the obnoxious '*almajirchi*' system and also ensuring that each child is properly educated and is salvaged from the shackles and bondage of cruel domestic labour.

Most of the legislation put in place does not necessarily translate into the desired lethal antidote for addressing the plights of domestic workers. It is apparent that children and young women are increasingly being trafficked, exploited, tortured and subjected to all forms of hard labour. There is an urgent need to shift focus towards full implementation.

Sustain advocacy for the regulation of the working and living conditions of domestic workers is imperative, with a focus on their needs, working hours, health and safety, prohibition of unrestricted working hours, monitoring mechanisms on their working and living conditions, and the adoption of appropriate sanctions for defaulters.

It is also critical to bring domestic workers under one umbrella of a strong union that will speak and fight for their good cause. Research has revealed that

domestic work, when it is regulated, is of great importance to the development of the economy as it provides opportunities for women to work in the formal sector, especially women who would have remained at home as caregivers if they did not receive paid help within the home.

Organising domestic workers into unions may grant them the rights and protection they need, as well as a platform for recognition by the state and visibility in wider society. Organising domestic workers is essential to prevent the exploitation of domestic workers by employers through a national legislative framework that will protect the rights of both parties in line with the provisions of the International Labour Organisation Convention 189 from 2011.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE WORKING CONDITIONS, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, PROTECTION AND GAPS IN LAWS PROTECTING DOMESTIC WORKERS

BY
DR. MUHAMMAD NURUDDEEN*

Abstract

This paper appraises the situation of domestic servants in Nigeria from legal point of view. The paper identifies gaps in the legal framework protecting domestic workers in Nigeria. Working condition and other fundamental issues concerning domestic workers are also brought to light in the paper. Some recommendations are preferred at the end of the paper.

Introduction

A domestic worker is a person who works within the employer's home. Such a person performs work in or for a private household or households. A domestic worker sometimes referred to as "domestic servant," "domestic helper," domestic labourer, "manservant" or "menial" performs a wide range of domestic services for an individual or a family. The work he/she performs include providing care for the sick, children, elderly, pets and other domestic animals. Other responsibilities may include housekeeping and/or house maintenance, cooking, laundry and ironing, shopping and running other household errands or even driving for the family. Domestic workers play strategic importance in facilitating labour market activities by providing critical services that gives opportunity for to work outside home. Domestic workers contribute significantly to the National and global economy. Domestic work in Africa is performed mostly by women and children. Report reveals that of the 83 million estimated global domestic workers, the majority are women and children. The use of women, and children, particularly girls in domestic service is widespread in metropolitan areas across the globe most especially in Africa.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) stated in 2002 that approximately 48 million children in sub-Saharan Africa between the ages of 10 and 14 are economically active, constituting 20 percent to 30 percent of children. This is a higher percentage than any other part of the world. The ILO and the United Nations Children's Fund noted that about 15 million children

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in Nigeria between the ages of 10 and 14 work in informal domestic work, 40 percent of whom are at risk of being trafficked for forced labour. Six million do not attend school, and two million work more than 15 hours per day. As of March 2021, about 13 million children were estimated to be out of school in Nigeria, 60 percent of whom were from the north east region due to insurgency and insecurity. A connection exists between trafficking and domestic work. Scholars have argued that most children working in domestic service are victims of trafficking. Like other parts of the globe, Nigeria suffers from the plague of child trafficking. In fact, Nigeria is a source, transit, and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation.

The United States Department of State stated that Nigeria is among countries of the world where slavery and involuntary servitude flourishes, with children used for domestic work and commercial sex. Within Nigeria, women and girls are trafficked solely for domestic servitude and commercial sex. Boys are trafficked for forced labour in street vending and begging, agriculture, mining, stone quarries, and domestic work. It is a fact that domestic workers predominantly come from disadvantaged families with less access to education. The issue of domestic work no doubt is a veritable source of concern not only in Nigeria but all over the world. Unfortunately, despite the significant contribution of the sector to sustainable social and economic development, the sector has been socially and economically undervalued and unrecognised. Couple with fact that in almost all jurisdictions, domestic workers are not adequately unprotected by laws of various jurisdictions. Although legislation protecting domestic workers is in place in many countries, it is often not extensively enforced. In many jurisdictions, domestic work is poorly regulated and domestic workers are subject to serious abuses, including slavery.

Against this background, this paper seeks to find answers to certain nagging questions affecting the domestic workers in Nigeria. The paper for example inquiries into the actual situation of domestic workers and assesses their working condition in Nigeria. The paper aims at finding out whether there exist laws protecting domestic workers in Nigeria and exposes the lacunae in the laws (if any). Some recommendations on how to address the legal challenges affecting the interest of domestic workers are provided at the end of the paper.

The paper, therefore is divided into five different sections. This is first section which deals with introduction. The second section provides the meaning of a domestic worker and the scope and nature of the work. The types of

domestic workers are provided in the section as well. The third section narrates a brief historical evolution of domestic work industry. The legal framework protecting domestic workers in Nigeria are highlighted under section four. The paper then highlights the situation and challenges of domestic work in Nigeria. Finally, the paper concludes with findings, recommendations and general conclusion.

Meaning of Domestic Worker and Scope of Work

The definition of a domestic worker varies from one jurisdiction or field to another. The term has been defined by various scholars, judges and statutes from different perspectives. For example, domestic worker has been defined to simply mean "a person who works within the employer's household." The domestic worker is any person who performs work in or for a private household or households, or simply a person who works within the scope of a residence. But there are certain who still fall under the list of domestic workers although their work is done within the confines of residence. A good example of such worker includes a driver and one who runs errands. A domestic worker is also referred to as domestic helper, domestic servant, manservant or menial or simply domestic. These terms connect the same meaning in this paper and will be used interchangeably throughout.

Justice Collins in the case of *Pearce v Lansdowne* observed that 'menial servant' denotes 'those persons whose main duty is to do actually bodily work as servants for the personal comfort, convenience or luxury of the master, his family and his guests, and who for this purpose become part of the master's residential or *quasi*-residential establishment

In the same vein, Section 91 of the Nigerian Labour Act provides a definition of a domestic servant as "any house, table or garden servant employed in or in connection with the domestic services of any private dwelling house and includes a servant employed as the driver of a privately owned and used motor car.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has defined domestic work as the form of modern slavery. It is noteworthy that elimination of modern slavery by 2030 is part of Goal 8 (Target 8.7) of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015-2030 of which many countries including Nigeria are party to it.

Domestic workers perform a variety of household services for an individual or a family. The work they perform include providing care for the sick, children, elderly, pets and sometimes domestic animals. Other responsibilities

may include housekeeping and/or house maintenance, cooking, laundry and ironing, shopping and running other household errands and even driving for the family. On the whole, domestic work resolves around three fundamental services, namely:

- **Traditional Housekeeping**: This includes cleaning, cooking, laundering and care of pets as well as driving and gardening. This kind of services are for the privileged families.
- **Childcare**. This comprises both the supervision of children's daily life and the intellectual activity of teaching. If both parents have a full-time job and no grandparents are available, this form of domestic work is indispensable, even for families who cannot be regarded as privileged.
- **Personal Care**: Workers in this category assist elderly or disabled persons who require personal services. In an aging society, the need for this kind of work is on the increase.

Classification of Domestic Worker

Domestic workers are generally classified into two, local or indigenous domestic workers and foreign or migrant domestic workers. A domestic worker who is working in a country of which she/he is a national is referred to as the local or indigenous domestic worker whereas a domestic who is working in a country of which she/he is not a national, is thus referred to as a foreign or migrant domestic worker.

It is important to note that an indigenous domestic and foreign domestic workers can also fall under either of the following listed sub-classes of domestic workers:

1. Child or Adult domestic workers
2. Formal or informal
3. Skilled or unskilled domestic worker
4. Paid or unpaid domestic workers
5. Live-in or live-out domestic workers
6. Individually (Household) or corporately employed domestic worker

The list of sub-types of domestic worker is not exhaustive. Passage of time and generation determines the emergence of new sub-types of domestic worker. For instance, with the advancement of the information communications

technology (ICT) one will not be surprised if robots (Artificial Intelligent (AI) Machines) in Nigeria are employed as domestic workers. In that case you will also have sometime like human and artificial domestic workers. It is how ever important to note that liabilities, duties and functions of domestic works is beyond the scope of this paper. That of course is a subject of another paper entirely. The next section will x-ray in brief the historical evolution of domestic work.

Circumstances Leading to Domestic Work

People join domestic work industry due to socio-economic problems as follows:

1. Poverty
2. Unemployment
3. Human trafficking
4. Lack of formal mechanisms to enforce any existing laws.
5. Pandemic such as Covid-19
6. Illiteracy
7. Growing urbanisation
8. Violent conflicts such as insurgency, banditry, kidnapping and the general insecurity in the country.
9. Weak legal system
10. Broken homes
11. Cultural practices such as lack of family planning

A Brief Historical Evolution of Domestic Work Industry from International Legal Perspective

Domestic work sector is one of the oldest sectors in the labour market. The sector is very important because it provides occupation for millions of people around the world. The sector is rooted in the global history of slavery, colonialism and other forms of servitude. Looking backwards through history one finds that domestic work has been viewed at a stage in life as apprenticeship rather than an occupational choice. Those days, it was believed that the practice was meant to be doing a good turn to the poor, uneducated children by taking them into house to carry out domestic services and did not merit any remuneration. They were only provided meals, accommodation, and sometimes clothes, and sometimes a token as a wage. Service was normally

an apprentice system with room for advancement through the ranks. Hence, they were considered as "house helps or domestic servants without any rights whatsoever and treated more or less like slaves. The sector was not regulated then and therefore they were subjected to all form maltreatment and forced labour

The use of the term domestic or menial servant started way back in 15th century. According to Blackstone's definition, the term menial referred to those working and living within the household. This can be deduced from his discussion of another type of servant, the class of labourers who 'do not live *intra moenia*, as part of the household. Menial servants were seen as having a private, personal relationship with their masters. So, domestic servants were unique in their assimilation within the family home as compared to labourers and other workers. The recognition of different groups of workers is a fundamental characteristic of that period, as Deakin and Wilkinson have shown. Each group had its own set of rules. For example, initially domestic work was treated as an informal work but with passage of time, it was believed that domestic workers can enter into agreement with their masters. Consequently, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, courts had accepted the custom of a month's notice in the employment of domestic servants. For instance, in *George v Davies,* the court accepted the claim that for domestic servants a custom existed enabling them to give notice in the first month of work, before the expiration of the first fortnight. By handing in her notice, the servant was entitled to wages for the period of that month. This clearly put the domestic servant at an advantageous legal position.

The transformation witnessed in the sector during this period was not only captured in court judgement but also in legislation as well. This could be seen in the enacted body of laws known as the Master and Servant Acts enacted in the course of the late eighteenth and the early to mid-nineteenth centuries which were consolidated by the *Master and Servant Act 1867*. The United *Kingdom's Master and Servant Act 1823* was the first of its kind. The Act influenced the enactment of domestic service laws in other nations, although such legislation tended to favour employers the more.

However, within the nineteenth century, the legal position of domestic worker changed as they were later exempted from protective legislation. Domestic servants were required to serve and obey their masters and mistresses around the clock—day and night—without any recognition of their own time and leisure. Labourers and other workers also suffered from similar problems.

The situation of the latter groups changed during the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, placing them in a more protected state. They therefore, left domestic servants behind in term of legal protection. This is glaring from what transpired by the end of the nineteenth century when collective bargaining was growing as a result of powers amassed by labour union. During that period the reciprocal contract of employment as we know it today began to be developed, but only for some groups of workers. First, for managerial and clerical workers, and later on for workmen. Worker-protective legislation was also structured around the category of 'workman', namely the manual workers consisting of the previous categories of 'labourers' and 'apprentices'. These became a protected group by law. And while these categories drew closer together, domestic servants were distanced and set apart. Hence, domestic workers were clearly not considered as part of workmen category and this had a serious legal implication of domestic workers. For example, *Employers and Workmen Act of 1875,* specifically excluded the category of 'domestic servant' from its scope so also *Employers Liability Act 1880* and even prior protective legislation such as *Truck Act 1887*. Similar exclusion could also be found in other legal mechanisms like the *Shop*

Hours Act 1892. Unemployment Insurance Act 1920, Factory and Workshop Act, the Workmen's Compensation Acts of 1906 and 1925 respectively. It is obvious that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries marked a shift in the legal status of 'domestic servants', and the law was a central factor in that process, causing domestic servants to be disadvantaged. This to some extent has been the position *mutatis mutandis* until close to the mid-twentieth century when domestic workers-friendly international legal instruments began emerge.

The mid-twentieth century witnessed tremendous developments in the areas of human right which in return changed the status of workers generally and in particular domestic workers. Slavery and forced labour were abolished at the international level and later at national levels. This was made possible with the coming into existence of the United Nations. Several international agreements were entered recognising equal rights for all humans without discrimination either on grounds of religion, tribe or gender. International Labour Organisation (ILO) was also established to regulate the labour market the world over. For example, the ILO came up with the Decent Work for Domestic Workers Agenda and specifically ILO Convention No. 189 (C189) and Supplementary Recommendation Number 201 of 2011, which came into

force in September 2013. The C189 recognises the social and economic value of this occupation and calls for the progressive extension of social security protection to domestic workers. The Convention recognises that domestic work is work and domestic workers deserve the same employment rights as any other worker. It also sets out clear rules to prevent abuse and spell out equal minimum wages; working hours and holiday allowance as other workers as other informal workers (ILO, 2011). They can reside in the home of the employer, as well as ensuring they enjoy certain degree of independence and privacy, including the need for a separate, lockable room. In fact, from 2o11 till date, the 16th of June every year is celebrated as domestic workers day. The standards have been set and therefore, ILO has done its own part. It is now left for individual countries to follow suit by enacting the needed laws and establishing institutions that will ensure the protection of domestic workers in their respective domains.

A Brief Historical Evolution of Domestic Work Industry: The Nigerian Perspective

Coming down to Nigeria, domestic work sector existed even before the coming of colonial masters. Parents have been known to give up or in some cases even entrust their children to middlemen in the hope that their children will have better opportunities in the big cities than they would receive at home. While some children get lost in the system, others are being privately adopted by distant relatives, who put them to work instead of registering them in school. Domestic servitude grew in Nigeria due to mismanagement of the national economy and the outcome which is associated with the end of era of oil boom in the 1980s coupled with failure of the economic policy of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which induced limited growth of investment in the manufacturing sector, these constrained the labour absorption capacity of the non-agricultural sector, especially manufacturing and the consequence is poverty, high growing unemployment especially in urban areas. These factors widened income inequality, weak governance, social conflict, gender, and environmental issues and therefore contributed to the evolution and expansion of domestic labour especially in urban areas in attempt to make ends meet. The use of children, women, and girls in domestic service is widespread in metropolitan areas across Africa and Nigeria in particular. Nigeria is a signatory to C189 but has not ratified nor domesticated it. As in other parts of the world, domestic work in Nigeria falls within the informal sector that operates in the

invisible space of the private household, providing personal and household care. It is executed outside the purview of labour laws and social protection.

In Lagos and some other states there exist illegal recruiting outlets for domestic works. The governor of Lagos state, Goerge Ambode said that it has been discovered that domestic workers are largely undocumented and pose a grave security threat in the state. The recruiting agencies must be licensed and regulated henceforth. Our safety is now non-negotiable. Consequently, in 2018, Lagos state government proposed a bill and presented same before the State House of Assembly to regulate the activities of domestic workers and security guards. The bill seeks to regulate these classes of workers, as well as, monitor their activities, that of their employers and agencies involved in the process. The bill drew must of its provisions from C189, which as highlighted above is yet to be ratified by or domesticated in Nigeria. The bill hopefully will build protection to ensure that domestic workers are formally recognised through an accessible system and have basic labour protections, have minimum wage, working conditions and working hours. The extent to which law guarantees protection to domestic workers in Nigeria will be examined later in this paper.

Situation and Condition of Domestic Workers in Nigeria and Some Selected Jurisdictions

As noted above, the conditions faced by domestic workers have varied considerably throughout history and in the contemporary world. It was noted that in the course of twentieth-century movements for labour rights, women's rights and immigrant rights, the conditions faced by domestic workers and the problems specific to their class of employment have come to the fore. At present, the situation and condition of domestic work in Nigeria and the world over could be summarise as follows:

Situation and Condition of Domestic Workers in Nigeria

The United States Department of State revealed that Nigeria is among countries of the world where slavery and involuntary servitude flourishes, with children used for domestic work and commercial sex. Majority of domestic workers are engaged in informal employment arrangement without any social security protection. This is the case even in advanced countries like United Kingdom, Germany and United States where such work is frequently performed by migrant workers. the ILO and the United Nations Children's

Fund noted that about 15 million children in Nigeria between the ages of 10 and 14 work in the informal sector, 40 percent of whom are at risk of being trafficked for forced labour. Six million do not attend school, and two million work more than 15 hours per day. As of March 2021, about 13 million children were estimated to be out of school in Nigeria, 60 percent of whom were from the north east region. Insurgency and insecurity were the factors observed to be responsible for this situation. Majority of those children are found on the street of cities begging only the luck or the unlucky ones will find themselves being used as domestic workers.

As highlight above, domestic workers predominantly come from disadvantaged families with less access to education. They are often vulnerable and uninformed of their rights, especially in rural areas. However, for the most part of the world domestic work is demanding and undervalued. Although legislation protecting domestic workers is in place in many countries, it is often not extensively enforced. In many jurisdictions, domestic work is poorly regulated and domestic workers are subject to serious abuses, including slavery. Because domestic workers work in the home, their sufferings and pains are hidden in the home and out of the public spotlight. Nowadays with an increase of power, the domestic workers' community has formed many organisations, such as the National Domestic Workers Alliance, Domestic Workers United, and the South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers Union. Unfortunately, such kind of organisations are not visible in Nigeria.

There were several reports across the Nigeria of physical and sexual abuse and even deaths of domestic workers at the hands of their employers, as in the case of Joy Adole. The Joy Adole case was reported by the media and the subject of public debates in Nigeria. She died under questionable circumstances in her employer's house in the Bariga area of Lagos during the Covid-19 lockdown. Her relatives accused her employer of beating her to death and, in collusion with her husband, staging a suicide. The police promised an investigation, but a year later the case has still not been resolved. In fact, the Covid-19 lockdown period saw an increase in violence against women and girls, and female domestic workers faced the brunt of it.

Most child and a few of adult domestic workers are live-in workers and are under the round-the-clock control of their employers. Domestic work is characterised by deception and false promises concerning conditions of work, lack of freedom to change employers, physical or sexual abuse, debt bondage, confiscation of identity papers, non-payment of wages to worker,

and physical confinement. National regulatory frameworks need to tame these inhuman treatments suffered by these helpless children on whom future generation will depend.

Furthermore, children domestic workers suffer significantly because they are deprived of right to education, social protections, they are exploited and undervalued and their future mortgaged not only in Nigeria but other parts of the Africa. This is generally attributed to inadequate or ineffective legal regime governing domestic work in almost all jurisdictions in the whole. Although it was argued that "it is not a lack of legal regulations on domestic workers that pose the main problem, but control of their implementation, given the peculiar nature of the relationship between households and domestic workers." Däubler sees a possible solution in the replacement of the household employer by a third, larger unit (artificial employer) which ensures that legal requirements are adhered to. He illustrates this approach with two cases in which an "artificial employer" has been successfully established. One is the case of dock workers in harbours, the other home-care aides in California. An obligation for labour contracts between the household and a third party could also ensure much needed social protection for domestic helpers. This kind of arrangement also exists in China where an agency is charged by the government with the training and administration of domestic workers, including dispatching them to households and handling their payment as well as social insurance.

Generally, domestic workers have low pay and work long hours, have no legal protection; 45% have no legal rest periods or paid annual leave and often have unlawful contracts. They earn less than the legal limit; and work under unfair terms and unethical job descriptions. Many get payment as food and a place to stay. Also, there are many other problems such as late pay, deductions, unpaid overtime and no pay for times they are not working. Domestic work can lead to slavery, sex trafficking and imprisonment. They are often victims of crime, rape, forced labour and physical violence. The child domestics wake up too early; are exposed to sexual abuse; labours endlessly; have no time for self-development, are denied happy childhood and some.

Domestic workers are usually isolated from each other. Contacts can be established only during their spare time. Joining a union tends to be considered unacceptable by employers and is often penalized by dismissal. In most countries, laws protecting against dismissal do not apply to small workplaces with only one or two workers.

Individual households normally hire them on a one-to-one basis. As a

consequence, domestic workers often lack the privilege of having basic worker rights such as minimum wage, regulated working hours, paid maternity leave, sick leave, holidays and social security benefits. In Nigeria for example they are excluded from minimum waged. Implicit exclusion of domestic workers can be found with reference to receiving the national minimum wage, which the Nigerian Senate proposed to raise from 18,000 Nigerian naira (58 US dollars) to 30,000 (97 dollars) in March 2019. Section 9 of the *National Minimum Wage Amendment Act 2011* defines a worker as:

any member of the civil service of the Federation, of a state or Local government or any individual (other than persons occupying executive, administrative, technical or professional positions in any civil service) who has entered into or works under a contract with an employer whether the contract is manual labour, clerical work or otherwise expressed or implied or in writing and whether it is a contract to personally execute any work or labour.

By implication, domestic workers are excluded from the minimum wage under Section 2(a) of the Act, which states that the requirement to pay the National Minimum Wage under Section 1 of the

Act shall not apply to "an establishment in which less than fifty workers are employed" a situation that applies to almost all domestic workers.

Situation and Condition of Domestic Workers in Some Selected Jurisdictions

Recognition of domestic workers and legal protection accorded to domestic worker varies from one country to another. This section selected some countries to analyse how they accord protection to domestic workers as follows:

Brazil

It is the requirement of the law in Brazil that domestic workers must be hired under a registered contract with many of the rights of any other workers, which includes a minimum wage, remunerated vacations and a remunerated weekly day off. Despite this requirement of the law, it is not uncommon, however, for employers to hire servants illegally and fail to offer a work contract. Since domestic staff predominantly come from disadvantaged groups with less access to education. They are often vulnerable and uninformed of their rights, especially in rural areas. Nevertheless, domestics employed without a proper contract can successfully sue their employers and be compensated for abuse committed. It is common in Brazil for domestic staff,

including childcare staff, to be required to wear uniforms.

United States of America

Traditionally domestic workers have mostly been women and are likely to be immigrants. Currently, there are 1.8 million domestic workers in the US, and tens of thousands of this class of people are believed to be in forced labour. America's domestic home help workers, most of them female members of minority groups, earn low wages and often receive no retirement or health benefits because they lack of basic labour protections. They are generally excluded from many of the legal protections afforded to other classes of workers, including the provisions of the National Labour Relations Act. However, in recent years, advocacy groups like the National Domestic Workers' Alliance have succeeded in passing a Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights into state law in New York, Hawaii, and California in an effort to push and assert their rights and legal status.

India

In India, domestic workers are largely absent from state policy. This is the case whether it be labour legislation or social policy. They are therefore not entitled to maternity or other social benefits nor are their working conditions or working hours regulated. However, some efforts have been made. The *Unorganised Social Security Act of 2008* does include domestic workers. In certain states, minimum wages have been notified for domestic work. There have been efforts to legislate for the protection of domestic workers, including one drafted by the National Commission for Women in 2008. At the state level, the *Maharashtra Domestic Workers Welfare Board Act of 2008* and the *Tamil Nadu Manual Workers Act* also envisage welfare and protection for domestic workers through the welfare board model. There are now several trade unions in India that have been working towards establishing the rights of domestic workers both in the legal sphere and on a day-to-day basis. The Penn Thozhilargal Sangam, the Unorganised Sector Workers Union in Tamilnadu, and the Domestic Workers Movement (operating in 23 states) are examples. Other domestic workers' organisations which are trade union's function either independently or in association with the larger regional or national trade unions. Cooperatives have also emerged as an effective way of organising for domestic workers. Cooperatives can create structures that allow domestic workers to take control of their working lives, address isolation

and build solidarity.

Pakistan

In Pakistan, it was estimated in 2019 that there were at least 8.5 million domestic workers in the country. Majority of them were women and children. Domestic child labour in Pakistan is the most hazardous work. There were many reported cases of beating, thrashings and killings of child domestic workers. The rights of domestic worker were neglected in Pakistan for a very long period. There were not legal mechanisms protecting the domestic workers in the country. However, realising the importance of domestic workers, the government of introduced the Punjab Domestic Workers Act, 2019 to enforce the rights of domestic workers, regulating their terms of employment, working condition of service and the provisions of social protection and welfare. It was suggested that enlightening the domestic workers about existence of the Act will go a long way in ensuring its full implementation as many of the domestic workers are not about its existence and the rights accorded them under the Act.

Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, freedom of association is observed. Workers can freely form societies and workers' unions. Recently, more and more local and migrant domestic workers have come to be aware of the importance of organisation. Many tend to unionise themselves to make their voice heard at the policy level for decent work. In 2010, there were four registered local domestic workers' unions and ten migrant domestic unions. Being organised does not bring with it collective bargaining power. Hong Kong has no collective bargaining legislation. Only a few large enterprises with inhouse unions can practice collective bargaining and reach agreements. Domestic workers, both local and migrant, rely heavily on the legal framework and individual bargaining. Workers' organisations make it easier to address demands.

In a nutshell, one thing is recurring in what has been the situation of domestic workers across the globe. For example, reports from mainland China/ Hong Kong, South Korea and India show that, although domestic work is no longer unpaid as a matter of course in this region, profound problems remain. For example, in India, South Korea and mainland China, the average wages in this sector are far lower than in other industries. And despite some first reform steps, the majority of domestic workers are still excluded from social protection. Only in Hong Kong are domestic labourers better off, because employment contracts, both for locals and migrants, are common. These

include rights and benefits regulated in Hong Kong Labour law. Nonetheless, most part-time domestic workers do not enjoy full legal protection. Moreover, all domestic workers are excluded from retirement benefits.

The Rights of Domestic Workers

The rights accorded to domestic workers differ from one country to another. Some of the rights are contained in statutes, some are impliedly imputed while some accorded to them based on custom of a given society. The rights numerous and can be itemised but not limited to the following:

1. Right of equal treatment without any form of discrimination.
2. Right to dignity. Under no circumstance should they work for free or compelled to forced labour. All work must be remunerated adequately.
3. Right to safety wears. There should be first aid kits in the house.
4. The right not to be subjected to any inhumane and downgrading treatment.
5. The right to socialise using social media outlets like the Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc
6. Right to education
7. Right to seek for better employment. You cannot force a willing master on an unwilling servant
8. Right to wear clean, comfortable and suitable dress to work with.
9. Right to work for you alone not to extended to or borrowed to friends, neighbours and relatives.
10. Right not to be married to somebody she/he does not like.
11. Right to private life
12. They have right to express herself and associate others.
13. Right to practice her religion freely without any restriction or harassment.
14. Right to education and decent place to sleep
15. Right to visit her family from time to time and to call them when necessary.
16. Right to have 30 days annual leave at ones with splitting it or distracting the leave
17. Right to be heard if she is found wanting in anyway.
18. Right to have six hours sleep everyday

19. Right to be taken to hospital if fall sick and to pay for drugs.
20. Right to prompt payment of salary. If there is delay, she/he has the right to know why and when the payment is going to be made. Payment should be made in block without splitting same.
21. Right own property and to sale or dispose of the property as he/she desires.

An Analysis of the Legal Framework for Domestic Workers in Nigeria

Unlike in other climes, Nigeria does not have a specific legislation governing domestic work sector in the country. Legislative provisions on domestic workers could only be found in scattered laws in the country. Some of the laws dealing with or protecting domestic workers in Nigeria include the following:

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As amended) which guarantees the right of all citizens to fundamental rights such as the right to move freely, right to life, right to fair hearing, right to own property, freedom of speech and the right to seek for legal redress in the event his/her right is or is likely or about to be violated.

Labour Act 1990 which provides the definition of domestic servant. The Labour Act contains specific provisions that may be used to put a check on the phenomena of domestic labour arbitrariness. Section 65 of the Act provides that the Minister may make regulations providing for the engagement, repatriation or supervision of domestic servants. So also the employment of women and domestic servants; the housing accommodation and sanitary arrangement of domestic servants; and the conditions of domestic service in general. The Act further provides that no young person under the age of sixteen years shall be employed in circumstances in which it is not reasonably possible for him to return each day to the place of residence of his parent or guardian except with the approval of an authorised labour officer and on a written contract. However, many employers of child domestic seem not comply with these provisions. Many children engaged in domestic labour are monitored twenty-four hours and hardly given opportunity to observe a rest by their employers. Moreover, the Act provides that no young person under the age of sixteen years shall be required to work for a longer period than four consecutive hours or permitted to work for more than eight working hours in any one day: Provided that, save as may be otherwise provided by any regulations made under section 65 of this

Act, this subsection shall not apply to a young person employed in domestic service. The provision for the protection of the young persons who dominate domestic labour market are in principle but in practice is far from application, the ministry who should monitor and regulate this responsibility has proven to have failed in the protection of this group of workers. How many labour officers visit organisations to monitor the working conditions of the Nigerian workers which are visible talk much less of the invisible domestic workers?

Child's Right Act 2003 which seeks to protection the Nigerian child against forced labour and other harmful traditional practices in the country. The Act contains certain right accorded to children in Nigeria. Ladan(2005) pointed out that Child domestic service in Nigeria today has becomes violation of children's rights; if it is derivatives of the rights of the child to be given protection and care necessary for his/her well-being; derivatives of the rights of the child to survival and development, to freedom of movement and from discrimination; derivatives of the family union, to human dignity, to leisure and recreation, to parental care, protection and maintenance, to free, compulsory and universal primary education and others as provided by sections 2-15 of the Child's Right Act. Section 28 of the Child's Rights Act, prohibits any child forced or exploitative labour, including employment of a child as a domestic help outside his or her own home or family environment. Section 35 of the Child's Right Act focuses on the prevention of child trafficking for any purpose or in any form.

National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) Act 2005: The use of children for domestic work is highlighted in the Amended NAPTIP. The Amended version specifically provides that no child (persons under the age of 18) should be used in domestic service outside his or her family. The importance of this provision is to strengthen the rights of the child as provided in the Child's Right Act and to ensure full mental and physical development of children in Nigeria. In 2021, the NAPTIP arrested and investigated 68 cases of child domestic labour which led to inflicting grievous wounds on the victims.

The Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP Act) 2015: This legislation is designed to eliminate violence in private and public life including domestic service issues. It prohibits all forms of violence against persons, domestic workers inclusive and seeks to provide maximum protection

and effective remedies for victims and punishment of offenders. NAPTIP is mandated to administer the provisions of the Act as highlighted in Section 44 of the NAPTIP Act.

Other laws and government policies with direct or direct bearing on domestic work include: Child Rights Law of Lagos state, Domestic Violence Law of Lagos state, Labour Regulations of 1936, the Anti-Trafficking Policy 2003, the Employee Compensation Act 2010, and the Labour Migration Policy 2013.

From the foregoing, it could right to conclude that there is lack of a comprehensive legal framework for domestic workers in Nigeria. The consequence of this will led to continued physical, verbal, and sexual attacks against domestic workers, with the culture of impunity at an all-time high.

Conclusion

This paper has investigated into the situation and condition of domestic workers in Nigeria. It has also analysed the legal framework governing domestic work sector. The paper has established that the domestic work is a very old sector tracing its history way back to many centuries ago. As an economic sector, domestic work sector helped a lot in balancing competition in labour market.

Millions of people earn a living through domestic work. Despite its contributions to national and global economy, reports have shown that domestic workers are the least protected by law and social security policies in almost all jurisdictions in the world. In Nigeria, domestic workers, majority women and children are being subjected to force labour, inhumane, torture and downgrading treatments. They are equally subject of sexual exploitation, trafficking and total neglect. In fact, they are been and continue to be deprived of their basic fundamental rights like right to life and privacy, freedom of expression and association. This paper has observed that there is no visible and formidable association for domestic workers in Nigeria. The paper has also revealed that the existing legislation regulating domestic work section are scattered and grossly inadequate. The paper therefore recommends creation of a strong domestic workers' union that will push for the enforcement of their rights and demands. Nigerian domestic workers need to borrow a leaf from the struggles of domestic works' unions in India as highlighted in this paper. The Minister of Labour should leave up to his responsibilities by issuing regulations that will sanitise the domestic work sector in line with

powers given to him by the Labour Act. In the alternative, Nigeria should give license to certain interested private companies (artificial employers) and charge them with responsibilities of recruiting, distributing domestic workers to whoever needs their services and then monitor and report whoever is found maltreating any domestic worker in the country. The domestic workers need to be enlightened about their rights because majority of them do not know that they have certain rights accorded to them by law. Finally it is recommended that Nigeria should amend its *National Minimum Wage Amendment Act 2011* and other anti-domestic worker legislation in the country so as to ensure that domestic workers are fully protected by law as practiced in other jurisdictions. In fact the need for a specific and comprehensive domestic workers legislation cannot be over emphasised.

ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN MITIGATING ABUSES IN DOMESTIC WORK

BY
SANI LAWAL MALUMFASHI, PhD*

Introduction

Work is generally defined as organised activity, marked off from other activities in time and space (Malumfashi 2021). It is an activity taking place outside home e.g., in an office or market or anywhere separate from home. It is also taking place within a specified period of time e.g., morning, afternoon or evening shift. The position of domestic work given this context is somehow ambivalent. Hence domestic work and many forms of informal works are excluded by this definition.

In a more generic term Giddens (2013) conceived of work whether paid or unpaid as carrying out of task requiring the expenditure of mental and physical efforts for the purpose of production of goods and services that cater for human needs. This also puts domestic work into a more ambiguous situation as to whether or not the services rendered by the workers are dearly needed.

Domestic workers are referred to as any person engaged in domestic work within an employable relationship (ILO 2013). International Labour Organisation (ILO) equally classified domestic work as work performed in or for a household or households. In Nigerian parlance, child domestic workers are referred to as 'house help'. The house helps exploitatively work as housemaids, cooks, waiters, valets, butlers, laundresses, babysitters, and sometimes sex slaves. The nature of domestic work is unspecified and therefore it is very common for a single domestic worker to carry out these multiple tasks at a time (Ibeme 2014). By its nature and practice, domestic work is a work akin to a modern-day slavery.

Domestic work is fast becoming a dominating informal urban economic space in many developing countries including Nigeria. Other informal sector employment thriving in Nigeria include water vendors, vulcanizing, waste scavenging, street hawking and many other unskilled works including professional and routine begging (Malumfashi 2010).

These types of work are referred to as informal because they are unregulated, undocumented and not covered by either health or life insurance

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policies. Informal sector employment dominates urban economic space and contribute to between 20% and 40% of GDP in developing Asian and African Countries (Giddens 2013).

Domestic Work Abuses: Psycho – Social and Economic Effects

Hundreds of domestic workers most of them underage of between 11-14 years and few elderly women are being trafficked on daily basis from rural Nigeria to urban areas, albeit with the consent of either their parents, care givers or relatives, to render unspecified service to the homes of rich urban elites. International Labour Organisation (ILO) reported that, Nigeria has about 15million children under the age of 14 working across the country. In reality however, the ILO's report is just a tip of the iceberg. These young 'servants' are mostly girls. The gender composition of domestic workers in Nigeria is further accentuated by Esssiet (2016), who reported that 80% of domestic workers in Nigeria are women and mostly underage children

By the nature of the work itself and the social and economic circumstances of the workers, domestic workers are subject to composite abuses. The work is economically exploitative as the workers are lowly paid for hours of mentally derailing and physically tasking job.

Domestic work is socially degrading and repugnant as the workers are subjected to social segregation, discrimination and dehumanization manifesting into lack of rest and freedom, food and sleep deprivation, sex exploitation and physical molestation, poor sleeping condition and lack of access to education.

Domestic work is politically and legally elusive as the rights of the workers are not defined, guaranteed or protected by any policy measure or legal code. The workers themselves are not documented by either Ministries of Labour and Productivity, Women Affairs and Social Development, or Ministry of Information, Youths, Sports and Culture. Given their undocumented situation, even when rights of domestic workers are violated, Government may not be aware because the workers do not legally and administratively exist.

Domestic workers are even more subject to abuse by their vulnerable social and economic circumstances. They are largely poor, young and consequently weak, rural–urban migrants, uneducated and in perpetual seclusion all of which made them absolutely powerless.

The psycho-social and economic effects of domestic work abuses are many: Domestic accidents that could lead to death or permanent deformity;

sexual abuse which may have lasting effects on later social and personality development of the victims; stress and depression as a result of the stressful nature of the work and social dehumanization they are constantly subjected to. Other effects include acute stress disorder, cognitive defects, inferiority complexes, and illiteracy owing to the lack of parental attachment ad care, work burden, inadequate socialisation, work burden and lack of schooling. (Malumfashi 2020, Malumfashi 2022).

Role of Stakeholders in Mitigating Abuses in Domestic Work

Stakeholders responsible for regulation, formalization, controlling, monitoring and preventing or mitigating abuses of domestic workers in Nigeria are identified as:

i. National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP)
ii. National Orientation Agency (NOA)
iii. Ministry of Education
iv. Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
v. Ministry of Information, Youths, Sports and Culture
vi. Police Authority
vii. Immigration Officials
viii. Judiciary
ix. community-based organisations (CBOs)
x. Parents
xi. Mass media

The roles of these major stakeholders are paramount in any conceived attempts to mitigate or stamp out domestic work abuses. Their statutory and cultural roles gave them the mandate to protect the vulnerable and defenceless domestic workers from abuses, exploitations and enslavement.

Through inter-ministerial and inter-agency synergy and collaborations, it is possible for the abuses to be checked in the form of adoption, localisation, and domestication of the already existing United Nations Child Rights Convention, Child Labour Act of the International Labour Organisation, Nigeria's Child's Right Act, Media enlightenment and sensitisation, Community Policing and prompt prosecution of offenders.

There already exist a number of laws, conventions, acts or provisions

where their enforcements would mitigate abuses in domestic work industry. According to Nigeria's Trafficking in Person's (prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act, 2003, as amended in 2015, it is a crime to use minors as house help. Section 23(1) (a) States *Any person who employs, requires, recruits, transports, harbours, receives, or hires out a child under the age of 12 years as domestic worker commit an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a minimum period of 6 months* (Unigwe 2020). Plausible as it is, what this Act requires is political will to enforce it and such enforcement could be possible and easier through inter-agency collaboration and commitment to affirmative action.

Again, U.N Convention on Protection of Children is very explicit regarding observation of child right and by extension constraining domestic work abuses. By the language of such convention 'every child has the right to be protected from different types of abuse' (in this context including domestic workers' abuses).

Article 19, further stresses that, every child has the right to be protected from abuse and neglect while in the care of anyone responsible for them (parents, guardians etc.). Yet article 32, maintained that, all children have the right to be protected from economic exploitation, and any work that is a danger to their educational and health.

Because the domestic workers in Nigeria are predominantly children, these laws or conventions directly apply to them (ILO (2005), ILO (2008), Malumfashi (2022). Nigeria being a signatory to these conventions can expediently adopt, domesticate and enforce them. Police Authority and Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development have the duty to actualise such enforcement. Ministry of Education on its own part must ensure that all school age children in the society are enrolled in schools.

Media Organisations should play the supportive role of cultural reorientation, public enlightenments, and sensitisation on the hazards associated with engaging children as domestic workers. The Ministry of Labour and Productivity on its own part ought to have a directorate on informal sector employment for proper regularization, standardization and documentation of informal works in urban sector. The targets for all these being the parents, traffickers, domestic Labour employers, and the domestic workers themselves.

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THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN MITIGATING ABUSES IN DOMESTIC WORK INDUSTRY

BY
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Abstract

The trend of domestic employment thrives almost in every society. It is most common in developing countries and Nigeria is no exception. Recent studies show that domestic work, which cut across age and gender, can have adverse and exploitative consequences for workers, predominantly in an unregulated environment. This paper therefore, reviewed the experience and nature of domestic workers in Nigeria and beyond concerning the abuses and exploitations they suffer, ranging from physical to psychological abuses in the hands of their employers. The paper also identified the vital roles played by stakeholders in mitigating abuses in domestic work industry. The paper also made recommendations on how best abuses faced by domestic workers would be curtailed.

Key issues: Domestic Worker; Child Domestic Worker; Stakeholders in Domestic Industry

Introduction

Domestic industry provides a range of services in private homes such as: sweeping and cleaning; washing of clothes and dishes; shopping and cooking; care for children, the elderly, and the disabled; gardening, driving, security and other services as the need may arise. There are almost 76 million domestic workers around the world represent 2.3 per cent of total employment worldwide (WIEGO & ILO 2022). Women comprise a higher share of domestic workers than men in developing and emerging countries, 79 per cent are women in comparison to 21 per cent men; and in developed countries, and 64 per cent are women and 36 per cent men (ILO, 2021). Across all countries the overwhelming majority of women in domestic work (around 80 per cent) are engaged as cleaners and helpers. Men in domestic work are engaged in a wider range of types of work: around one-third are security guards, gardeners and building maintenance workers; around one-fourth are cleaners and helpers and a little less than one quarter are drivers. Across the countries, around 7 per cent of women domestic workers are engaged in direct care and 1 per cent

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of men (WIEGO and ILO 2022). They provide essential services that keep households working, yet most work in vulnerable situations.

Many factors lead women to enter domestic work. Women from poor households or disadvantaged communities often have few employment opportunities, and may face discrimination based on gender, caste or class, race or ethnicity. Cleaning, cooking, and caring for children and the elderly is almost universally regarded as women's work, so men rarely compete in this job market. Demand for domestic services is growing worldwide due to the increases in women working outside the home, the aging of populations and the increasing need for long term care and the loss of extended family support (WIEGO and ILO 2022).

The trend of domestic employment flourishes almost in every society, but it is most common in developing countries, especially in Africa (Okafor, 2009) and Nigeria is no exception. Such employment is also witnessing a resurgence rather than a decline in Europe and other developed countries (Gamburd, 2000; Williams, 2003). More than 85% of domestic workers in NigeParticipants in domestic work have been reported to be highly racialized, gendered and classed indigenous and migrant women, children, and increasing men have been reported to be highly active in the domestic work industry (Nesbitt-Ahmed, 2016).

Domestic labour has become a 'silent killer' of the child's future. This is so because many children today are exposed to different abusive acts in Nigeria. Taking from this view, children are at even greatest risk, due to their rights, separation from their family, and dependence on their employer (Child Right International Network, CRIN, 2016; ILO, 2015).

Recent studies have shown that domestic work, which cut across age and gender, have adverse and exploitative consequences for workers, particularly in an unregulated environment for instance Ogbechie and Oyetunde (2019) conducted a study and found out the experience of domestic workers in Nigeria concerning the abuses and exploitations they suffer in the hands of their employers. The domestic workers suffer issues such as long hours of work, excessive workload, and lack of voice, abuses and ill-treatment, lack of health, safety and maternity protection. In this vein Chidi and Olanrewaju (2018) found similar trend in their study whereby many children who are domestic workers are subjected to deprivation of their rights necessary for their wellbeing; protection and maintenance, access to free, compulsory and universal primary education, etc.

The income of young domestics as opined by Ibeme (2014) was insignificant spite of abuse and exploitation; most gruesome is that they are subjected to undue punishment and humiliations, experienced physical beating and verbal abuse. The working environment is often characterised by long periods of isolation and long working hours, leading to physical and psychological trauma. It is estimated that many children in the child domestic service sector work between 14 to 18 hours per day working largely in the sphere of private households, domestic workers experience a degree of vulnerability that is unparalleled to that of other workers (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour & ILO 2013).

In essence Adisa, Adekoya and Okoya (2021) found out that the nature of the jobs of domestic workers in Nigeria gives rise to a situation of modern-day slavery in which an employee works without a formal employment contract, with little or no rights to private time. Long and unstructured working hours, employers' perceptions about domestic workers and a huge workload fuel and exacerbate work-life conflict amongst domestic workers in Nigeria.

Domestic Work/Domestic Worker

Domestic work: The Domestic Workers Convention described domestic work as "work performed in or for a household or households" (ILO, 2011, No. 189). **Domestic worker (or house help)**:

According to the Domestic Workers Convention, a domestic worker is "any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship" (ILO, 2011, No. 189). A domestic worker may work on full-time or part-time basis; may be employed by a single household or by multiple employers; may be residing in the household of the employer (live-in worker) or may be living in his or her own residence (live-out). At the 20th International Conference of Labour Statistics in

2018, the following statistical definition of domestic workers was adopted: "workers of any sex employed for pay or profit, including in-kind payment, who perform work in or for a household or households to provide services mainly for consumption by the household. The work may be performed within the household premises or in other locations." (ILO 2018b, para. 104.). A domestic worker may be working in a country of which she/he is not a national, thus referred to as a **migrant domestic worker**. Majority of domestic workers are live-in domestics. Though they are often accommodated, their lodgings are not as typically as comfortable as those set aside for the family members.

In some cases, they sleep in the kitchen or small rooms (ILO, 2011). In many countries they are completely excluded from labour law and social security protection, or inferior standards apply. Most domestic work is informal i.e. performed outside of labour regulations and social protections. The fact that domestic workers are employed in private homes, they are invisible as workers and isolated from others in the sector. Especially live-in domestic workers are economically and personally dependent and thus working on the good or bad will of their employers. Private homes can be "safe havens", however, growing evidence suggests domestic workers are exposed to a range of unhealthy and hazardous working conditions (WIEGO, 2021). In same the vein, domestic workers are more often than not, excluded from vacation time, sick time, and overtime, many of these workers are subjected to abuse, sexual harassment, and social inequality. However, because domestic workers work in private households, their struggles are seldom brought out of the public spotlight. (Adesina, 2014; Aibangbe, 2015; Bello, 2018; Manbe, 2016; Salihu & Chutiyami, 2016; USDS, 2019; ILO, 2015).

Types Of Domestic Workers

Basically from the above discussion one may classify Domestic worker into **LIVE- IN** and **LIVE-**

OUT. While Live-in Domestic Worker lives in the Employers 'place of abode, being

accommodated and fed, sometimes being given medical attention when required, Live-out on the other hand, are domestic worker coming from his/her place of abode and not otherwise. Depending on the nature of his\her terms of engagement, live-out domestic worker normally works from morning to evening and sometimes night. Compared to live in, live-out domestic worker enjoys some level of freedom and privacy, at least from when he\she leaves his\her place of work to when he\she returns.

A domestic worker whether live- in or live- out, may be **paid** or **unpaid** domestic worker. Unpaid domestic work or service does not signify absence of any consideration for the work done, it signifies a situation where domestic worker receives other benefits than monetary entitlement such as relatives. His\her entitlement rests on the maintenance offered him\her by the employer, which ranges from shelter, feeding, hospital bills, and other entitlements in kind rather than cash (Chidi & Olanrewasu, 2018). This may extend to the worker's immediate family. Paid domestic worker on the other hand, receives

certain amount of money either on monthly, weekly or hourly basis as he\she might have agreed with his\her employer. The worker may well receive other benefits in addition to cash payments, such as feeding or shelter or both.

Similarly, domestic worker may be the national of his employer's country or a foreigner as in the case of migrant domestic worker for example one secured through "Kafala". The kafala system is a legal framework defining the relationship between migrant workers and their employers in Jordan, Lebanon, and all Arab Gulf states but Iraq. It was created to supply cheap, plentiful Labour in an era of booming economic growth, and its defenders argue that it benefits local businesses and helps drive development. But the system has become increasingly controversial, and there is growing recognition that it is rife with exploitation. The lack of regulations and protections for migrant workers' rights often results in low wages, poor working conditions, and employee abuse.

Racial discrimination and gender-based violence are endemic (Robinson, 2021)

Child Domestic Worker

The ILO (2021) estimates that, globally, as many as 7.1 million children under the age of 17 work in domestic service, especially in the developing world. They are particularly hidden and among the most difficult to survey (ILO & WIEGO 2013). The informal employment arrangements in which these children work exclude them from labour and social protection. Their isolated workplace makes it difficult for them to exchange with other children or seek help in case they face problems. Child domestic workers are usually defined as children under the age of 18 years who work in the household of people other than their closest family, doing domestic chores, caring for others, running errands, and sometimes helping their employers run small businesses from home (Gamlin, Camacho, Ong, & Hesketh, 2015). Child domestic workers seem to be common in Nigeria, with the children often being sent by their parents to earn extra money. The use of children as domestic servants continues to be common in many parts of the world, these children are very vulnerable to exploitation: often they seem to be deprived of rest and are required to work for long hours; many suffer from lack of access to education, which may likely contribute to social isolation and a lack of future opportunity (Chidi & Olanrewasu, 2018).

Abuses Faced by Domestic Workers

Domestic workers face many abuses from their masters and sometimes persons related to the masters such as family members, friends and even neighbours. According to the International Domestic Workers' Federation, some domestic workers face various forms of inhumanity: physical abuse, intimidation, threats, bullying, sexual assault, harassment, being provided poor quality food and a lack of privacy. Serious instances of violence, including murder, have been documented (ILO, 2011, No. 189). Generally, abuses faced by domestic workers can be categorised and explain as follows:

1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse generally includes punching, hitting, slapping, kicking, and strangling etc. Physical violence against domestic workers ranges from slaps to severe beatings using implements such as shoes, belts, sticks or household implements; knocking heads against walls; and burning skin with irons, among other forms of violence. Employers may cause physical abuse so severe that it leads to a domestic worker's hospitalisation or death. For example, Human Rights watch interviewed Widyaningsih, a twenty-seven-year-old domestic worker, who was hospitalised after returning from employment in Saudi Arabia. She had received surgery on her ears due to injuries caused by repeated beatings on her head, and had several scars on her arms and feet from her employer having beaten her with a cable and other implements (Human Right, 2006).

In a report on physical abuse of domestic workers in Nigeria, Egielewa (2018) found out that pouring hot water and hot food as well as burning parts of the body constitute the major and frequent abuses suffered by domestic workers. In a case reported by Lambo (2019), an employer lacerates a 10-year-old maid with a razor blade for stealing milk in Oyo State Nigeria. Similarly, Akindele (2018) reported a case of an employer who pours hot water on her 13-year-old maid in

Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The 13-year-old narrated her experience as follows:

> I have been living with her for some time and have been sleeping on the bare floor. On that day, after working for a whole day, I was tired and slept off using the couch to support my body. I woke up from the

> shock of my boss pouring hot water on me. I ran for safety, but she pushed me to the ground and started beating me as well. (Akindele, 2018).

Another case has been reported by Nwaubani (2017) of Titi, one of countless young girls working as domestic servants in cities across the nation, far from their own homes in rural Nigeria or neighbouring countries such as Benin. "Sometimes, she beat us," said Titi, recounting the businesswoman who had flogged the girls for the smallest mishaps, such as breaking a plate.

"Sometimes, she didn't give us breakfast till after 1 p.m., and my bed had been the floor"

Kabir (2022) in a HumAngle, a media network website, reported how Nigerian children used as house helps face life of abuses. From his narration, John Akinkunmi (not real name) a 10-yearold boy said his boss usually feeds him once daily and as a result, he steals from the kitchen. On Sunday, Feb. 6, 2022 after the young boy was caught stealing meat from his boss's pot. His boss, used a razor blade to inflict deep cuts on the minor's body. There were over 10 different slashes on the victim's body, causing him to lose pints of blood.

Another woman was reported to have beaten Faith a 10-year-old maid to death in Anambra, Southeast Nigeria on March 11, 2021. Similarly, on April 23, 2018, a 12-year-old house help in Anambra had her intestine ruptured and was also tortured in her privates by her employer whom she worked with. The employer inserted sticks into Faith's private parts and turned them over several times. In the process, her reproductive systems were ruptured leaving Faith needing multiple surgeries. In another related incident, an employer was reported in Lagos on April 23, 2020 for torturing her maid to death over a dispute about salary arrears and stealing of noodles. Similar case was reported on June 16, 2018, an employer for tortured her 10-year-old house help with a hot iron for damaging the knob of a tap on the premises of her residence in the Iyana Ipaja area of Lagos. And for not washing a kettle properly, an employer blinded a 12-year-old boy in one eye. The issue occurred at Ikeja, Lagos on July 7, 2016. Another report was published on July 14, 2020, a 14-year-old-house help was tortured by her employer in a lighter hot knife in Kaduna.

2. Psychological Abuse

In the world over domestic workers suffered psychological abuse in form verbal abuse-harsh insults, threats and belittlement which is often accompanies

physical abuse and takes place in a total situation of excessive workloads, sleep deprivation, insufficient or poor-quality food, and inferior living conditions. For example, "Lastri, a fifteen-year-old domestic worker in Indonesia, human right, "I did not like my employer because she would shout at me, call me a shit and dog. I did not feel comfortable. Why am I being treated this way? I could not stand my employer's treatment of me." (Human Rights Watch 2006).

3. Sexual Abuse

While sexual abuse can be a form of physical abuse, it can however include both physical and nonphysical components. It can involve rape or other forced sexual acts, or withholding or using sex as a weapon. Isolation in the household, and lack of privacy or of conditions to ensure their personal security, place domestic workers at risk of sexual harassment and assault. The true dimensions of sexual violence against women and girl domestic workers may never be known; under reporting is likely to be significant due to workers' isolation and the deep social stigma attached to sexual assault. Human Rights Watch has collected the testimonies of domestic workers in numerous countries; in most cases, the victims endured sexual violence because they were unable to escape, felt acute financial pressure to remain in their jobs, or were under threat of greater harm if they did report (Gaby, 2000).

Sexual abuse of domestic workers in Nigeria, constitute the worst unethical actions extended to them by their employers. This kind of abuse is highly predominant among female live-in domestic workers (Nesbitt-Ahmed, 2016). The reason is not unlikely as they are mostly at the mercy of their employers and their spouses. These sexual assault and violence faced by these workers range from propositions and illegal sexual advances, rape threats, unapproved touching and kissing, groping, to continuous rape. According to a report contained in Punch Newspapers (5 April 2018), a popular news tabloid in Nigeria, a 48-year-old pastor was arrested for defiling a 12-year-old housemaid in Lagos. Also, the same news agency on 3rd November 2017 reported that a 39-year-old man defiled his 13-year-old housemaid in Lagos, Nigeria. Falayi (2017) narrated the experience of a 13-year-old who was raped her mistress' husband as follows:

The first time he raped me, and I bled, I reported to madam when she got back home. She did not do anything about it. There was a time madam was in the sitting room, he came to where I was and carried me to his room. I tried to struggle but he held me down and said she would stab me if I made any

noise. When he finished, he told me to get out of the room and to keep quiet because I was crying. I still went to report to his wife, and she did nothing about it. (Falayi, 2017)

4. Food Deprivation/Excess Workload

One of the most common forms of mistreatment that serves to reinforce the subsidiarity of domestic workers' status in the household is the withholding of food, or providing poor quality or rotten food. In some cases, as in Titi's experience above, domestic workers are literally starved, and forced to steal food and suffer sometimes brutal consequences if discovered or to rely on the kindness of neighbours and others for basic sustenance. This treatment becomes a form of physical and psychological abuse. Another example can be brought to light of a 12-year-old Aisha who is one of many underage girls working as domestic help moving around, doing domestic chores in cities across Nigeria. Aisha during an interview with Odey, (2021) reported as follows:

> I wake up before Fajr (the Muslim pre-dawn prayer). I clear my things and sweep the sitting room, then boil water for bathing on the firewood. After prayers I clean the compound, rooms, and kitchen, go to market, wash clothes, fetch water etc. (Odey, 2021)

Aisha is given food twice and not allowed to have any friends and any mistake made was accompanied by serious beating. Aisha does not know how much she earns, but 5,000 naira (about $7) is paid monthly to her agent, who takes a percentage before sending what is left to her parents in the village. Aisha has not been back to the village since she left and only gleans information about her family whenever her agent visits the house to check that employer is satisfied with Aisha's services. Aisha pulls out a mattress that is tied up and hidden behind a door, and unrolls it into place. That is where she makes her room every night (Odey, 2021).

The Role of Stakeholders in Mitigating Abuses Faced By Domestic

Workers

The United Kingdom's Master and Servant Act 1823 was the first of its kind; the terms referred generally to employers and employees. The Act influenced the creation of domestic service laws in other nations, although

the legislations tended to favour employers. However, before the passing of such Acts, servants and workers in general, had no protection in law. The only real advantage was that domestic service provided the provision of meals, accommodation, and sometimes clothes, in addition to a modest wage (ILO 2011).

The International Labour Organisation being an international body dealing with employment maters world over, has made several efforts through conventions and policies to address some of the problems relating to domestic workers. In 2011, the International Labour Organisation adopted the Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers. Previously, at its 301st Session (March 2008), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Governing Body agreed to place an item on decent work for domestic workers on the agenda of the 99th Session of the International Labour Conference (2010) with a view to the setting up Labour standards. In July 2011, at the annual International Labour Conference, held by the ILO, conference delegates adopted the Convention on Domestic Workers by a vote of 396 to 16, with 63 abstentions. The Convention recognised domestic workers as workers with the same rights as other workers (ILO, 2011). On 26 April 2012, Uruguay was the first country to ratify the convention. Nigeria and most, if not all the African countries have not yet ratified this convention (Uruguay, 2012).

Domestic work has begun to receive the attention it deserves. Several countries according to WIEGO and ILO (2022) have ratified the ILO Convention 189 and some have (without ratification) introduced new laws, policies, or schemes to protect domestic workers and regulate the sector.

They include:

- A right to organise, coverage under the Employment Ordinance, and contracts with minimum standards required by the Immigration Department in Hong Kong.
- A Magna Carta for Household Helpers in the Philippines.
- A subsidised state "service ticket" scheme with collective bargaining in France, Belgium, and part of Switzerland.
- A Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997, with a binding mandate to protect domestic workers in South Africa (Bonner 2010)
- A Domestic Servant Service Policy in Ghana, introduced in 2012, to monitor contracts and working conditions.
- As of July 2021, Ten Federal States in the US have passed bills of

> rights for domestic workers: New York, Illinois, Oregon, California, Nevada, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Virginia. In addition, the cities of Seattle and Philadelphia both passed their own bill of rights. The National Domestic Workers Alliance is now pushing for federal recognition and protection of domestic workers (WIEGO & ILO 2022). In Nigeria, the main stake holders in domestic work industry are the Governmental Organisations like the Nigerian Police Force and National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Human Rights Commission and some Citizens Rights Departments of states ministry of justice and various non-governmental organisations such as Association of Household Employee Managers (AHEM), etc.

For instance, raped domestic workers who report their cases to police usually get justice after proper investigations by the police and consequent prosecution, although time consuming, this process helps bring to book employers who are found wanting in one way or the other. As most of the abuses in domestic work industry are crime based, the police being responsible for curtailing crimes, surely serve as a watchdog for domestic workers abuses.

Similarly, NAPTIP has charged Nigerians to desist from hiring domestic workers that are under

12 years of age, because children under 12 do not understand their rights and cannot resist abuse. The appropriate thing to do is to employ people above 18 years who know their rights and obligations. Sequel to this, the agency implements the Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015. "Section 23 sub-section 1a of The Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Enforcement and Administration Act, 2015 (TIPPEA Act, 2015), prohibits the employment of a child below 12 years as a domestic worker. This offence attracts a jail sentence not exceeding seven years. The Section also prohibits the employment of a child to do any work that is exploitative, injurious or hazardous to the physical, social and psychological development of the child. This offence is without an option of fine (NAPTIP, 2020).

Likewise, some NGOs and Human Rights Commission have roles to play in curtailing abuses in domestic industry. Since the bulk of the abuses cut across some known and recognised constitutional rights, these agencies given the much-needed information usually have cause to champion the course of domestic workers thereby curtailing in one way or the other such abuses.

Government especially legislative body have more role to play in this area of problem because, lack of clearly legislation at early onset make almost every movement geared protecting the right of domestic workers grumble meaninglessly. Recently, Nigerian legislative body deems its importance to showcase the role it can play in domestic workers' affairs. In this regard, there is currently a Bill before the Senate in Nigeria which is undergoing its second reading. The Bill is sponsored by Senator Sani Musa from Niger state which is to regulate employment of domestic workers, interns etc., the Bill is intended to conform to the ILO's Practices on domestic workers to create decent work and decent remuneration and to promote strategic objectives etc. (Premium Times; Friday, November 18, 2022). This bill, if passed into law may hopefully curtail substantially the major problems facing domestic workers in Nigeria. What is most paramount here is that cases boarding on domestic work should be treated with all urgency and much needed attention.

Conclusion/Recommendations

One major predicament of domestic service is that it is not regulated by any known Law in Nigeria and most countries in Africa and Europe. The main Law dealing with employment law in Nigeria is the Labour Act which has no business with domestic workers. These and many reasons contribute to the abuses and sufferings of domestic workers. Hence, it is imperative to state here that the most important and much needed tool to curtail abuses in the domestic work industry is a clear legislation setting forth all rights and boundaries of service under the industry.

In this regard therefore, Government should quickly ratify all international conventions on domestic workers' 'rights and protections'. Police, prosecutors and the judiciary should take seriously domestic work abuses, all channels creating easier access to justice should be made available and readily accessible to domestic workers. There should be an extensive awareness campaign and enlightenment on domestic abuses by both the Government at all levels and NGOs.

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SECTION 4: RESTRUCTURING NIGERIA

INTERROGATING THE CONCEPT OF RESTRUCTURING FOR PROGRESS OR BALKANISING TO RETROGRESSION, USING SUDAN AND YUGOSLAVIA AS CASE STUDY

BY
OLISEH, KADISHI NDUDI

Introduction

Before Nigeria was put under one umbrella, it was characterised by the presence of different entities and small political units. Nigeria became an independent nation and as a political unit under one political umbrella has been in existence since 1914. Thus, when it comes to understanding the concept of restructuring in Nigeria, history becomes important. This study aims to interrogate the concept of restructuring and the idea of Balkanisation in Nigeria, to achieve this, the work has been divided into four segments, namely: Introduction, Conceptual Clarification, The History of Restructuring in Nigeria, Interrogating the Concept of Restructuring for Progress or Balkanising to Retrogression using South Sudan and the Balkanised States of Yugoslavia as Case Studies for Analysis, and then Conclusion. This study adopts the historical approach in gathering and interpreting data. This includes the use of both primary and secondary data. Major data is gotten from secondary sources which includes books, journals to mention a few.

Conceptual Clarification

Restructuring

Restructuring is the "process is popularly referred to as "state creation" and/or "reorganisation", the process whereby new geo-political units/ constituents known as "states" in most federations are created out of existing or old ones." [i] It is defined as the redistribution of power and resources from the federal to the state governments. Also restructuring is a term used to connote effort geared towards rearranging, reconstructing, re-orienting, reshuffling or revamping, reconstituting, reestablishing, or overhauling of institutions, organisation and systems. [ii]

Balkanisation

Balkanisation simply means the breaking and fragmentation of a larger region or state into smaller regions of states. It is the division of a country into smaller ethnically homogeneous entities. Examples of countries that have

balkanised, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

> Balkanisation is generally understood to be the breakup of larger political units into smaller, mutually hostile states which are exploited or manipulated by more powerful neighbours. [iii]

The History and Reason for The Clamour for Restructuring in Nigeria

Nigeria has undergone a long process of restructuring in terms of the number of geo-political administrative units constituting the polity. Thus, in order to understand the agitation for restructuring, there is a need to look at the state creation and the Nigerian federal system. Nigeria has undergone different structural changes since the establishment of a federal system.

Some works have traced the beginning and establishment of Nigerian federal system to the British annexation of Lagos in 1861. Later in 1914, there was the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates, then the different constitutional development processes. [iv]

Other works trace Federalism in Nigeria to several constitutions such as Richard Constitution of 1946, MacPherson Constitution of 1954 and Lyttleton Constitution on 1954. With these constitutions came the division of Nigeria into regions (North, West, East and later Mid-Western Nigeria). With independence came different structures on how to govern Nigeria and her territories. The unitary system was introduced during the 1966 coup d'état which brought Major General Johnson Thomas Umunnakwe Aguiyi-Ironsi, but this did not last as was seen due to the July 1966 coup that brought in Col. Yakubu Gowon, who was later promoted to Major General, then General. After these two coups, a civil war engulfed the country and lasted between 1967 and 1970. [v]

During this period, Nigeria experienced a form of restructuring as 12 states were created in 1967. These changes continued as seen in 1976 when 19 states were created and by 1987 the country had a total of 21 states. By 1991, there were 36 states. This is why the federal structure of present-day Nigeria has 36 states, 774 local government areas and the federal capital of Abuja.

The agitation for self-rule by different regions in Nigeria came before the call for restructuring. Some works have traced it to be from 1979 after the Civil War. The people were clamouring to secede: Igbos in the southeast as the Republic of Biafra; Yoruba in the South West as the Oduduwa nation and Hausa in the north was the Bayajida caliphate. This has led to the Nigerian

federal system threating to break as a nation, as it witnesses more violent conflicts, insurgence, militancy to mention a few. The first republic was characterised by regionalism, while the military era was characterised by centralisation.[vi]

There are several reasons why some groups are clamouring for secession. Some reasons for the clamour for restructuring include carry over from colonial administration, the government's capacity to remain neutral, marginalisation, lack of cooperation, mistrust, and inadequate representation of different groups. Other issues threatening the existence of Nigeria include poor state of economy, lopsided representation, the Minorities Question, resource control, ethnic-religious crises, memories of the Nigerian civil war to mention a few.

Question: Is restructuring or balkanisation the solution to Nigeria's problems?

Interrogating the Concept of Restructuring for Progress or Balkanising to Retrogression

The concept of *Araba* which means "break up" was popular in August 1966 and some works have pointed out that in July/ August 1967, which was when the second coup took place, soldiers had initially decided to break up the country. [vii] Over time, especially in countries that clamour for restructuring or have balkanised, several reasons for balkanisation are advanced. Some have been mentioned above, but other reasons found after analyses of restructuring and balkanisation include ethnic differences, culture, religion, past grievances etc.

South Sudan

South Sudan is an African country that separated from North Sudan in 2011 after years of battle. One of the reasons for separation was because North Sudan implemented Sharia Law, but after secession, South Sudan began been fighting ethnic wars. [viii] Another reason was because since Sudan got independence in 1956, the northern Sudanese governmental policy had been that of marginalisation towards the southern part of the country.

The roles of leaders and their perspectives can be seen in the demand and clamour for secession in Sudan:

> A radical change in perspective came after 1983, with the formation of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA). Unlike its predecessors,

> the SPLA refused to be confined within the borders of South Sudan. It demonstrated an ability to mobilise beyond sacrosanct ethnic boundaries, first beyond its supposedly Nilotic heartland to Eastern Equatoria, and then beyond the old North-Sudan border to the Nuba Hills in Southern Kordofan and the Southern Blue Nile. The SPLA presence in the Southern Blue Nile Province appeared in late 1985, when armed SPLA units began passing through it, as they moved between Ethiopia and the White Nile. The SPLA put forth an all-Sudan demand, one that called for the reorganisation of Sudanese state and society around the recognition that Sudan was an African country. [ix]

At the time Southern Sudan did referendum, John Garang was killed. Close to a year after he assumed the position of First Vice President in Sudan, he played an important role. John Garang mentioned that "*The problem of the Sudan was that of political power, not cultural diversity"* [x]

In July 2011, South Sudan gained independence. This was possible after several years of civil war. The country is very fragile and has been faced with a lot of challenges such as political conflict, food insecurity, food shortage, poverty, infrastructure bottlenecks, lack of unity, governance, etc. it has one main religion, yet the country is doing so poorly and is burdened by debt, economic mismanagement government corruption, banditry. There are over 2 million South Sudanese refugees in different countries such as Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan to mention a few

Also in Sudan, the USA and China's involvement was visible, as China was a major ally of the Sudan government and thus had ties with the government in Khartoum. China also had investments in Sudan that it had to protect. This investment was geared towards acquiring foreign oil reserve from the land-locked South Sudan and running the oil pipeline through Northern Sudan. By so doing, China would be importing oil and exporting low-cost manufactured things as well as armaments into to the country. Also, the presence of USA could be seen as the USA made diplomatic ties to keep South Sudan Independence referendum, promoting new legislation, new bills, etc.

Since independence, South Sudan has not shown any sign of progress. After nearly 10 years of independence, South Sudan still struggles for stability. It has had a 5-year civil war which has impeded growth in the new country. It provides an example that separation is not possible because all the issues that led to the civil war and clamour for secession is still present after the creation of South Sudan. These simply show that Nigeria needs to tackle all

its challenges for there to be real progress, with or without seceding. Carry over from colonial administration, Government capacity to remain unneutral, marginalisation, lack of cooperation, mistrust, inadequate representation of different groups, poor state of economy, lopsided representation, banditry minority question, resource control, ethnic-religious crises to mention a few.

Balkanisation of Yugoslavia

In 1946, when a communist government was established, Yugoslavia was renamed Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPR Yugoslavia, FPRY). These units in Yugoslavia was related in different ways, but in the 1990s after the end of the Cold War and with the collapse of Soviet Union, Yugoslavia disintegrated and as at 2015 became seven independent states, namely Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The road to achieving Balkanisation in Yugoslavia was not so peaceful. There was protest, economic failure, lack of unity, retrogression, protest, wars of independence but over the years this has changed and there is a level of stability that is present in some Balkan states, namely: Yugoslavia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Bosnia. This has been possible because of its history. First Yugoslavia was joined together and was created according to the wishes of people residing in the area in 1929, as compared with Nigeria which was created and amalgamated by foreign bodies, colonisers and empire.

Some Balkan states of Yugoslavia had been prosperous because of the nature of leaders that was present before the 7 countries was created. A major figure was Josip Tito, he had both Croat and Slovene blood. He fought for the people, and he was a charismatic leader; he led the Yugoslav resistance against the Germans. With the creation of Yugoslavia, he became a dictator with the mind to promote development in Yugoslavia. He was thus seen as a unifying symbol. During his rule, he gave a form of autonomy to the different republic in Yugoslavia and each had been grown politically and economically. Thus, he was a successful leader who aided growth. After the Cold War when each republic wanted to break away, in some way they had a good leadership background, with ability to govern each other. So, with the death of Josip Tito in 1980, each of the regions had leaders who served with the mind to promote the growth of their regions and this aided development. This shows the importance of leadership in development. Weighed against the Nigerian situation, a leadership gap is glaring.

With the deteriorating health of Josip Tito who was seen as a unifying symbol, different issues began to plague Yugoslavia, and different leaders of the 7 regions began to clamour for different things such as a new constitution, to balkanise, etc. Although there were evidences of tension as a new constitution was developed, some regions clamoured for constitutional reforms, while others wanted their autonomy. This led to several arguments and ethnic nationalism and different regions insisted on a new constitution or independence. An example of this was Slovenia and Kosovo.

These demands led to protests, economic failure, ethnic nationalism, lack of unity, retrogression, attempts to secede and this led to the presence of army to end the secession attempts, clashes of different ethnic groups, and in 1992, there were wars and ethnic conflicts, such as the Bosnia war, Croatian war, Slovenia War, Kosovo War, etc. The Bosnia war was caused by several reasons, one of which was due to the leader Milosevic, he deliberately created conflict between Serbians, Croatians etc.

In 1999, the United States bombed Yugoslavia. This played a role, as the bombing continued through air strikes until Yugoslav armed forces withdrew from Kosovo USA military base. One of the reasons for a level of peace and stability is because of the presence of a USA military base. One of the USA bases is in Croatia, also in Serbia which is a strategic location in the Balkans. Looking at the Balkan states, the areas that are currently peaceful are those areas that were doing well when the countries were under one umbrella of Yugoslavia. E.g., Croatia and Slovenia. The ones that are not doing so well include Serbia and Macedonia.

A Broken Nation Will Significantly Lead to Progress or Retrogression?

From the two countries above, it shows that the quest for secession comes with a lot of problems such as tension, chaos lack of unity economic down turns, protest and sometimes civil war. And to a large extent a broken nation, using the case of Sudan and Balkan states lead to retrogression, and it would take a lot of time for progress to be achieved. Countries that were once peaceful became hubs for insecurity, war, etc.

The Nigerian structure and setting is closer to that of Southern Sudan before it seceded, first because it is an African country and, secondly, some of the challenges that plagued southern Sudan and northern Sudan when they were one nation is apparent in Nigeria. These challenges include of marginalisation, neglect and lack of development, and unfair representation. This needs to be resolved.

With a broken nation, comes a once-great nation shrinking into a small country. In the Nigerian case, a question comes to mind: How would each unit survive on its own, especially due to the high dependency of each region, would all the challenges currently faced be resolved?

Conclusion

This work has looked at the concepts to balkanisation and restructuring, and having looked at South Sudan and the Balkan states of Yugoslavia, it is evident why South Sudan has not been peaceful and why some Balkan states are nor peaceful and some has been peaceful since seceding. In the South Sudan, some of the challenges that plagued and is still plaguing the country stems from the history and unresolved challenges that existed before succeeding, while for the Balkan states is peaceful because of first its history which shows that the people agreed for the creation of a Yugoslavia in 1929 and there was a preamble. Also looking at leadership, the Sudanese leadership and government was faced with different challenges such as inept leaders, marginalisation etc. The leaders were engulfed by chaos after the death of John Garang, compared to Yugoslav leadership before the call for secession.

In Nigeria, several challenges have ravaged the country, leading to strident calls for restructuring by different states and groups. Thus, the Nigerian government ought to address the challenges and problems for continuous and harmonious existence instead of calling for restructuring. This needs to be looked at as soon as possible to enable Nigeria and Nigerians to acquire the requisite stability and peaceful coexistence amenable to accelerated, sustainable socioeconomic development.

The paper concludes that, using the case study of southern Sudan and the failed state of Sudan, when it comes to restructuring and balkanisation, the crises-ridden South Sudan and the state of Somalia, should provide warnings for Nigeria. What is of importance is the need to address the challenges and problem of a challenging state e.g., development, security, representation, tackle marginalisation, and infrastructural development. It is important to note that attempts have been made to tackle some issues that have led to the clamour for restructuring and succession. Examples can be found in the introduction of national integration policies and programmes such as the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Quota System, creation of the National Orientation Agency, etc. Despite these efforts there are still outcries of marginalisation, neglect and lack of development, unfair representation, etc. Thes need to be

resolved.

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LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND POWER IN THE FRAMING OF NIGERIA AS A MONOLITHIC BINARY

BY
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Tag words: British colonialism, North, South, Nigeria, Monolithic binary, Amalgamation, 'Discursive turn'

Introduction

Nigeria is framed mainly in terms of a 'predominantly Muslim North versus largely Christian South'. This is what this paper calls the monolithic binary. But, how secure or insecure is this reading of the polity? To what extent does it correspond with the pattern of observable interaction among Nigerians in recent history?

This article confronts these questions from the perspective that the monolithic binary is an exercise in acquisition and consolidation of power which relies on use of language to frame identities in the service of hegemony and hegemons. That is, the monolith binary is a framing exercise by which the framers hope to make the frame commonsensical and, by implication, deterministic of how we may relate to the idea of Nigeria. It is to this extent that the monolithic binary is a power agenda in that it reduces Nigeria to a country of two opposing regional identities instead of where identities, whether they are just two or a million, are meeting and mixing and producing multiple outcomes.

We shall take the argument in three different sections, the first of which is the discursive data on identities and the making of Nigeria. Inferring from this data, the second section shall contest that binary from a constructivist perspective of identity and identity politics. We shall restate the main argument in section three and then close the effort in the fourth section.

The Literature on the Monolithic Binary

The academic tradition of literature review remains a useful tool for commencing our engagement with the narrativisation of Nigeria as monolithic North and South. Even in an activity such as this which is not purely academic, we still need to employ the tool but perhaps in a non-orthodox manner. When we do that, beginning with the South and whether it is monolithic or not, the broader picture of the region that emerges is how this region is a product of a

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process that started in 1900 to 1914. Relying on the Historians (Afigbo, 1991, Usman, 1994), we get the idea that no less than four different entities define the South by the time of 1914. The implication is that there were many Souths in existence - the Niger Coast Protectorate; the Oil Rivers Protectorate; the Protectorates of Lagos hinterland and the Colony of Lagos. It was the merger of these entities at different points that produced the South of 1914, beginning with the fusion of Protectorates of Lagos hinterlands with the Niger Coast Protectorate to form the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria but without the Colony of Lagos yet. This was the amalgamation of 1900. It was followed by the amalgamation of 1906 involving the fusion of the Colony of Lagos with the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, this being the basis of the point about Lagosians being six years behind all else in attaining Nigerian citizenship.

There is an important question that has been posed. It is about why the British colonialists were carrying out this process of fusing the different entities since 1851, (Afigbo, 1991: 16) when there was yet to be any substantial challenge to their authority by any other European power in these areas of an emerging Nigeria. Again, one would find Usman's geopolitical reading of the British strategy of consolidating their grip entirely agreeable. He argues that the British found that they could not utilise Lagos without consolidating their control of the hinterlands and that the hinterlands had, by 1898, extended to the lower Niger which, at this time, embraced Ilorin and Bida emirates. He locates the significance of the twosome in not only Bida's inroads into Benin Empire but also Bida and Ilorin's involvement in struggle for power in the Oyo Alafinate. Above all, both emirates in the lower Niger had their own ties with their own hinterland, a reference to Sokoto, Gwandu, Kano, Zazzau, Katsina, Bauchi down to Borno and Fombina, (Usman, 1994: 39). This is an analysis Afigbo agrees with, given his reporting of the contending explanations on why the British intervened to consolidate Lagos hinterland in 1862. As far as the British were concerned, it was to rout resistant slave traders, a standpoint contradicted by the alternative notion promoted by Nigerian Historians that it was "to protect British trade and acquire a vantage point from which to control, eventually the overland route that ran through Yorubaland to northern Nigeria", (Afigbo, 1991: 16).

These details may not be agreeable to all Historians but Usman serves our purpose here by showing diversity rather than a monolithic South unfolding even at this time, dictated by conflictual and cooperative dynamics of trade, war, migration and diplomacy. And he consolidates his argument by citing the

pervasive use of the Cowrie currency as well as Austrian and Spanish dollars over two-third of the area under reference in the 18th and 19th centuries. The vastness of the usage was to the extent that even the Royal Niger Company, (RNC) did not just use the Cowrie currency but also kept accounts in it. Interestingly, Usman's account of this came from published academic sources, (Jones, 1958; Hiskett, 1966 and Johnson, 1970). These scholars might not have been disinterested observers but could not enjoy that level of consensus if they were merely fabricating this pervasiveness of the Cowrie currency from which we are inferring an integrated complexity rather than distinct component entities doing its own thing. Rather, the data support the main argument ever since that the British found it difficult to disaggregate the level of mixing that had developed, finding the networks and linkages to be in its favour in terms of the advantages they calculated and expected colonialism to bring. As such, even as early as 1898 when other European powers such as France and Germany were yet to contest British overlordship in the area under reference, the British had seen the advantages of knitting these different entities together. It could not have been a tension-free process but neither was it contradictory of popular aspirations all the way through.

The idea of a monolithic South, therefore, contradicts that of a Cosmopolitan Southern Nigeria before and after the British colonial interruption. This is a point that is attested to by the pervasiveness of the Cowrie currency at a point in time but also by the dynamism of the identity formation of individual entities. An interesting example would be the case of what is today the Igbo identity in Nigerian politics. Toure shows that this identity did not exist as it does today before the colonial interruption. In fact, Toure holds that it was colonialists and missionaries who developed a "common, written, standard language", (2003: 12) that is now Igbo language which unified hitherto different identities and dialects into a formidable, single component of the subsequent anti-colonial movement before its further consolidation by the Nigerian Civil War. The paradox of the war, however, is how diversity undermined and checkmated the Igbo identity move when the Federal Government smartly granted the non-Igbo component of the fledging Biafra Republic autonomy. Again, that is another stark illustration of difference or multiplicity of identity within just a major cultural component of the South. This example is too recent to belabour or expatiate.

Although agitation for separate state or local governments today are mostly products of wrongheaded ethnic mobilisation, it is interesting that the

purveyors are always clever enough to invoke something distinctive about whichever ethno-cultural identity is making the demand. The problem though is that what is invoked in the context of post-independence struggle for the proverbial national cake is usually 'positive self/negative other' framework that makes enemies of the rest in a manner that challenges cosmopolitanism. But, what is still important from that kind of agitation is whether it would have been possible to frame them so if the South were such a monolithic entity. So, it was never monolithic regional entities.

Diversity in the North

When we seek to demonstrate that the North too is not a monolithic entity at the level of identity, we find a similar though sharper case of difference and contestation than the South. The principle of Indirect Rule which colonialism assumed in the North explains the sharpness of diversity in the region as a critique of monolithicism. Aside from the fabled pre-colonial inter-ethnic wars, say between Kwararafa and Kano or Kano and Zaria before 1804, post-colonial resort to deployment of identity or in-group referents for offensive or defensive options in the context of competition for privileges in the post-colonial setting has ever defined the region.

Like the South, the North did not always exist from Day One. It was also a process of multiples of 'amalgamation'. Unlike the South which existed concretely before the British consolidated its control between 1898 and 1900/1914, the North did not exist as such till many years later. However, by 1897, it had been basically declared to exist and baptised with the name Nigeria by Lord Lugard's wife or partner in her January 1897 letter to *The Times*. There, she was already canvassing the name Nigeria for the yet to be consolidated North on the ground of need for a:

> A shorter title for the agglomeration of pagan and Mohammedan states which have been brought by the exertions of the Royal Niger Company within the confines of a British protectorate, and thus need for the first time in their history to be described as an entity by some general name (which) may serve to differentiate them equally from the British Colony of Lagos and Niger Protectorate in the coast … (Shaw, 1897, cited in Usman, 1994: 37).

What her letter reveals are, at least, two distinct identities – pagans and Mohammedan states, terms which radical anthropologists would not accept.

The trade, war, migration and diplomacy dynamics that shaped the meeting, mixing and the making of the South were not missing but the colonial approach to governance privileged by Lord Lugard and which privileged one ethno-religious identity in the North as officially proclaimed in 1900 created a power relationship that accentuated deployment of difference and the impossibility of a monolithic region that can be seen as a contradiction of the South in any sense. Although the British subdued the Caliphate at last and brought all identities within its power in the North, it nevertheless opted to rule through an indigenous coterie of one ethno-religious identity. For, as power accretes, so did the power of the Fulani privileged by the colonialists assumed its own dynamics in terms of power relations between the different groups even as they all suffocated under colonialism. As much as the Jihad reconstituted the space along religious identities but yet left huge chunk of Christians in the Southern part of nearly every state in contemporary Northwest of Nigeria except Jigawa State, it also created room for the phenomenon of deployment of ethno-religious or in-group referents to secure advantages or shield groups from vulnerability to out-group manoeuvres. The outcome is a fundamentally conflictual but at the same time an inherently integrative process at class, ethno-religious and spatial levels that rules out any notion of a monolithic North other than the ideological mischief of undermining Pan-Nigerianism by posing the North as a binary opposite of the South.

We may not need to go to explain how diversity in each of the North as well as the South could be characterised by both co-operative and conflictual interaction simultaneously. It rests squarely in the inherently fluid rather than fixed nature of identity, producing the situation whereby:

> A person, for example, is a Nigerian citizen at one level but at the same time a Muslim or a Christian or non-religious. In addition, every citizen has a gender identity, a man or a woman. In the same vein, someone who is a Nigerian can be, at the same time, a Yoruba, female and poor worker in contrast with a Yoruba big landowner who is also a man and a leading politician, (Toure, 2004: 45)

This paper is in complete agreement with Toure when he canvasses critical examination of claims of 'total harmony of group identity'. The diffuse nature of identity makes monolithic composition of groups impossible. This is more so in the case of the North and South of present-day Nigeria whose multiplicity of identity historically is such that an extraordinary cosmopolitan

complexity has been the case. In whatever terms – class, ethno-religious or generational as well as gender - this is provable. If this is the reality, then the question regarding where this narrative might be coming from becomes such an important question. That is what the section that follows seeks to pursue.

Locating the Monolithic Binary

In trying to find out where the understanding of Nigeria in terms of the binary metaphysics of the country as no more than a monolithic North opposed to a monolithic South might be coming from, we must proceed from the colonial process under reference in the previous section. That process provides the inter-textual reasoning by which to establish the origin of the situation under discussion. On this, we find Oculi's (2000) insight on the emergence of the construct fundamental and dependable. Essentially, this is because his accounts are firsthand accounts borne out of his own practical involvement in what he is discussing and he provides evidence of similar enactment beyond Nigeria. Three of such cases in his book under reference are Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya.

British handling of volcanic nationalism in Nigeria between 1940 and 1960 is a perfect starting point in the evidences from Oculi. Here, what Oculi calls Zik's profanity was the problem in the sense that Zik was trying to reproduce the two conditions the British feared most. The first of these is Marcus Garvey's slogan of 'Africa for Africans' while the second is Gamal Abdel Nasser's advocacy of the unity of Muslims, Arabs and Africans against white domination. So, an American educated Zik popularizing a Negro World ideology across Nigeria through oratory, newspapering and anti-colonial heroism was not something British genius would fail to take note of. It did by finding an attractive solution in driving him "into the twin swamps of tribalism and regionalism", (Oculi: 2000: 9). With the propping up of alternative political platforms reflecting ethnic and regional imaginations, Nigerian politics has never known other enduring perspective of politics beyond ethno-regionalism as if these were natural. It took so long to ever have a national political party and even whenever it happened as in the case of the defunct National Party of Nigeria, (NPN) in the late 1970s and the People's Democratic Party, (PDP) in the late 1990s, the rationale, models and practices were all structured to respond to the tribalism and regionalism the British constructed.

The point here is not about how much of a socialist or nationalist Zik was or wasn't in the anti-colonial struggle. It is to illustrate how British colonial

warfare handled most of the signifiers of anti-colonialism. In most cases, it was to disrupt whatever hold they exercised on popular psyche, whether their hold came from modern or traditional practices of power. While it may be important to properly locate the torch bearers of anti-colonialism in the ideological sensibilities that propelled their politics, doing so should not blind us to crediting them as the definitive agency behind the repudiation of colonial rule, warts and all. To deny their agency, individually and collectively, for the reason of perceived weaknesses of their ideological line is to risk complicity in suggesting that colonialism and colonialists would have gone away on their own. The contradiction would have produced that outcome but it would have taken a longer time and differently done. It is sustainable to say so if we consider how the process of de-radicalisation took place in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo where the Belgians were at work.

Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba who would be readily cited as epitome of the post-independence African leader ended being murdered right before UN troops made up of African and non-Africans. That is what happened but how did that happen? Oculi offers a narrative of the unmaking of independence in DRC by United States and Belgian conspiracy. His account is of the purposive spotting and systematic grooming of Mobutu Sese Seko from the moment of his expulsion from school on the ground of what the Catholic owners regarded as rascality till his emergence as coup leader who superintended the elimination of Lumumba. The grooming was such that a month after independence, Mobutu who just returned from Brussels had attained the stature of being listened to by soldiers involved in a Belgium engineered mutiny. They did not only listen to Mobutu, they also obeyed him by returning to the barracks. Subsequently, he was appointed by Lumumba as military chief, the position which enabled him to displace the Prime Minister shortly afterwards, dismiss all the politicians quarrelling over DRC's future and install himself as the landlord. It was the culmination of a series of similar efforts at undermining independence for reasons of interest of powerful external stakeholders on the African continent and which, in the case of DRC, had involved an instigated secessionist project before the coup. Yet, by Oculi's account, Lumumba was the only one who had led a political party with national spread in the country.

Like the British did in Nigeria between 1940 and 1960, the Belgians took 1957 to 1960 in the DRC to create what Oculi calls "the monsoon storms of tribalism: in Kinshasa, the Kongo were fighting Ngala; in Kananga, the Lulua were wrestling with the Luba; in Mbandaka, it was Mongo against the Ngome

and in Lubumbashi, the 'authentic Katangans' were slapping Kasaians", (Oculi, 2000: 10). The point here is how successful the strategy of removing the individuals identified as threats to the colonial order and replacing them with the preferred figures. As it was in Nigeria, so also was it in the DRC and in Kenya too.

In the briefest possible form, the story in Kenya centres on the invention of Arap Moi against the alliance of leading politicians of the two dominant ethnic groups of Luo and Kikuyi once Raila Odinga declined to stab Jomo Kenyatta at the back the way the British successfully programmed Awo and Zik to do to each other in Nigeria. The fear of a nationalist party that could sponsor or back attacks on privileged European control of best lands in Kenya made for a policy of engineering a crack in such possibility by creating the fear of majority, (Luo and Kikuyi) dominating the minorities. In the end, the minorities had their Kenya Africa Democratic Union, (KADU) with its ideology of confederation as a counterpoise to the nationalist Kenya African National Union, (KANU). KADU went nowhere in electoral terms but foreign powers were still able to dilute the radical nationalism of the KANU, disorganise its slate and create commotion in the party. Kenyan politics has never gone beyond the ethnic charm since then.

It is worth repeating that Oculi's evidence is considered dependable to the extent that his interpretation is not challenged by evidence from other sources. The above examples from the three African countries, therefore, give us a sufficient idea of where the constructs came from. The monolithic binary in Nigeria is nothing but the pragmatic coming to terms of the colonial establishment with what they found to be irreversible. It is the same dynamics of contingent resolution of the many contradictions of colonialism that the employment of the construct can be understood. The tactic of a mediated representation of Nigeria in terms of monolithic binary was found necessary to undermine anti-colonial potential of the rising radical nationalism. The successful naturalization of the frame today is understandable only in terms of the role of 'regimes of truth' in the consolidation of power and how a regime of truth can produce outcomes far beyond whatever may be called an original intention. 'Predominantly Muslim North versus mostly Christian South' has acquired meaning and consequences beyond the colonial agenda of undercutting rising radical nationalism in the era of anti-colonial struggle.

Otherwise, monolithic binary is an empirical ruse, a point on which Nigeria's leading historians and authorities, (Ajayi, 1971; Afigbo, 1974, cited

in Usman, 1979) are in complete agreement in their study of inter-group relations before 1800, stressing that the histories of the individual ethnic or cultural identities cannot be understood outside of the wider context of meeting and mixing of difference. Bala Usman, the most aggressive voice in support of this thesis credits Billy Dudley as going beyond Afigbo by categorically asserting that pre-colonial inter-group contacts had, at the level of culture and the economy, produced sufficiently significant 'linkages' and "broad collective identities" (1979: 33) before colonial rule. In the text, Dudley is held up to "see even inter-group conflict as one of the factors facilitating assimilation and diffusion of common culture, producing a 'homogenising effect sufficient for one to perceive the emergence of a wider "community" covering the area known as Nigeria", (1979: 33).

By admitting the fact of conflict as part and parcel of the dynamics of inter-group relations, Dudley undercuts the only reason that could have been used to contest or deny the possibility of meeting and mixing of different ethno-cultural groups prior to colonialism. If no such reason could be found or if such reason did not prohibit the convergence of cultures, then the idea of a Nigeria that actually precedes colonial rule becomes completely tenable, that being exactly what the then Nigerian leader, General Yakubu Gowon told his audience at the British Royal College of Defence Studies in 1973, (cited in Usman, 1979). Granting the reality of inter-group conflicts in the same manner that Dudley did, General Gowon argues that, notwithstanding those, inter-dependence between the North and the South had produced linkages which the British were merely recognising in the amalgamation process.

In other words, it was the high degree of meeting and mixing that forced the colonialists to reckon with amalgamating the North and South into one country because they had no formula by which to de-mix the cosmopolitan population that had developed in the course of time. The implication is that amalgamation was not a mistake but the deployment of a problem-solving approach by a colonial establishment that had no other options. It is interesting that Bala Usman accepts our above hypothesis that the hype about the monolithic binary in Nigeria is nothing but the pragmatic coming to terms of the colonial establishment with what they found to be irreversible. It is the same dynamics of contingent resolution of the many contradictions of colonialism that the employment of the construct can be understood. Although Usman diverges to privilege a materialist explanation by hinging amalgamation on colonial needs for raw materials and market, he still acknowledges a discursive move when

he says that there has been a disproportionate stress on the amalgamation in 1914 to the detriment of previous amalgamation exercise in the build up to 1914. The aim of overplaying the 1914 amalgamation is, according to him, "to psychologically and politically obstruct the emergence of a pan-Nigerian movement for independence by deepening and emphasising that the basic division is between the "North" and the "South", (1994: 38). This is what would have been undermined if it is understood that the "South" in question has never been such a uniform entity as to be that distinct from the "North", the South being a product of a series of amalgamations. It is thus worth emphasising that the bottom line is that Nigeria has never been a monolithic binary but has always been in constant flux through interactions among all the components that is known today as Nigeria. These components include but also transcend religious, ethnic and cultural diversity.

Narrating Nigeria as nothing much more than the North as largely Muslim and South as predominantly Christian is one which eliminates in-between-ness within the entities and hence the divisive or conflict-generating nature of this narrative. We are, therefore, restating the argument that the North-South dichotomy involved in the monolithic binary is not about identity but a constructivist move which seeks to normalise or naturalise a construct, aware of the constitutive power of such constructs. Constructs are constitutive of power because, if and when a construct emerges consensual or commonsensical, it also becomes the frame of reference by which actors are guided in action. With the popularity today of the monolithic binary, there is no way that an investment decision to be taken by some investors interested in Nigeria will not take note of the binary. As is with investors, so is it bound to be with other global governance actors, especially in a century that took off and is still lost in a 'global war on terror'.

Theorising the Monolithic Discourse of the North and South of Nigeria

If the North and the South are not monolithic but a case of narrativisation, then how might we understand the consistently conflictual nature of the interface between the two? This question takes us back to the title of this essay in which language – power agenda is argued in the monolithic binary usage. In other words, the description of Nigeria as 'mainly Muslim North versus predominantly Christian South' is a language game aimed at producing a 'regime of truth'. A regime of truth constructs its own reality if and when it becomes commonsensical and serves as directive logic for action. British

colonialists and the indigenous politicians who succeeded them in the aftermath of the demise of colonialism have made commonsensical the idea of Nigeria as a country of two regions that contradict each other. Having successfully excluded or substantially suppressed alternative narratives of Nigeria especially those canvassed by radical nationalists, Socialists and Pan-Africanists, the narrative has now moved beyond a linguistic activity to the realm of constituting the reality it speaks of. That is the reality of a regionally antagonistic Nigeria and the case for dismembering the country implied in the narrative.

The image of Nigeria as one of irreconcilable regional monoliths has become so commonsensical or naturalised that even those who do not share it can be found enacting it out in everyday, routine life, meaning a performative dimension to the monolithic binary. This is the discursive power credited to language in the 'discursive turn' and the case for 'Hegemony and Socialist Strategy', the book on acquisition and practice of radical power by that title. The 'discursive turn' articulated there by two veterans of radical democratic politics, (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001) gives primacy to politicisation of anomalies such as we are confronted in the monolithic binary. Practitioners of radical democracy need to subvert the binary by constructing and counter-posing an alternative narrative. This is cheaply doable as long as the social space is a discursive space rather than a space of fixed meaning. The indignities of colonialism, the stressful nature of modernization and the reality of racism are rich resources from which to draw the counter-hegemonic narrativisation of Nigeria that can overthrow this binary in favour of the plurality that Nigeria reflects. And by which Nigeria is held in awe in the world today as a result of what the pluralism can be mobilised to make of Nigeria within a very short time.

The dogma of materialist interpretation of History cannot produce the counter-hegemonic outcome because the global capitalist system and even the underdeveloped predatory capitalism in Nigeria have all moved beyond where a classical working-class revolution is the way to power. Instead, a coalition of diverse interests brought into a 'historic block' of shared understanding of the limits of fixed sense of identity, mostly ethno-religious, is required. Articulation of the coming together of such trans-class coalition and the articulation of a new framing of Nigeria towards a new, more unifying 'regime of truth' are the twin requirements for the defeat of monolithic binary and associated practices in Nigerian politics. It is not a case of excessive faith in words or a

question of how it could make sense to believe that words or language rather than material effects or coercive capacity can be constitutive of reality. The 'discursive turn' does not entertain a dichotomy between discursive and the extra-discursive or between the ideational and the material. What it argues is the notion that the material or the real acquires whatever meaning it possesses only through its mediation by language, not the other way round. It is what a thing is called that defines it and the way people relate to it, meaning that it is language or words-in-use rather than reality that constitute meaning or reality.

Since there is nothing in life that is not mediated by language, what an object like Nigeria is said to be matters as in the example of the monolithic binary. That is why it is possible for the word Nigeria to mean as many things as possible, beginning with meaning initially what is today Northern Nigeria; then later the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria and now 'largely Muslim North versus predominantly Christian South'. At other times, it refers to just one of the members of the United Nations family or no more than a leading oil producing African country. It has additionally been called 'the giant of Africa' or a 'fantastically corrupt country'. These are all discourses of Nigeria, competing with each other in terms of defining the country. Only one of these discourses can end up as the 'regime of truth' at any one point. Whichever one does has its implications in terms of how the world relates to Nigeria. Nigeria seen more as 'the giant of Africa' would be related to differently from Nigeria seen more by the world as 'fantastically corrupt country'.

These discourses, therefore, matter as who gets to define Nigeria or constitute the meaning of Nigeria is whoever's frame of Nigeria attains hegemonic or commonsensical status as to act as a guide for action for majority of the stakeholders involved. Although no frame can remain permanently hegemonic because of the infinity of competing discourses of Nigeria by the media, diplomats, Nigerian intellectuals of statecraft, non-Nigerian intellectuals of statecraft, foreign investors, domestic business interests, criminals, theorists, producers of popular culture and sundry global governance actors – IFIs, models, actresses, First Ladies, a hegemonic or popular 'regime of truth' can produce a devastating implication before its disavowal. The narrative of Nigeria as a country on cue to implosion in 2015 by the National Intelligence Council of the United States of America has not acquired a hegemonic status in the representation of Nigeria. Yet, it has contributed immensely to creating doubt about Nigeria's future in the minds of numerous Nigerians and the

global community, especially if the ease with which some Nigerians quote it in their columns is anything to go. Such people who quote the prediction with deadening certainty and approval forget that it is a mere exercise mere in geopolitics intended to constitute the reality of Nigeria's collapse rather than any analysis of existing information. It was an exercise in the power of interpretation of facts and fantasy. But the impact of that prediction in popular psychology is a good illustration of the phenomenon of 'power of words in international relations', (Epstein, 2008) as well as of the imperative for radical capture of the narrative industry around and about Nigeria. This is so since a hegemonic 'regime of truth' today can easily be overthrown and substituted with another one tomorrow, depending on which interests are in competition and the resonance of their politics of articulation.

Conclusion

Relying on a radical constructivist ontology, this essay argues that the view of Nigeria as a predominantly Muslim North versus a largely Christian South' can only be understood as a disciplinary and hegemonic move. Like all plural societies, Nigeria is what the totality of its dynastic wars, trade networks, cultural an ideological linkages and migration makes of it before and after colonialism. Any part of it ever being monolithic either in class, ethno-religious, regional or whatever else sense is not possible. The North and the South could not have been monolithic entities given the diversity the British colonial regime met and reconfigured or attempted to reconfigure in their own image, with varying degrees of success.

Against this background, the monolithic binary can only be understood as a colonial strategy of colonising the future by undermining the Pan-Nigerian radical nationalism that early nationalists such as Zik were promoting. The paradigm has, however, continued to be deployed with minor shifts and amendments by the indigenous politicians who succeeded the colonialists. This has been done to the point where the conception of Nigeria as North that is the opposite of the South in orientation, collective desires and imagination of Nigeria has become a commonsensical or hegemonic view among a large population of Nigerians and non-Nigerians. In other words, the monolithic binary is performative, with implications for national integration and security. This is argued to speak to the theory of discursive constitution of reality and, therefore, the challenge of a switch to 'Hegemony and socialist strategy' in radical politics in Nigeria as the quickest and cheapest route to foisting a

counter-narrative to the monolithic binary.

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RESTRUCTURING: A COUNTERFACTUAL DISCOURSE ON THE MINORITIES PROBLEMATIC

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Introduction

The cacophonous political cymbal of restructuring that took root in Nigeria first following the massive rigging of the 1983 general elections by the northern dominated political party, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), and second, on the heels of the annulment of the June 12 presidential election; especially under the General Sanni Abacha military junta, has now attained a national crescendo under the General Muhammadu Buhari presidency. This was in contrast with other agitations which was grounded about the same time on fiscal federalism by the Niger Delta people. It was for this agitation known as the resource control struggle that the renowned playwright and environmentalist, Ken Saro-Wiwa, was judicially murdered by the Nigerian state under General Sani Abacha.

While there is a connection between the restructuring and resource control agitations, especially given that resource control is often linked and conflate with fiscal federalism an aspect of the agitations for restructuring, the latter is broader and rooted in a different power dynamic, particularly in terms of the dominant social forces promoting them and their places in the national power equation. First, the social actors championing these two tendencies are not the same. Second, while restructuring have is a battle cry of the temporarily 'disadvantaged' and 'shortchanged' majority political elites in the Nigerian primitive accumulative federal arrangement, resource control was by minority elites who capitalized on the painful and suffocating exploitation and oppression of resource-owing minorities of the Niger Delta region to demand for participation (sharing) in the federal accumulative enterprise in the country. This clarification is key for a proper analysis and understanding of the ongoing restructuring problematic and its implications for the minorities.

The question to poser in this connection is why was restructuring not an

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issue under the General Olusegun Obasanjo, Alhaji Umaru Yar'Adua and Dr. Goodluck Jonathan presidency? A perceptive answer to this query will reveal that restructuring rather than being oriented towards minority freedom, justice, empowerment and development is a counterfactual agenda of perpetuating minority domination by political elites of the majority groups. How and why is this so? Olorode (2021) called attention to the importance of "facts and memory" in the resolution of the Nigerian crisis. In this regard it could be recalled that though the Obasanjo presidency was initially not supported by the Yoruba political elites, it was unquestionably a project of the northern political elites. During the second term of Obasanjo, the Yoruba elite came on board while for the eight years the Igbo political elites enjoyed the number three position thus the Obasanjo administration could be described as years of political breeze and unhindered accumulation for the major ethnic groups. The minorities despite the usual tokenism were effectively locked out of power.

Beyond these facts and memory, we content that the crux of understanding the Nigerian trajectory as a basis of resolving its contemporary problematic should be ideological perspective and interpretation of both historical memories and facts. This has been precluded with the debate limited within the orthodox frame work of federalism, regionalism, and the economic order of the state taken as given and immutable. Flowing from the above, the paper posits that the restructuring discourse is deliberately designed as a coup against alternative liberating and empowering paradigm beyond the decadent capitalist order that breathe life and gives strength to the problems of the minorities in Nigeria. In other words, the core of the minorities' problem which is the nature and character of the Nigerian state and its ideological anchor which need to be dismantled is being deliberately afforded. This problem we argue flows from the use of state power as ladder for economic power by those who controls the machineries of the predatory Nigerian state. Second, the paper further argues that restructuring sorts to preserve the state and the prevailing system of domination. Third, it contents that the restructuring enterprise is superficial, enslaving and disempowering for the minorities in Nigeria. Hence, it is deemed as a dangerous circumlocution in the exploitative cortex of the Nigerian decadent and primitive capitalist order.

An improper appreciation of the critical elements of history, that is, movement and momentum (Chiemeke, 2016) regarding the minorities' issue in Nigeria which must be anchored on a clear perspective and ideological deconstruction of the deliberately confusing narratives on restructuring is

programmed to fail. This is germane given that the restructuring discourse falls squarely within the rubric of what Nnoli (2010, p.59) perceptively tagged the "tyranny of petty bourgeoisie discourse". This reactionary and disempowering discourse as Nnoli (2010, p.59) further argues, " … has grown in strength to such an extent that it has sucked all political discussions, reactionary and progressive, into its vortex", almost attaining the status of a "national theology" (Nnoli:2010, p.59). Our point of departure in this paper is that restructuring is a class project and is underpinned by class interest. Hence, the restructuring discourse is ideologically loaded and provides ideological rationalization for covert class positions and power. Political discourses, like the restructuring discourse, are never value-free neither are they ideologically neutral.

This calls for the restructuring of the restructuring discourse by proposing an alternative paradigm if the interest of the minorities and ordinary Nigerians are to be served. It is in this context that the paper repudiates the ongoing restructuring conundrum whose propositions include a return to the 1963 Republican Constitution as well as the creation of more states, amendment of the constitution, adoption of a new constitution and special Commissions on the Niger Delta. These strategies that were applied before rather than serve as a panache for minorities' empowerment were mechanisms for opportunistic incorporation of minorities' elites into the parasitic club of the Nigerian exploiting system. We argue that the restructuring orchestra has no new lyrics that envision a new socio-economic order to empower all Nigerians and make Nigeria serve the interest of Nigerians as against imperialism and its domestic beneficiaries. To that extent, we posit that restructuring is a grand illusion and delusion designed to perpetuate the domination and exploitation of the minorities in Nigeria as well as consolidate their impotence.

The rest of the paper deals with minorities' conundrum in Nigeria, the restructuring problematic, what is to be done and conclusion.

The Minorities' Conundrum in Nigeria

There is a sense in which minority is not divine but a political creation. Neither is it fixed. It could be transformed by political power, a different political circumstance and configuration from the one that creates it in the first instance. Gladney (1998, p.1, cited in Solway, 2004, p.130), notes that "majorities are made, not born … numerically, ethnically, politically, and culturally, societies make and unmake their majorities and minorities under specific, political and social circumstances". For instance, as argued forcefully

by Falola (2004), the Yoruba nation was a political creation of the nineteenth century. Hitherto, there were several political kingdoms or empires among the Yoruba. In Falola (2004, p.151) words, "Yorubaland was never a single socio-political unit". As an idea and consciousness, Falola (2004) opines that Yoruba was manufactured. Same with the Igbo and so-called Hausa-Fulani.

Minorities in Nigeria is a political taxonomy whose origin is linked with capitalism and colonial imperialist organisation of the Nigerian state and the exploitation of the Nigerian people. Prior to the creation of the colonial state in Nigeria, the different people that were forcefully brought together as Nigerians, irrespective of their demographic, land mass, political organisations, economic wealth and religions were no bodies minorities as they existed independently and autonomously of other political entities with which they related in different forms.

It has been argued that the contemporary major ethnic groups in Nigeria, Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo, were nothing but political creations in the context of the power structure of colonialism and the struggle for decolonisation wherein they positioned themselves to inherit the colonial state power at independence. Though the power and control over the Nigerian economy remained with the departing British colonial power, these major ethnic groups inherited Nigeria at independence as a neocolonial package which included the dominated ethnic minorities. As Nnoli (2010, p. 62) opines, "Colonial occupation in Nigeria was characterised by domination, oppression, repression, exploitation, injustice and illegitimacy. The most significant of these features was domination. It had political, economic and cultural dimensions. Of these, the economic aspect was the most important".

Two important historically correct observation in relations with colonialism and the ethnic configuration of Nigeria often ignored which Olorode (2021) advanced is that "No ethnic group or nationality, as they are conceived today, was conquered by the colonialists as such; the European conquests were achieved piecemeal and city state-by-city state occasioning various degrees of collaboration between African city states and the marauding European conquerors!"

While it is correct that there existed pre-colonial socio-cultural and economic links as well as conflicts between the people constituted into Nigeria, these different social formations were not and never related as minorities. In this respect Oyovbaire (1983) posits that, "Colonial rule was hardly more than a scaffolding, a superstructure over numerous pre-colonial social orders

having varying degrees of independence from, interdependence upon, each other. … All colonial rule did was to amalgamate and divide for its own purpose of domination and exploitation".

Arguing the same position Akinyemi (2007:38) posits that "In the case of Nigeria, these major structures are the nationalities which were all independent before the advent of colonialism in the 1800s. They are not by any stretch of the imagination a motley collection of individuals without structure, without government, without authority and without any formal system. These nationalities were negotiated with, warred against and finally were subject of treaties with Britain". Akinyemi (2007:39) further emphasised that "The important thing, however, was that they were not in a subjugative relationship among themselves".

Being a political creation of the state process in Nigeria, minorities have been severally created and recreated in Nigeria as a consequence of contestations of social forces as well as the pleasure of the dominant political coalitions in the Nigerian state. For Olorode (2021), "these identities are inventions of the ruling classes any way; they are constructed and deconstructed as political exigencies require or as group and individual aspirations of alleged leaders command."

It need be said that the whole concept of minorities that impregnates the restructuring agitation is myopic and exclusionist. Reducing minorities question to political minorities is fundamentally flaw. One minority is as problematic and requires liberation and empowerment like another. Minorities are a broad category of oppressed, exploited, excluded and disadvantaged peoples ranging from political, economic, religious, ethnic, cultural, gender, disabled and youth minorities. Often, in the minorities discourses political minorities have been over-emphasised to the exclusion of others minorities that equally deserves attention. This underscores the fact that much of the hullabaloo on minorities in Nigeria has nothing to do with the issue of social justice. This calls for a proper conceptualisation of the minorities.

While demographic inferiority in a political community is an attribute of minorities as Barten (2015) argues, it is his specification on non-dominance position of minorities, that is, minorities powerlessness that resonate with the minorities' issues. There are political communities, no matter how exceptional these may be, where minorities dominate and are powerful. Osaghae (1991) accords a secondary importance to population in understanding the minorities. Rather, Osaghae (1998, p.238) argues that, "it is not the objective existence

of a major or minor groups, but of the dynamic interactions which follow the objective differentiation". Thus, minorities must be historically and empirically constructed. Historicising the minorities issue in Nigeria, Osaghae (1998) argues that colonial "regionalism was the cradle of minority problem in Nigeria."

Suffice to say that the minorities' question cannot be understood outside the question of power and resources. In other words, the majorities' cum minorities' questions is one of political economy. That is, who gets who, when and how in the resources that is available in the political community. Hence, the subservient position of political minorities that is at issue in the prevailing political economy dynamic is evident in marginalisation in the areas of regional development, access to power or privilege, social, economic and political spheres (Stavenhagen, 1983, p. 122). This also finds concurrence with Osaghae (1998, p. 238) thus:

> It is colonialism, the regions not only contain groups of unequal sizes, more importantly, also afforded the elites of the majority groups the opportunities for transforming their groups from groups-in-themselves to groups-for-themselves. They did this because it was clear to them that only groups which were preponderant could hope to control power in the regions and at the centre. It was the ethnic nationalism instigated by the elites of the majority groups, more than the mere fact of lumping together unequal groups that brought about the problem of minorities.

Akinyele (1996, pp. 71-72) maps a variety of actions by dominant majority ethnic groups and by extension the state in confronting the marginalisation of political minority groups. These include ethnocide, genocide, constitutional provisions, reversal of status and territorial solutions. For instance, Guyana and Lebanon introduced proportional representation as constitutional measures to ensure the integration of minority ethnic groups. Extreme solutions include ethnocide and genocide witnessed for instance during the Holocaust in Germany.

In response to their continued marginalisation, minority groups have a number of actionable responses. Broad actions by minority ethnic groups include integration with the political majority groups, struggle for self-government or maintaining the status quo of marginalisation (Kymlicka, 2004, p. 56). The first two have emerged as popular options for minority groups

across the world. The integration with majority ethnic groups is manifested in nation-building efforts by states which as Kymlicka (2004) argued are aimed at eroding the identities of minority groups and undermining their capacity to push for self-government (p. 57).

Within the cultural landscape of Nigeria, minority ethnic groups include Birom, Idoma, tiv, Kanuri. Yorubas in Kabba and Ilorin, Esan, Angas, Itsekiri, Urhobo, Efik, Ijaw, Ibibio, Ekoi, Ikwerre, Kalabari, Bini, among others. The creation of regions in 1939 which cemented the territorial basis of federalism in Nigeria engendered the marginalisation of these political minority groups (Suberu and Agbaje, 1998, p. 337; Osaghae, 1991, p. 239). This is because the ethnic groups were subject to the domination of the majority ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa who controlled the Western, Eastern and Northern regions, respectively.

As argued previously, the importance of economic domination in the creation of these minorities starting from the colonial times cannot be over-emphasised. The colonial economy that was based on the exploitation of peasant agriculture was basically trading and externally oriented. The colonial state was a primary means of accumulation. Nigerians were largely alienated except the emerging petty bourgeoisie of the major ethnic groups who profited from the colonial economic order of accumulation using state machinery. Thus, the political elites of the major ethnic groups learnt the deployment of state power for access for accumulation and minority domination under colonial rule.

Realising their disadvantage in the unfolding power equation, during the struggle for self-government and independence, these minority ethnic groups in the three regions, formed political parties as platforms to agitate, challenge and contest for political power solely and in alliance with oppositional majority parties. Some of these minority parties were the United Middle Belt Congress, United Nigeria Independence Party, Borno Youth Movement, Calabar Improvement League, among others. The failure of the colonial state to address the concerns of the minority ethnic groups led to the escalation of these demands in the face of impending political independence. This resulted in the constitution of a Commission to enquire into the concerns of the minority groups and provide recommendations on how to allay the fears. Individuals saddled with this responsibility included Willink H. (Chairman), Mason P., Hadow G., Shearer J., and Hilton K. (Secretary).

The Commission established in 1957 was required to study the demands

of the minority groups in Nigeria and make necessary recommendations to the colonial government. The colonial government in setting the terms of reference for the Commission prioritized constitutional panacea over the creation of new states as solutions for addressing the fears of the minorities. The Commission was inundated with complaints of marginalisation of the minority ethnic groups in different spheres such as political, socioeconomic, sociocultural, developmental, among others (Akinyele, 1996, p. 77). Consequently, the consensus among the representatives of these minority groups was the creation of new states with proposals including the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers state out of the Eastern region, Mid-West state in the Western region and Middle Belt state for minorities in the Northern region.

The Willink Commission acknowledged the evidence of marginalisation of the minority groups by the dominant groups in the three regions. It however failed to support the demand for the creation of states by the minority ethnic groups on the basis that the creation of new states will lead to the proliferation of minorities groups and their agitations (Colonial Office, 1958). Experience with the creation of states in the country after independence has validated this position. The Commission's recommendations focused on the use of constitutional guarantees and other institutional means to address the fears of minority ethnic groups. The continued agitations by the ethnic minorities in Nigeria is a pointed to that state creation and constitutional guarantees as recipe against minorities domination and exploitation in Nigeria merely scratches the surface of the problem.

These recommendations included liberal democratic practices and the parliamentary system of government, placing policing functions in the concurrent list, a special government agency to examine the problem of the Niger Delta with the support of both tiers of government, as well as the constitutional guarantee of fundamental human rights (Colonial Office, 1958). The failure and lack of concern to pose the question "whose democracy" and the nature of democracy?, that is, is it a democracy that empowers the ordinary Nigerian people and promote social justice or a democracy that disempowered the Nigerian people and promote ethnic justice? This was at the root of the non-workability of the liberal democratic and parliamentary solutions recommended.

Furthermore, equating minority rights with human rights (Barten, 2015, p. 148) is antithetical to solving the challenges of the ethnic minorities. This is because guaranteeing the rights of minority ethnic groups goes beyond

individual rights. Barten (2015) in differentiating between these two categories of rights noted that minority rights focus on the collective, while human rights are applicable to individuals (p. 148). Examples of collective rights include the right of representation, right to be treated equally as other ethnic groups, right to self-determination, right to identity, right to infrastructural and developmental projects, among others. The lack of concern and inability of the Nigerian state in terms of protecting these collective rights, as well as the non-justiciability of these rights further underscore its limits in addressing the fears of minorities.

In post-independence Nigeria, the demands for state creation as a solution to the challenge of marginalisation of minority ethnic groups has persisted. In the context of Nigeria's federal structure, the creation of states provides the political elites of the minority groups a ready access to national politics and its accompanying accumulation benefits in line with Nkrumah (1957) maxim about the primacy of the political kingdom in neo-colonial societies. The creation of states benefits the political elites of the minority groups in terms of representation at the central government, statutory and preferential appointments, recruitments into the armed forces and other government parastatals, among others (Osaghae, 1986, p. 158). The fallout of state creations has been the creation of new majorities and minorities as Otite (2010:42) argues "… in an endless crises of marginalisation and uneven development".

Beyond these factors, the demand for states must be situated within the political economy of a neo-colonial contraption like Nigeria. Considering that the state has remained an important means of accumulation and the consolidation of the interests of the political elites, Ekekwe (1986) argued that political elites of minority ethnic groups propose the creation of states as a means to gain access to the accumulative machinery of the state. State creation enabled political minorities elites opportunistic exploitation of minorities through accommodation with majority elements within the federal exploitative order.

Ekekwe (1986) thesis on the instrumental perspective to state creation is important for understanding the present disdain of the present governing class in Nigeria to reducing the number of states in the country, as it impinges on the accumulative interest of the class. In this respect, those advocating the return to old regional arrangements as parts of their restructuring agenda will have minorities' political elite who are the beneficiaries of state creation to contend with. This is because, this will be an end to the ladder they are using

for primitive capital accumulation. The absence of minorities' political parties like in the First Republic shows that the political elites of the different ethnic minorities have found comfort and accommodation in the political cocoons of the majority parties and the created states in achieving their accumulation agenda. It is for this reason that the resource control agitations were never predicated on separatist agenda but accommodation and ethnic justice within the Nigerian federation unlike most of the restructuring agitations that are out rightly secessionist.

A discourse on the challenges of minority ethnic groups in Nigeria would be incomplete without considering the Niger Delta conundrum. The Niger Delta region comprise minority ethnic groups such as Urhobo, Ijaw, Ibibio, Efik, Itsekiri, Bini, Ogoni, Isoko, Ikwerre, Kalabari, among others. Since the discovery of crude oil in the region in 1956, the region has assumed economic importance in Nigeria. Onuoha (2016) noted that the Niger Delta has an "… estimated 37.2 billion barrels of proven oil reserves and 188 trillion standard cubic feet of natural gas… the largest hydrocarbon deposits in Africa" (p. 2).

The Nigerian state has however failed to accede to the developmental needs of the Niger Delta region as the area remains a signpost of lack of development and its indicators such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, insecurity, among others. The creation of a special government agency to address the needs of the Niger Delta as recommended by the Willink Commission and managed mostly by political elites of Niger Delta extraction has failed to significantly impact on the region's condition for over fifty-one years. The forgoing analysis and failure of applied strategies to deal with the minorities problematic demonstrates a failed understanding of the minorities' question which is rooted in the nature and character of the state as well as the condition of accumulation engendered by the state. A perspective understanding of this must also be linked with the crises of citizenship the state form brings forth.

The State, Citizenship Crisis and Restructuring

Flowing from the social contract, the state exists only in the context of citizens for which it is mandated to provide security and welfare in order to secure its own continued legitimacy. Stewart (1995) distinguished two forms of citizenship, namely, state and democratic citizenships. Stewart (1995:63) argues that "state citizenship involves the identification of citizenship with the elaboration of a formal legal status, „„". On the other hand, Stewart (1995:63) posits that, "|democratic citizenship, …, involved the elaboration of citizenship

around shared membership of a political community, in which conception citizens are political actors constituting political spaces".

It is within this legal status of citizens, and citizens being political actors with their inviolable political space that citizens are imbued with equal rights. Hence, Shachar and Hirschl (2007) described "citizenship as inherited property." As argued by Birkinshaw (1993 p. 31), "citizenship connotes bundle of rights and duties, obligations and privileges. The source of these rights and duties is the state, that institution representing the official and public side of human affairs". Birkinshaw (1993 p. 31), further notes that, "Citizenship involves a sense of community and one's membership of the community – community bounded by space, territorial extent and cultural and traditional heritage". Flowing from the above, the existence of majority and majority dichotomy is a breach of citizenship rights and a mark of a dysfunction state. It is therefore curious and a gross theoretical oversight that the ongoing restructuring discourse has thus far dealt with the minorities issue out of the citizenship and state problematic. This is because as Birkinshaw (1993, p. 31) further argues, "The body that provides these rights may also invade these rights. If citizenship is to mean anything, then there should be adequate protection against such invasion unless it is clearly justified." Were the state not invading the rights and space of citizens the restructuring problem would not have arisen.

The state for strategic reasons hides its true nature as an instrument of class rule and pretends to be an altruistic defender and promoter of common good. Ake (1985), exposes this charade thus, "The state is a specific modality of class domination, one in which class domination is mediated by commodity exchange so that the system of institutional mechanisms of domination is differentiated and disassociated from the ruling class and even the society and appears as an objective force standing alongside society". This seemingly autonomy with which the state is clothed Ake (1985) opines is limited. In consequence therefore, the African state for Ake (1985) is involved in class struggle. In fact, the state is a site of struggle and a means of production. It is germane that an ontological analysis of the Nigerian state is indispensable in order to illuminate the minority problematic.

The starting point is to state that the Nigerian state was created originally as a colonial state. This Nigerian colonial state was not a welfare nor development-oriented state. Rather, it was an instrument of domination, oppression, exploitation and accumulation in the interest of foreign capital

which clothed its uncivilised predisposition in the rhetoric of 'civilising mission'. Keeping the nationalities divided, confused, antagonistic and suspicious of each other by whatever means possible were dominant strategies of colonial rule in Nigeria.

To achieve its imperialist accumulation agenda, the colonial power allied primarily with the major ethnic groups which were politically created and given the prominence as well as the relevance they never have prior to colonial rule, particularly the northern arm of the Nigerian ethnic configuration. The colonial creation and constitutional base of the ethnic minority problems thus became rooted in the creation of regions in 1939 as alluded to earlier and concretized in the Richard Constitution of 1945 as well as the adoption of federalism in 1954.

Suffice to say that independence in Nigeria brought about neo-colonialism with the domestic inheritors of state power from the majority ethnic groups who had been well schooled in the use of state power for accumulation in the interest of imperialism given control of state power. Having been denied opportunities for entrepreneurship and capital accumulation due to monopoly capitalist preference of the colonial power, these new petty bourgeoisie class of the major ethnic groups continued to perpetuate the colonial practice of deploying the state as a mechanism for primitive capital accumulation and minority domination. In this respect, Williams (1980:47) notes that "The ethics of business penetrated politics, the ethics of politics penetrated business, the ethics of the gangster penetrated both". Thus, as Williams and Turner (1980:67) argue, "Politics thus became a means for gaining control of public resources for the pursuit of private ends".

Even the state itself made foray into business and became exploiter of its citizens through profiteering and payment of miserable wages. Ake raised concern about the reversed capitalist process in Africa where rather than individuals the state acts as entrepreneur, major employer and exploiter of surplus values from the citizens. In Ake's words, "Many of those who exploit the proletariat do not themselves own the means of production, but they control the power of the state which is used to control the means of production and to carry out exploitation".

In this regard, Graf (1983:199) notes that, "Active state involvement in the economy then further enhances the process of elite consolidation". For Souhall and Comninos (2009, p.358), "… the emergent post-colonial national bourgeoisie [national by geographical location only] developed

largely through public employment and state economic activity via parastatals rather than through economic entrepreneurship within the private sector. The emergent bourgeoisie, managerial rather than capitalist, was therefore from this perspective pursuing rent rather than profit …"

This struggle over the control of state power by the political elites of the majority elite groups engendered a normless intra-class struggles for power for which the instrumentalisation of ethnicity became a major strategy. The fallout is group contestations and struggles for dominance which unknown to many was struggles among political elites rather than the ethnic groups.

In this group interface and contestations, the minorities are highly disadvantaged. Even when states were created in the course of these struggles new minorities were created. The marked outcome of the struggles for power by these political elites of the major ethnic groups in the pursuit of accumulation is the creation of a new citizenship rooted in ethnic citizenship. Citizens were recruited and constituted into political clients who gives unalloyed loyalties to these political elites in exchange for crumbs stolen from the collective patrimony of the people in the name of the people. This produced a discriminative citizenship where attainment is not by merit but by ones ethnicity.

Given that the political elite of the major ethnic groups have captured state power leveraging on the advantage they acquire during colonial rule as well as the orientation towards patrimonial politics they recruit more and more clients from their ethnic groups. In the same ways, development projects are not allocated based on economic rationality but ethnic justifications even in cases where the resources deployed for these developmental projects were obtained from the minorities. It is this promotion of ethnic, unequal and discriminative citizenship which fails to do justice and equality to all Nigerians by to the political elites of the majority ethnic groups in order to privilege themselves and their ethnic groups which is at the root of minority marginalisation, oppression and injustice in Nigeria.

The minority issue cannot therefore be understand outside the context of the state and its use and misuse as a means of production and accumulation. It is for this reason that the issue of federalism, though its bastardization have contributed to the minority problems is unnecessarily exaggerated. A focus exclusively on federalism in finding solutions the minorities' quagmire is flaw in a fundamental way. As Onyeoziri (2005:20) correctly posits, "Giving that federal solution is rooted within the state system, a theory of the state should

be both necessary and prior to a theory of federalism". We contend that the state should be accorded primary to federalism. Onyeozeri (2005) further motes: first, the state precedes federalism. Second, federal solutions are only means for serving the end of the state. Third, efficacy of federal solution is tied to the nature and character of the state.

What kind of state is the Nigerian state? Put differently, what is the nature and character of the state in Nigeria that allowed for this sort of ethnic and discriminative citizenship which engendered the minority problems? We shall proceed to briefly sketch the fine contours of the character and nature of the Nigerian state.

First, the Nigerian state is non-organic as a consequence of both its creation and the failure to consciously move it to becoming a nation-state. This is due to the failure of the petty bourgeois class preference for ethnic citizenship and primitive accumulation as against capital accumulation in order to entrench their hegemony. Second, closely connected to the first, the state is alienated from the citizens. The state confronts the citizens mostly as an extractive machine, always asking but not given or offering the minimum requirement on which state legitimacy is based: security and welfare. This condition has worsened since the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986.

Third, the state lacks relative autonomy and acts unabashedly as the instrument of capital, exploitation and oppression. Fourth, the Nigerian state is a decadent, peripheral, predatory and parasitic capitalist state which is highly unproductive. In fact, it often acts as if it is against production the way it sought to extract revenue from the insignificant productive activities taking place in forms of multiple and double taxations. Productivity is punished while unproductive wealth is allowed to flourish. Both the private sector and the public sector are in alliance in the looting of the state.

Furthermore, the Nigerian state is lawless to the extent that it does not obey its own laws and dishonours its own constitutions. Consequently, like its colonial progenitor the Nigerian state is arbitral and undemocratic in spite of the fact that it claims to be under democratic governance. The Nigerian state is subservient to foreign capital and imperialist dictates. Finally, the Nigerian state is run by an unproductive, predatory and parasitic domestic class on behalf transnational capital. It was as a result of the nature and character of the Nigerian state that the pre-independence federal consensus broke down immediately after independence and the several political patched work since

then has been unsustainable.

All of these characteristics get codified in the state-capital mode of accumulation through which the state and the class that manages it dominates everything to the exclusion of all other classes and groups. Ake raised concern about the reversed capitalist process in Africa where rather than individuals the state acts as entrepreneur, major employer and exploiter of surplus values from the citizens. "Many of those who exploit the proletariat do not themselves own the means of production, but they control the power of the state which is used to control the means of production and to carry out exploitation". For Graf (1983:199), "Active state involvement in the economy then further enhances the process of elite consolidation"

As Souhall and Comninos (2009, p.358) opine, "… the emergent post-colonial national bourgeoisie [national by geographical location only] developed largely through public employment and state economic activity via parastatals rather than through economic entrepreneurship within the private sector. The emergent bourgeoisie, managerial rather than capitalist, was therefore from this perspective pursuing rent rather than profit …".

It cannot be over-emphasised that the state plays an instrumentalist role in this accumulation process. This is because the Nigerian state is largely an instrument of the ruling class deployed as a means of production. In this wise, it lacks relative autonomy and is unable to play a mediating role as well as provoke challenges to the legitimacy and hegemony of the dominant class given the direct involvement of the state in accumulation on behalf of the class. The restructuring issue amongst other divisive issues facing Nigeria are reflection of the legitimacy crisis of the state and its dominant class.

The Restructuring Problematic

There are several interpretations of restructuring as there are restructuring agitators. From resource control, true federalism, secession, state creation, return to the 1963 regional arrangement, regionalism, constitutional amendments, new constitution and so on and so forth. Interestingly, the restructuring agitators are a babel of voices such that even they themselves lacks mutual understanding. While they have sufficiently confused themselves, they have succeed in confusing others such that the restructuring discourse have become contained within the limited parameter they have defined. That is, within the context of a rigid ultra-conservative framework of the decadent, parasitic capitalist state and its disempowering ideology. It is in this sense that

we argue that the restructuring discourse as a tyranny of received discourse is a counterfactual agenda for minority domination.

According to Amuwo and Herault (1998, p. 6), "restructuring is indicative of the fact that existing state institutions, particularly at the centre, are inadequate to apprehend, comprehend and resolve immediate and new challenges". This is the outcome of the quasi-federal arrangement with excessive centralisation of power following the military intervention in 1966, state creation and particularly with the oil political economy of the 1970s.

It is obvious that Nigerians sees federalism as a magical wax that solves all problems of a segregated society. It is also true that Nigerians takes restructuring as a cure of the ills of federalism. This is a perverted thinking. First, federalism has the propensity for both integration and disintegration depending on felicity to the federal ideology and ideas. Second, as Akinyemi (1979, cited in Amuwo and Herault, 1998, p.3) argue, "Review of a federal system is not new and does not warrant any apology. Thus, restructuring as a model of review of federalism is normal and desirable if the issues are understood as a basis of the review". Restructuring ultimately deals with the reordering of power in the state. This is with particular focus on the use of power either for collective accumulation, equity in the distribution of state resources and public benefits in a way that is ethnically blind. So, the issue therefore is not about the rightness or otherwise of restructuring but within what political economy framework and whose interest is accord primacy in the process.

In this context, an issue that has been totally ignored in the restructuring discourse in Nigeria is the democratic stipulation of federalism. As Wheare, cited in Jinadu, 1979, p. 21 in Amuwo and Herault, 1998, p. 3) argues, "Federalism demands forms of government which have the characteristics usually associated with democratic or free government". Duchacek, (1977) similarly stresses the importance of democracy for the success of federalism. This is important for entrenching popular participation, rule of law, constitutionalism, and decentralisation of powers, citizenship rights, regional autonomy and the right to self-determination (Odukoya & Ashiru, 2007, p. 81). It is in the context of democracy that federalism represents a viable option for safeguarding minority groups from marginalisation. Can we say from 29th May, 1999 when we started this civil rule journey we have a democracy we can be proud of? Whose democracy? Has our democracy empower or disempowered the Nigerian people?

It must however be emphasised that federalism is not a perfect panacea for managing diversity in pluralistic societies. Its utilitarian essence is reflected in Linz (1997) position that "federalism can only assure that nobody could be fully unhappy but certainly not that everybody will be happy with the solution" (Linz, 1997, p. 21). Similarly, Tamuno (1998) asserted that peace in federalism "… is not necessarily that of the grave" (p. 13). Consequently, managers of federal structures around the world must pay attention to addressing challenges from the constituent groups in order to engender unity in diversity.

Paradoxically, federalism was not adopted in Nigeria because it was deemed to be a perfect solution to the crisis of state-building. Rather, it was adopted because it was the preference of the British colonial power who saw it has the best way to preserve the ethnically diverse nation for its continued exploitation (Alli, 2003). Acceptance of federalism was also the easiest choice to fast-tracked the realisation of the goal of the desperate political elite of the majority ethnic groups to inherit political power and its economic benefits from the colonialist.

According to Egwu (2003, p.19), while the British preferred federalism because they believed it will serve the interest of their northern friends after independence not because it could aid national integration, "federalism was adopted merely as an expedient strategy for terminating colonial rule" by the nationalists. Thus, the adoption of federalism was a recalibration at of the struggle for power among the political elites of the three dominant ethnic majorities. Ekekwe (1986:73) correctly notes that "…, the federal nature of the state, which to some extent at least was a British creation, also helped to determine the pattern of the struggles for access and political control".

The federalist compromise of the British colonialist and the political elites of the three major ethnic groups at the eve of Nigeria's independence broke down like a pack of cards no sooner after independence. Akinyemi (2007) argues that the federal consensus succeeded until the Tiv revolt and West region crisis starting in 1962 and the coup of 1965 put it asunder. For many especially the northern political elites, the imposition of unification decree by the military under Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi marked the termination of the nation's federal arrangement. With the over-centralisation of power by the military in a context where the military was northern in orientation the Nigerian military for Akinyemi (2007) a Hausa-militia.

This sad development of unification decree though reversed subsequently under General Yakubu Gowon military administration, coupled with the oil

political economy which shifted the focus of accumulation to the minorities of the Niger Delta region fuelled the greed of the political elites of the majority ethnic groups in control of the levers of power of the Nigerian state. Aided by the centralising and command ethos of the military, Nigerian federalism was recentralised and became a quasi-federalism with states becoming beggarly in the federation. The various state creation exercises also weakens the states relative to the central. This was not helped with the north dominated military who the authored of the constitution on which civil rule is based. The military constitutionalised the over-centralisation of state power which favours the north in particular and the majorities in general.

Akinyemi (2007:41) captures the development as follow:

> The intervention of the military has had two consequences for the national question. The first was the destruction of the federal system and adoption of a pseudo-federal system with a powerful centre. Even the constitutions which the military bequeathed to succeeding civilian regimes reflected its belief that it is only an over-centralised system that can contain the competing nationalities of Nigeria, whereas the competing nationalities of Nigeria have reached the opposite conclusion that only within a proper federal system that their interests can be safeguarded. The second consequence which derives from the first….The other nationalities in Nigeria regard the post-military constitution not only as unfederal but, more importantly, as having been designed to serve the interest of the Hausa-Fulani. In essence, to the other nationalities in Nigeria, the system negotiated at independence which provided sufficient autonomy to them has been replaced with one imposed by one nationality for the interests of that nationality to the detriment of other nationalities.

It is therefore unequivocally clear that the agitations for restructuring underscores the failure of, and a vote of no confidence on the 1999 Constitution by majorities of Nigerians. Given the ethnic foundation of the 1999 Constitution in terms of how it favoured the major ethnic groups by the over-centralisation of power, the restructuring brouhaha continue to engender the ethnification of the national question in Nigeria. This has led to conflating the minority crisis in Nigeria as ethnic crisis.

We argue that the minority question is not an ethnic crisis but at the core

of the national question.

Odukoya and Ashiru (2007:82-83) opine in this respect that:

> While ethnic questions are embraced within the rubric of the national question, the national question cannot be contained or subsumed within the problematic of an ethnic question. This is because the totality of the national question has to do with the issue of social justice. And social justice is non-exclusive; it is an umbrella concept that covers all, irrespective of ethnic, religious or cultural background. It is for this reason that the ethnic question is non-liberating and amenable to injustice and social inequalities. On the other hand, the national question, properly posed, is a question of generalised justice, equality, freedom, human rights and human dignity.

The issue of return to the old regional arrangement as a basis for resolving minorities problem would have been paradoxical had it been canvassed by the minorities. As Ekekwe (1986:132) succinctly argued, "The Commission [Willink Commission] made a clear point of the fact – and this is important – that the fears 'were all expressed in regard to the *Regional Governments*, who in each Region were thought of as a majority group. *No minority expressed fears of the Federal Government*". The attraction to the regions and the call for return to the regionalism of the First Republic is nothing but a nostalgia for the era where the regions was for the petty bourgeoisie political class the centre of accumulation particularly with the control over the instrumentalities of the marketing boards among others. As Ekekwe (1986:76) argues, "The increasing economic accumulation powers of the regional government helps to explain why regions were the focuses of serious political struggles for access".

The struggle for accumulation is thus central to the hegemonic centralisation of power and the present counter-hegemonic call for restructuring which is oriented to decentralisation and institutionalization of a new accumulation propensity. This however is not a repudiation of devolution of power. The question is within what context. Any decentralisation within the prevailing socioeconomic order will produce the same if not worst result. This flows from the fact that at the root of the restructuring crisis and minority issue is the need for re-ordering the pattern of accumulation in the state. What nature of accumulation is feasible in a decadent predatory capitalist social formation like Nigeria?

As we have alluded to earlier, state creations which is another strategy in

the struggle for accumulation has failed as a mechanism for access to state and accumulation. Particularly the difficulties of state creation under civil rule have made it unattractive and restructuring attractive. Though there are still some demands for state creations still been made.

Similarly, the suggestion on constitutional amendment as well as having a new constitution are unhelpful. For constitutional amendment, the demographic dominance of the major ethnic groups particularly the north in the National Assembly is such that it would be impossible to achieve any fundamental redistribution of power from how is its presently constituted. In the same view, Amuwo (1998) position on restructuring through constitution-making is instructive and persuasive. As Amuwo (1998, p.80) opines, "… constitution-making hardly democratises inter-class political competition, it only addresses intra-elite political contestation and, not infrequently, rather unfairly and unsatisfactorily.

What is to be Done?

A restatement of how we perceived the minority problem will be helpful and simplify our task. At the root of the minority debacle in Nigeria we have argued are the issue of justice, lack of democracy, majority domination, and ethnic citizenship all incubating under the over-arching debilitating impact of a decadent and parasitic capitalist state in the interest of transnational capital.

One is at loss to situate the issue of justice within the ongoing discourse on restructuring. This is understandable given that justice is a scare commodity particularly in the context of a decadent and parasitic capitalist system oriented to oppression, domination and exploitation of labour and minorities of different types. Justice in the relations amongst Nigerians is a categorical imperative in the resolution of the minority problems.

We talk of justice in the context of the relations between groups in Nigeria in the Rawlian sense. As John Rawls (1976:50) argues:

> The conception of justice which I want to develop may be stated in the form of two principles as follows: first, each person participating in a practice, or affected by it has an equal right to the most extensive liberty compatible with the liberty for all; and second, inequalities are arbitrary unless it is reasonable to expect that they will work out for everyone's advantage, and provided the positions and offices to which they attach, or from which they may be gained, are open to all. These principles expressed justice as a complex of three ideas: liberty,

equality, and reward for services contributing to the common good.

From the above, justice must entail the equality of liberty as well as equality of inequalities amongst the citizens of a state. This resonates in our conception of citizenship as equal citizenship. The denial of political, economic, social and cultural rights as well as non-generalised inequalities in a country is conterminous with injustice and promotes discriminative citizenship which is the root of the minority problems. To this end, the minority problem in Nigeria is also a question of justice as a basis of ensuing democratic citizenship which allows for a sense of community.

Can justice be obtained by the minorities in the context of the decadent parasitic capitalist social formation known as Nigeria? For Blowers and Thompson (1976:160):

> Inequalities are primarily an effect of the structure and forms of social organisation, so that to change inequalities the social structure must itself be changed. This can be achieved both by individual effort and perhaps more importantly, by collective action. It is at this point that the issue of the political responses to inequalities is directly posed. Individuals and group or class ideological attitudes towards inequalities are given expression through different political strategies, for change or otherwise, and through the forms of organisation built upon those strategies.

This calls for a critical engagement of the decadent capitalist system which is the structure that underpins and generates the minority question in Nigeria. Harman (2010, 11) correctly depicts the capitalist system when he notes that, "Capitalism transforms society in its entirety as it sucks people by the billions into labouring for it. it changes the whole pattern by which humanity lives, remoulding human nature itself. It gives a new character to old oppression and throws up completely new ones." On his part, Toyo (2001:152), sees a capitalist economy as a "master-and-servant economy, one of such economy in history. It is, in fact, a modern variety of a slave economy".

A decadent capitalist economy such as we have in Nigeria is worst that the normal capitalist system described in shivering details above. Given that those who runs the Nigerian economy are themselves subservient and does not owe the means of production but survives on crumbs, commissions and stealing in the performance of their roles decadent capitalism in Nigeria is

even worst that the capitalist system proper. Beyond the workers that are traditionally dominated and exploited in the capitalist economy, different minorities are dominated and exploited in the process of accumulation by the petty bourgeoisie manager of the Nigerian decadent and parasitic capitalist state.

Decadent capitalism in Nigeria engenders crisis, contradictions and antagonism which finds expression in unemployment and underemployment, inflation, poverty, insecurity, insurgencies, kidnapping, banditry, Boko Hara, ethno-religious crisis, armed robbery and others. One of the ways the political elites have contained these crises from threatening their hold on power and becoming a revolutionary pressure for change is ethnification of the crisis. The result is that the poor and dominated who as a class should rise against their oppressors at the root of their problems end up confused, misinformed and fighting themselves. The restructuring discourse is another of these strategies of revolutionary containment by the oppressors.

Toyo (2001:155) notes that "capitalism is characterised by two forms of capital accumulation, namely, primitive accumulation and accumulation out of profits generated in already established capitalist enterprises". Elsewhere, Toyo (2002) characterised primitive capitalist accumulation as non-endogenous parasitism. For Toyo (2002:11), "Non-endogenous parasitism in the capitalist sector takes the forms of unequal exchange, landlordism, state contracts, state subsidies to business, state-financed loans, agency contracts, money lending, inflationary financing and peculation". Control of state power plays a dominant role in this form of accumulation and the majority used it to disadvantage and unjustly against the minorities.

The failure of the poor, dominated and exploited class to organise and institute class action against the exploiting class has promoted minority oppression and exploitation in Nigeria. For too long the Nigerian poor and exploited class across ethnic boundaries have accepted to be limited to the periphery of politics as against the core of the state which is the engine room of political actions. In this wise, the power of the workers, masses and the minorities remain sadly potential. The poor and dominated must transit from the fringe of political power to the core arena of state power for the minorities to get justice.

Lenin (1976:31) argues that, "Guaranteeing the rights of a national minority is inseparably linked with the principle of complete equality". This is not possible under capitalism. The lesson Karl Marx bequeathed to the poor,

oppressed and exploited is that, the social order that has become antiquated don't just give way, except through a struggle. Williams (1980, p.17) similarly counsels thus, "Class action of the poor and exploited classes requires that they organise themselves to act directly in their own interest". Of what benefits is a system valorise for its ability to create wealth but in practice makes the workers who creates the wealth to consume less and inversely poorer in proportion to the wealth they have helped to produce for someone else who played no role in the production of the wealth beyond providing the capital?

To expect the members of the Nigerian petty bourgeois class either among the majority or minority ethnic groups who sometimes poses as nationalist or ethnic groups champions to relinquish power or empower the poor, dominated and the minorities is a grand delusion of unimaginable proportion that is unhistorical. These political elites are mere opportunists interested only in advancing their chances of accumulation at the expense of the Nigerian people. This is why they masquerade as champions of the peoples cause.

Williams (1980, p.40):

> The ambiguous position of the bourgeoisie within the neo-colonial political economy is expressed in its ideological ambiguity. Its nationalism is the outcome of its wish to appropriate resources back from the foreigner; its commitment to foreign investment is the outcome of its concrete dependence on the neo-colonial political economy. National unity and reconciliation express its ambition to act as an hegemonic class, providing moral and political leadership at the national level and within the international political arena; its tribalism is the outcome of its lack of control of the productive resources of the economy and hence of the competition among the bourgeoisie for favoured access to scarce resources, and the need to manipulate particularistic interests and sentiments among the poor to maintain the bourgeoisie's political domination.

Similarly, Williams and Turner (1980, p.67) submit that, "The competition for access to resources in Nigeria has taken place predominantly between ethnically-defined constituencies. These constituencies were not simply given, but a redefined in the process of political competition".

Conclusion

Given the complicit of the state in the minority problem and the use of

the state as a means of production and mechanism for primitive capitalist accumulation by the political elites of the major ethnic groups a condition favoured and allowed by the prevailing decadent capitalist system, restructuring is an agenda to perpetuate the domination and exploitation of the minority within the Nigerian federation. We therefore affirm Olorode's (2008, p. 40) position of the imperative of the three commitments for a new political movement that Nigerian must work assiduously to build which in captures as follows:

> The first is commitment to a united Nigeria with a united people who are genuinely sovereign. The second is a commitment to an economic order in which the welfare of the people is the primary goal, in which the resources of our land and their exploitation and allocation are under the full control of the toiling people thus immediately enabling the minimum of a welfare state and incremental socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange. The third commitment of the movement will be the pursuit of a social and cultural policy that promotes cultural freedom and solidarity among our people, and frees their minds from superstitions and from ethnic and confessional prejudices.

Without any equivocation, only a socialist federal republic of Nigerian can ensure justice, equity, equal and democratic citizenship, productive accumulation, welfare, employment and development for the minorities in particular and all Nigerians in general.

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THE NATIONAL QUESTION AND SELF-DETERMINATION IN NIGERIA

BY
ADEWALE ADEOYE

The Gist of the Matter

The agitation for self-determination in Nigeria is age-long. However, in the past one decade, the campaign has seen renewed vigour. It appears to be the most dominant storyline in Nigeria today. In recent instances, we see violence being employed to push for ethnic self-determination in Nigeria. At the moment, in the year 2021, in my view, while the country is ravaged by poverty, misery and deaths, the loudest cry in Nigeria is self-determination. It has raised serious questions about the future of Africa's most populous country. It has assumed a life of its own far more than the demand for the provision of the essentials of life. Amidst the clamour for ethnic self-determination is the resurgence of terrorism, armed attacks, violence, kidnapping, rape and forceful seizure of land by armed gangs, all happening in the face an poverty, hopelessness, corruption in a country managed perpetually by inept, weak and irresponsive political leadership.

Terrorism: A Personal Encounter and the Burning Rage of Terror

In March 2021, I had a personal experience in Osun State. I ran into heavily armed men. Many of us were lucky to escape. The police had come. The exchange of gunfire lasted for no less than one hour as we watched from our hideout. While we waited in nuclear settlements, awed farmers told me their experiences as I interviewed them one after the other. I was informed the terrorists started trickling into the forests more than 10 years ago. They first came as farmers and in subsequent years, began to bring cattle and then arms into the farmstead with the excuse they wanted to protect their herds. I was informed they had maps, binoculars and jungle booths and all the paraphernalia of soldiers preparing for war. This clearly shows that apart from armed herdsmen, there is the problem of terrorism which is being entrenched in Nigeria all of which have aided the renewed agitation for self-determination even from strange quarters. The Benue State Governor, Samuel Ortum recently escaped being killed by armed men. The Governor of Ondo State, Rotimi Akeredolu's convoy was equally attacked by armed men.

Ortum said his recently said his experience has convinced him that restructuring was the best option for Nigeria. The Federal Government has

expressed opposition to restructuring even though it was one of the campaign slogans of the ruling All Progressives Congress, (APC). At the National Assembly, there are bills proposing Local Government Autonomy, while the central government, instead of adopting State Police, has initiated its own version by creating Federal Police in communities, an indication that the central government detests restructuring. Today, emphasis is shifting from restructuring to outright break-up of the country.

Self-Determination in Historical Perspective

In this paper, I chose to look at the pre-colonial state, the origin of Nigeria as one entity, the pre-colonial campaigns for independence, the various constitutional conferences, the post-colonial state, the socio-political crisis and the current contradictions which have propelled an almost irreversible tempo of agitation for self-determination.

There were pre-colonial states in the current territory we now refer to as Nigeria. The pre-colonial states and nations may not have been organised in the form in which we have countries of today, but there were nations defined by language, common history and origin, culture, boundary demarcation, defence, governance, political authority, shared fears and aspirations.

In the Beginning

For thousands of years since distinct nations began to emerge some 6000 years ago around the Niger Valley, the indigenous peoples have been part of the historic formations of states and nations. They had a system of governance based on indigenous knowledge, values and civilisations similar to the emergence of nations in Europe, Asia, the Pacific and America. Long before the coming of Europeans to Africa, the continent had built and fortified states established by the standards of the time. These pre-colonial states existed all over Africa. "The ancient Egyptian civilisations had developed along the river Nile from 3,000 years B.C and had lasted until about 300 B. C. During that time the Pharaohs of Egypt had built up a large empire in Africa and had travelled widely on land." [1] The early part of the first century saw great migrations of peoples all over Africa with many settling down in territories far off from their original dominion. But there were Western prejudices. Some scholars ignorantly or mischievously hold the view that there was nothing like states or nations before the coming of Europeans. I proceed to prove them wrong.

In his *Travels and Explorations in Yorubaland* William H Clarke who travelled between 1854 and 1858 in Yorubaland wrote about Western prejudices: 'They judge hastily and rashly, frequently under the impulse of strong and deep-rooted prejudice, and therefore do injustice to those whom they condemn simply because they are not peculiarly in all things what they would wish them to be."[2]

In present day Nigeria, the organised indigenous nations included but not limited to the Bornu (El Kaneni), Hausa, Yoruba, Bini and the Kwafarawa. The El Kanem Empire ran by the Kanuri ethnic group in the north east of Nigeria, mainly Yobe and Bornu States traversed countries like Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Southern Libya and Northern Cameroon around the Lake Chad basin. Kanem-Bornu was believed to have been established in the mid-9th century with its capital city sited in Njimi, not too far from Lake Chad. At one time in the 14th century, when the Kanem was attacked by alien forces, the Capital was moved to Birni Ngazargamu until 16th century when the Empire regained lost grounds.

The Empire became an Islamic nation in the 11th century after its leader of the time, Sef mai Umme became a Muslim changing his name to Ibn ¿Abd al-Jalil. The Bornu Empire thus by 11th century had become a theocratic state founded on the Sharia doctrine. The Bornu Empire existed until 1900.

In 1800, in the phosphoric rage of the Fulani Jihad, the Empire was attacked. In 1808, its King, Mai Ahmad was sacked, but it regained its strength after Mohammad al Kanemi came to his aid. In today's Northern part of Nigeria was the traditional Hausa State which flourished in the 15th century. It was bordered in the West by Songhai Empire and in the East by Bornu Empire. The state had a loose union united by language, history and culture though without a central authority. The Hausa States were Biram, Daura, Gobir, Kano, Katsina, Rano, and Zazzau]. The other seven Hausa States were Zamfara, Kebbi, Yauri, Gwari, Kororofa Nupe and Northern Yoruba areas.

The last seven were not necessarily Hausa speaking but were considered, by some scholars to be part of the Hausa State. The states came under attack by the Fulani in 1804 through Uthman Dan Fodio who preached Holy War against the oppressive Hausa *Habe* system. The Jihad enlisted many Hausa peasants who formed the bulk of the Jihad. Earlier in the 14th century, the Hausa States had been introduced to Islam operating stiff Islamic laws.

In the 19th century, the Hausa State was vanquished by the Fulani who led the Jihad. By 1820, most if not all the Hausa States have come under the

new emergent power of Uthman Dan Fodio all of which were subservient to Sokoto, adopted as the new capital and to a large extent, exerting central authority on the rest of the states. The states were not all about wars, they had administrators who managed the political economy, local and international trade including appointment of political envoys.

'For long, however, the economic development of Hausaland was overshadowed by the might of Mali and Songhai to the West and Kanem-Bornu to the East. Lacking large supplies of gold or vast imperial resources, the area did not attract North African merchants until comparatively late in its history. Once contact was made with North Africa, however, prosperity grew quickly, and after the fall of Songhai there was very rapid economic growth." 3 The Bini Kingdom was established by Oranmiyan, a prince from Ile-Ife. The then Ooni of Ife, Oranmiyan's father had sent Oranmiyan to Bini which was then referred to as Igodomigodo ruled by some 35 Ogisos, a parliament of leaders that had ruled over Benin. Oranmiyan on arrival lived at Use, the outskirt of Bini where he ruled the city and her frontiers. He left Bini and arrived at Egor, where he had a wife, Erinwide, daughter of Enogie, who gave birth to Eweka who became the first Oba of Bini.

The Kingdom developed into a state expanding eastwards and westwards. Between 1400 and 1700, Bini attained her height of statehood and prosperity including military prowess. It had Metropolitan and community regiments. It began to decline in 1700. The end of Bini Empire was enhanced finally by the British in 1897. The British visitor Richard Francis Burton had visited Bini in 1862. He was at that time an envoy at Fernando Po. He sought treaty between Bini and Britain, fuelled by the abundance of palm oil, timber and rubber. Various treaties were proposed between 1884 and 1886. In 1892, the Vice Consul, Henry Galway visited Bini. Due to dispute over trade and suspicion about the mission of Britain, Bini launched a pre-emptive attack on the British leading to the deaths of British soldiers. The British went for reinforcement and in turn launched a counter attack in 1897 which eventually led to the overthrow of Oba Ovonramwen. The Empire came under British rule. While it lasted, Bini was centre of civilisation and culture known for its ivory and brass, acknowledged as one of the world's best works of art. This could not have been achieved without a formal school of or art and philosophy that specialised in Creative talent and design. In Yorubaland, from the 9th century, a city state had been created at Ile-Ife through its first most notable progenitor, Oduduwa. The advancement in economy and trade

led to the expansion of Ile-Ife dynasty, with many of Oduduwa descendants establishing several Kingdoms up to Bini, Benin Republic, Togo and Ghana all linked to Ile-Ife. In Ghana, the Oduduwa dynasty also extended through the Ga and the Ewe people.

De Wheno Aholu-Toyi 1, the 15h Akran of Badagry said, "As a matter of fact and for the avoidance of doubt, the earliest Monarchy for the Badagry stool had its root from Accra in the old Gold Coast through the Ga/Ewe speaking group historically reputed to have migrated from the ancient Ketu Kingdom (part of Odudua major Kingdom which left Ile-Ife around the mid-twelfth century (1257) and established the Badagry Kingdom around 1560."[4]

The most successful of the Oduduwa dynasty was Oyo Empire established in 1300 by Oranmiyan. Before the formation of Oyo Empire in 1300, there were tributary states like Ekiti, Ijesa, Owo, Ondo under the Oduduwa dynasty all loyal to Ile-Ife, the headquarters of the federal state. Oranmiyan's establishment of Oyo Empire changed the structure of the traditional nation. Oranmiyan had left Bini around 1190. At the Niger tributary, he established a city named Oyo-Ile with his royal entourage. He married Toroso, a Nupe woman and also Moremi Ajasoro. The Oyo Empire flourished between 1300 and early 1800 before its decline. As indicated by *Stride and Ifeka-1971,* "Small states and chiefdoms were the characteristics form of political organisation until the eighteenth century. However, there were two major exceptions to this general rule, namely Benin and Oyo. In both cases, possession of iron and trading contact with the great Sudanic trading centres enabled growth on an imperial scale to take place from the fourteenth century onwards."5

The Kwararafa Empire was a plural society built around multi-ethnic groups through a strongly linked confederacy established along the Benue River Valley. It was cited in the South-West of Bornu Empire and Southwards of the Hausa states. It was a prominent Empire in the 17th century. The confederacy lasted for about 350 years before its collapse in the 18th century. The capital of Kwararafa was Wukari. It contained a number of smaller ethnic groups brought together by common fears and bound and by territorial contiguity. It was established in 1500 and lasted until 1840. Obviously, these traditional states were not as organised as the modern states of today, but they had all the rudiments of authority, leadership and structures for the maintenance of law and order. There were unwritten constitutions that guided the lives of the people mainly derived from their customs, values, civilisations and heritage. The obvious point is that before the formation of Nigeria in 1914 by the British,

there were states and nations in the territory we now refer to as Nigeria which were on their own chosen path of development. As stated by Okwudiba Nnoli, 'Without implying any linearity in their history, it is clear that over the past centuries, these societies have increasingly become more complex through sometimes evolutionary, and other times revolutionary, occurrences. Changes in their technique of production, migrations, and patterns of contact with other societies have given rise to societal transformation." [6]

It is wrong to presume that the indigenous people have no idea about nations and states prior the colonial era.

The Emergence of Nigeria

On January 01, 1914, the concept of Nigeria was developed after more than 5000 years of human existence in these territories, and had passed through various stages of development. It should be recalled that the lordship of Britain did not manifest until 1800s. It began with the annexation of Lagos in 1861. In 1884, the Oil River Protectorate was established. Between 1886 when the Yoruba civil war ended and 1900, the current space referred to as Nigeria was under the domination of the Royal Niger Company, a relationship built on charter administered by George Taubman Goldie. The Southern and Northern protectorates were amalgamated in 1914 at the prompting of British agent, Lord Lugard. However, the three, East, West and North ran as autonomous regions. Though British effective rule of the South and the North began in 1900, Sokoto, the headquarters of the Sunni Muslim State was not subdued until 1903.

Of the British occupation, Ahmadu Bello had said, "Whatever the rights of the attack on Kano and Sokoto may be, the British were the instrument of destiny and were fulfilling the will of God. In their way they did well. Even at the actual time there was no ill-will after the occupation. We were used to conquerors and these were different: they were polite and obviously out to help us rather than themselves.'7 Thus came the effective, forceful merger of the pre-colonial states and nations by the British. With the amalgamation, alien interest had forcefully brought together nationalities, philosophies civilisations, cultures, values, faith, heritages and norms, some in perpetual conflict with each other, together, under a garrison hegemony. There were no consultations, no conferences, no debate, if any took place, it was one-dimensional, among the colonisers. One of the kernel principles of living together in peace and conflict prevention is the culture of debate which was absent in the formation

of Nigeria.

No doubt, nations could emerge through different means: either by conquest, by mutual agreement or through voluntary surrender of sovereignty. However, countries that emerge other than through informed consent of stakeholders have the greater risk of turmoil than those nations brought together out of participants' freewill. In the year 1914, the seed of discord and repression of democratic dissent was planted. It has started to geminate since then.

Between 1900 and 1960, there were various constitutional conferences organised by Britain on the future of the new colony. It should be understood that during the various constitutional conferences, representatives were invited based on their regions, where each presented their aspirations and suspicions. Prelude to the exit of British rule in 1960, the colonial government, aware of the bottled-up disenchantment set up the Willink Commission of Enquiry. Inaugurated on November 23, 1957, it traversed the country between November 23, 1957 to June 1958. It met with individuals, communities and minorities. After its consultations, it made recommendations to the colonial government.

Key among the demands of minorities was the creation of states given the several cases of reports of domination by ethnic minorities lodged against majority ethnic groups in the North and South. In the report of the Willink's Commission, it was stated that "the boundaries of the territory now known as Nigeria were first defined in 1907. The word Nigeria was then not twenty years old and the various elements which now constitute Nigeria came together for the first time under one Government in 1914. The unity and indeed, the separate existence of Nigeria are thus concepts of recent growth." [8]

The Commission noted that at the 1953 Conference the decision was taken that Nigeria should be a federation of three regions. The dominant political parties at the time, AG, NPC wanted a Federation of three regions, while the NCNC preferred a strong centre but had to succumb to the demand of the other two political parties, the AG and the NPC. The real changes in terms of recognising the diversity of Nigerians began with the 1951 (Macpherson Constitution) which ushered consultations with the people. The Legislative Council directed meetings with villages, districts, divisions, regional and provincial levels after which a national conference was held. However, the groundwork for Federalism in Nigeria was laid by the 1946 Richardson Constitution.

'The result of this decision was a Federation of an unusual composition, in that one of the three constituent elements was slightly larger in population than the other two to distinguish between a majority group of about one-third. When the Conference was resumed, in 1954, certain of these minority groups expressed fears about their future in regions of this kind and asked for recognition as separate states:"[9] In his epic book, Dele Ogun reflected that 'pushing the new country out of independence whilst pregnant with these agitations for self-determination, and new states, could only lead to one outcome.'[10]

By 1960, Nigeria had three regions, West, North and East. These formations put together by the British were informed by their 60-year experience in governance and political economy of Nigeria. The years between 1952 and 1966, when the country ran a confederation, each region developed based on its own objective situation. Under the 1960 constitution, each region had own constitution, apart from the Federal Constitution, separate Coat of Arms and Motto, separate diplomatic missions abroad led by "Agents General".

What promoted political crisis was the scramble to take over the political command of the country at the centre and the rivalry between the three regions to upstage one another at the centre. This precipitated political crisis that led to the country's first military coup.

This was compounded by the fact that the post-colonial emergent ruling class at the national level in Nigeria has never had any national vision either for economic, cultural or political freedom of the people. While the NPC and NCNC coalition ruled Nigeria immediately after independence, the most important figure in NPC, Sarduana of Sokoto Ahmadu Bello who held a traditional war title in the caliphate was quoted to have said that he would conquer Nigeria the way his great grandfathers conquered the Northern territories, referring to the Jihad of 1804. 'A report in the Sunday Express of December 20, 1959, at page 2, summed up the attitude of mind of the hierarchy…..I shall divide Nigeria into two and hand them over to my lieutenants….Sir Ahmadu claimed that like his great grandfather, Shehu Othman Dan Fodio who he said after his conquests, divided the conquered country between his two sons, 'I too after conquering the South will also divide Nigeria into two to be taken charge of by two of my lieutenants.[11] Saduana on the other had believed the Fulani ascendancy in Nigeria which was promoted by the British was informed by the Fulani administrative expertise. To him, 'Lugard, as has been said saw the administrative genius of the Fulani Rulers

and their staffs; he utilised it as the mainspring of the Native Administration system, that he called 'Indirect Rule', and it has worked well since then. The only difficulty from his point of view was that the Fulani system did not cover the whole country. An attempt was made by the British to produce an imitation of Fulani Rule in what were then known as the 'pagan areas' and this failed completely.'[12] Chief Awolowo and Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe on the other hand were accused of forming ethnic unions. The *Egbe Omo O'odua* was established in 1945 while the Igbo Federal Union came in 1944. In the next phase, I will examine the rise of Nigeria from a regional state to a forcefully united country.

Forceful Unification of Nigerian three Regions: The emergence of a Post-Colonial Barracks State

In 1966, following the military coup led by Major Kaduna Nzeogwu and later subdued by Gen Aguiyi Ironsi, the Decree No 34 of 1966 forcefully merged the three regions into a one-dimensional country even in the face of agitation for autonomy by all the nationalities without exception. The unitary system is not without its own beneficiaries. It led to absolute power akin to monarchical order. The economic and political structures, the network of institutions, local, national and commune, came under the control of one person or hegemony who bestride over the country as if it is a personal estate. In terms of its concentration of power and authority, it enables the Head of State to appoint, dismiss anyone without question.

The political crisis in the South West following the 1964 elections and attempts by the ruling alliance of Northern Peoples Congress, NPC National Council of Nigerian Citizens, (NCNC) to scuttle the freely expressed democratic will of the people spurred the *Wild Wild West* protest which aided military intervention.

The January 1966 coup led to the killing of Ahmadu Bello, the iconic scion of the Sokoto caliphate. The emergence of Ironsi after Nzeogwu's coup was subdued was resisted by the Northern officers, prompting the massacre of Igbo in some parts of the North. The pro-North military that took over the country after the overthrow of Ironsi's government sustained the barracks structure. For a country that emerged out of primordial rival empires, Decree 34 of 1966 provided the legal framework for forceful union which nurtured domination, control and manipulation of the country's political and economic commanding heights by vested interests to the detriment of the contending parties.

In subsequent years, the command structure became a highly attractive venture for the military leadership and the political elite that sees a composition similar to a military command. One of the problems with Nigeria since independence is that the central government became a magnet that drew the various contending forces or their rookies hoping to take over the apex in order to run the affairs of the state in accordance with geo-political desires. In the pre and immediate post-colonial years, the three most prominent political parties, NPC in the North, the AG in the West and the National Council for Nigerian Citizens, (NCNC) in the East had control and influence in the regions where each was established and where their key leaders had ethnic control. However, it should be noted that between 1952 and 1966 saw a country of comparative autonomy for ethnic nationalities in terms of political and economic choices. Regional political parties, and independence candidacy were recognised by the electoral umpires. For instance, the economy was decentralised and each region had its own constitution enabling growth and development founded on the objective conditions in each of the three regions. Since the coups of 1966, Nigeria has never been the same. The rivalry between the ancient Kingdoms was transferred into the scramble for the control of the political-economy which finds expression through sectional coups and counters coups. In 1967, the consequences of the January 15 coup led to the Biafra war which lasted from 1967 to 1970. The war left scars that may never healed.

Power, Politics and the Crisis of Resource Allocation

Another major factor that has compounded the Nigerian crisis is control, ownership and sharing of national resources. Over the years, there has been gradual movement from regional control of resources to arbitrary control by the central authority.

In 1953 for instance, the Chicks Commission recommended 100% on the basis of allocation according to derivation. Under section 134(11) of the 1960 independent constitution, 50% was adopted for each of the three regions. In 1970, after the civil war when oil began to feature prominently in the economic and political equation of Nigeria, the Gowon administration decreed 45% to the states. The figure was reduced to 20% in 1975 when decree 6 was promulgated during General Murtala Mohammed's regime. In 1982 when a democratic government was in power, the allocation dropped to 2%. In 1984 during the era of General Mohammed Buhari as military Head of State, the figure depreciated to 1.5% and later to 3% during the time of General Ibrahim

Babangida. From 1966 to 1997, Nigeria witnessed six successful military coups. The leaders profess the desire to run a united country grounded on justice and the rule of law but in praxis have been reactionary and anti-people. What we have seen are governments that have consistently manipulated the divisions among the people, feasting on their prehistoric differences. Of all the military regimes that have ruled Nigeria, some of the most reactionary were the regimes of the late Generals Sani Abacha and Ibrahim Babangida, IBB who staged a coup on December 31, 1983 to overthrow the democratically elected government in of Alhaji Shehu Shagari.

It should be noted that in the wake of Independence, Nigeria had a string of progressive economic policies propounded by some of the regional leaders. The Western Region for instance introduced free and compulsory education through Chief Obafemi Awolowo led Action Group, (AG). This economic policy of the South West was driven by Democratic Socialism. This led to economic growth in the region between 1952 and 1960. The NPC led by Ahmadu Bello and the NCNC had economic blueprints that transformed their regions. The foundation for economic growth was laid in the three regions further encouraged through mutual regional competition and rivalry between the three regions which aided some achievements in various spheres of development.

During the era of regional self-government, certain laws were made to enhance industrial growth in the post-colonial country. For instance, the Industrial Development (Income Tax Relief) Act of 1958, the Industrial Development (Import Duty Relief) Act of 1957; the Customs Duties Act of 1958 were introduced to promote indigenous industrial take off of the country. The National Industrial Plan of 1962 ensured not less than 14 percent of public investment was invested in the industrial sector. These plans were disrupted by the political crisis that engulfed the country after the 1964 general elections. However, under the military, Gen Yakubu Gowon introduced the Companies Decree of 1968 to help greater indigenous ownership of investments in the country. In 1972 after the civil war, Nigerian introduced the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion (Indigenisation) Decree in 1972 with the sole target of ensuring that the government took over companies and industries in Nigeria.

However, why these policies were to help develop a political economy based on local content, there was no equivalent and sustainable political ideology to drive the initiative. The country's decline into economic asshole was further accentuated at the coming of the National Party Nigeria, (NPN)

in 1979 after more than a decade of military rule. The civilian government introduced the Economic Stabilisation Acts of 1982 and 1983. This liberalised the economic space and moved Nigeria from the centre to the right wing extreme. The regime launched the privatisation of national assets. Corruption and profligacy took the centre state. By the time the government was overthrown on 1983, the damage had been done. In 1985 when Gen Ibrahim Babangida overthrew Mohammadu Buhari, he brought full blown reactionary economic policies that further pauperised millions of Nigerians. The country's economic commanding heights fell. The value of the naira further nosedived amidst human rights repression and spineless corruption. This further deepened loss of hope of many Nigerians in the polity. The first generation of Nigerian professionals began to leave the country in large numbers, many of them representing skilled labour both in the industrial, academic and even artisan communities. Millions of people lost their jobs, crime rate shot into the sky. Public resistance was met with authority violence, state sponsored killings, abduction and repression dominated the political space. The crooked fiefdom sharpened during the era of Babangida was institutionalised through the Structural Adjustment Programme, (SAP) leading to privatisation of the commanding height of the Nigerian economy. Within the shortest time, the value of the naira nosedived, prices of commodity rolled down the hill characterised by loss of jobs, rising unemployment.

The upswing in social unrests precipitated resistance led by students, labour and peasants. The regime responded with violence and killings. Public pressure led to the June 12 election which was again annulled by the military government of Babangida. Abacha came to complete the circle of torture. The crisis accentuated by the economic downfall added to the growing feelings of exclusion and marginalisation of the poor masses. What succeeded Babangida was his worst version in the form of a brutal, instinctively violent and uncouth, corrupt tyrant. After his death, the wreck of the country was inherited by Gen Abdusalami Abubakar who handed over again to a former military dictator, Gen Olusegun Obasanjo, this time in a civilian garb. Since 1999, Nigeria has continued on the path of misgovernance, corruption, state-sponsored violence, profligacy, exclusion of the toiling masses and anti-people but pro-imperialist economic policies. Since 1999 Nigeria has continued to renew the economic programmes influenced by alien interests designed to favour foreign investors and their local political collaborators. The racketeer economy deemphasises public interest.

'With the increased activities in the field of manufacturing, importation, and construction industry occasioned by the growth in oil wealth, the country is more than ever before integrated into the world capitalist system in a manner which destroys self-reliance, increases external dependence, and leads to the external control of local economic life.'[13] *Path to Nigerian Development p128.* The Nigerian ruling class ran a political economy designed to impoverish the people, produce a few millionaires and billionaires amidst millions of subjects that live in abject misery. The country is a consumer society, every initial efforts made to set the foundation for industrial take off of the country by the founding fathers, in spite of their limitations, was filtered away in subsequent years.

The State and Ethnic Favouritism

The various military regimes, barren of any ideological drive, and desperate to cling to power, resorted to ethnic favouritism in terms of appointments, allocation of national resources like oil blocs and the disbursement of favour. The lifting of ethnic chauvinism to statecraft led to disenchantment in the public space and within the military. On April 22, 1990, Major Gideon Orkar led a military revolt. The coup was largely an ethnic minority revolt. The demands of the coupists included the excision of some states from Nigeria. The coup plotters were also angry that Babangida had become a champion of his ethnic instead of national interest. 'The implication here was that the President's about-face was a capitulation to sectional interests which was against the spirit of nationalism that fired the enthusiasm of those officers into pitching their tent with him. The officers were apparently piqued with the tradition of foisting northern-born officers as governors in their home states as well as in the South without problems while the Southerners were being denied such opportunities.'[13] While ethnicity was dominant during the military era especially in the time of IBB and Abacha era, it became worse under the current regime of Mohammadu Buhari. Since 2015, Nigeria has seen the most astonishing rise in ethnic politics in Nigeria. Buhari has been accused of stocking his government with people of his ethnic stock occupying strategic positions which violates the National Character principle. Gradually, many Nigerians began to lose faith in the unity of the country.

Lack Of Organised and Ideology-Driven National Opposition

Apart from the economic hardship, the collapse of an organised national opposition weakens the prospect of a national rebirth. Labour and other

progressive forces have degenerated in ideology and perspectives leading to the lack of a people-driven mechanism that can swiftly respond to the rot orchestrated by the ruling class. The students' movement once driven by clarity of ideas and quality of human resource, has degenerated. The students' movement was the breeding ground for prospective radical figures. With a limping and compromised labour movement, a fatigued and disillusioned students' movement and the lack of radical social forces in the traditional hubs of labour unions, in the midst of party politics dominated by ethnic favouritism and tribal loyalty, the field is open for ethnic groups who in reality are the first organised social unit for any community or individual.

Agitation for Restructuring

Nigeria began the campaign for National Conference in the late 1980s. Since then, the agitation has increased. It will continue to increase because the country has failed to define and design a national vision that aggregates the plural nature of the country. The economic policies of the leadership has failed to address the pangs of an increasingly desperate, toilworn and exhausted populace. Ethnic groups began to appear as the succour for many disillusioned Nigerians. Pro-restructuring point to what they consider as the garrison structure of Nigeria and the over concentration of power at the centre. Nigeria runs a federal system but in reality, stifles the federating units especially in the context of revenue sharing and devolution of power. Many believe the consistent conflict in the country since independence, including the 30-month-old civil war is a reflection of the political fault lines.

Advocates of restructuring also point to the increasing over-concentration of power over security architecture by the FG at the expense of the states. Over the years, the FG has continued to take over responsibilities of the states. For instance, in 1963, there were 46 items on the Exclusive legislative list, by 1999, the Exclusive list has gone up to 68. The powers of the states and local governments have been cut down. The 1999 constitution also gives 54 percent, being the lion share of revenue to the FG, 26 percent to the states and 20 percent to the local governments, an indication that the country has been in retrogression in terms of revenue sharing based on derivation. Lately, the call for restructuring has been seized by fresh blocs in the Middle Belt, a region hitherto opposed to devolution of power, this time, fuelled by the recent herdsmen killings. The armed pastoralists are active in every corner of the country, killing, maiming, kidnapping and robbing people of their ancestral

land. Apart from armed pastoralists, there is the threat of terrorism. Nigeria has seen cases of heavily armed men who have no cattle yet have invaded ancestral homes of many indigenous communities, their lands seized.

The Rise of Self-Determination, Armed Resistance, A Chronicle of Violence and Deaf Ears

I present here a summary of the report card of ceaseless agitations, violence and misery, now the lot of Nigerians. An attempt should be made to give a graphic picture of the current situation in Nigeria regarding concurrent elements that threaten the oneness of the country. In the past one decade, self-determination groups have grown in Nigeria like mushroom in early summer. No particular region in the country is immune from this outcry. In the North East, the North West, the Middle-Belt, the South West, the South East and the South West various groups continue to drumbeat the call for self-determination, in many cases up to the point of secession.

In the South West, the clamour for self-determination agitation rekindled after the June 12 election crisis won by the late Chief Moshood Kashimawo Abiola. There was great disillusionment among many people in the mainly Yoruba South West following the annulment of the election by the dictator, Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida. After ceaseless campaigns without respite, the first self-determination group to be established in the South West was the O'odua Youth Movement, (OYM) in December 1994 led by two former leaders of the National Association of Nigerian Students, (NANS). The pioneer leaders were in their 20s. The leadership of OYM was essentially a product of the students and labour revolutionary history. In 1995, the OYM launched the Yoruba Charter, a socio-economic blueprint that highlights the road to Yoruba Nation under a Socialist Democratic transformational plan. In 1995, the O'odua Peoples Congress, (OPC) was established by the late Dr Fredrick Faseun who was once the Presidential candidate of the Labour Party.

In 1996, O'odua Liberation Movement, (OLM) led by the late Baba Omojola, a radical left was established. The leadership of OLM, whose coordinator was Comrade Rotimi Obadofin, was essentially left. The OLM designed the first Yoruba Flag and Logo. In the year 2001, the Coalition of O'odua Self-determination Groups, (COSEG) was formed being the first coalition of some six Pan Yoruba groups. The first Coordinator of COSEG, Rotimi Obadofin came from the Marxist tradition so also was his successor, Comrade Wale Balogun. While COSEG was based in Lagos, Apapo Omo

O'odua another Yoruba coalition for Yoruba self-determination was based in Ibadan led by the late Comrade Ola Oni, a left-leaning activist, well-known for his Marxist-Leninist tradition. By 2021, there are some 24 Pan Yoruba groups all seeking self-determination in the South West area alone. Prominent among the new groups is the Yoruba World Congress, (YWC) led by Prof Adebanji Akintoye recently christened *Ilana Omo Oodua*. The YWC raised the tempo of the campaign in 2020 when it approached the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation, (UNPO) to enlist the Yoruba Nation. On October 1, 2020, the Yoruba held a world-wide rally in some 75 countries across the world calling for self-determination. The campaign was under the umbrella group One Voice. The Yoruba demand for own country has gained currency among millions of Yoruba skilled labour across the world. Across the Yoruba states, the call for Yoruba Nation re-echoes daily.

The agitation in the North East began as a movement that rejected the socio-political order in Nigeria and wanted a territory administered under the Sharia law. Boko Haram began in 2009 after the murder of Mohammed Yusuf, the charismatic leader of the Islamic sect. Boko Haram began in 2002. The full name of Boko Haram is *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad,* translated in Arabic, it means *"People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad"*. Yusuf who had four wives and 12 children was arrested by Nigerian soldiers who handed him over to the Nigerian Police Force, (NPF) operatives. The police without any trial publicly executed Yusuf at the Maiduguri police headquarters on July 30, 2009. His son, Abu Musab Al Barnawi, is leading a faction of Boko Haram. The most prominent terrorist group in the North East today is Boko Haram.

Shekarau is the most notable leader of the Boko Haram factions. He was the deputy of Boko Haram funder, Muhammad Yusuf. Mamman Nur introduced Shekarau to Yusuf. The Boko Haram founder was said to have been a notorious fan of Bin Laden, the Al Quada leader and Taliban. Yusuf was believed to have expressed deep affection for Al Quada in the Maghreb (AQIM). Nur on the other hand is a Kanuri from Cameroon. He was fingered in the bombing of the United Nations Headquarters on August 26, 2011.

Following the murder of Yusuf, many of his supporters left Nigeria. Some went to Algeria, training under Khadli Barnawi and Al Shabab in Somalia and the Maghreb for comprehensive knowledge on guerilla warfare. Nur, whose mission was to create and strengthen Boko Haram in a regional context was trained in Somalia by Al Shabab. The murder of Yusuf and the killing of his

followers drew the blood of revenge in Boko Haram. Adam Kambar was also one of Boko Haram's main figures who provided regional networking for the terrorist group. Today, Boko Haram has established a dreadful presence in the North East. It is believed that the group has cells, mostly unactivated in the South and Middle Belt area of Nigeria. However, recently, Boko Haram's influence is being felt in Niger State, where it has established a terror cell. Boko Haram appears to work with Ansaru, another militant extremist group operating in the Middle Belt region. In terms of military assaults, supply of logistics, the Nigerian authorities claim that Boko Haram has been decimated but not to the extent that it has become impotent. The group maintains its stronghold and capacity to cause havoc in many parts of the North East. Recently, it created a strong cell in Niger State. Each passing day, Boko Haram proves it remains a potent force in Nigeria. No fewer than 8000 lives have been lost since Boko Haram launched its campaign of terror in 2009.

In the South-South, agitators for self-determination abound. The main group is the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, (MEND) though a mismatch of different spontaneous and often ad hoc groups which often emerge seeking immediate gains any moment there is a major crisis in the region, yet the group has its own sketchy leadership and followers. The most prominent figure associated with MEND is Henry Orkah. The group appears to have a loose structure with its statements built around a popular name, Jomo Gbomo, who is unknown as a person to many. Okah was arrested in Angola in 2008 followed by trial and offer of amnesty. On Saturday, October 2, 2010, he was arrested in South Africa following his link with the October 1 Independence Day bombing in Abuja that took 12 human lives. On January 21, 2013, he was convicted by a South African court on 13-count of terrorism.

The South East has seen the emergence of three main groups: The Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra, (MASSOB), the pioneer group led by Chief Ralf Nwazuruike, the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra, (IPOB) led by Mr Nnamdi Kanu and the Biafra Zionist Movement, (BZM) led by Ben Onwuka, a lawyer.

In dealing with the agitators, the Federal Government has been employing of combination of self-denial, bully, repression, intimidation and name calling. Boko Haram for instance did not start as a violent group until after the murder of its leader, Yusuf. The campaign of terror by Boko Haram has justifiably earned it a terrorist group. The Federal Government had declared IPOP a terrorist organisation given the world the impression that Boko Haram

and IPOB are the same. Boko Haram has a strange desire to rule Nigeria by imposing stiff Islamic rule, irrespective of the diversity, apart from opening up violent cells across the country using terror as its main weapon. This could not be said of IPOB which is demanding for the right to self-determination within its traditional and indigenous territories citing lack of security and livelihood by the Igbo people. IPOB claims the setting up of the Eastern Nigeria Security Network, (ESN) was in response to the ceaseless attacks on the people of the South East by Fulani armed men. In terms of international narratives, while Boko Haram is seen as a terrorist group IPOB is viewed from the prism of horror.

In the South East, the Federal Government has violently suppressed the growing agitation for self-determination. On October 14, 2015, IPOB leader, Nnamdi Kanu was arrested, detained and charged for treason. Despite court orders that he should be released, he was kept for one year in prison. On 23 November 2015 he was charged by an Abuja Magistrate Court for "criminal conspiracy, intimidation and membership of an illegal organisation". After his release, Kanu disappeared from public view in Nigeria. In September 2017, his home was raided by heavily armed soldiers, a gory scene that led to the murder of some 28 people. The Government proscribed IPOB and labelled it a 'terrorist' group. All this time, IPOB did not employ violence but peaceful protests. Lately, years after the protests were brutally suppressed, Nigeria has seen increased spate of armed rebellion in Eastern Nigeria. Police Stations are stormed and weapons seized; prison attacked and inmates set free; security officials killed and their weapons taken. The government is responding with armed suppression raising serious human rights concerns. In late April, 2021, Divine Nwaneri, a first-year student of Imo State University was killed in the front of the office of the State Governor, Hope Uzodinma. In early May, a businessman, Noel Chigbu was killed. The two were murdered in cold blood by soldiers. There are reports of locals being abused, harassed and intimidate on mere suspicion of being IPOB members.

The situation in the North West is fluid. No single group can be associated with the myriad of violence seen in the region lately. What is certain is that there are armed groups ran mainly by Fulani and another by the indigenous Hausa often referred to as 'bandits' by the media. It is hard to debunk claims that the same groups in the North West are connected with the kidnapping ring in the South West States. The terrorists operating in the South West believed to be of Fulani origin have accentuated the calls for Yoruba self-determination.

There are recorded frequent cases of kidnapping, killings and rape that affect the entire South West states. The figures of deaths related to armed terrorists keep increasing. The terrorists attack farmers and residents. Cow herders destroy farms. The terrorists invade sacred forests, stream and traditional grove. Millions of farmers can no longer go to their farms. This has serious negative impact on food security and livelihood not to talk of the assault on ecology, forest dependency and the associated trauma. The gory scenario and the seeming government inefficient solutions have increased the call for Yoruba self-determination. In April, the Ilana Omo Oodua led by Professor Adebanji Akintoye, launched regional protests across the South West States. Pamphlets and bills have emerged clamouring for Yoruba Nation. One of such read 'Yorubaland is bleeding. We are being whipped and when you cry they tell us we are CALLING FOR WAR.' [15.]

In the community I come from, Hon Rafiu and another businessman, Jacob Olugbade who came from London were kidnapped and kept for two weeks by armed Fulani. After a ransom of N10million was paid, Rafiu was released, but he died of high blood pressure months later. Olugbade relocated to London and has not recovered. They had killed one young boy in Rafiu's community of Ipao-Ekiti. In my own town, they kidnapped a business woman investing in Ethanol. She was taken away for weeks. Ransom was paid. The community did not ask her if she was raped. The woman has since relocated abroad. She had employed some 50 people in my community. A close friend known to me, Mr Bode Folorunso, the former Commissioner for Agriculture in Ekiti was kidnapped. They shot dead his Personal Assistant, PA. They took Folorunso for weeks and when he came back, he spent weeks in hospital. He could not cope with the trauma. As at May, 2021, terrorists sustain their foothold in Yewa and Iganna areas of Ogun and Oyo State States. Those areas lead to Northern Burkina Faso, a haven of terrorists/ISWAP. Now they can bring any weapon to that ''ungoverned territory.' There are genuine fears, Lagos and SW may be prime targets. "The dilemma of Yorubaland now is that the space is dominated by 14th century slave drivers, covetous, criminal, vain, short-sighted, loud-mouthed, foolish, flirtatious, leather-tongued who nevertheless parade themselves as leaders who are selling their strangulated people for immediate gains forgetting that the harsh judgment of history can never be bought with money. Mark it, this generation of crooks will be consumed by self-deceit and they will rise no more. From these fetters of iron, we shall be free." [16]

A prominent oil magnate, a woman was kidnapped in 2016. She paid N200m to secure her freedom. The latest was in Ibarapa area of Oyo State. In early May, 2021, terrorists kidnapped three ranchers, Kabiru Oladimeji, Kazeem and Soka in Ogun State. They demanded for N10m ransom. In my own personal interviews with some victims of kidnapping, there is a recurring decimal: The kidnappers have a strong network, they are linked with influential interests and lastly, there is the desire of them to have foothold in the territories they occupy. In one instance, the kidnappers kept telling their victims 'We'll take this land, nothing can stop us.'

The Middle Belt region is not exempted**.** It continues to see a resurgence of conflict mainly between herdsmen and farmers. A new dimension was introduced when occupiers of seized territories began to rename them. In a publication in *The Vanguard Newspapers*, June 30, 2018 reported the renaming of Rotchun (Rafin Acha), Dankum (Mahanga), Hywa (Lugere), Fass (Tafawa), Davwak and many others attacked and seized between September 7 and 10 have all been renamed from their indigenous names given to them by Berom, the ancestral owners. The killings in Plateau linked to farmers-herders clash led to the death of thousands of people including Senator Gyang Dalyop Dantong. He was shot dead on July 2012, ironically while preparing for the burial of some 63 people killed in violent attacks.[16.]

In recent years, there has been a slight shift in the nature and form of the complex crisis in the Middle Belt. There are many armed criminal gangs, armed ethnic militia spurred by the bourgeoning communal clashes among the ethnic monitories in the region coupled with clear cases of terrorist networks seeking political strongholds by employing the orgy of violence through kidnapping, merciless killings and brigandage in an expressed desire for conquest and subjugation. There are grave concerns that President Muhammadu Buhari's government is not doing enough. There are deep concerns about why a terrorist group once nominated him to negotiate on the group's behalf with the Federal Government before he became the President of the country. For instance, on November 02, 2012, there were reports that Buhari was nominated by Boko Haram to be its spokesperson in a meeting scheduled with the Federal Government. The reported noted that "Islamic sect Boko Haram yesterday opted for dialogue with the Federal Government, picking former military leader, Gen Muhammadu Buhari as mediator.' The report added that "Boko Haram also proposed Saudi Arabia for the talks, which the government had for long suggested to ascertain the sect's grievances. Boko Haram also named

Abu Mohammed Ibn Abdullazi, said to be the second in command to its leader, Abubakar Shekau, as leader of its team to the talks." Others to join Buhari were Shettima Ali Mungono, Senator Bukar Aba Ibrahim. Ambassador Gaji Galtimari, Mrs Aisha Alkali and her husband Alkali Wakil. Boko Haram's team was to be led by Shekarau, Abu Abas, Sheik Ibrahim Yusuf, Sheik Sani, Kotangora and Mamman Nur, a Cameroonian. This report has continued to raise deep concern about why Boko Haram had to nominate someone who eventually became the President of Nigeria and under which there has been re-insurgence of terrorism. The Buhari regime has not helped to allay fears given his posture on issues that affect national discourse on violent pastoralists.

The Ondo State Government had asked armed groups to leave the forests in the state after several cases of kidnapping. The Presidential spokesperson, Shehu Garba said "It will be the least expected to unilaterally oust thousands of herders who have lived all their lives in the state on account of the infiltration of the forests by criminals."

"If this were to be the case, rights groups will be right in expressing worries that the action could set off a chain of events which the makers of our constitution foresaw and tried to guard against,"[19] In his reply, the Governor of Ondo State, Rotimi Akeredolu said "The statement from Garba Shehu is a brazen display of emotional attachments and it's very inimical to the corporate existence of Nigeria. Akeredolu continued "We need to clearly define actions on the part of the Federal Government to decimate the erroneous impression that the inspiration of these criminal elements masquerading as herdsmen is that of power. Our unity is threatened, no doubt. Shehu's statement states in a breath that the governor fights crime with passion while it is prevaricating on the atrocities. The question is, are the herdsmen who are perpetrating murder, kidnapping and robbery more important than government and even the Federal Government in this case?

"Ethnic nationality and activism on the part of anyone hiding under the Presidency or federal government is an ill wind,"[20] The Presidency and the Benue State Government have also been at loggerheads. The Presidency has consistently given the impression that it places more emphasis on degrading attacks on individuals who raise the red flag against pastoral terrorists than dealing with the aggressors.

Self-Determination and the Future of Nigeria

Nigeria is a potentially great country. With a landmass of 923,768 km,

it is the world's 32nd largest country. Niger State in the Middle-Belt has the largest land mass with 76,363 km. Lagos which is the richest of the 36 states has the smallest land mass with 3,345 square meters.

Nigeria has a population of over 190m people, the largest of any black country on earth. Nigeria is potentially also one of the richest countries in the world blessed with gold, diamond, several solid minerals, oil and gas. Nigeria has 37,070,000,000 barrels of oil reserve. The country is the 10th in terms of oil deposit and hub of the world's 2.2 percent total oil reserve. The country has some 300 ethnic groups, of diversely rich culture, language, art and heritage. The climate is a mix of tropical and Savannah with annual rainfall of 3,500 mm unique for agriculture; the country is blessed with a vast ocean and coastline of some 850km accompanied by vast aquatic resources. Nigeria has beautiful plains, lowlands, lurch, green valleys and hills; snow is experienced in Obudu, Cross River State; Nigeria has uncountable streams and tributaries making her territories one of the most beautiful in the world. In terms of potential strength, Nigeria is a great country that should be the pride of Africa. However, the country is bedevilled by the forces of darkness, ruined by corruption, nepotism, favouritism and leaders without neither national vision nor ideology that can uplift the country and glorify her people in the comity of nations. Poverty, hunger, misery and frustration have pushed Nigerians to the extreme of inhumanity. Let us proceed from arguments that the country is better as a united country. This is a slogan that has been drummed by different social forces, the political class especially, those occupying political offices, the leaders of ethnic groups that are chief beneficiaries of the skewed system and then by a section of Nigerian Marxists.

The reasons being advanced for the unity of the country by these social formations are not the same. Within the political class, there are tendencies. There is a faction that wants a united country propelled by the advantaged position of their ethnic group, there is a faction that wants a united Nigeria based on the privileges and pecks offered by the corrupt and inept country which they are not sure can be guaranteed in a divided country. A section of Nigerian Marxist insists the unity of Nigeria should be viewed from the prism of her strength in population and that what the masses face is class oppression and not based on repression on the basis of ethnicity. However, in this angle, the opportunistic political class and Nigerian Marxist find a common ground. Those who support self-determination also do so for different reasons. A fringe of the political class supports self-determination on the grounds that it would

allow them to be tiny lords in their own enclave. Yet, a section of the ruling class clamours for self-determination simply because they have lost access to political power. However, there are those calling for self-determination based on genuine frustration, exclusion, denial of access to opportunities by virtue of their ethnic origin, killings, murder and the state of siege imposed on their ancestral land by armed aliens compounded by official complacency of the Nigerian State.

Self-Determination as a Legitimate Right

We should treat self-determination on its own merit, irrespective of the different reasons propounded by the conflicting interests. Why the Nigerian constitution recognises only the sanctity of the unity of the country, the right to self-determination is legitimate. It is recongised by international laws. Article 1, of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), affirms the right of all peoples to **self-determination**. State parties are expected to promote and respect it as part of international obligations. "All **peoples** shall have **right** to existence. They shall have the unquestionable and inalienable **right** to **self-determination**. They shall freely **determine** their political status and shall pursue their economic and social development according to the policy they have freely chose." In Article 20, sections 1 and 2 of the charter states:

1. All peoples shall have the right to existence. They shall have the unquestionable and inalienable right to self-determination. They shall freely determine their political status and shall pursue their economic and social development according to the policy they have freely chosen.
2. Colonized or oppressed peoples shall have the right to free themselves from the bonds of domination by resorting to any means recognised by the international community.

Unfortunately, these articles have been brutally violated by the Nigerian state. Without self-determination, the people can never fully realise their full potentials. Both the UN Charter and the African Charter are binding on Nigeria. Nigeria must fulfil her obligations to the international community even if it does not respect the hues and cries of her citizens. Apart from local and international laws, there is the law of nature. Human beings resonate

with material relations in their environment which informs their world view, their fears, their aspirations and their choices. A democratic country should not oppose the right to self-determination. No country should. Why it is true that resurgence of self-determination is linked to economic depression of individuals and communities, the explanation is not enough reason why people seek self-determination. People naturally have norms, values and civilisations, traditions, customs and faith they treasure. They do not wish to submit these to any national concepts defined by people alien to them. There is a problem of pro-colonial infantile disorder associated with some Nigerian Marxist scholars. In the desperate race to protect Marxist ideology, they mutilate and destroy the timeless philosophies and sociology of their own people. They are eager to read about class struggles in Europe and the history of the emergence of states in the Pacific and in North America or Eastern Europe but they are completely ignorant of their own history, the centuries of experiences of their own societies and the different dynamics in the development of human material relations before the coming of Europeans. They disdain the language of their own people, the concept of ethnicity, the primordial culture, the aboriginal art, the native ritual, the home-grown science, food, culture, god, faith and the leitmotif of traditional knowledge all in a bid to promote the unity of the working people.

The struggle of the working people is meaningless without their history, without their unique experiences, without the philosophy of their ancient forebears, and without their spirituality all of which cannot be classified within the pigeon-hole of food and water alone. The advancement of a national ideology as a way to keep the country united at all cost, thus, has brought in its wake the necessity and inevitability of the destruction of the undying heritage of indigenous people and all the civilisations that made them humans. Those who promote ethnic self-determination are wrongly perceived as "parochial, uncivilised, ethnic jingoists, ethnic chauvinists, crude, reactionary" forgetting that socialism is not in any way contradictory to ethnic self-determination which is one of the most basic law of human existence. It has come to a stage that Nigeria and the international community can no longer stop the wave of self-determination spreading across the country. The shortest cause for the country's leadership and the people is to address the burning fire instead of attempting to douse it through brute force. Arm-twisting tactics, bullying and the use of state violence will only consume the country and set her on a path of ruin. The starting point it to restructure the country. We need a new

constitution with input from the people, we need the ethnic minorities to determine their preferences, we need the people to decide their political and economic preferences. We need to guarantee the right to self-determination. This is the best option to preventing a violent break-up of the country. Time is ticking so fast like a digital clock. Delay is dangerous.

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WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND CHALLENGIES OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

BY
KADISHI OLISEH

Abstract

Over the years, women have been faced with different struggles, and with the presence of insecurity and conflict, more threat have risen against their wellbeing and rights. The aim of this study is to disclose how insecurity has affected women's rights. This work therefore aims to bring to lime light, the challenges in the light of insecurity faced by women which have affected them in the area of their fundamental human rights, for instance, the impacts of the Boko Haram menace on their female victims in Nigeria. This work looks at the state of insecurity in Nigeria, causes of insecurity in Nigeria. It argues that women right such as freedom of marriage, right to education, right to security, right to privacy, right to worship, right to dignity of human persons is infringed upon as a result of conflict and insecurity. It summarises that women pay heavily with the fundamental rights following the presence of insecurity as they are kidnapped, raped, forced to marry, trafficked, subjected to torture, among others. This study adopts the use of historical approach in the gathering and interpretation of data. This includes the use of both primary and secondary sources including books, journals, etc.

Introduction

The presence of Insecurity is evident around the world, thus making it a global phenomenon. Attempts have been made to tackle the causes of insecurity as it affects humanity as a whole, society, human rights and development. Insecurity has proven to be a challenge to the world at large and its presence and evidences in independent Nigeria have been traced back to 1960s.[1] Thus, it has continued to be one of the problems that are of great concern to the country even many years after independence.

Insecurity has been made manifest in the series of conflict, violence, kidnappings, crime, killings, to mention but a few, that have taken place even before the civil war of 1967 which was the height of it all in the history of the country. There are records on the agitation in the Niger Delta for resource

1 Danladi D. 2013. Security and Economic Development in Nigeria Since 1960 *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review* Vol. 2, No.6; p 2

control, communal crises such as the Ife- Modakeke crises, the Boko haram insurgency, Niger Delta crises and the presence of Fulani herdsmen, all of which have had their different effects on women, especially as regards their rights.

With regards to the aforementioned crises and the activities as carried out by their perpetrators, different effects have emerged which most times result to disorder, death and destruction in the society. During these events, people, the immediate communities and their environs are always affected while women have been affected by these in the forms of rape, kidnapping, forced marriage, torture and mutilation, trafficking, killing, to mention but a few. The levels of insecurity that come with all these conflicts and violence have thus affected and infringed upon human rights in general and women's rights in particular.

Subsequently, this work will show the link between women's rights and the challenges of insecurity in Nigeria. In order to do that, the paper has been divided into seven sections. First, there is a need to understand both concepts namely; women's rights and security. The remaining section will be on historicising women's rights and its presence in Nigeria; the state of insecurity in Nigeria; the causes of insecurity in Nigeria; women's rights and Nigeria insecurity; the impact of Nigeria insecurity on women and women's rights and conclusion.

Conceptual Clarification

Women's Rights

The term women's rights have been defined to be human rights that apply to women.[2] Thus, it is best to explain what human right is in order to get the concept of women's rights copiously. Human right is perceived as an "entailment to treatment that a person enjoys simply by virtue of being a human being"[3] these rights are evident in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948 which consist a preamble and 30 articles, some rights includes

> "Human being should be treated equally irrespective of personal characteristics or citizenship , Right to Life, live and exist, Right to

2 Bamgbose, O.1999. Women's Rights and The Nigerian Criminal Justice System: A Sorry Tale. Paper Presented at The Women's World's '99: The 7th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women Held at The University of Tromso, Tromso Norway. p1-2

3 Holfman J. and Graham P. 2009. *Introduction to Political Theory.* England. Pearson Educational Limited .P 408

Liberty, Right to security of a person, Right to love, Prohibition of slavery, Prohibition of torture, Protection of minorities, Equality before the law, Equal protection by the state, Right to an effective remedy for violation of one's right, Prohibition on arbitrary arrest and detention , Right to fair trail ,Presumption of innocence until guilt is proven, Prohibition on retroactive laws, Prohibition on arbitrary interference in private life, Freedom of movement including emigration, Right to seek asylum in another country, Right to nationality, Prohibition on deprivation of nationality, Right to marry, Prohibition of forced marriage, Right to own property, Prohibition on arbitrary seizure of property, Freedom of thought, Freedom of conscience , Freedom of religion, Freedom of opinion, Freedom of expression, Right to peaceful assembly, Prohibition on compulsion to belong to association, Freedom of information, Right to political participation, Equal access to public service "the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of the government", Right to Democracy, Right to social security .Right to work, Right to free choice of employment, Right for equal pay for equal work, Right to for choice of employment, Right to just and favourable remuneration , Right to join the trade union, Right to rest and leisure, Right to an adequate standard of living , Right to education, Right of parent to determine the kind of education the children receive, Right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community ,Freedom to social and international order: "everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedom set forth, Right to peaceful protest, Right to duties to his or her community, Rights that essentially amount to be left alone, Right to participate in the political structure of the country and to enjoy the protection of its law, Rights to associate with people of one's own choosing and also relates to social rights such as employment protections."[4]

The above is a quotation that covers the human rights as they applied to mankind. Thus, looking at the above stipulation it is self-evident that women

4 Holfman J. and Graham P. 2009. *Introduction to Political Theory.* England. Pearson Educational Limited.P 409-414

5 Bamgbose, O.1999. Women's Rights and The Nigerian Criminal Justice System: A Sorry Tale. Paper Presented at The Women's World's '99: The 7th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women Held at The University of Tromso, Tromso Norway, Pp p 3-7

are also entitled to these rights. Women's rights therefore entail the general rights applicable to women; these include right to life, right to personal liberty, to mention a few.[5]In relation to this paper, women's rights are perceived by women's rights advocates to be laws that cover and respond to the realities of women's lives. These can also be seen as measures that are specially considered and intended to focus on women issues and gendered injuries.[6] It is important to note that an integral part of human right agenda is women's rights.[7] Correspondingly, it can be said that women's rights are also human rights.[8]

As regards the understanding and the achievement of women's rights, some components or concepts need to be taken into cognisance, one of which is non-discrimination,[9] this means that for women's rights to be achieved around the world, there is a need for everyone to be treated without discrimination.

Insecurity:

The concept of insecurity has been defined by different scholars from different fields. In its simplest form, it means the absence of security. Thus, insecurity can be said to be the absence of a peaceful area and the occurrence of danger and no safety. Insecurity is conceived as a state of being subject to danger or threat. It is perceived as when there is a threat to a state, it has been looked at to mean different thing but what is evident is the presence of threat, lack of peace. To fully grasp the understanding of insecurity, there is a need to conceptualise security. Security is seen as the freedom and absence of dangerous tendencies that could undermine internal cohesion and corporate existence of nature.[10] This simply means that security has to do with absence of tendencies that are life threatening and hazardous. In other words insecurity has to do with the presence of dangerous, life threatening event that causes or has or perceived to have the tendency to cause a hurtful disruption in the

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6 Dianna Otto. Woman Rights. In International Human Rights Law, Edition: 2nd,. (Eds)Daniel Moeckli, Sangeeta Shah and Sandesh Sivakumaran, Oxford University Press, pp. 310-311

7 Bruce A. 2004. Essentialising Gender Justice and Womens Empowerment. In Paradox of Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics. Akingboye S.O (ed) Lagos: Concept Publication Limited P 105

8 Emeke A.A. Women Right and the Gender Question I Nigeria. *Education law Journal Vol 3, NO1* p P74

9 Dianna Otto. Woman Rights. In International Human Rights Law, Edition… pp. 310-315

10 Oarhe O. 2015. Boko Haram Insurgency in Norhtern Nigeria and the vivious cirvle of internal secutiry. *Small wars and Insurgency.* Vol 24. No 3 P 538

existence of nature and pattern of life.

The conceptualisation of insecurity varies at different time and based on different circumstances and eras. During the cold war, insecurity was conceived to be the recognition of threats to the state which often accounted for the race for arms and nuclear weapons to defend the state.[11] In post-cold war that is the period from 1993 insecurity has been referred to presence of any situation that causes fear , instigate harm; this situation can be socio-economic, politico-strategic etc, and it is evident in political stability, insurgency, poverty, disease, unemployment, lack of access to education to mention a few.[12]

In all, this study simply views insecurity as any situation or state of things that is an anti-thesis to a safe situation or security.

Historicising Women's Rights From a Global Perspective, to Its Presence In Nigeria

Since the end of the second world war, the concern for women's rights began to assume a wider spread and became recognised as a global problem as women were marginalised almost in all the parts of the globe. This recognition played a role in the 1948 declaration of human rights and the 1976 covenant of human rights.[13] Prior to 1948, the 1945 UN charter made it possible for women to have platform to discuss reforms and have legal basis.[14] This was obviously a recognition of women's rights.

Notwithstanding, there was limited change in the way women were treated, thus, from the inception of the human right declaration of 1948, women right activists believed that the rights of women were still being neglected as their status was still on a low on a global scale, thus women came together to deliberate the plan of action, focusing on improving women status far and wide. It was a strong belief that for women status to be improved upon there was a

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11 Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko á & Nkemakolam Okorie . 2014. Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: Political Economy Implications .Global Journal *Of Human-Social Science: Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 5 p12

12 Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko á & Nkemakolam Okorie . 2014. Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria… p12

13 Olojede I. 2004. Public Policy and Gender Politics in Nigeria. *Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics*. Akingboye S.O (ed) Lagos: Concept Publication Limited 119

14 Emeke A.A. Women Right and the Gender Question in Nigeria. *Education law Journal Vol 3, NO1* p 73.

15 Agomo C. 2004. The Legal Framework for Gender Equality in Nigeria. In Paradox of *Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics*. Akingboye S.O (ed) Lagos: Concept Publication Limited P91

need to advance women's rights. These led to series of movement, conferences, meeting to challenge and clamour for a change.[15] In the mid-1970s – 1980s efforts were intensified to promote women's rights and examples of such efforts include the women conference in Mexico, the second women conference in Copenhagen.[16] Also there was the 1985 UN Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya and the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Subsequently, the period between 1990 and 2015 retained the vigour of this the struggle for women's rights, thus women and women activists clamoured for the need to advance, promote and achieve women's rights. There have been issues regarding the disregarding of women right, and these have led to more intensified efforts on the struggle, such as the Declaration of the elimination of violence against women adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993.[17] And there was also the fourth world conference of women in Beijing 1995.

Nigeria is not left out in the pursuit of achieving women right, as she has ratified the different Acts or documents from the different conferences; these include Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW. Nigeria has also enacted the Protocol to the African Charter of Human and Peoples right on the right of women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), the Child's Right Acts (CRA) and also the Violence Against Persons Prohibitions (VAPP) has been endorsed. It is important to note that although these laws, protocols, policies, agreement have been enacted and endorsed, their implementations have remained a challenge. For instance, Nigeria aimed at implementing the UNSCR 1325, and related resolutions regarding the protection of women and girl right and security, she also aimed at prosecute any violator of the rights this is evident in the Nigeria's National Action Plan (2017-2020)[18], in all she (Nigeria) encountered and still encountering some challenges.

Insecurity In Nigeria

The presence of insecurity is evident in Nigeria and has posed a challenge

16 Emeke A.A. Women Right and the Gender Question in Nigeria. ... p 73.-74

17 Asagba, R.B. 2014 Gender Based Violence: A Nigeria Experience Publisher: Ife Centre For Psychological Studies.

18 https://www.cfr.org retrieved 19/03/2020

even after fifty-four years of independence.[19] There have been acts of terrorism and violent conflagration. In 1966 there was a 12-day revolution by the Niger Delta Vigilante led by Adaka Boro, then 1967 -1970 was the period of the civil war in the nation's history. [20]The insecurity did not end as even after the civil war as it has been manifesting in different levels and stages and somewhat heightened. This is evident in the series of religious conflicts and communal clashes example of which is the Maitatsine riots of 1980. From 1991 to 2000, there were records of over 30 violent crises and from 2001 to 2005, the country had about 100 conflicts which made insecurity the order of the day as lives and properties were hugely lost.[21]

The state of insecurity in Nigeria has metamorphosed and has been perceived to have assumed more complex dimensions especially in 2002 when Boko Haram came into the scene. It is important to note that different areas are affected with regards to the various crises and conflicts that have created insecurity in Nigeria.[22] The northern part has been ravaged by the Boko Haram, the south-south has been faced with the Niger Delta militants, while the presence of Fulani herdsmen and their and destructive activities and indiscriminate killings have been witnessed in both the north and south divides of the country, among others.

The Niger Delta

Niger Delta has been seen as the area of oil production and petro-violence, there are mainly three states of importance namely Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers[23] and Akwa Ibom. However, Niger Delta constitutes mainly the six oil producing states of the south-south region which are Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Delta, and Rivers, as well as the oil producing states of the south-east

19 Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko á & Nkemakolam Okorie . 2014. Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: Political Economy Implications .Global Journal *Of Human-Social Science: Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 5 p12

20 Oarhe O. 2015. Boko Haram Insurgency in Northern Nigeria and the vicious circle of internal security. *Small wars and Insurgency.* Vol 24. No 3 p. 537

21 Oarhe O. 2015. Boko Haram Insurgency in Northern Nigeria …p. 537-538

22 Omede J.. and Omede A.A. 2015. Terrorism and Insecurity in Nigeria: Moral, Values and Religious Education as Panaceas . *Journal of Education and Practice* . Vol.6, No.11,P120

23 Obi Cyril and Siri Aes Rusted, 2011, Introduction: Petro-Violence in the Niger Delta- The Complex Politics of an Insurgency: *Oil and Insurgency In The Niger Delta: Managing the complex politics of Petro Violence ,* Cyril Obi and Siri Aes Rusted eds, London: Zed Publishers p3-4

and south-west which are Abia, Imo, and Ondo. The Niger Delta is the area that harbours over 95 per cent of Nigeria Crude oil and gas resources; it is also seen as a place of intense exploration and exploitation of crude oil and gas.[24]

With the discovery of oil, The Niger Delta Region was now recognised not as the poor soil land but the land rich with oil. This oil led to the recognition of the region both from the national and international levels. It has been recorded that since the 1990's there was crisis in the Niger Delta. This limelight has been sustained by uprisings such as those of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Ijo Egbesu boys and in more recent times by the Niger Delta Volunteer Force(NDVF) led by Asari Dokubo.[25] As an economic zone for oil production and exploration and exploitation in Nigeria it has been recorded that the people of Niger Delta hardly benefits from the proceeds of the oil and that has been the reason for their many protests.[26]

The activities of the Niger Delta militants in the oil-producing states have affected not only the region; they have had destabilizing effects on the general wellbeing of Nigerians and Nigerian economically, socially and politically. Furthermore, some of the reasons why these militants did what they did boiled down to their grievances against the state based on the way they have been marginalised and the poor representation of their people in the federal system.[27] Thus, the militants and the people's grievances include the fact that they were politically and culturally marginalised, their area suffered neglected infrastructure and widening social inequalities compared to other regions who do not even have oil to 'milk out', as well as environmental degradation, of course not forgetting the high level of the insurgences in the Niger Delta region which can be summarised to the political and economic pains. [28] The militants

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24 Ogbogbo C.B.N. The Niger Delta Peoples and the Resource Control Conflict,, 1960 -1995: An Assessment of Conflict Handling Styles: *Essays in Honour of General (Dr) Abdusalami A. Abubakar.* Isaac Olawale Albert ed. Ibadan: John Archer Publisher Limited. P 170.

25 Ogbogbo C.B.N. 2005 . Towards Understanding the Niger Delta Question: A Review of Osadolor's 'The Niger Delta Question: Background to Constitutional Reform, *Journal Of The Historical Society Of Nigeria* vol.1 no.2 , p 83

26 Egharevba, M.E. & Iruonagbe, C.T. , 2015, Ethnic/ Religious Insurgencies and Nation-Building In Nigeri*a, International Affairs and Global Strategy* Vol.29, p 39

27 Kingsley Emeka Ezemenaka, Chijioke Egwu Ekumaoko . 2018.Contextualising Fulani-Herdsmen conflict in Nigeria . *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* · vol. 12, no. 2 p 31

have carried out series of kidnappings of expatriates, bombing of pipeline and oil wells, among other violent activities and these has been detrimental to the region, Nigeria and women's rights in the country. Hence, the Niger Delta has been made to be known as the treasure base of Nigeria endowed with oil which forms the main stay of the nation's economy but contrarily characterised by poverty, crises and conflict.

Boko Haram

The word Boko Haram has been traced to the Hausa and Arabic language as Boko means book (education) and Haram means unlawful thus when pieced together it can be said to mean "western education is sacrilege"; a "sin"[29] it literally means that " western education is an abomination" as the Muslim believe that the values and education of the western world is evil and sinful and they should not be practised, taught or evident in Northern Nigeria.[30] It can be said that Boko Haram means "Western secular education is Islamically prohibited".[31] Furthermore, the ideology that is said to be coherent with the Boko Haram insurgency is the commitment to islamatisation which is comparable to the movement in Afghanistan and Iraq.[32]

Furthermore, Boko Haram is recognised as an Islamic group and sect just like the Taliban and Al-Qaida. They have become a dominant terrorist group in Nigeria and have carried out different actions that are more detrimental to Nigeria than beneficial.[33] Their activities have led to loss of lives and destruction of properties of great dimension and magnitude such as burning and bombing of churches, United Nations building in Abuja, market squares,

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28 Ogbogbo C.B.N., 2014, " 1 00years of the South South Zone in The Political Economy of Nigeria: The Pains and Gains. : *The House that " Lugard Built" Perspective on Nigeria's First Century: The Gains and The Agenda for the Future. S.U Fwatswak and J.W Akinwunmi.*Jos: HSN , Jos University Press Limited. Pp109-116

29 Eme, O.I., et. al. (2012).Activities of Boko Haram and Insecurity Question in Nigeria *African Journal of Business Management.*(*AJBMR)* 1(9), pp. 77-99.

30 Igboin B.O. 2013, From Religious conflict to Religious Nationalism: The Nigerian Experience. In *Nigeria at 50: Politics, Society and Development.* Sofela B. Edo V. O, and Olaniyi R,O (Eds) Ibadan: John Archer Publishers Limited. P240

31 Mohammed Dauda. 2014. The Effect of Boko Haram Crisis On Socio-Economic Activities In Yobe State. *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention. Volume 1 issue 4 2014* P 251

32 Oarhe O. 2013. Boko haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria and the vicious cycle of internal security. *Small wars and Insurgency,* Vol 24, No 3 P 338

33 Jideofor Adibe. 2013. What Do We Really Know About Boko Haram…. P 11

etc, and the killing of innocent people in Adamawa state (Mubi) when at least 40 people were killed by a bomb, etc[34]

The origin of Boko haram is a controversial issue as some are of the commentators believe that Boko Haram began operation in the year from 2002, while others have traced it to 2009 because that was when the clash with Nigerian security forces and the sect happened. This clash ushered in a new stage as the group began their series of activities of bombing, kidnapping, killing in Northern Nigeria.[35] An example of their activity was the 2009 clash which led to the death of about 700 people.[36]

It is believed that Boko Haram is born out of the need to clean the country of religious grunge and the sharia law and Islamic educations should be taught. [37]The Boko Haram major target has remained the Christian group.[38] The violent activities of the sect have spread beyond where it is perceived to have started from Bauchi and thus, spread to Kano, Maiduguri, Yobe, Borno State, Abuja, to mention but a few. Overtime, the victims have included women, children, police officers and Christian, as well as non-Christians.[39]

Fulani Herdsmen Conflict

Fulani Herdsmen conflict is a skirmish between herdsmen and farmers. This has led to series of clashes between the two parties which resulted to violent deaths. It has been a source of insecurity affecting the north central and south-eastern areas and by extension the entire country.[40] The causes of farmer/herder conflict vary, but they include, cattle rusting, climate change

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34 Maloswe Godwin C. "State and Security crises in Nigerias's fourth republic." *International Journal of Development and Sustainability. Vol 5 Number 2 (2016):*54

35 Daniel. E. Agbiboa. 2013. Peace at Dagger's Drawn? Boko Haram and the State of Emergency in Nigeria" Studies. *Conflict and Terrorism* 37.1:146-159

36 Ilesanmi. G. I.. 2014. Ehtno-Religious Crises and Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria: Issues, Challenges and the Way Forward. P 143.

37 Igboin B.O. 2013, From Religious conflict to Religious Nationalism: The Nigerian Experience. In *Nigeria at 50: Politics, Society and Development.* Sofela B. Edo V. O, and Olaniyi R,O (Eds) Ibadan: John Archer Publishers Limited. P240

38 Oarhe O. 2013. Boko haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria and the vicious cycle of internal security. *Small wars and Insurgency,* Vol 24, No 3 p537

39 Igboin B.O. 2013, From Religious conflict to Religious Nationalism: The Nigerian Experience. … P240

40 Kingsley Emeka Ezemenaka, Chijioke Egwu Ekumaoko . 2018.Contextualising Fulani-Herdsmen conflict in Nigeria . *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* · vol. 12, no. 2 pp 49-51

and the desertification of land, depleting farming space, etc. This conflict is sustained by the inept performance of the government leaders and lack of political will to look into the matter critically and proffer solution.

In 2014, the conflict a death toll of 65 percent which cut across north central Nigeria. This means that 786 out of 1150 death count was as a result of the clashes between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers. It has been recorded that in 2015-2016, the conflict spread towards the eastern part of Nigeria, and in over ten months, about 710 Nigerians were killed by Fulani herdsmen.[41] Among these deaths included a great number of women and children.

Fulani conflict has been traced back to the period 1980-1984; this period was known to be a period when the Fulani herdsmen had a violent conflict with the Tiv people of Benue state. This encounter led to the loss of about 80 cattle—a number which was big. Since the 21st century, the clashes between herdsmen and farmers have been on an increase and the pastoralist conflict has become the deadliest threat to the nation's security, especially as it exists as a twin with the menace of Boko Haram. In March 26th 2014, North-eastern Nigeria had a fatality rate of about 1187 deaths courtesy the herdsmen attack.

In 2016, according to existing records about 1425 people were killed in attacks involving Fulani herdsmen. During cattle rustling about 470 victims were killed. During the Fulani herdsmen attack, the communities' residents most times suffered the most death with an average of 30 deaths per attack.[42] Hence, a record states that:

> conflict between herdsmen and farmers in Mambilla, Plateau State resulted in the death of more than 96 herdsmen and the loss of 53,991 cattle, which led to mass internal migration of affected communities.41 Notable Fulani clashes over farmland destruction occurred on September 30 2012, April 5 2014, February 18 2016, March 5 2016, April 12, 19 and 25 2016, June 16 and 20 2016, and December 18 2016. Of the ten cases in total, eight were recorded in 2016 alone.42 In February 2016 over 300 people were killed in the state of Benue, and in March 2016 over 40 were killed in Enugu state, with many more fleeing their homes as a result.[43]

41 Kingsley Emeka Ezemenaka, Chijioke Egwu Ekumaoko . 2018.Contextualising Fulani-Herdsmen conflict in Nigeria … pp 31 32

42 Kingsley Emeka Ezemenaka, Chijioke Egwu Ekumaoko . 2018.Contextualising Fulani-Herdsmen conflict in Nigeria . *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* · vol. 12, no. 2 p 35

The Causes Of Insecurity In Nigeria

There are several causes of insecurity in Nigeria some of which have been narrowed down to bad governance, unemployment[44], lack or inadequate basic infrastructures, corruption and corrupt practices of government officials, poverty, perceived victimisation, ethnic superiority, religious superiority, materialism and the display of it with impunity,[45] domination and exploitation, lack of quality education or training, to mention but a few.

Lack or inadequate basic infrastructures is evident as some areas of the country have been neglected and people suffered over the years in terms of infrastructure and widening social inequalities. This situation is crucial in explaining the regular eruption of protests and crises in the Niger Delta. It is no more news that despite the fact that Niger Delta has been and the hub of oil production, the region lacks basic infrastructures and suffers exclusion in development as there are no good roads, no electricity, no pipe borne water, no visible federal government presence, among other things.[46]

Moreover, corruption or corrupt practices of government officials constitutes one of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria. Corruption is evident in practices of individuals and government practices. Government officials are known to have embezzled funds that were designated for the development of their states, local government areas and communities. These people divert the funds and other benefits or compensations to personal use. Thus corrupt practices are said to constitute one of the reasons why people are aggrieved, thus exhibiting it through protest, kidnappings, militancy and terrorism in Nigeria as was in the case of the Niger Delta militancy.[47] Hence, it has been observed that "corruption leads to unemployment, unemployment to conflicts and conflicts to insecurity. Many Nigerian youths have become preys to

43 Kingsley Emeka Ezemenaka, Chijioke Egwu Ekumaoko . 2018.Contextualising Fulani-Herdsmen conflict in Nigeria . *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* · vol. 12, no. 2 p 35

44 Omede J.. and Omede A.A. 2015. Terrorism and Insecurity in Nigeria: Moral, Values and Religious Education as Panaceas . *Journal of Education and Practice* . Vol.6, No.11,P120

45 Omede J.. and Omede A.A. 2015. Terrorism and Insecurity in Nigeria: Moral, Values and Religious Education as Panaceas . *Journal of Education and Practice* . Vol.6, No.11,P122

46 Egharevba, M.E. & Iruonagbe, C.T. , 2015, Ethnic/ Religious Insurgencies and Nation-Building In Nigeri*a, International Affairs and Global Strategy* Vol.29, p 39

terrorists and are easily radicalized".[48]

Poverty and educational backwardness is also another cause of insecurity in Nigeria Corruption, unemployment, illiteracy are some of the reasons of poverty in the country and Nigeria is rated as one of the poorest countries in the world. This adverse situation has birthed the willingness of the youth to carry out activities that would aid their survival without thinking whether or not such would be detrimental to the country. Hence, they have become political thugs, thieves, armed robbers, rapists, etc. It is recognised that one of the factors that has contributed to the spread of conflict in the North-eastern part of Nigeria is the level of educational backwardness and poverty.[49]

Basically, unemployment can be recognised as one of the main factors that cause insecurity in Nigeria. This is because the unemployed youths are jobless and lack the basic necessities of life, thus they are the ones employed in armed conflict to carry destructive behaviours to bring their plights to limelight. They end up engaging in criminal activities, electoral violence, kidnappings, armed robbery etc. They see these activities such as kidnapping, militancy as lucrative business because it helps to deal with the challenges they face as unemployed youth. For example, in the Niger Delta, the unemployed youths are the ones contacted to carry out armed conflict against multinational oil companies and the Federal government. Also, youths who became members of the Boko Haram sect were the unemployed ones who had the innate drive to meet the basic needs of life.[50]

Religious intricacies and the belief of superiority of one's religion over another are noted to be one of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria. The history of Nigeria has been characterised by the evidences of intra and inter religious conflicts aided by fanaticism, intolerance, fundamentalism, politics, etc.[51]

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47 Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko á & Nkemakolam Okorie . 2014. Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: Political Economy Implications .Global Journal *Of Human-Social Science: Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 5 P 14

48 Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko á & Nkemakolam Okorie . 2014. Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: Political Economy Implications .Global Journal *Of Human-Social Science: Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 5 P 14

49 Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko á & Nkemakolam Okorie . 2014. Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: Political Economy Implications .Global Journal *Of Human-Social Science: Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 5 P 14-15

50 Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko á & Nkemakolam Okorie . 2014. Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: Political Economy Implications. Global Journal *Of Human-Social Science: Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 5 P 14-16

These intricacies have played a part in the Boko Haram doctrine and activities as they seek to spread Islam and Islamic education as well as the sharia law with the aim to relegate the western education and religious practices. It is the group belief that western education and values should be wiped out in Northern Nigeria; thus, it could be said that the Christians and Muslims are part of the root causes of the current insecurity. The presence of religious appellation cannot be overlooked as it is identified within the series of conflicts. Nonetheless the ideology attached to the Boko Haram movements and the religious/ethnic crises in Jos form a good example of the role of religious intricacies and belief of religious superiority in conflict and insecurity in Nigeria.[52] The activities carried out by these religious sects and groups have caused devastating effects on the socio-economic lives of people of Nigeria as properties has been destroyed, lives lost and women and children have been greatly affected by the different inhumane activities and their attendant levels of insecurity in Nigeria. These ugly incidents and situations have remained a challenge to human rights in general and women's rights in particular, in Nigeria.

The Effect of Insecurity and How It Affects Women in Nigeria

The presence of insecurity and conflict in Nigeria has affected women drastically as women pay heavily and remain susceptible to its heinous effects, especially as they suffer gender-based violence during this time. During insecurity, women are raped, kidnapped, forced into marriage, trafficked, used as sex slave, etc. These in turn creates psycho-emotional effects on the women both as victims and non-victims. Thus, women have been demoralized and discouraged from achieving their full potential and contribute to the development of the nation. The girl child education is put on a stand still as there is disruption in her education.[53]

As mentioned above presence of insecurity and conflict in Nigeria has affected women, emotionally, mentally and psychologically, all which have

51 Igboin B.O. 2013, From Religious conflict to Religious Nationalism: The Nigerian Experience. In *Nigeria at 50: Politics, Society and Development.* Sofela B. Edo V. O, and Olaniyi R,O (Eds) Ibadan: John Archer Publishers Limited. P 232

52 Igboin B.O. 2013, From Religious conflict to Religious Nationalism: The Nigerian Experience… pp 232-244

53 Ajagunna, F. O. 2017. *Reparation as A Veritable Tool for Redressing Women's Reproductive Rights Violations in Armed Conflicts in Nigeria.* Department of Public Law and Department of Jurisprudence and International Law Faculty Of Law, University Of Ibadan

had negative effects on their socio-economic development. Hence the effect of insecurity on women in Nigeria can be seen in the economic structure as women who are supposed to be at the fore front become economically inactive. This is due to the disruption of their means of livelihood thus making them economically amputated. For example, the series of Boko Haram bombings of market squares such as busy market in Maiduguri in June 2015, which resulted to about 50 deaths,[54] also crippled the business enterprises of many women. On the other hand, the Fulani herdsmen are known for their destructions of farm lands where some women, if not most, get their produce which they sell for subsistence. And the Boko Haram destruction of infrastructures and other places of work like the bombing of the United Nation building in Abuja on August 26, 2011, recorded over 100 people injured and 25 people killed including women.[55]

Thus, insecurity has led to the loss of lives and property of women, men and children. This is evident in the series of raid done by the herdsmen, Niger Delta militants and Boko Haram. 2012 marked the period when Boko Haram began emulating the Algerian AQIM tactics, this was in form of slitting the throat of people in Christian villages at night. Women, children and men were killed. [56] On April 14th 2014 Boko Haram set off bombs in Nyanya, Abuja, which led to the death of over 70 people including women and children.[57] In January 2015, there was an attack in Borno that damaged about 3700 properties and destroyed about 16 towns,[58] women were among those killed and inarguable most of the victims.

The effect of insecurity, as earlier mentioned, goes beyond just physical

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54 Agbor. A. 2018. Boko Haram and the Abduction of schoolgirls in Nigeria: Reflecting on Gender Based Crimes As a legal Misnomer. In *Boko Haram and International Law.* . Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing. P312

55 Ogunfolu A., Assim U. M., and Adejumo O. 2018. Boko Haram: On the Road to Algiers?. . *in Boko Haram and International Law.* Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing. P184

56 Ogunfolu A., Assim U. M., and Adejumo O. 2018. Boko Haram: On the Road to Algiers?. . *in Boko Haram and International Law.* Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing pg 188

57 Ogunfolu A., Assim U. M., and Adejumo O. 2018. Boko Haram: On the Road to Algiers?. . *in Boko Haram and International Law.* Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing P 185

58 Adeola R. 2018. Protecting Conflict Induced Displaces in Northern Nigeria: Assessing the compliance of the state with article 9(2) of the Kampala Convention. In *Boko Haram and International Law.* . Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing. p302

impact, it affects women emotionally, mentally and psychologically, which put them in a state of long psychological imbalance such as phobia, posttraumatic stress disorder , and depressions following the reflection on and of the events that the survivors witnessed during crises and conflicts like the killing of family members, the rape of relatives, the brutality meted to family, friends and neighbours in form of beatings as well as the abduction of their own . Scenarios like these ones are hardly forgotten. Some of the survivals have suicidal thoughts, and tend to withdraw from the society, while feeling feel revengeful and ashamed.[59] Their mental health becomes unstable due to what they saw, either the killing and destruction of lives and property of families. For example, the killing of women's husbands and parents in villages in Yobe, Borno and Adamawa states caused serious mental illness and problems for the women[60] For those abducted their treatment and experience while in the custody of Boko haram make them mentally unstable and their level of mistrust become high. The indoctrination process that women and girls go through while in the hands of their abductees led to the mindset of lethal violence in women, [61]

The effect of insecurity is also visible from the health perspective as health challenges emerged from either being raped. Hence, they have infected with disease like HIV, STI, etc. Some of the girls end up having Vistula. Some women have become widowed due to the activities of the different sects; their homes looted or burned down by Boko Haram during attacks or by rampaging Nigerian security forces.[62]

Another effect of insecurity is that people are displaced from their home due to the destructions. The displacement of people has led to the creation of internally displaced people camp (IDP) areas or camps. And sometimes, these

59 David Suaka Yaro and Tobias Tseer .2019. Exploring the State of Human Insecurity in Nigeria: The Root Causes of The Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict in Benue State and Its Manifestation on The Livelihood of Rural Farmers and Pastoralists. ADRRI Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, Ghana: Vol. 16, No.5 (4), P86

60 James Okolie-Osemene & Rosemary I. Okolie-Osemene (2019) Nigerian women and the trends of kidnapping in the era of Boko Haram insurgency: patterns and evolution, Small Wars & Insurgencies, 30:6-7, 1153

61 James Okolie-Osemene & Rosemary I. Okolie-Osemene (2019) Nigerian women and the trends of kidnapping in the era of Boko Haram insurgency: patterns and evolution, Small Wars & Insurgencies, 30:6-7, 1153

62 P283

facilities are destroyed by the insurgents activities, thus becoming inhabitable. An example, is the Banki village in Northern Nigeria, before it was attacked in 2009. It was a bustling trade hub before it was attacked by Boko Haram. This left the inhabitants homeless and displaced. And women seem to constitute the highest number in the IDP areas or camps, and are still subjected to other misfortune based on their gender.

The fact is that women and girls that are kidnapped are affected physically and non-physically. For instance, apart from the non-physical effects discussed above, the victims also end up having physical problems like disabilities, separation from parents, husbands, children and loved ones and the loss of cohesive social systems that existed prior to the crises and conflicts, as well as permanent injuries[63] In May 2013, Boko Haram abducted a dozen Christian women in Borno State. They also abducted 276 female Chibok girls on 14th April 2014.[64] On 6th May 2014, they abducted eight girls aged between 8 and 15 years from a village in Borno. On 10th June 2014, they abducted 20 women near Chibok. Again, on 24th June 2014, they abducted over 60 women from the village of Kummabza in Damboa, Borno State. On 20th October 2014, they attacked the two villages of Waga Mangoro and Garta in Adamawa State where they abducted 40 women and girls. On 8th January 2015, they abducted an unknown number of women from Karatako village in Gujba Local Government of Yobe State.[65] On 19th February 2018, in Dapchi, 110 female students were abducted[66], and so on and forth. In all, it is clear that the women and girls have been the major target and victims of the Boko Haram violence and attacks, thus placing women on a position of insecurity and infringed human rights.

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63 David Suaka Yaro and Tobias Tseer .2019. Exploring the State of Human Insecurity in Nigeria: The Root Causes of The Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict in Benue State and Its Manifestation on The Livelihood of Rural Farmers and Pastoralists. ADRRI Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, Ghana: Vol. 16, No.5 (4), P86

64 James Okolie-Osemene & Rosemary I. Okolie-Osemene (2019) Nigerian women and the trends of kidnapping in the era of Boko Haram insurgency: patterns and evolution, Small Wars & Insurgencies, 30:6-7, 1157

65 Iyi J. M.. The Weaponisation of Women by Boko Haram and the Prospects of Accountability in *Boko Haram and International Law.* Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing 263-265

66 James Okolie-Osemene & Rosemary I. Okolie-Osemene (2019) Nigerian women and the trends of kidnapping in the era of Boko Haram insurgency: patterns and evolution, Small Wars & Insurgencies, 30:6-7, 1157

Women's rights and Nigeria Insecurity

Fundamental human rights have been guaranteed in Nigeria and it is evident in Section 39 of the Nigerian constitution as amended in 1999 that, as a citizen, man or woman, everyone is entitled to the list of rights enacted.[67] Hence, women's rights have been guaranteed in the Nigerian constitution. However, despite the constitutional provision of these rights, women's rights have been an object of easy infringement by the insecurity in Nigeria, it is evidently clear from all indications and cases that during insecurity, women's rights are greatly, if not absolutely, overlooked and trampled upon and since insecurity is still prevalent in Nigeria, it has continued to take its toll on the recognition and achievement of women's rights. Experiences faced by women in the series of conflicts and crises during have shown an outrageous violation of women's rights during these periods. The right to life, liberty, and personal dignity are greatly infringed upon as seen in the abduction of over 200 Chibok school girls in Borno State[68] by Boko Haram on April 14th, 2014, and of course, in many other cases. It is evident that these girls once kidnapped no longer own their lives as long as they are in the custody of their abductors. Their freedoms are taken away from them—including freedom of movement.

Additionally, with the presence of conflicts and crises, women's rights have been faced with the issue of lack of safety and security. Women no longer feel safe and secure as they are most times affected by the activities of the perpetrators. For example, in April 2013, Ijaw militia men attacked the army which later led to a cross fire between Ijaw militant and Nigerian security forces. In this cross-fire women were cut up and unfortunately killed.[69] Also "Herders attacked and killed indiscriminately in location farmers, young and old, men and women disabled and abled without recourse to the laws of the

67 Adeleke V. I 2004. Concepts of Gender Equality as a paradox in Nigeria's Democratic Experience. In Paradox of *Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics*. Akingboye S.O (ed) Lagos: Concept Publication Limited P257

68 Angela Ajodo-Adebanjoko á & Nkemakolam Okorie . 2014. Corruption and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria: Political Economy Implications .Global Journal *Of Human-Social Science: Political Science* Volume 14 Issue 5 p12

69 Olusegun Adeyeri Olusegun, "The Nigerian Federal Experiment and Resources Control: Principle , Contradictions and Crises. In *Nigeria at 50: Politics, society and Development* edited by Babatunde S. Edo V.E and Olaniyi .R. . (Ibadan: John Archer Publication ltd. 2013)207

land as a form of retaliation to their rustled" cattle by the bandits.[70] And women would always be part of the victims.

In UDHR 1948 a section shows that there is a right to dignity of human person and the right not to be subjugated to torture, inhuman or ill treatment. This is clause is usually disregarded during the time of insecurity. This provision recognises the prohibition of slavery, prohibition of torture, protection of minorities. This right is recognised as one of the women's rights, but with the presence of insecurity, the right becomes overlooked, as women who were abducted were tortured and used for sex slaves. There are evidences of sexual harassment by Fulanis towards the women.[71] There is also evidence in the way abducted women are treated that they become slaves or are used as object and subject of dangerous and inhumane acts which are unhealthy to their well-being. For example, Boko Haram suicide bombing missions from April 2014-December 2015 were characterised by the presence of women and children as carriers of explosives. The suicide bombing activities from April 2011- June 2017 in which 434 bombers were deployed to 247 target recorded 56 percent of the bombers as women.[72]

During insecurity, reproductive human rights are violated, the rights of women to access good health care facility and health services and make decisions regarding their health such as pregnancy, family planning and reproductive health are taken away from them. Girls and women who are abducted are raped tortured and mutilated and they eventually become mothers of unplanned or unwanted children and families. Some of them end up developing the Vistula disease. After all these ordeals, the girl child/ women will become faced with health challenges that they do not have proper health care facility to deal with such as the dreaded HIV/AIDS, etc.

The right to marriage which allows the woman to choose who to marry is infringed upon during crises and conflict. For instance, Boko Haram have

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70 David Suaka Yaro and Tobias Tseer .2019. Exploring the State of Human Insecurity in Nigeria: The Root Causes of The Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict in Benue State and Its Manifestation on The Livelihood of Rural Farmers and Pastoralists. ADRRI Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, Ghana: Vol. 16, No.5 (4), P 72

71 David Suaka Yaro and Tobias Tseer .2019. Exploring the State of Human Insecurity in Nigeria: The Root Causes of The Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict in Benue State and Its Manifestation on The Livelihood of Rural Farmers and Pastoralists. ADRRI Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, Ghana: Vol. 16, No.5 (4), P 65

72 United States Military combating terrorism

forced women and young girls into marriage. During insecurity, freedom of movement is also restricted both in the victim's life and that of non-victims as people including women are displaced. Also, due to the high rate of killings and abduction, there is fear of insecurity which limits people movements of a person.

Right to education and information becomes insubstantial, this is because during crises and conflicts there is distort of daily activities, and education is affected. The kidnapped women no longer have a choice as a human to choose how they want to be educated. This is particularly related to the abductees of Boko Haram as they were made to attend koranic school and made to learn to recite the Koran [73] the Dapchi girls that were kidnapped also suffered the same fate.

Women right to freedom of religion is taking away once they are abducted by Boko Haram; they are taught the Islamic way. Women are forced into conversion to Islam. [74] The women were made to cover themselves and follow strict version of Sharia'a requiring. [75] A source comments thus:

For example, a young woman, Tabitha Adamu, was captured with her mother when their village was attacked by Boko Haram, which killed her father and brother. She was forced to convert to Islam, join and marry a Boko Haram fighter, who impregnated her.[76]

Conclusion

This work has shown how women's rights are faced with challenges because of the insecurity in Nigeria. It has given a conceptual clarification of women's rights and security. It went further to give a brief history of women right and its presence in Nigeria; the state of insecurity in Nigeria and the

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73 Iyi J. M.. The Weaponisation of Women by Boko Haram and the Prospects of Accountability in *Boko Haram and International Law.* Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing 264

74 James Okolie-Osemene & Rosemary I. Okolie-Osemene (2019) Nigerian women and the trends of kidnapping in the era of Boko Haram insurgency: patterns and evolution, Small Wars & Insurgencies, 30:6-7, 1153

75 Iyi J. M.. The Weaponisation of Women by Boko Haram and the Prospects of Accountability in *Boko Haram and International Law.* Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing 264

76 Iyi J. M.. The Weaponization of Women by Boko Haram and the Prospects of Accountability in *Boko Haram and International Law.* Iyi J. M. and Strydom H. Eds. Switzerland : Springer International Publishing P 273

causes of Insecurity in Nigeria the paper concludes that there are impacts of insecurity on women and women's rights. The presence of insecurity and conflict in Nigeria has affected women drastically as women pay heavily with their fundamental human rights while remaining most susceptible to gender-based violence. During insecurity, women are raped, kidnapped, forced into marriage, tortured, mutilated, trafficked, used as sex slave, suicide bombers among others. The effect of insecurity on women and girl child is very vast; it affects their mental, psychological and physical wellbeing. In all, Boko Haram remains the greatest perpetrator of the violation of fundamental human rights of the Nigerian women given the above analysis and available records.

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OPERATION ÀMÒTÉKUN: DEMOCRATISATION OR REGIONALISATION OF SECURITY IN NIGERIA

BY
AYOKUNLE FAGBEMI*

Introduction

The formal joint launching of Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN), codenamed "OPERATION ÀMÒTÉKUN", by the Governors of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo States on January 9, 2020 triggered multiple sociopolitical and governance relations reactions in Nigeria. This is notwithstanding that, these governors, under the auspices of Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN), had given adequate notices to the Nigerian-state concerning the need for them to harmonise and concert efforts aimed at tackling security breaches and challenges under their individual watch and collective jurisdiction since June 2019. That these states constitute, in the main, old Western Region now commonly referred to as the Southwest Geopolitical Zone in a flawed contemporary Nigeria operating nominal federalism with unitary orientation. This is notwithstanding that the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) specifically stated in Section 2:

(1) *Nigeria is* one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign state *to be known by the name of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*. *(Emphasis added)*

(2) Nigeria shall be a Federation consisting of States and a Federal Capital Territory.

Thus, upon the launching of Operation Amotekun, spin masters had a filled day with arguments for and against the initiative, predominantly based on emotive primordial and political sentiments. Some of the arguments appear orchestrated to reinforce the prevalent unitary command and control system by the central government of Nigeria that some beneficiaries may not necessarily be favourably disposed to relinquishing in favour of effective and functional security services delivery nationwide.

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This is primarily because the patterns and trends of crimes and criminality, terse, security concerns in Nigeria have tended to assume some form of ethnoreligious coloration. The attendant sentiments often lead to wrong labelling of crimes, lack, improper or poor investigation to lack of apprehension and prosecution of culprits, which consequently deny victims of any form of remedy and redress. Therefore, Nigerians with increasing security breaches and high levels of unresolved crimes in the country are constrained, justifiably, to react to fears of becoming victims of crimes of kidnapping, arson, assassination and extra judicial killings by initiating self-help schemes of vigilantism and reliance on private security outfits. This citizens' reaction to insecurity is tacitly a vote of no confidence in government that the 1999 Constitution has statutorily declared as being primarily responsible for the "security and welfare of the people". It is believed that the governors of the aforementioned states were left with no choice other than to live up to the dictates of Section 14 (2) (b) and (c) by providing the required leadership.

The controversies surrounding Operation Amotekun assumed "Politico-Legal Dimension" on January 14, 2020 with an alleged Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) declaration that the initiative was illegal. The purported declaration claimed to have been issued by the incumbent Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF), Abubakar Malami (SAN), was vide an unsigned [but widely circulated] press statement presented as issued by certain "Dr.

Umar Jibrilu Gwandu, Special Assistant, Media and Public Relations to the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF)"[1]. Thus, rather than remain a simple "peace – security discourse" for integrated development, it became politicised and assumed volatile dimensions raising issues bordering on the continued existence of the already fragile Nigerian-state.

Whereas, these politico-legal crises have continued to stall the effective take-off of the scheme as designed, we hope that this roundtable shall help refocus and settle some of the controversial issues; delivering it from the renowned proverbial "Nigerian Factor"! A factor that creates cogs in the wheel of progress to create slow motion or completely stall any laudable initiative or decimate productive individuals.

Clarification of Concepts

In concise terms for our purposes, we shall attempt to clarify three major

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1 Author of this paper, Fagbemi, had cause to deal with this severally on television, AIT Democracy Today (January 18, 2020) using slides attached to this paper as Appendix, and on radio, Naija Info 95.1FM (January 20, 2020). Fagbemi provided deep insights into what constitute and under which circumstances the AGF can issue valid "Expressed Opinion". He was even emphatic on the type of stationery, the mode of signing and endorsement of the document based on Administrative Procedures Framework and Public Service Rules, and to which constitutional entities s/he can express an opinion for their decision-making e.g., Executive Council of the Federation, National Security and Defence Councils or Courts of Superior Records. See https://www.instagram.com/tv/B7jBhKwAOfN/?igshid=3ywkcaul8jbd. It is interesting to note that thereafter the Hon. Minister of Justice/AGF, Abubakar Malami (SAN) had to moderate the widely circulated purported opinion from Tuesday, January 21, 2020; featuring on radio and television, claiming, *"I was misinterpreted on Operation Amotekun. I did not say it's illegal…I said the Operation Amotekun should be properly backed by law, so if at the end of this government, if the operation has been backed by law, any government that eventually succeeded this government would not rubbish the operation…I said if they failed to enact a law in support of Amotekun in the South-West Region of Nigeria, another government can come and say it's illegal and this is because it is not backed up by any law…So, it is just a piece of advice to the state governors to use their power and the State Houses of Assembly in their various states to enact a law that will make the operation more effective."* [https://www.lindaikejisblog.com/index.php/2020/1/i-never-said-amotekun-is-illegal-agf-abubakar-malami-2.html]

AGF's personal moderation paved the way for fence mending meetings held by the concerned State Governors with the Vice-President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo (SAN) GCFR with the AGF and Inspector-General of Police in attendance on Thursday, January 23, 2020. Kindly read the reportage on the meeting and commentaries of Nigerians from https://headlinenewsnigeria.com/osinbajo-southwest-governors-meet-in-abuja-over-amotekun/ or https://punchng.com/breaking-fg-south-west-governors-agree-on-amotekun/ and https://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2020/01/23/osinbajo-southwest-governors-meet-in-abuja-over-amotekun/

concepts relevant to the theme of this roundtable and presentation. In achieving the task of clarifying these terms, we shall seek to avoid the multiple dialectics often associated with the definition and/or operationalizing concepts in social science.

1. Operation Àmòtékun[2] is the codename for the Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN) jointly launched on January 9, 2020 by the six governors of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo States. The codename Amotekun is the Yoruba derivative word for a leopard or panther (Panthera pardus). It is one of the five extant species in the genus Panthera, a member of the Felidae. It is a large slender member of the cat family with a yellowish brown to orange red coat spotted with black rosettes[3]. It is native to Africa and Asia where they occur in a wide range in sub-Saharan Africa. Its well-camouflaged fur, ability to adapt to a variety of habitats ranging from rainforest to steppe, including arid and montane areas, and its strength with ability to run at speeds of up to 58 kilometres per hour (58km/h or 36 mph) distinguish the leopard as an animal with unique hunting behaviour. This is what has earned it the choice as the logo and mascot for Amotekun. It is a security outfit based in each of all the six states to rid the South-West of criminal elements. It is responsible for curbing insecurity in each state with cross-boundary interface operations amongst the concerned states. Within the context of now popular *(without legal referencing)* geopolitical zonal structure that clusters the six states as Southwestern (SW) zone, it is perceived as the first regional security outfit initiated by a geopolitical zone in Nigeria. As conceptualised, it has the *Motto: "Zero Tolerance to Crime"*. At the public launching of Amotekun, the convener of the event as Chairman of Southwest State Governors, H.E. Rotimi Akeredolu, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), provided the bases for its establishment as being purely their collective proactive to prevalent insecurity ravaging Nigeria. According to him, no portion of the country was immune to insecurity. For him and his colleagues, "it had become embarrassing that the South-West, with its historical accommodating nature, has become a centre of many negative stories of attacks in recent times. He said, "We cannot predict the exactitude where this unfortunate disturbance will take place, hence we felt that a combined effort of all of us would be very necessary. It would save

2 https://www.sunnewsonline.com/amotekun-is-a-pain-reliever/https://www.thecable.ng/amotekun-leopard-on-the-spot

3 Microsoft® Encarta® 2009. © 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved

us from all these banditries, terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, herdsmen/farmers clashes, ritual killings and cybercrime. The current situation in the country demands pragmatic and proactive solutions. "The sustained onslaught on the lives and property of our people compelled the adoption of serious countermeasures to stamp out the menace within a short period. We shall not relent until the entire space is secured."[4]

2. Democratisation, as noted by online Encyclopædia Britannica, the term,

"Democratisation is difficult to define in practice, in large part because of disagreements about how to understand democracy. For example, there is no consensus on where to mark the beginning and endpoints of the democratisation process. One approach defines democratisation as the period between the breakdown of an authoritarian regime and the conclusion of the first democratic national elections. Others mark earlier beginning points, such as the initiation of liberal reforms by authoritarian regimes or structural changes that weaken authoritarian regimes enough for opposition groups to push for democratic reforms. Some democratic theorists similarly assert that democratisation continues long after the first elections because, by themselves, elections do not ensure a functioning democracy. The problem with this approach is that it is not clear when the democratisation process stops. If measured against the ideal of a perfect liberal democracy, all countries may be viewed as perpetually being in a process of democratisation. This limits the utility of democratisation as an analytical tool. Disagreements about definitions of democracy also make it difficult to measure where a country is in its democratisation process. One common measure is the Freedom House score, which measures political rights and civil liberties. Another indicator is the polity score by the Centre for Systemic Peace, which measures "authority characteristics" and is more consistent with procedural definitions of democracy." [https://www.britannica.com/topic/democratisation accessed June 17, 2020]

Democratisation is the exercise of consolidating and strengthening institutions that help to support democratic government. These institutions may relate to rule of law initiatives, political party development, constitution

4 https://www.blueprint.ng/insecurity-why-amotekun-was-formed-in-south-west-govs/https://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2020/01/09/operation-amotekun-western-nigeria-governors-launch-security-outfit/

building, public administration development, and civil society education programmes [Snodderly, Dan (2011) page 18]. Wikipedia summarised it as "the transition to a more democratic political regime, including substantive political changes moving in a democratic direction. It may be the transition from an authoritarian regime to a full democracy, a transition from an authoritarian political system to a semi-democracy or transition from a semi-authoritarian political system to a democratic political system. . .attributed to various factors, including economic development, historical legacies, and civil society. Some accounts of democratisation emphasise how elites drove democratisation, whereas other accounts emphasise grassroots bottom-up processes[5].

Therefore, "Democratisation" for our purposes shall imply the process for ventilating the space for increased stakeholders' participation in the security processes by enlisting their positive involvement and constructive engagement for effectiveness and efficiency. That is the process of achieving paradigmatic shifts from "state centric" to "citizens centric" national security.

3. Regionalisation: The basic dictionary definitions (from Microsoft Encarta, Oxford and Webster) posit the concept as the art of dividing into administrative subunits of a larger component for ease of administration based on legal and policy frameworks, that is, for effectiveness and efficiency. It connotes some form of loyalty to the central but with preference and/or prejudice in favour the subunit jurisdiction due to some form of peculiar idiosyncrasies of the particular region. Management sciences recognise it as the process of dividing an area into smaller segments called regions. One of the more obvious examples of regionalisation is the division of a nation into states or provinces; considered as a management tool and a way of meeting certain needs unique to particular areas[6]. Regionalisation is often perceived or conceptualised as "Decentralisation", which is the process through which the activities of an organisation, particularly those regarding planning and decision making, are distributed or delegated away from a central, authoritative location or group.

Decentralisation, as a concept, is applicable to group dynamics and management science in private businesses and organisations, political science, law and public administration, economics, money and technology. It is the process of dividing a political entity or country into smaller jurisdictions

5 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratization accessed June 17, 2020

6 Read more: http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/regionalization.html

(administrative divisions or subnational units) and transferring power from the central government to the regions; the opposite of harmonisation for unitary command and control from the centre.

4. Police And Policing: We herein present the term "Police" as the acronym for "**P**ublic **O**fficer for **L**egal **I**nvestigations and **C**riminal **E**mergencies"[7]. Other variants in public domain include "**P**rotection **Of Life In C**ivil **E**stablishment" and "**P**rotector **Of Life In C**ities **E**verywhere". We do this without prejudice to the arguments in favour or against the adoption of the term originating as an acronym or otherwise. We opted to so present "police" in this paper because it helps to capture the essence of literal, technical and professional services delivery meanings available in dictionaries and encyclopaedias. "Police" is a derivative of the Greek word "Polis", meaning that part of non-ecclesiastical administration having to do with the safety, health and order of the state. It operates as an organisation with special legal powers from government whose task is to maintain law, public order by preventing and solving crimes within a particular area or sphere of activity. They enforce correct behaviour; make others' opinions or behaviour conform to the law for common good and by preventing crime in a community. Thus, as a constituted body of legally empowered persons, they enforce all laws (specific and incidental); protect the lives, liberty and possessions of citizens. Within the state centric orientation and emergence, Police, essentially, is a body of officers representing the civil authority of government that are basically responsible for the maintenance of public order and safety, enforcing the law, preventing, detecting, and investigating criminal activities. Policing is the procedural performance of these functions.

From the foregoing clarification of terms and definitions, there is need to emphasise that the Nigerian application of these concepts are often based on the whims and caprices of stakeholders who view issues with prisms colored from their primordial sentiments. Concerning political actors and public officers, their status and roles often determine how they perceive and skew their interpretations of the concept about legal and policy frameworks, with which they even, deliberately, do selective amnesia. So we cannot safely appreciate the intentions of the Nigerian-state when attempts are made through the pronouncements of public officers until when confined to historical perspectives after (or beyond) the tenure of such officer.

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7 https://www.abbreviations.com/term/1428685

Nigeria's Security Architecture and Service Delivery

The ***fons et origo*** of Nigeria's security architecture and services delivery remains the 1999 Constitution (as amended) that specifically declared in Section 14 (2) (a), (b) and (c) that:

(a) sovereignty belongs to the people of Nigeria from whom government through this Constitution derives all its powers and authority;
(b) the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government; and
(c) the participation by the people in their government shall be ensured in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.

It is to this end that the Constitution thereinafter provided for the establishment of the Nigeria Police Force in Sections 214 through 216 and the Armed Forces in Sections 217 to 220. Thus, empowering the National Assembly to legislate, perform oversight on these entities of primary security, law enforcement, and defence system in Nigeria in furtherance of the aforementioned provisions that sought to operationalize Section 14 of the Constitution. In addition, the 1999 Constitution equally provided in the Third Schedule Part 1 for the existence of some security defence management architecture executive bodies in (G) National Defence Council, (K) National Security Council, (L) Nigeria Police Council, and (M) Police Service Commission. The 1999 constitution designated the Nigerian Police as **the national police of Nigeria with exclusive jurisdiction throughout the country;** providing for the establishment of separate branches and command structures, "forming part of the armed forces of the Federation or for their protection of harbours, waterways, railways and airfields". The NPF now has 17 zones; each zone reportedly has between two and four state commands as well as a "series of area commands, divisions, police stations, and police posts under these commands". It used to be 12 until Wednesday, May 27, 2020 when the media reported the Presidential approval [8] for the creation

8 We again note with concern, the validity of this approval without the inputs of the Nigerian Police Council requiring the involvement of and consultation with State Governors. This approval maybe another in the series of constitutional breaches involved in the functional and operational deployment of the Nigeria Police, over the years by successive administration, as expected within the federal system of government based on the constitution.

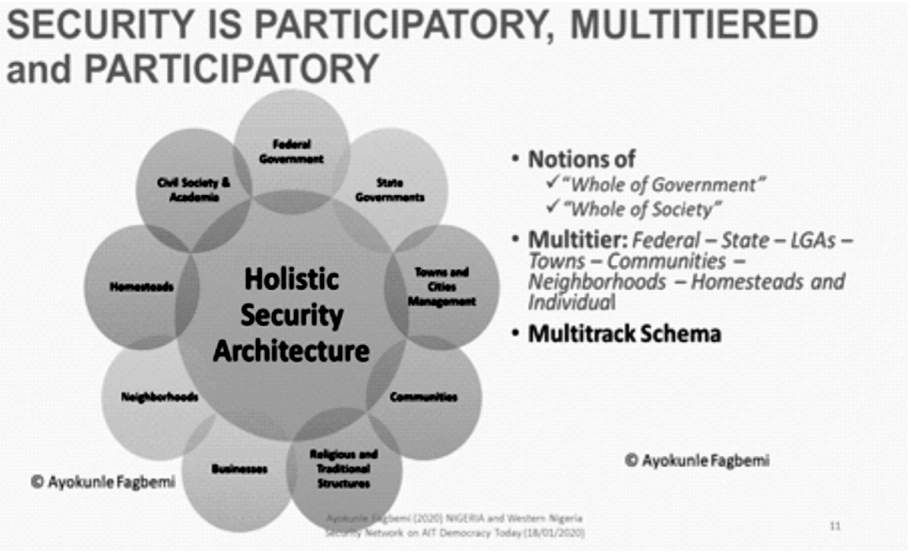
of five new Zonal Commands and restructuring of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF). The incumbent IGP disclosed this in a statement reportedly signed by him, Mohammed Adamu, the Inspector-General of Police. He explained that the new structure would fully integrate intelligence-led policing strategy and community policing. The five newly created commands are Ondo and Ekiti Command, Enugu, Anambra and Ebonyi Command, Bayelsa and Rivers Command, Katsina and Kaduna Command, and Yobe and Borno Command.

Notwithstanding the seemingly "omnibus" and "unitary" posturing of the constitution in Section 215 and the listing of it as part of the exclusive list, the same constitution in other parts recognised the federal structure of Nigeria. The constitutional recognition for the effective participation of the subnational units for example in the Nigerian Police Council, amongst others, giving room for their active participation are statutorily supported by some other substantive legal enactments of relevance in the area of law enforcement, security and maintenance of public order. They include but are not limited to the following:

- Administration of Criminal Justice Act (2015)
- Federal Road Safety Commission through Decree No. 45 of the 1988 as amended by Decree 35 of 1992 i.e., the FRSC Act cap 141 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN), passed by the National Assembly as Federal Road Safety Corps (establishment) Act 2007
- National Counterterrorism Strategy (NACTEST) (2016)
- Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act (2004). *The EFCC has direct responsibility for the enforcement of some other laws, including the Money Laundering Act 2011, the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act 2006, The Failed Banks (Recovery of Debt) and Financial Malpractices in Banks Act and the Miscellaneous Offences Act.*
- National Cybersecurity Policy and Strategy (2014)
- National Defence Policy (2017)
- Nigeria Immigrations Service
- Nigeria Prisons now Correctional Service
- National Emergency Management Agency Act (No. 12 as amended by Act 50 of 1999);
- National Security Agencies Act (1986 No. 19)
- Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) Act No. 2 of 2003 and amended by Act 6 of 4 June 2007. *The NSCDC was*

first introduced in May 1967 during the Nigerian Civil War within the then Federal Capital Territory of Lagos for the purpose of sensitisation and protection of the civil populace. It was then known as Lagos Civil Defence Committee. It later metamorphosed into the present-day NSCDC in 1970. In 1984, the Corps was transformed into a National security outfit and in 1988.

- National Security Strategy (2019)
- Nigeria Police Act (1943) (1967 No. 41) (1979 No. 23), (1990 No.47) CAP 19 LFN
- Nigeria Police Regulations 1968 (No. 53) (Chapter 359)
- Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) [Act No. 3 of 2003 and Amendment Act No. 6 of 2007]
- Nigeria's Terrorism Prevention Act 2011 (amended Terrorism Prevention Amendment Act 2013)
- Official Secrets Act (1962)



These legal instruments are testaments to the fact that the Nigerian security and defence management architecture, to all intents and purposes, are ab initio liberal and multiple stakeholders involving even as they are multidimensional and multidisciplinary. A cursory studying of these legal and policy instruments indicate that they contain strategic directions on how

to deal with outlined major security, safety and law enforcement concerns of Nigeria. They are elaborate in content, and contain implementation guidance directives, orders and/or operational guidelines for effectiveness and efficiency. More emphatically, they provide for citizenry participation and engagement contrary to the "we – they syndrome" of state centric national security services delivery. Since, as with most issues pertaining to legal and policy mechanisms in Nigeria, operatives and public commentators or analysts hardly know their contents and few who do take advantage of such knowledge for pecuniary or political patronage benefits and thereby manipulate them for added advantage in favour of the incumbent government or for blatant abuse.

In fact, President M. Buhari in the Foreword to the National Security Strategy, NSS, (2019) noted as follows:

> We live in an interconnected world and must proactively respond to the challenges of both the local and global security environment. Recent events in the world, buoyed by globalisation, already impact or could potentially impact our national security. These include the defeat of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, the emergence of the Islamic State in West Africa Province, the spread of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, the unpredictability of global stock markets as well as the unending global search for new sources of non-fossil energy. On the domestic front, some previously existing security challenges have grown in intensity while other significant challenges have emerged. These include ethno-religious conflicts, which continue to prey on our historical and socio-political fault-lines, conflicts between pastoralists and farmers, banditry, kidnapping, cyber-crimes and politically motivated violence.
>
> In the circumstances, the virulence of previous and emergent security threats immediately calls for a confluence of ends, ways and means of overcoming them. This is an urgent existential imperative. However, our vision of sustainable national security goes beyond reaction to physical threats. We must ensure clarity in our understanding of the dynamics of Nigeria's security environment and address them in a comprehensive manner. We must optimis the effectiveness of the security sector by evolving systems and structures that encompass societal and governmental contributions. We must admit the evolution of new methodologies and technologies in contemporary national

> security systems. We will build national consensus to guide the implementation of the values and principles of our national security. Lastly, we live in a globalised world, so we must project our national security interests in a manner that promotes regional and international confidence and cooperation. These are the rationales for the review of the National Security Strategy 2014.
>
> The implementation of all the principles and ideas expressed in this document is crucial to our national security and general well-being. Concerted efforts will therefore be made to implement the National Security Strategy 2019. The implementation will be driven systematically, transparently and accountably, to ensure that all Ministries, Departments and Agencies key into it and deliver expected measurable outcomes designed to enhance our resilience, stability and national strategy. This process will involve relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies, civil society organisations, Development Partners, the Armed Forces, Police, Security and Para-military organisations as well as the general public.
>
> The National Security Strategy 2019 and other related instruments capture my renewed bond with Nigerians to ensure the nation's security and welfare. I therefore commend the document to all Nigerians, stakeholders and key players, as the overarching policy and strategic basis for protecting, preserving, promoting and projecting our core national values and interests in the face of internal and external threats.

The National Security Adviser, Babagana Monguno *(retired Major General),* reinforced the views and position of President Buhari in the preface to the National Security Strategy (NSS). He noted that contemporary security challenges required "a robust, dynamic and proactive national security framework and infrastructure capable of dealing with these growing threats in real time." Furthermore, he opined:

> *The National Security Strategy 2019 aims at ensuring that Nigeria's sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interests, the well-being of the people and the country's institutions are preserved, protected and enhanced. The Strategy provides a comprehensive vision of National Security, premised on the understanding that a responsible society aware of its security is better poised to address today's challenges.*

> *Thus, it is essential to encourage the involvement of citizens and collaboration between the public and private sectors.*
>
> *Our Mission is articulated through a strategy that defines a global and all-embracing form of reference in security matters. The Strategy envisages the unique characteristics of the risks and threats we face in a world that is constantly undergoing changes. In other words, a strategy that orients state action towards current and perceived future challenges by using available resources flexibly and efficiently. The Strategy will also enhance our prevention, protection and response capabilities to security threats in an increasingly complex environment. Nigeria is a member of the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union with a unique and strategic geopolitical location. This particular attribute defines our specific strategic objectives. On the basis of defending our interests and values, Nigeria's strategic projection is aimed at pursuing regional, continental and global peace, stability and security.*
>
> *In formulating the National Security Strategy 2019, the views of the relevant government and non-government experts, the security establishment and other key stakeholders were sought and integrated, as much as possible. It is believed therefore, that going by the breadth and depth of experiences and inputs that were brought to bear on the process, this National Security Strategy will facilitate our short, medium and long-term security aspirations.*

In another vein, the established security and law enforcement agencies, based on the laws and policy frameworks earlier identified, function for effectiveness and efficiency based on command structures that cluster some contiguous states together. For example, the principal policing entity, the Nigerian Police Force along with Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. It is interesting to note that the rationale adduced for the clustering of these states into a zonal command include forging of synergy in the prevention, apprehension and combating crime in a proactive manner with seamless interface across jurisdictions. They are:

Nigeria Police Zonal Structure

Until May 27, 2020, the country had twelve (12) Zonal Commands for ease of administration as follows:

Zone 1 - With Headquarters at Kano: Kano, Jigawa and Katsina States
Zone 2 - With Headquarters at Lagos: Lagos and Ogun States
Zone 3 - With Headquarters at Yola: Adamawa, Taraba and Gombe States
Zone 4 - With Headquarters at Makurdi: Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau States
Zone 5 - With Headquarters at Benin: Edo, Bayelsa and Delta States
Zone 6 - With Headquarters at Calabar: Cross Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Ebonyi and Rivers States
Zone 7 - With Headquarters at FCT: FCT Abuja, Kaduna and Niger States
Zone 8 - With Headquarters at Lokoja: Kogi, Kwara and Ekiti States
Zone 9 - With Headquarters at Umuahia: Abia, Imo, Anambra and Enugu States
Zone 10 - With Headquarters at Sokoto: Sokoto, Zamfara and Kebbi States
Zone 11 - With Headquarters at Oshogbo: Osun, Oyo and Ondo States
Zone 12 - With Headquarters at Bauchi: Bauchi, Borno and Yobe States

The five newly created commands are

Zone 13 – Ondo and Ekiti States Commands ***from Zones 8 and 11***
Zone – 14 Enugu, Anambra and Ebonyi States Commands ***from Zones 6 and 9***
Zone 15 – Balyelsa and Rivers States Command ***from Zones 5 and 6***
Zone 16 – Katsina and Kaduna States Commands ***from Zones 1 and 7***
Zone 17 – Yobe and Borno States Commands ***from Zone 12***

Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps Zonal Structure

ZONE A - Lagos State Command
ZONE B – Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, and Jigawa States Commands
ZONE C – Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Yobe and Borno States Commands
ZONE D – Niger, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi and Kwara States Commands
ZONE E – Abia, Imo, Cross River, Ebonyi, Akwa Ibom, Enugu and Rivers States Commands
ZONE F – Ogun, Osun, Ekiti, Oyo and Ondo States Commands
ZONE G – Edo, Anambra, Delta and Bayelsa States Commands
ZONE H – Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Taraba and Kogi States Commands

The highlighted zonal structures and operational interfaces with multiple stakeholders are indeed reflective of the "crises response and resilience" components of the NSS that inter alia has determined that:

> The primary responsibility for crisis response and management lies with various tiers of government until such responsibility is transferred to a higher authority or a Presidential declaration is made in accordance with Section 305 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) 1999 (as amended). In the event of a national emergency, the Federal Government will discharge its responsibilities for crisis response through statutory organs such as the National Security Council (NSC), National Defence Council (NDC) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) for security and defence emergencies as well as national disasters.
>
> The NSC oversees the management of national crisis situations through the instrumentality of security and intelligence agencies statutorily empowered to carry out designated functions. The overall national crisis and emergency response and management system is aided by inputs from designated agencies in the form of early warning, intelligence gathering and analysis, strategic decision-making, early and effective responses as well as effective leadership and coordination. In the particular instance of a national defence crisis, the President exercises command and control of the AFN in accordance with extant provisions of the Constitution. However, in the event of national disasters, NEMA is empowered to provide both strategic and operational leadership, guidance and coordination in all national disaster relief efforts.
>
> The national crisis response and management system is guided by certain fundamental crises management principles such as early warning and early response, effective communication, establishment of focused objectives and unified command and control. Others are interdisciplinarity, multi-tasking and flexibility of remedial options and overarching imperative to deliver impactful remedies and reliefs on time.
>
> The objectives of the national crisis response and management system are to coordinate Ministries, Departments and Agencies in all tiers of government as well as domestic and international State and Non-State actors. The objectives seek to prevent crises; establish an

effective management structure to respond to a threatened or actual crisis; apply a multi-sectoral approach to crisis management; and lastly, build national resilience. These objectives will continue to be promoted through certain thematic approaches.

In recognition of our political structure, we will continue to apply a crisis management philosophy of collective but differentiated responsibility that recognises the tenets of our federalism as well as coordinate jurisdiction. This will undergird full-scale crisis management responsibilities for containment, response, stability and recovery. We will promote continuous, integrated technology-enabled environmental scanning, monitoring, early detection and analysis, and initiate public advisories, alerts, warnings and engagements as necessary.

Policing As A Triad

When we properly contextualise the foregoing expressions from the National Security Strategy, we observe that the focus of Operation Amotekun, like others nationwide, is internal security to supplement and complement policing responsibilities. Amotekun therefore conforms to the notion that

policing is a triad involving (i) formal, statutory and regular policing, (ii) community (multiple stakeholders) participation, and (iii) informal neighbourhood watch.

Currently the NPF and NSCDC have frameworks for harmonising and harnessing resources available at the disposal of nationwide vigilante systems by maintaining viable community relationships schema. The military – civil relations schema of the armed forces have equally provided strong bases to underscore the efficacy and relevance of policing triad to which Amotekun tightly fits.

OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF AMOTEKUN

The objectives of Amotekun across the six states are to:

(a) systematically gather, document, evaluate and analyse data and information to convert to actionable intelligence for tactical, operational and strategic goals;
(b) share intelligence about crime, crime in progress, suspicious activities, criminal suspects and other criminal activities;
(c) collaborate with similar security network agencies in other States, including but not limited to Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo States, to deter kidnapping, terrorism, destruction of livelihood, criminal damage to property, cultism, highway robbery and any other criminal activities and to assist the Police in apprehending such criminals;
(d) protect lives and property within the State;
(e) ensure that all persons travelling along the highways, major roads, remote areas, hinterland, forest and inland waterways are free to participate in their normal social and economic life without fear or hindrance; and
(f) assist the Police and other security agencies to carry out any other lawful activity for maintaining law and order in the State.

Each of the six states established an agency to manage the functions of the State Security Network. In the case of Lagos an existing entity was adapted and the hitherto subsisting law amended to include the following functions:

(a) collaborate with and assist the Police and other Security Network Agencies in gathering information about crime, crime investigation,

arrest and prosecution of persons suspected of or involved in kidnapping, terrorism, destruction of livelihood, criminal damage to property, cultism, highway robbery and any other criminal activities;

(b) collaborate with and assist the Police and other security agencies in maintaining law and order within the state by:

(i) making available relevant information on crime, crime in progress, crime related activities, suspicious activities and criminal suspects;

(ii) undertaking routine day and night patrols on major roads, remote areas, hinterland, forests and inland waterways;

(iii) ensuring that offenders are identified, arrested, registered and promptly handed over to the nearest Police station or post;

(iv) giving timely report of suspicious activities and crimes in progress to aid in the effective policing of the State;

(v) providing the Police and other security agencies with any other relevant information to aid in the effective policing of the State;

(c) disarm unauthorised persons in possession of firearms and other dangerous weapons;

(d) render prompt assistance to crime and accident victims;

(e) undertake routine day and night patrols on interconnected roads and surveillance on highways, major roads, remote areas, hinterland, forests and inland waterways;

(f) undertake joint patrols and operations with the Police and other security agencies in furtherance of the objects of the Agency;

(g) react and respond promptly and strategically to distress calls;

(h) prevent highway crimes and any other criminal activities by way of local intelligence gathering and use of technology;

(i) collaborate with the So-Safe Corps or other security agencies in carrying out its duties; and

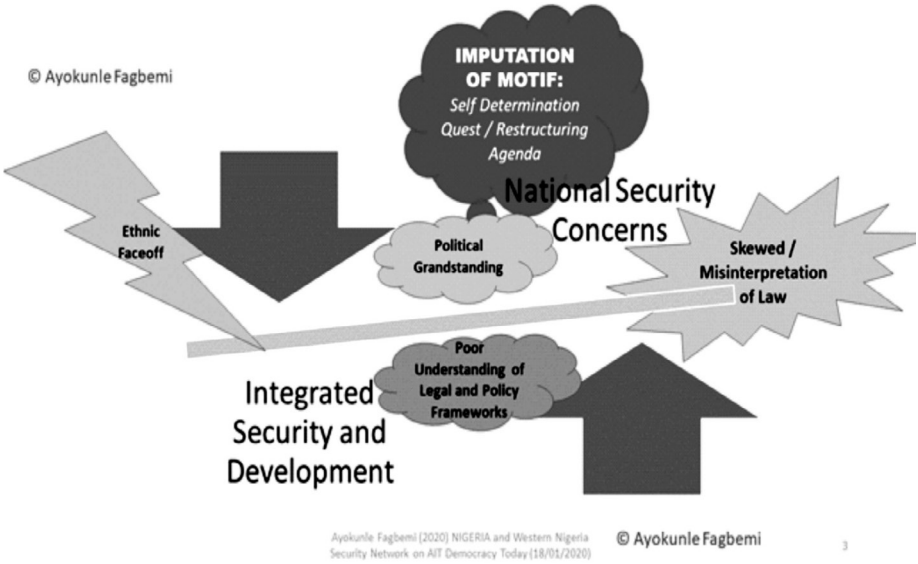
(j) carry out such other directives as the Governor may expressly give to the Ogun State Amotekun Corps in relation to security and the maintenance of public order and safety.

(2) The Agency shall in the course of carrying out its duties safeguard the human rights of every person as enshrined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) and other relevant human rights instruments.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Amotekun does not constitute any form of threat to Nigeria's existence. It is rather a safeguard against crime and criminality in all forms and ramifications. The only unspoken concern in the view of many analysts is that of the states will now have effective control of the resources they deploy for their internal security. For example, until the establishment of the network, the six states are renowned for providing administrative and logistics support, including hardware and firearms, to the Nigerian Police. The ceasing of extra National Assembly funding of NPF from these states it is believed shall bring to an end the racketeering and corruption often associated with security expenditure.

DYSFUNCTIONAL SERVICES AND FAILURE

As noted earlier, Amotekun and other self-help initiatives including the Hisbah of Kano State and in other states of northern Nigeria where Sharia is prevalent are products of dysfunctional services and failures of security and law enforcement agencies. The dearth of knowledge about the existence, relevance and/or understanding of the contents of legal and policy frameworks have continued to cause dysfunctionality in services delivery because of structural and systemic failures due to faulty interpretation and application of their provisions.



Thus, Operation Amotekun remains a classical fusion of citizens' self-help and subnational level initiatives. It is reflecting the years of clamour for security sector reforms in Nigeria, Africa and globally. Amotekun is indeed a product of years of security sector reformation supported by international development partners such as DFID, USAID, AusAID, UNDP, etc.

We must reiterate that contrary to what spin doctors have projected severally, Operation Amotekun conforms to the provisions of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) along with other legal and policy frameworks that shape Nigeria's security and defence management architecture. They include and not limited to:

- Nigerian Security Agencies Act
- Nigerian Police Force Act and Force Regulations/ Orders
- Criminal and Penal Codes
- National Security Strategy, National Cybersecurity Policy and Strategy, National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) amongst others

In specific terms, the relevant portions include Section 11 (1) and (2); Section 13, 14 (1), (2) (a) – (c). That is, in as much as the initiative does not run contrary to Section 214 (1) and/or item 45 of the 2nd Schedule of the 1999 Constitution.

Furthermore, Part V of the Criminal Code Act Sections 272 - 275 that inter alia provides for citizens participation in crime prevention and arrest, to wit, Sections 272 and 273 of the Criminal Code reveal that 'a person may arrest a person who has committed an offence and prevent his escape'. More emphatically, Section 275 states that:

> "it is lawful for any person who witnesses a breach of the peace to interfere to prevent the continuance or renewal of it, and to use such force as is reasonably necessary for such prevention and is reasonably proportioned to the danger to be apprehended from such continuance or renewal, and to detain any person who is committing or who is about to join in or to renew the breach of the peace for such time as may be reasonably necessary in order to give him into the custody of a peace officer or police officer…"

In addition, Amotekun is fully rooted in ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework, Article 20 of the Peace and Security Protocol (as defined by the

Livingstone Formula) of the African Union (AU), Commonwealth and UN peace and security architectures.

CONCLUSION

We conclude that Operation Amotekun is a manifestation of the continued efforts aimed at democratisation and regionalization of security in Nigeria. The only challenge being that many stakeholders have failed to rise above their primordial political economic interests in their perception and engagement of the scheme. The most guilty being the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association and extant Fulani sociocultural groupings because of myriad security breaches in which their members have been allegedly implicated.

AMOTEKUN: DEMOCRATISATION OR REGIONALISATION OF SECURITY IN NIGERIA

BY
OWEI LAKEMFA*

Introduction

Amotekun is the Yoruba name for leopard, one of the big cats that roam the forests of these South-Western peoples of Nigeria. Ekun is the name for the Tiger. So, Amotekun literarily means the animal similar to or with the characteristics of the tiger.

On the other hand, the Europeans thought the leopard was a hybrid between the lion and the panther, hence the Latin origins of the name leopardus, literally "lion-pard, lion-panther" [2]

The leopard has a good camouflaged fur that makes it blend with its environment including the trees it climbs to escape danger or drag its kill away from other predators. It stalks in a sneaky and graceful manner. The leopard also has the ability to adapt to its environment, is fiercely territorial, has speed of up to 58 kilometres, is strong and confident.[3]

Given the high rate of insecurity in the country with the terrorist Boko Haram on rampage in the North East, bandits roaming around most of the North West, violent crimes including kidnapping in the South, the six South West states of Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Ekiti and Osun, met on Thursday, January 9, 2020 to establish a regional security outfit, the Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN) codenamed Amotekun.

The governors of the six states had met in June, 2019 under their regional body, the Development Agenda for Western Nigeria Commission (DAWN) where they decided to establish the security outfit. As a demonstration of their commitment, five of the states contributed 20 vehicles each, while Oyo State which is to host the headquarters, contributed 33 vehicles. They also donated 100 units of motorcycles each.[4]

Those constituting the security outfit were mainly drawn from some Yoruba self-determination groups like the Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC) local hunters and the famous farmers movement, the Agbekoya.[5]

However, within a month, matters almost got out of hand when Mrs. Funke Olakunrin, daughter of the leader of the Pan-Yoruba socio-cultural organisation, Afenifere, Chief Reuben Fasoranti was killed by gunmen on July

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12, 2019 along the Ondo-Ore Road in Ondo State. There were region-wide agitations for the area to be rid immediately of perceived Fulani kidnappers who were blamed for the murder. In an apparent bid to stem the tides of protests and accusations of police incompetence and bias, the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Mohammed Adamu, deployed a special squad to track down the killers and bring them to justice.[6]

This act in itself exposes the weakness of the unitary police force; that a country of about 200 million people in a 923,768 square kilometre space, would need to send special squads from the country's capital for basic murder or crime investigations which local detectives should handle as a matter of routine.

The Mrs. Olakunrin incidence added a lot of pressure on the governors to speedily establish Amotekun, and led to the holding of an emergency meeting in September 2019, between the IGP and the six state governors. At the meeting, he pledged to redeploy special forces to the South West states to boost security.[7]

While welcoming the gesture, the governors reiterated their commitment to establish Amotekun. Their Chairman, Governor Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State who is also a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) and former President of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) explained that Amotekun is not being established to rival the police but to complement its work. "[8]

Some Major Cases of Insecurity in Nigeria

There have been major cases of insecurity in Nigeria since its 1914 Amalgamation under Lord Lugard when the Northern and Southern Protectorates and the Lagos Crown Colony were merged to establish the country.[9]

The Tiv Uprisings

The Tiv who migrated from Central Africa to Cameroun, and later moved down to Taraba and Benue areas, are a strong, courageous and fiercely independent people who could not be militarily conquered either by the Fulani forces or the British.[10] Three years after the British colonial conquest of the Hausa States and the Sokoto Caliphate, it attacked the Tiv in 1906 ostensibly to protect the Jukun but in reality to impose colonial rule through the dominance of the Fulani Caliphate.[11]

The Tiv led a major uprising in 1952 against Caliphate which ruled the

North through the Native Authority system. This was brutally repressed by the colonial army. The Tiv politically organised themselves under the Middle Belt Forum and carried out two other uprisings in 1960 and 1964 seeking to be independent of the majority Hausa-Fulani rule.[12]

The Tiv areas became the first place the Nigerian Army carried out almost annual internal security operations. In 1967 when a dozen states were created from the four regions in the country, a Benue-Plateau State was created which gave the Tiv some autonomy. On February 3, 1976, Benue State was created in which further gave the Tiv a high degree of autonomy. [13]

There were less clashes between the Nigerian state and the Tiv until 2001 when during a Tiv-Jukun clash, 19 soldiers involved in peace keeping were allegedly killed by some Tiv youths. In retaliatory attacks, the Nigeria Army invaded the Tiv areas sacking villages and towns.[14]

The Human Rights Watch reported that: "the military operation began on Monday, October 22, when soldiers from the 23rd Armoured Brigade of the 3rd Armoured Division of the Nigerian army rounded up residents in Gbeji village for a "meeting," made them sit on the ground, separated the men from the others, and then opened fire upon the men indiscriminately. Witnesses reported that some of the victims' bodies were then set ablaze. Further killings took place as soldiers invaded the villages of Vasae, Anyiin Iorja, Ugba, Sankera and Zaki-Biam, all located in the two local government areas of Logo and Zaki-Biam. In the following two days, there was widespread destruction of property and buildings in these villages, after terrified residents had abandoned their homes." [15]

The Niger Delta Uprisings

The first armed attempt to break away from Nigeria was that by the Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro-led Niger Delta Volunteer Service (NDVS) which sought to create an independent Ijaw Republic.[16] Boro said it was a war of survival as the Ijaws in the oil rich Niger Delta were facing extinction. He said: "The Ijaws were going into perpetual bondage: if we did not strike now, not only our families, but also the entire Ijaws would be infernally chained"[17]

The 12-day insurrection began on February 23, 1966 with Boro giving his men the marching orders: "Today is a great day, not only in your lives but also in the history of the Niger Delta. Perhaps, it will be the greatest day for a very long time. This is not because we are going to bring the heavens down, but because we are going to demonstrate to the world what and how we feel

about oppression. Remember your 70-year-old grandmother who still farms before she eats; remember also your poverty-stricken people; remember, too, your petroleum which is being pumped out daily from your veins; and then fight for your freedom." [18]

By March 7, 1966 when Boro turned himself in, 167 persons including 80 members of the NDVS had been arrested. Boro and two of his lieutenants; Samuel Owonaru and Nottingham Dick were sentenced to death on June 21, 1966.

However, the General Aguiyi-Ironsi regime that sentenced them, was overthrown in a counter coup on July 29, 1966 and the sentences of the three men were commuted to life in May, 1967, and on further consideration, were granted full pardon on August 4, 1967.[19] They were commissioned into the Nigeria Army to use their knowledge of the Niger Delta in the Civil War which pitched the Eastern Region against the rest of the country. Boro was commissioned a Major and killed on the battlefield on May 9, 1968. He was 29.[20]

In the 1990s, there were renewed agitations leading to the massacre of civilians in the Boro hometown of Kaiama and the declaration by the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) of a war manifesto called 'The Kaiama Declaration'[21] This was the commencement of what became known as 'The Militants' struggle which resulted in huge loss of lives, destruction of a lot of towns and villages in the Niger Delta, Nigeria's oil production cut by two thirds and ended with a Presidential Amnesty for all combatants. The amnesty proclaimed by President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua GCFR, on June 25, 2009, included a Presidential Amnesty Programme to rehabilitate the combatants and youths impacted by the uprising.[22]

The Civil War

The Nigerian Civil War has been perhaps the most catastrophic armed conflict in Nigerian history. After the bloody coup of January 15, 1966 and the bloodier counter coup of July 29, 1966, the then Governor of the Eastern Region, Lieutenant Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu on May 30, 1967 declared a break- away Republic of Biafra. The Civil War broke out two months later.[23]

In the 30-month war which ended on January 15, 1967, at least one and half million people died.[24]

The Maitatsine Uprisings

Maitasine was an Islamic Sect led by a cleric, Muhammadu Marwa which staged bloody uprisings in some states in the North from 1980 to 1985. The Washington Post reported of the first Maitasine Uprising:

> "In December 1980 the Maitatsine sect attacked and killed worshipers at Kano's central mosque during Friday prayers. Eleven days of fighting followed, first with the police, who were defeated and killed in large numbers, and then the Army, which had to kill all of the sect's followers guarding their headquarters in order to capture it. The official death toll was more than 4,000, but other sources put the figure much higher." [25] Over 900 sect members were jailed.

Some of the sect members moved to Maiduguri and two years later, the police said it had information the group was planning to attack other citizens who do not accept its brand of Islamic. In reaction, the police on October 26, 1982 moved into the sect's premises in the Bulunkutu area of Maiduguri. In the fighting that took place, about 250 people were killed, 600 wounded and 2,200 left homeless.[26] Within three days, the bloody urban warfare had spread to Kaduna and finally Kano where the security forces declared the sect crushed. In 1984, the sect staged another bloody uprising in Yola.[27]

Boko Haram

The on-going Boko Haram terrorist uprising which began in 2009 is the longest running uprising in the country's history. It has killed tens of thousands, bombed high profile places including the United Nations Building and the Police Force Headquarters, kidnapped thousands of men and women including 276 School girls in Chibok in April, 2014.[28]

When the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) took power on May 29, 2015, it vowed to bring the Boko Haram insurgency to an end. It in fact boasted in September 2015 that it would end the insurgency within three months. Three months later, it announced that it had "technically defeated" the Boko Haram.[29]

Today, over four years later, Boko Haram remains strong, prompting President Muhammadu Buhari to call a meeting of all security chiefs in the country on Thursday June 18, 2020 during which he expressed his dismay that the insurgency was still on and in fact that insecurity in general has

deteriorated.[30]

The National Security Adviser, Babagana Monguno, who briefed the country after the meeting, reported that: "Mr President expressed great concern over the declining security situation in the country. He is extremely unhappy about what is happening and he feels that, even though the security agencies are doing their best, their best is not good enough for him and wants an immediate reversal of the current trend and immediate reversal of our misfortunes in all their dimensions. Mr President also told us clearly in no uncertain terms, that he and indeed the administration campaigned to power on the platform of three issues, fighting insecurity, overcoming our economic difficulties and dealing with the scourge of corruption. More so, he noted that it takes common sense for anyone to understand that without security, the pursuit of the other two will just be an exercise in futility."[31]

What is clear from the analysis above, especially as it relates to the war against Boko Haram and banditry is that the Federal Government is becoming increasingly incapable of maintaining security in the country. There is the need for some sort of complementary security support system.

Amotekun: Concept, Objectives and Establishment

There were lots of debates on Amotekun, but its January 9, 2020 launch which attracted a lot of attention in the country was an opportunity for its sponsors to directly explain their vision, concept and objectives.

The headquarters of Amotekun is Ibadan, Oyo State where Governor Oluseyi Abiodun Makinde, an engineer and expert in fluid and gas metering explained: "The security of their lives and properties should be of paramount importance. When we discuss the economic potentials of our states, and talk of investment opportunities, and growing our internally generated revenue, by exploring areas of comparative advantage, we remain fully aware that we cannot achieve anything in a state of insecurity."

"To those who are afraid, I say, when we assumed office, we all took the oath of office and promised to be faithful and bear true allegiance to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. To follow the dictates of the Constitution and protect the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Nigeria."

"That enemy is not Nigeria, but bad elements among us who are threatening our co-existence." [32]

The man who explained the whole Amotekun concept from the perspectives of the founding governors was Governor John Olukayode Fayemi

of Ekiti State who is also the Chairman of Nigeria Governors' Forum. He holds a doctorate in War Studies from Kings College, University of London, had earlier been governor of the state from 2010-14, and Minister of Solid Minerals Development between 2015 and 2018. Fayemi clarified that:

> The genesis of this initiative was when we were being assaulted by a spate of kidnapping, banditry and armed robbery across the length and breadth of Western Nigeria. We obviously sought succour in all the right places and the mainstream security agencies did their best to arrest the situation.
>
> It was in the context of this unfortunate development that we lost a daughter of our leader in Afenifere, Pa Reuben Fasoranti and that further put and rightfully, a lot of pressure on the political leadership of the South West to do something about the fear our community and constituencies were in… Amotekun is nothing but a community policing response to problems that our people wanted to see the back of. Pending the time that the community policing being put together by the police come to fruition, it is clearly important that we give confidence our people confidence boosting strategy. If you ask me, Amotekun is nothing but a confidence-building strategy for our people in the six states. The personnel that would work in the security outfit would do the work with the knowledge of the terrain, language and history of where they are going to work. Amotekun is not a duplication or a replacement but gives our people confidence that they are being looked after by the people they elected into office.
>
> We have seen all sorts in social media. What has proliferated the social media is an attempt to sabotage what we are doing. We are not creating a regional police force neither are we oblivious of steps to take in order to have state police. Yes, some of us are an apologetic, inveterate advocate of state police, but we are also law-abiding citizens of Nigeria. We know the process and procedure to undergo to get to that point…However, we share boundaries and there may be a situation that would warrant a handshake between one or the other of our Amotekun formation. Most importantly, it is not an agenda to undermine the integrity of our country. Just as some of us are unapologetic Yoruba indigenes, we are very proud citizens of Nigeria and we will do everything to protect the integrity of our people.[33]

Professor Adebanji Akintoye, leader of the Yoruba World Congress an amalgam of 28 organisations in the region explained on behalf of non-state actors why Amotekun was born: "I don't think anybody is in doubt that our nation is in danger today. Our farmers are being driven from their lands. And we know that large numbers of our farmers out of the fear for their lives and families have fled their abodes. The foundation of our economic well- being is fearfully being eroded. And we cannot just watch. And the Yoruba people have not just watched. When we first started, we did not know how to take it because we Yoruba are peaceful people… We did not know how to respond and so our people suffered very seriously in many parts of our States, and our zones. By and by, our people have arisen and are answering back increasingly, creditably, and that is a good thing. … What is happening is that the Yoruba by their elected leaders have decided to give the highest level of protection to their people in their fatherland and homes. " [34]

The Great Debate over Amotekun's Legality

There were debates on the legality or otherwise of Amotekun, but the launch its January 20, 2020 launch went on. However, five days later, the Federal Government through the office of the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, declared it illegal. The Minister, Abubakar Malami released a press statement stating the position of the Federal Government:

"The Federal Republic of Nigeria is a sovereign entity and is governed by laws meant to sustain its corporate existence as a constitutional democracy. It is a Federation of states, but with the Federal Government superintending over matters of national interests. The division of executive and legislative authority between the Federal and State Governments has been clearly defined by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended). It is against the same background that matters relating to the peace, order and good government of the Federation and in particular, the defence of the country, are enshrined in the Exclusive Legislative List. The Second Schedule in Item 17 deals with defence. This is a matter that is within the exclusive operational competence of the Federal of Government of Nigeria. No other authority at the state level, whether the executive or legislature has the legal authority over defence.

"The setting up of the paramilitary organisation called 'Amotekun' is illegal and runs contrary to the provisions of the Nigerian law. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) has established the Army,

Navy and Air Force, including the Police and other numerous paramilitary organisations for the purpose of the defence of Nigeria. "As a consequence of this, no State Government, whether singly or in a group has the legal right and competence to establish any form of organisation or agency for the defence of Nigeria or any of its constituent parts. This is sanctioned by the provision of Item 45 of the Second Schedule of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) authorising the Police and other Federal Government security services established by law to maintain law and order. "The law will take its natural course in relation to excesses associated with organisation, administration and participation in 'Amotekun' or continuous association with it as an association. "Finally, it is important to put on record that the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice was not consulted on the matter. If it had, proper information and guidance would have been offered to ensure that Nigeria's defence and corporate entity are preserved at all times." [35]

The next day, Human Rights Lawyer and Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Mr. Femi Falana, opposed the stance of the Attorney General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami:

> Before the official launch of Amotekun at Ibadan, Oyo State, last week, the Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Ibrahim held a meeting with the south-west governors represented by Gov Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State. At the end of the meeting the Police endorsed the security initiative. By virtue of section 318 of the Constitution the word "government" is said to include the Government of the Federation, or any State, or of a local government council or any person who exercises power or authority on its behalf. Thus, through the Inspector-General of Police the Federal Government has ratified the establishment of Amotekun. Therefore, the statement of the Attorney-General of the Federal Government that he was not consulted before the establishment of Amotekun is totally uncalled for and ought to be ignored by the South-West governors.
>
> With respect, Mr Malami's purported proscription of Amotekun is hypocritical and discriminatory on the grounds that the Civilian JTF operating in Yobe and Borno states is constituted by 26,000 well-armed volunteers who have been assisting the armed forces to combat terrorism in the north east region. Similarly, the governments of Kano and Zamfara states have established the Hisbar Commission.

It is common knowledge that the Hisbar operatives in Zamfara state recently arrested a policeman who was alleged to have been caught in the company of three women. The Lagos State government has equally established the Neighbourhood Watch to assist the Police and other security agencies in protecting the life and property of every person living in Lagos.

No doubt, section 214 of the Constitution stipulates that there shall be only one police force in Nigeria. But the Federal Government has breached the Constitution by setting up other police forces. For instance, the Nigerian Security and Defence Corps is another police force established by law. The State Security Service is also a police force established by law. Its operatives are well-armed. They wear masks even in broad daylight. The Federal Government has also authorised the officials of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, the Independent Corrupt Practices and Offences Commission, Nigeria Customs Service, Nigeria Correctional Service and other paramilitary agencies to bear arms. To that extent, the Federal Government cannot stop any state from setting a security outfit. In fact, having lost control of the monopoly of violence to armed gangs in the various parts of the country the Federal Government lacks the legal, political and moral right to challenge security outfits set up by state governments and individuals to protect the lives and property of the people of Nigeria.

It is pertinent to point out that as chief security officers in the respective states, governors have the power to adopt measures deemed fit within the ambit of the law to ensure the maintenance of law and order. In **Attorney-General of Anambra State v Attorney-General of the Federation (2005) 9 NWLR (Pt 931) 572** the Supreme Court held that, "The Constitution in section 215 subsection (1) clearly gives the Governor of Anambra State the power to issue lawful direction to the Commissioner of Police, Anambra State in connection with securing public safety and order in the State."

In Inspector-General of Police v ANPP (2008) 12 WRN 65 it was held by the Federal High Court that police permit for rallies was illegal and unconstitutional and that the governor is the appropriate authority who may delegate powers under the Public Order Act to a

Commissioner of Police for the purpose of convening any meeting or rally. It was further held that the Inspector-General of Police cannot exercise any power under the Act. The decision was upheld by the Court of Appeal in **All Nigeria Peoples Party & Ors. v. Inspector General of Police (2008) 12 WRN 65.**

As tribunal of enquiry is not provided for in either the Exclusive or Concurrent Legislative List it is a residuary matter. Hence, in **Chief Gani Fawehinmi v. Ibrahim Babangida (2003) 12 WRN 1** the Supreme Court held that the power to set a Tribunal of Inquiry is vested in state governors and that the power of the President to institute a commission of enquiry under the Tribunal of Enquiry Act is limited to the Federal Capital Territory.

In view of the aforesaid decided cases of our courts the Federal Government does not have exclusive control over law and order in any of the 36 states of the Federation. No doubt, Mr. Malami has anchored his controversial legal opinion on Section 227 of the Constitution which provides that "No association shall retain, organise, train or equip any person or group of persons for the purpose of enabling them to be employed for the use or display of physical force or coercion in promoting any political objective or interest or in such manner as to arouse reasonable apprehension that they are organised and trained or equipped for that purpose."

"Since Amotekun is not an outfit set up by South West governors to harass or intimidate political opponents it cannot be prohibited under Section 227 or any other provision of the Constitution. In other words, the Constitution has not prohibited the establishment of security outfits for the defence of the people of Nigeria. However, if Mr. Malami is convinced that his position is backed by law he should approach the Supreme Court to test the constitutional validity of Amotekun. Meanwhile, the governments of Ekiti, Ondo, Osun, Ogun and Oyo states are advised to ignore Mr. Malami's purported proscription and proceed to enact the necessary laws similar to the Neighbourhood Watch Law of Lagos State."[36]

The debates on the legality or otherwise of Amotekun overflowed into the streets of the region as coalition of groups held protest marches necessitating

a meeting between the state governors and the Federal Government. The meeting which held on January 23, 2020 was presided over by the Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria and former law lecturer. In attendance were the Attorney General of the Federation, the Inspector General of Police and the state governors. The consensus was that everything must be done to protect lives and property including by states but that any state security outfit should be structured along the lines of the community police concept of the Federal Government and backed by law enacted by each participating state. [37]

The Imperative of Amotekun

When the Buhari administration came to power in 2015 promising to end insecurity in the country, the main challenge was the Boko Haram. Within a year, massacres in the name of herdsmen-farmers clashes and banditry became the new order so much that large swaths of land were seized from the indigenous people in the Benue Basin. These areas were occupied by the invaders and renamed. In Plateau State alone by July 1, 2018, 54 such occupied communities had been renamed by the invaders.[38] The inhabitants of those communities had either been killed, forced to flee or pushed into internally displaced peoples' camps without the security services moving to retake them.

In a frightening twist, the Buhari administration in 2018, advised the victims of these land invasion and seizures, to abandon their ancestral lands to the terrorists as it is better to be alive than be killed in their homes! The Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, Mr. Femi Adesina, speaking on an AIT morning programme in response to a question on ancestral attachments to land said: "Ancestral attachment? You can only have ancestral attachment when you are alive. If you are talking about ancestral attachment, if you are dead, how does the attachment matter? …So, if your state genuinely does not have land for ranching, it is understandable; not every state will have land for ranches. But where you have land and you can do something, please do for peace. What will the land be used for if those who own it are dead at the end of the day?" [39]

In January 2019, President Buhari who is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces in throwing up his hands as a way of explaining why the military was not engaging the invaders and restoring indigenes to their lands, blamed the situation on the late President Mouammar Ghadaffi of Libya who had been killed eight years earlier.

In an interview with Arise Television, Buhari claimed: "The Nigerian cattle herder used to carry nothing more than a stick, but these are people with AK-47 and people refuse to reflect on the demise of Gaddafi. Gaddafi for 43 years in Libya, at some stage, he decided to recruit people from Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, from Central African Republic and these young chaps are not taught to be bricklayers, electricians, plumbers or any trade but to shoot and kill. So, when the opposition in Libya succeeded in killing him, they arrested some and they did what they did to them. The rest escaped with their orphans and we encounter some of them in the North-East and they are all over the place now organising attacks."[40]

So the Federal government under President Buhari clearly had no answer to the insecurity in the country. The Kaduna State Governor Nasir El-Rufai seemed to have reached this conclusion far back in 2016 when rather than rely on the security forces to restore law and order, he decided to pay off the killers, in some cases sending cash to pay them in neighbouring countries.

He told journalists this story that seemed rather bizarre: "For Southern Kaduna, we didn't understand what was going on and we decided to set up a committee under Gen. Martin Luther Agwai (Rtd) to find out what was going on there. What was established was that the root of the problem has a history starting from the 2011 post-election violence. "Fulani herdsmen from across Africa bring their cattle down towards the Middle Belt and Southern Nigeria. The moment the rains starts around March, April, they start moving them up to go back to their various communities and countries. Unfortunately, it was when they were moving up with their cattle across Southern Kaduna that the elections of 2011 took place and the crisis trapped some of them. Some of them were from Niger, Cameroon, Chad, Mali and Senegal. Fulanis are in 14 African countries and they traverse this country with the cattle. So many of these people were killed, cattle lost and they organised themselves and came back to revenge. So a lot of what was happening in Southern Kaduna was actually from outside Nigeria... We took certain steps. We got a group of people that were going round trying to trace some of these people in Cameroon, Niger Republic and so on to tell them that there is a new governor who is Fulani like them and has no problem paying compensations for lives lost and he is begging them to stop killing. In most of the communities, once that appeal was made to them, they said they have forgiven. There are one or two that asked for monetary compensation. They said they have forgiven the death of human beings, but want compensation for cattle. We said no problem, and

we paid some."[41]

The identity of the killers Governor El-Rufai paid and how much they were paid is not certain. It is also not known if they used the so-called compensation to buy more arms. However, what is certain is that the terror attacks did not abate. One of the latest of such massacres was on May 12, 2020 when alleged Fulani invaders overran some communities in the Kajuru Local Government. [42]

The Senator representing Kaduna South Senatorial District, Danjuma La'ah who is also the Chairman, Senate Committee on Federal Character and Intergovernmental Affairs, on May 26, 2020 told the press that the security situation has become worse with more massacres and alleged indifference by the Kaduna State and Federal Governments.[43]

Senator La'ah complained "It is even getting worse during this period of (Covid-19)lockdown because the bandits are still moving about, killing innocent souls in my area, who obey government directive to stay indoors … I said it the last time that my people should defend themselves. I thought that by now, we would have overcome them, but the attacks continue and my people are always the victims. I expect the military, the police, and other security agencies to have come to our aid and protect us, but it is not happening."[44]

Governor Bello Masari of Buhari's home state of Katsina which has been overrun by bandits in many parts, had a different strategy from El-Rufai. He decided that the best thing is to negotiate with the bandits and buy peace. Initially from 2016 he ran a two-year amnesty programme for the bandits who surrendered over 400 AK 47 guns and other assorted arms, and returned over 36,000 cows, donkeys, camels and horses.[45]

Then he went into full negotiations with the bandits and in September 2019, announced a major break-through:

> "The negotiation is yielding results. Now I can say over 80% of people under captivity in Katsina State have been released. So, in terms of group kidnapping I can only remember that right now (we have) only 13 people that we are searching for. We have only 13 people. But in terms of massive attacks since we started, there was no single massive attack on any village or any community. By my account, about 57 people have been released by them, most of them women and young children. Among them even are nationals of Niger Republic.
>
> So, for us it has brought relative peace. The next step is the issue of

> disarming the bandits and commanders in the forest that command 200, 300, 400 fighters, fully armed on motorbikes. That's how they operate and attack the villages. In most cases they go three to one on a motorcycle. They've reinforced their motorcycles and they are using tubeless tyres. They put something inside so that their tyres do not get punctured or breakdown."
>
> "They are ready to disarm but the first stage is about the release of some of them that were not even convicted or even charged to court and by the time they release all those people under their captivity, we will start reconciliation between them and their neighbours. And then those in the forest. We'll start talking about because if they keep the guns and other ammunition with them, they'll eventually fight among themselves."[46]

I wonder why Governor Masari was worried that the bandits could turn on themselves. In any case, nine months later, he discovered that the bandits have been deceiving him and his team. He cried: "They could not honour the agreement, they betrayed us"[47] But how did a governor believe bandits are honourable people who will not betray him?

He lamented: "We choose to sign peace agreement with the bandits so as to avoid loss of life and properties but it didn't yield a positive result. This time around we will hand it over to security personnel. In our effort to honour the agreement between us, we cancelled all vigilantes and volunteer groups and we allowed them (bandits) to continue with their normal activities in the state."[48] Pray what can be the "normal activities" of bandits but banditry?

Governor Masari begged the Katsina people to forgive him since he had failed in his primary duty to protect them. He lamented: "In the forest, a lion or tiger kills only when it is hungry and it doesn't kill all animals; it only kills the one it can eat at a time…How can a human being behave the way an animal cannot behave." [49]

The governors of the six South West states chose not to throw up their hands in frustration, placate killers or negotiate with bandits. They decided that the best strategy is to fight and bring the criminals to justice; their chosen weapon, is the Amotekun.

Amotekun is Neither Democratisation nor Regionalisation

Security as we know it and as President Buhari admitted at his June

18, 2020 meeting with the security chiefs is in a state of virtual collapse. [50] There is dual power in the streets and a life or death struggle may result. So the governors of the South West who share a common culture, language, geographical congruity and claimed progenitor, chose to stand together. What brought them together are not issues of democracy or regionalism, but survival.[51]

Amotekun is the failure of the central government to provide security in the country and the imperative for the people to defend themselves. It is the need for the building blocs of the federation to defend their territories against advancing anarchism. It is the glaring failure of a dysfunctional unitary system and the instinctive need for the constituent parts to hold together, rather than risk being overrun by terrorists, bandits, kidnappers and other criminal non-state actors.

The issue of Amotekun is neither democracy nor regionalism, but self-preservation and survival. It is not about the sociology of insecurity, but the instinctive defence of life. The six South-Western states must have realised that you need a defended geographical area in order to defend life which is the most fundamental of all basic human rights.

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SECTION 5: GENDER

PATRIARCHY: WOMEN AS ITS NEMESIS

BY
CHIJIOKE UWASOMBA*

Introduction

Humans are differentiated into two sexes- female and male; and this differentiation has both biological and behavioural (social) components. From the outset, it is important to note that biological inheritance determines the structure of the female sex organs. The female hormones produced by those sex organs determine the female secondary biological features like breast, auxiliary and pubic hair, menstruation and menopause including the ability to conceive and bear children. Nature has therefore, equipped the women with the ability to reproduce the human species. The male is also endowed with complementary biological features that make the reproductive process possible namely; the structures of the male sex organs and the functions of the male sex hormones. But as Mead (1935) has noted, different societies "standardized personality differences between the sexes which are cultural creations to which each generation, male and female is trained to conform" (191).

The foregoing shows that in a society, personality characteristics, behaviours and many other characteristics of women and men result from non-biological factors. In other words, whatever roles men and women play in the society are not informed by their nature but socially determined. The socialisation process through which the individual, starting from infancy, is trained in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours approximate and appropriate to his/her culture. Socialisation ensures the continuity of a people's culture from generation to generation. Culture determines social role which are prescribed patterns of behaviour assigned to particular classes of individuals, and in the case of our concern in this paper, males and females.

In this paper, our brief is to demonstrate that in spite of the patriarchal ordering of the society in general terms, we will argue that women by their nature have inherent powers that negate and make nonsense of the machismos of men which is not as powerful and sustainable as those possessed of the female folk. Men are a tool in the hands of women and are easily manipulated by the latter.

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We will further explain this view drawing from the Igbo, an ethnic group in Nigeria showing the place of women before the coming of colonialism. Examples from other African countries will suffice.

What is Patriarchy?

General speaking, patriarchy is used to refer to male domination and to the power relationships by which men dominate women. Feminist writers like Millett (1969) have focused more on the system of male domination and female subordination, unlike Marxist feminists who have attempted to look at the issue from the perspective of the relationship between the subordination of women and the organisation of various modes of economic production. According to Beechy (1979), Marxist feminists have attempted to explain patriarchy in a manner that the Marxist theory will be deployed to comprehensively and adequately used to account for the subordination of women as well as for the forms of class exploitation. Juliet Mitchell (1974) sees patriarchy from the point of view of "kinship system in which men exchange women, and to the symbolic power which fathers love within these systems, and to the consequences of this power for the inferiorised… psychology of women" (402).

Heidi Hartmann (1979), adopting the radical feminist usage, sees patriarchy as male power over and above the female and tries to show the inter-relationship between the patriarchal order and the organisation of the capitalist labour process. Eisenstein (1979) sees patriarchy from the point of view of sexual hierarchy which manifests in the role of mother as both a domestic labourer and consumer within the family.

According to Kate Millett in *Sexual Politics*¸ Patriarchy is organised around the principles upon which men *MUST* dominate women and that older male shall dominate younger male. The family is implicated in Millett's conceptualisation of patriarchy because, according to her, that is the unit that socialises children into sexually differentiated roles, temperaments and statuses, and to maintain women in a state of subordination. Revolutionary Feminists like Firestone (1971) have argued that the basis of women's oppression lies in women's reproductive capacities as long as these have been under the control of men. Sheila Jeffreys (1977) articulated this to mean or correspond to what she terms as the sex class system, which to her is based on the relations of reproduction, a situation which leads to the rule of women by men and subsequently confers power on men to own and control women

reproductive powers.

Another conception of patriarchy is the one articulated by Levi-Strauss (1969). According to him, "exchange relations lie at the foundation of human societies, and the exchange of women which accounts for the particular social position in which women are placed in all human societies" (226). This position of seeing women and not men as being used as exchange objects is a product of Freud's (1950) account of the universality of the incest taboo. Patriarchy is seen in this context as women remaining defined by kinship structures while men enter into the class-dominated structures of history. And in the words of Juliet Mitchell (1974), Patriarchy is the symbolic law of the father which exists in all societies.

Engels' Preface to his classical work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State,* provides a justification within the Marxian analysis which sees the sphere of reproduction as one important expect of why social relationships based on the family (or the domestic community) continue to have such great importance for the capitalist system. This source is one of the sources which locate patriarchy within the social relations of reproduction. According to Engels:

The determining factor in history, in the last resort, the production and reproduction of immediate life… this itself is of a twofold character. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence… on the other, the production of human beings themselves. The social institutions under which men of a definite country live are conditioned by both kinds of production, by the stage of development of labour on the one hand, and of the family on the other (Engels, 1968:455).

McDonough and Harrison (1978) are of the view that patriarchy is concerned with the control of the wife's labour in the family and the wife's sexual fidelity and procreation.

What emerges from the foregoing is the fact that patriarchal ideology is oppressive to women.

Patriarchy as Power and Façade

> … in the greater number of ambitious day-dreamers, too, we can discover a woman in some corner, for whom the dreamer performs all his heroic deeds and at whose feet all his triumphs are held (Freud, 1963;37-38).

> Whereas male power is hard, aggressive and boastful, female power is soft, passive and self –effacing. Whereas male power is like an irresistible force, female power is like an immovable object. Whereas male power acts like a storm, full of motion, sound and fury, female power is like the sun-steady, quiet and uncontestable. Against resistance, male power barks, commands and pummels, whereas female power whispers, manipulates and erodes (Chinweizu, 1990:22).

The above excerpts capture the reality of our world. As indicated in our introduction, Patriarchy exists and appears very repressive but in the exercise of power in an otherwise patriarchal system soft power wielded by women predominates in every material particular. Patriarchal advantage can be upturned into a mutual playing field where both male and female can participate based on what each other has to offer.

The implication of this is that the patriarchal order and its mind-set may not always work to the man's advantage. Patriarchy is a façade which satisfies the male ego while the real power is with the woman. This is because of the intricate network of relationship which is complex and dynamic in nature. In the *Anatomy of Female power*, Chinweizu challenges one of the basic premises of Feminism on the issue of patriarchy and demonstrates how women rule men and have always been in charge. According to him "they exercise power through education, propaganda, directives, suggestions, rewards and punishments. They wield instruments of persuasion and coercion (11). He goes further to outline what needs to be done to reduce the power and influence of women with a view to building a society of equality between and amongst men and women.

The German writer Esther Villar, in her book, *The Manipulated Man* explains how from time immemorial, women have manipulated and turned men into their slaves. She explains how a woman manipulates a man skilfully by steps like courtship and finally marriage. She also gives an account of how the man is tricked to care for the women and her offspring all his life. The woman has used this strategy for thousands of years as a stick and carrot method to keep the man chasing her and committing his life to serving her. Both Villar and Chinweizu argue that all societies are matriarchal and not patriarchal. Matriarchy rules subtly through wits and tricks. This view resonates with Luke's three faces of power-patriarchy uses the overt face of

power, while matriarchy uses the covert face as well as the subtle face.

The first contact of a child (whether a boy or a girl) is the mother who must have carried it in her womb for nine months before delivery. Therefore, the existence of any child is a product of the woman (mother) who would have made enormous sacrifices including maturing care. Women are so important in the nurturing of a child that Chinweizu puts it thus:

The advantage women have over men resides in the fact that they are our mothers. We owe our very existence to their enormous sacrifice and nurturing care. What if they had chosen to flush us out of their corporeal system when we were still merely smears of blood, or dump us in pit toilets after birth, or suffocate us to death with excessive breast feeding, mammoth breast could kill a baby through asphyxiation or put little poison in each meal they serve us (92)

Chinweizu further asserts thus:

The notion of male superiority is a noisy myth, a compensatory boast, born of men's acute consciousness of inferiority. Rather than being inferior to man, woman's superiority is incontestable, and is based on the womb. After all, the achievements of even a Caeser are but credentials which he tenders before a woman (92).

The above corroborates Lebeuf's and Amadiume's (2008) works which have shown the capacity of women to exercise power or to be part of the power structure of their societies (African) as subjects, not as objects.

Women in Pre-Colonial African (Nigerian Society)

According to Green (1964), women in the pre-colonial African society had equal decision-making opportunities during village assembly. The emphasis was then on the ability to speak wisely. Women generally attended age-set gatherings in their natal villages, performed various ritual functions and helped to settle disputes among their "brothers". And as Okorie and Okehi (2012) have argued, "women in expressing their grievances during the pre-colonial period had boycotts and strikes as their weapons. For boycotts and strikes to work effectively, they would co-operate" (201).

Ifi Amadiume has thrown more light on the place, activities and power of women in Nigeria, especially her Nnobi community in the present Anambra state of Nigeria. Through her work, *Male Daughters, Female Husbands*, she shows with rich data and documentary evidence the powerful roles women

played in the society she investigated. Lineage daughters had specific duties in the patrilineage during funerals, settlements of disputes, mediatory roles and control of patrilineage wives. A female could be asked by her father to remain in his house as "a male-daughter", some of these women occupied very much sought after positions normally filled by men. The institution of male daughters disproved the view that the patrilineal system of inheritance only allowed sons to inherit their father's land while daughters did not. In other words, when women had been accorded the status of men, they took over their parents' properties as male daughters.

Amadiume also dismisses the patrilineal therapy which states that ritual and political role of daughters ended after their marriage. Gifts of land and other important economic items were made to daughters by their fathers and this encouraged them to visit their fathers' houses regularly after they had left to settle in their marital homes. The matrifocal principle which undergirds the Nnobi society that she studied encouraged the ideology of female industriousness. This was such that the "processing, sale, storage and preserving of food stuffs was (sic) done exclusively by women. It was however, only through the control of the evaluation of yam that men asserted their authority over women" (37).

In *Male Daughters, Female Husband,* Amadiume demonstrates that there were structures in her area of Igboland that enabled women to achieve power indicating that the roles of women were "neither rigidly masculinized nor feminized". The flexible gender system in place gave women access which incorporated them into certain positions of authority in the power structure. These could be seen in their production relations, wealth generation, title system, land acquisition, roles of wives, redistribution of family wealth, ownership of staples, other household resources like the palm trees, etc. She concludes that "certain women could occupy roles and positions usually monopolized by men, and thereby exercise considerable power and authority over both men and women" (40).

Another institution which Igbo societies employ to effective use in their exercise of power is the Umuada. Umuada is a fellowship of all the female offspring of every Igbo family both married and single as long as they have reached marriageable age. They resolve conflicts involving themselves and the wives of their male counterparts in the family. Disputes that could not be settled within each family are settled by Umuanna (the male offspring) and they can apply punishments, in cases of manslaughter, the culprit is banished

to his maternal grand –mother's family for a period. Ikwunne – a relationship associated with one's matrilineage is also another institution that positively showcases the inherent power of women. The Igbo say: Mother is supreme. Ikwunne, as a relationship associated with one's matrilineage – the daughter's child and members of the mother's patrilineage is bound by the relationship of indulgence and respect. All children of a daughter of a minor patrilineage born into other patrilineages are highly respected and given certain powers in their mothers' lineage. Shelter was (is) given to one who runs to his/her Ikwunne after a major crisis in one's life. Those who have one form of misfortune or the other or even a serious misunderstanding run to their mothers' places in recognition of the value of Ikwunne.

From the socio-economic point of view, Uchendu (1995) asserts that Nigerian women in practically all the various ethnic groups of Nigeria during the pre-colonial era were independent economically. He maintains that although women's economic and political participation varied from one ethnic group to another, on the whole, Nigerian women across the country were financially independent and were not marginalised economically until the coming of colonialism, Islam and Christianity to Nigeria. He also contrasts the status of women in Igboland with that of European and American women who at that time were treated as perpetual minors, "legal non-beings" and whose identity merged into that of their husbands. Igbo women, he maintains, had distinct lives of their own (Uchendu, 1995-8-10). This view resonates with Agara-Houessou – Adin's (1998) assertion that in pre-colonial Igbo society, women had a place, a voice and a distinct role in the societal governance. As a result, women were able to sell the surplus of their crops and the palm kernel and such other Agricultural products like cassava, cocoyam, etc. known as crops for women. Because of the healthy division of labour in operation, women allowed access to their own share of crops.

Women are known and respected for their prowess in transmitting cultural ideas through the telling of stories as well as songs. Men tell stories of war and such other exploits of manly disposition but as children spend most of the time with women, their stories capture the attention of the children. In the area of education, women were made to acquire education with the aim of making them functional within the society. Their education commenced from childhood with parents, siblings, relations in nuclear and extended polygamous homes as teachers. As has been noted by Fafunwa (1978), education of boys and girls differed in terms of areas of emphasis even though they grew up in

the same environment. According to Fafunwa, in agriculture and education, the mainstay of the Igboland economy, women from childhood, were taught how to grow female crops such as maize, okro, cassava, beans, melon, cocoyam, etc. Men on the other hand learnt how to grow male crops such as yam and how to clear farmlands and prepare mounds. While the boys were taught how to hunt and rear cattle, the girls were taught to domesticate fowls (11).

There was a strong presence of gender roles during the pre-colonial era as some activities were considered feminine while others were considered masculine. In vocational training, women were taught and exposed to weave mats, baskets, clothes, hair and salt while their male counterparts were taught smithing, carving, carpentry, wine-tapping, etc. We note once again that even with these strong roles by both sexes, women were extremely active in their zones of responsibilities.

Among the Swazi, the king's mother shares power with him, and is described, thus: "she is the elephant, the Earth, the Beautiful, the mother of the country", (Lebeuf, 1963: 100). The king, on the other hand is described as the Sun, the Lion, the Great Wild Animal. The gender implication of this is to stress the almost parity that exists between the king and his mother. Among the Lunda, a matrilineal people ruled by a patriarchal aristocracy, the king shares power with his kinswoman, who is regarded as the mother of the kingdom. According to Amadiume, it is understood that this woman's husband is invisible (187). Similar patterns are reported to exist in Central Africa. Among the Bamileke of Cameroun, the Chief's mother – who wears masculine attire- is equivalent to the chief. Her domain is outside the chief's authority. The agricultural sphere of the community is under her custody. Her children belong to her and not to her husband.

Again, among the Chamba in the north east of Nigeria, a female relative of the king rules over the women and has corresponding duties to the king's. She is also in charge of the female cult and participates with the king in the ancestral cult, and is even buried in the same manner as the chiefs. Her husband is not known as he has no such role to play. Among the Ashanti of Ghana, the female joint ruler with the king has powers greater than those of any man. Her court, from which she rules on female matters is different from the king's. She is also involved in the election, presentation and enthronement of a new king, and remains his adviser, guide and critic and in his absence takes his place in war. Among the Bemba of north-eastern Zimbabwe, the Bushongo of the Kassai and the Loango, the king shares power with a woman.

Colonial Intrusion and Implication for Female Power

There is no doubt that by intruding into the affairs of Africans, colonialism did not only destabilise the lives of Africans, it is also shook the entire cultural and governmental architecture of the African peoples. The colonial period was fundamental in every sense of the word. Afigbo (2008) has captured the essence of the period thus:

> Pre-colonial society experienced change but hardly, acknowledged it, and never consciously pursued it or planned for it. In colonial society, the alien power elite were in favour of controlled change, especially on the political and social planes in the bid to create an environment that would be favourable to economic change. Howbeit, this meant more change and at a more rapid rate than the women or even the men were used to (10).

It was this reality that caused the heroic responses of the women which got to their apogee with the women's war of 1929, which has been styled "Aba women's Riot". The resistance of the women against the Warrant Chief system was a strong pointer to the power of women.

Apart from vehemently resisting the tax imposed on the women and the introduction of Warrant Chief System the women were also opposed to the personality of Chief Okugo of Oloko who was so appointed. Under colonialism, the African society came face to face with the European one and the consequences are being felt up to the current period in the history of African. The women did not only fight the British colonialists, they also through their inherent spiritual power pushed Chief Okugo to death.

The post-1900 period which saw the invasion of Igbo (Nigerian) hinterland by the British with the suppression of indigenous institutions, the imposition of a new economy and many other institutional structures that threw away what as on ground. These new institutions, with their linked ideologies and cultures, greatly affected the structured position of women in the society. As has been earlier implicated, the coming of colonialism delinked the indigenous concepts linked to flexible gender constructions in terms of access to power and authority mediated dual-sex divisions. The new western concepts introduced through colonialism carried strong sex and class inequalities supported by rigid gender ideology and constructions. Uchendu (2001) has argued that Christian missionaries who were rather closer to the people, unwittingly aided the colonisers.

These missionaries effectively implemented the colonial policies which

marginalised the women. Consequently, women were disposed of the political, economic and social positions which they had enjoyed in the pre-colonial days Uchendu (2001:46). According to Uchendu (1996)," the early deprivation of equal educational opportunities to women gave men advantage over women in the economy, which is the deciding factor for their active and successive political participation in the Nigerian society. It was the Christian missionaries who through control of educational system that transmitted perhaps unconsciously female inferiority of sexual discrimination in Nigerian economic and political affairs at that time" (14) Okorie and Okehi (2012) have noted that while it is patently incorrect to talk of Igbo women being politically invisible in the pre-colonial period, they were certainly invisible in the government of politics of colonial Igbo land (104).

In fact, in Igbo, there is no distinctive subject pronoun between the male and the female. This flexibility makes it possible for man and woman to share attributes. And as has been noted by Amadiume (1987:89), "this system of few linguistic distinctions between the male and the female genders also makes it possible for men and women to play some social roles which in other cultures, especially those of the western world, carry rigid sex and gender association".

There is a biological gender distinction of male and female of any Igbo species in Igbo terminology – Oke: male, nyi: female (Nwoke and Nwanyi). But in subject pronouns, no distinction is made between male and female. The third person singular, O, is used for both sexes, unlike the English gender construction, which distinguishes male and female as "he" and "she". In Igbo, the third person singular of the possessive pronoun (ya) stands for both his and hers: there is no attempt to distinguish between the sexes. This goes to show one of the strong connections between male and female among the Igbo. A study of other African societies may yield similar results. This reality, no doubt paves way to a more equitable relationship in which both women and men are organised to co-exist in a gender- co-operative way. In the affairs of the Igbo, any disruption of this natural balance in the relationship of the two sexes leads to crisis which ultimately undermines the male folk even to its doom. From the foregoing, it is obvious that a complementary relationship between men and women is the tonic for a happy life for the entire humanity. This is in conformity with Chinweizu's view that in many traditional African societies, men and women have long had parallel organisations and complementary institutional powers for the stabilization of the society.

The Idea of Progress

The idea of progress is sustained when there is gender equality. In Oyewumi's (1997) *The Invention of Women*, she points out that gender is not a universal organising principle in all cultures. To her, gender with its categorisation of women as inferior to men is an extension of colonialism imported into Africa. Du Toit and Coetzee (2017) observe that Oyewumi sees the reordering of sex/gender relations as "a crucial aspect of the workings of the logic of western modernity and colonialism through which a radicalised, hierarchical, patriarchal and capitalist global social system was constructed" (342). As Le Roux (2005) has observed, it is important we pay attention to both context and agency: to recognise that women's and men's lives differ even under the same or similar conditions, and, even within the same societies.

What emerges from the discussion so far is that women of African descent (using the Igbo and some African societies) were very active in their patriarchal societies before the coming of colonialism. Even though colonialism worked against African women, the latter challenged it and its agents. Men who think that the world is theirs are living in foolishness as women have what it takes to rule the world. It is a woman's world as women have the capacity to overthrow an over-arching patriarchal arrangement. Those who are theorizing gender and its implications especially in Africa need to take on board these realities for women are indeed social catalysts and economic spring boards in the community. Patriarchal ideology is oppressive to women; while matriarchal ideology is linked with motherliness and love.

Two characters in two fictional texts among many give insight into this reality: Okonkwo in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and Eugene in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2006). These two characters dominate their spheres of influence wielding immense power. But underneath their show of power is a greater power controlling them: fear of Okonkwo – because he does not want to be a failure like his father, Unoka. In Eugene's case, it is fear of the eternal damnation- a pathological yearning for a spotless holy life that secures a firm place for one in heaven while still on earth. The fear leads to Okonkwo's tragedy. Fear also propels Eugene to turn his family into a punching bag and when this gets too unbearable, his wife poisons him. Here is power in which the wielders inevitably turn out to be the ones in need of pity. Eugene, the otherwise lordly patriarch becomes the cropper. The fate that befalls both Okonkwo and Eugene exemplifies the fakeness and fickleness of patriarchy. Mother is indeed supreme!

Conclusion

As part of the intricate system of checks and balances in some traditional African societies, women exercised (and do exercise) the most effective sanctions against misrule and misbehaviour. Even women who step on the toes of their fellow women are not spared the harsh judgment of their fellow women. When a king becomes intolerable to his subjects, a procession of grandmothers will march naked to his palace. No ruler survives this final and dramatic repudiation by the mothers. Usually, the threat of this march is enough to bring erring and dictatorial rulers to heel. Chief Okugo of Oloko (in today's Ikwuawo Local Government of Abia State) suffered this fate in the hands of women in what has been styled as Aba women war or protest. In circumstances where women feel betrayed or misgoverned by the powers that be, they take recourse to actions that ultimately change the status quo.

In traditional African societies as has been documented by Lebeuf (1963) and corroborated by Amadiume (1987, 1988), women exercised real authority in the political and socio-economic affairs of the people. It is apposite to stress that colonialism with its western prejudices dealt a big blow to African women and relegated them to the background with its emphasis on the privacy of domestic tasks while men were considered better at shouldering the burden of public affairs.

But even with the negative impact of colonialism on Africa women, their inherent powers can always be pressed to service with a view to dealing with recalcitrant men who operate within the structures of patriarchy.

The purport of this paper is to demonstrate that patriarchy is a weak institution and does not possess the type of powers that women are imbued with. There are instances to show that the subtle powers that women possess have endangered arrogant men who mistake their machismos for power. Power lies with women. Society ought to be arranged in such a manner that balances the relationship between men and women for the greater good of all. This is the task that confronts women and men that struggle for equality and development.

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PATRIARCHY, WOMEN AND POLITICS IN NIGERIA

BY
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Abstract

'It is a man's world' is an old cliché that seems to reiterate the assumed normalcy of patriarchy, it summarises the universal narrative of male superiority where the world is seen through the lenses of the man and the woman's experience in the private and public spheres is shaped by a social construction of an identity that defines her femaleness as different from his maleness. The objective of this paper therefore is to examine the role of women in politics within the context of this narrative, noting historical practices and the socio-economy through which these narratives evolved.

The paper also examines the role that women play in contemporary Nigerian politics and the extent to which patriarchy affects women's participation in politics. The evolution of patriarchy and how this has been influenced by the objective material condition in existence is discussed by the paper, while it highlights some specific situations of women in pre-colonial, post-colonial and contemporary societies and their experiences in the political and economic decision-making space. It argues that contrary to the notion that Nigeria is traditionally a patriarchal society, there are historical practices and indeed contemporary realities that seem to question these views.

While the paper acknowledges the role of socio-cultural, economic, political, organisational, legal and political factors in defining power relations and exploiting the vulnerabilities of women, it posits that these same factors can be reorganised to change the situation of women and the society at large.

Introduction

In the last half of the Century, there has been a consistent and persistent universal demand for gender equality and the inclusion of women in the development process. Specifically, it has been noted that the participation of women in the political process is a progressive way of ensuring gender equality and demystifying patriarchy. The most noted global coordination of this call was the outcome of the World Conference of Women which held in Beijing, 1995 after three previous conferences that held in Mexico 1979, Copenhagen 1980 and Nairobi 1985.

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The Beijing Conference consolidated on the previous conferences and set a significant and comprehensive programme of gender equality; Women in Power and Decision Making is one of those key programmes which was expected to bridge the gap between women and men though legislation and practice.

The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which was established in 1975 (two decades before Beijing) and the many follow ups to Beijing, the question of marginalisation and the underrepresentation of women in politics and the economy are still major issues in the development platform. The fundamental obstacle to the realisation of these goals is located in our social-culture, religion and most fundamentally in the existing material condition, which in this context has been largely driven by market for profit and politics for power and control.

In Nigeria, the laws and practices have been transforming specifically in the last four decades to accommodate the changing socio-economic and political need for gender balance and inclusivity. Hitherto, women have played different significant roles in the socio-economic and political development of the society albeit in different ways across the country.

Though the women constitute about half of the population and much as the legal and institutional framework recognises that beyond reference to number and statistics, women are expected to be 'equal' participants on the development process, in actual practice there is no fundamental programme for ensuring a sustainable impact of development on women. There are rather more activities that appear to add up the number rather than transform the orientation of patriarchy. Thus, from the home front and into the public space, the ideology of patriarchy is still woven in our daily tradition and culture from social orientation at the home front to institutionalisation at the public space.

The different roles that women play and their position in the political process have been variedly explained by theories which expound the position of women in the production and reproduction circle.

Patriarchy: Evolution Of the Theory and Practice

First, we need to note the fact that human society has evolved through political organising that blended the demands and needs of the people and their environment and facilitated by the social and economic situation in time and space. Thus, patriarchy as a universal practice predates organised societies and as a theory it explains how the biological functions of a woman

provide a tool for her subordination through the dynamics of power relations in production and reproduction.

While patriarchy in practice facilitates the exploitation of vulnerabilities and the maximisation of profit, the theory explains the origin and the processes of the subordination of women by men (Pereira, 2004). It exhibits the power of maleness over femaleness in the context of social, political and economic institutions.

Whereas patriarchy evolved through the family institution it has through social construction developed into a system where men dominate and control resources; political, economic, social, religion, cultural, industrial and financial across different space. Feminist theories have attempted to explain the origin of patriarchy either as based on the differences in the biological formations and thus functions of men and women or determined by the class division in the society which is based on existing material condition.

According to radical feminist theory, patriarchy is based on the biological formations and functions of female and male. It establishes the control of reproductive capacities of the female which is used to subordinate and oppress women (Abdullahi, 2006). That control is sustained by exerting power over women's productive and reproductive rights. That control is what determines the construction of the difference between the man and the woman

The socialist feminist position on patriarchy sees oppression of women as a built-in process of a production system. Women's subordination is therefore a necessary component of the process of labour exploitation, profit maximisation and class division in the society.

This theory thus recognises the fact that working class men could be oppressed by bourgeois women in private and public spaces (Abdullahi, 2006). At the same time bourgeois women could also be oppressed by men of the same class using the superiority of a class position.

Theoretically therefore women's oppression and subordination is twofold; first on the basis of their biological formations and function, and second on the basis of their existing material condition. While the earlier position established and reinforces patriarchy which is rooted in the family, the latter is a function of the general material condition which in turn is determined by the system of production which thrives on exploitation of labour and accumulation of profits.

According to radical feminists, women's liberation can only be achieved by dismantling patriarchy which specifically includes creating laws and rules on gender equality, equity and affirmative action. Socialist feminists on the

other hand, see the liberation of women in the liberation of the society through the dismantling of the productive system of exploitation and accumulation. It contends that the subordination of women thrives due to the fact that her labour is not compensated, thereby weakening her capacity and ability to function adequately as a social and political being.

The general perception that; 'it is a man's world', that 'men are born to rule and women are born to reproduce and serve', that the woman is the 'weaker sex', that 'women are intellectually weaker' etc are all psychological processes of institutionalising patriarchy using the family as an instrument of social conditioning/socialisation. This narrative therefore produces a psychology of naturalness around the concept and practice of patriarchy which further strengthens their exploitation, subordination and relegation in politics and the economy.

Historical Examination of Women's Participation in Nigerian politics

Pre-colonialism

The trend in African political process shows that women have always participated in public and political affairs. They have exercised their power of solidarity to call male dominated leadership to order and indeed to sanction both men and women where necessary. The role of the women has though generally been complimentary but it is acknowledged to strengthen the political leadership and constituency.

Going by this trend, history has at least noted the role of women in organising and defending political constituencies such that several decades after their political exploits, they are still recognised and acknowledged for their courage and assertiveness:

Queen Daurama of Daura and **Queen Amina Turunku** of Zaria, lived at different times and places but were both famous for their military prowess. While both of them extended their empires' territory, Queen Amina was particularly respected as a fearless, assertive and adventurous warrior (Imam, 2002)

Queen Emotan was a trader on foodstuff, who used her boldness and loyalty to protect the King and thereby won her place in the palace as an advisor. **Queen Iyoba Idia,** the first queen mother of Benin Kingdom was a warrior, a skilled administrator, knowledgeable in traditional medicine and all of which she combined with her bravery to help her son win a battle and therefore keep

the peace in the Benin Kingdom during the reign of her son (Imam 2002).

Moremi a queen of the Yoruba kingdom was famous for her selfless determination to preserve the Yoruba culture. Again among the Yoruba, the 'Iyalode' (Afolabi, 2013), was the leader of the market women association, it was such a powerful position that she was consulted by political leaders and was appointed as member of the council of state,

In Nupe land, **Sagi is** the title of the queen mother, who happens to be the eldest wife or eldest daughter of the king and is a member of the king's council offering advice on general issues, representing the king in ceremonies and specifically taking care of women's interests.

In Borno/Kanuri Empire, the **Magira** as the mother of the king together with **Gumsu** the wife of the King had their domain specified for them over which they ruled being largely in charge of women's issues and assisting the King to implement his policy on taxation. The Magira specifically assisted the king in the selection of his council members and inner circle.

Though the Ibo community traditionally operates a diffused political system, It is reported that the women's councils established from community socio-cultural gatherings (weddings, naming ceremonies, cultural festivals etc) and markets provided the platform for women to organise and collectively discuss issues that affect women specifically and the community at large. The councils nominated leaders on the basis of leadership capacity and experience (Van Allen, 1972 in JSTOR, 2009).

While the women were strongly organised around the economy and socio-cultural concerns of women, their input into the governance process was largely recognised. The most notable indication of their strength and unity was demonstrated during the Aba women revolt in 1929 after an attempt by the colonial government to impose a property tax on the women.

Alimotu Pelewura was the leader of the Lagos Market women's Association who worked to ensure that women exercised their franschise, demanding for equality and social justice. She used this power to control prices in support of the workers who were on strike so as to ease their pains. She was a member of political parties and served as an active member of the Nigerian National Democratic Party in 1938.(Fayemi, 2003)

The common thread about the experiences of these women is that first they are mostly from a royal background which offers quick advantage to political limelight. This experience does not becloud the fact that though the men held more political, social power and influence yet the women were not

just categorised as a social being but that in addition to their biological and economic functions, they were able to make political impact.

Colonialism

Following the history of courage and assertiveness of women through the years of conquest and kingdoms in Nigeria, it is even more significant that towards the struggle for colonialism, there was significant contribution from the women albeit that today the history of nationhood is more of 'his story' than 'her story' and typically celebrating the heroism of male contributors while simply glossing on the women contributors as a 'side dish'. Yet the story of Nigeria's struggle against colonialism will not be complete without the appropriate recognition of the role of women during this period.

Funmilayo Ransome Kuti was an educationist and a tireless and courageous activist who founded the Abeokuta Women's Association with more than 20,000 women members. She led one of the biggest women protests (Abeokuta women riot), in the history of Nigeria which led to the abolition of separate tax rates for women. She campaigned for women's suffrage and election accountability. She was a strong politician who established a political party that challenged the then dominant party National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon.

Gambo Sawaba, a grassroots organiser, a philanthropist and political activists was a prominent member of the then radical party, Northern Elements Progressive' Union (NEPU). Though barely educated and married off early, she communicated mostly in 'pidgin' English and Hausa languages, while campaigned against forced marriage; she was an activist for girl education.

Tireless and fearless, she had several confrontations with the ruling political party; Nigeria People's Congress (NPC), and was subsequently jailed many times. Unperturbed she never relented in her conviction for good governance and a better society until her death.

M**argaret Ekpo** was a teacher, a women's rights advocate who promoted economic rights for women. She was an active member of the NCNC and later she became the President of the Women's wing of the Party. Working together with Funmilayo Ransome Kuti, they toured the South East and South West campaigning for women to exercise their rights to vote and be voted for. She served in many political and elected positions between 1954 and 1964. Detained by the Biafran army for 3years, she came out even stronger and more resolute.

Again the common denominator with these women is their determination in the face of a political system that was dominated by patriarchy to mobilise and organise women for the society. They were assertive, though they had opportunities for self-enrichment, yet they were selfless and humble.

Post-Colonialism

Some centuries and decades after the heroic exploits of Queens Amina, Moremi, Daurama, Emotan several political astuteness of Funmilayo, Ransome Kuti, Margaret Ekpo and Gambo Sawaba, the country is yet to significantly build on those successes with the men still strongly dominating the political process and the women trailing far behind.

Except for the years of military intervention where appointments into administrative positions were virtually all men because they dominated the military, there has been a gradual but steady increase in the participation of women in the political process.

Though the level of awareness and the legislative framework that allows for freedom of participation have improved and more women come out to vote. However even where more women contest for elective positions, the 2019 election experience shows that fewer women won elections and fewer are appointed into political offices compared to previous experiences and more importantly their population. This is in spite of their stride in education and the economy.

The CEDAW is the most quoted and significant international legal instrument which identifies the need to empower women and include them in decision making process (CEDAW, 1979). In addition, section 40 of the Nigerian Constitution provides for freedom of assembly and association, including joining and forming political parties and trade unions, while Section 42(1) underscores this freedom by protecting every citizen of Nigeria against discrimination on the basis of ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). It is therefore not the inadequacy of the legal framework that allows women to participate in politics rather it is the role of patriarchy and the state of the political economy that muffles their voices and veils their faces.

There is no longer doubt about the importance of women's participation in politics, what is however of concern is that the systematic exclusion of half of the population in the political process has implication for the success of our development goal. It is through their effective participation in the political

process that they can adequately be captured in the structures and process of the production and distribution of national resources which are collectively owned.

Manifestation of Patriarchy and the Barriers to Women's Participation in Politics

We have seen how feminist theories have explained the subordination and relegation of women in politics and social economy. These discriminatory practices have become ingrained in our everyday tradition in the private and public spheres. They have combined to create a stereotype of timidity, low skill, poor funds, all of which challenge woman's ability to contest or compete favourably with her male counterparts.

In Nigerian politics in spite of some of the significant achievements that have been won with respect to women's participation in politics, they are generally expected to be campaigners for men and not to be contesting with them. They are still to be seen at the polling boots and not to be heard in the parliament or executive seats. These stereotypes as orchestrated by patriarchy have formed a huge obstacle against the effective participation of women in Nigeria's politics;

1. **The socialisation process** that defines the gender of a boy child and that of a girl child which also creates the notion of superiority is a core function of low participation of women in the political scene. In the typical Nigerian family, a higher premium is placed on the birth of a boy child than it is for a girl child. This is largely because of the expectation that the boy child will carry on the name and home of the family while the girl child will be lost to 'another home'. While the male child through the use of language, chores performed and entertainment/games are being prepared to become 'strong' and 'hard', the Head of the household, the girl is being socialised to become the humble, respectful, obedient and dutiful housewife and mother. So while it is okay for a girl to cry it is a 'taboo' for the boy to cry. A boy can be rough, play football, play with guns and trucks, but a girl must be calm and learn how to cook and clean the house while she plays with baby dolls and learns to make herself beautiful.

2. **Attitude and Values:** The scenario that starts from home is played into the later years of education and work life. The written and

unwritten rules of politics are often designed by the men with the plan to deepen their control of the political process. These range from the methods of conducting meetings, selection of office bearers and party representatives, demand of commitments and loyalty, information dissemination and disciplinary action distribution of benefits. All of which are targeted at preserving a patriarchal values and norms which technically do not accommodate women and their interests.

3. **With respect to language,** the word man is synonymous to tough, rough personality like a lion, while the woman is a weak, meek personality like mice. Any wonder that a man feels insulted when he is addressed as a chairperson or addressed with the qualities traditionally ascribed to a woman. On the other hand, the woman feels a rush of adrenalin when described as a man or with the qualities ascribed to maleness. The use of gender biased innuendos and sexist words at meetings and advertisements can deter women from participating in political meetings. At the same time they set a psychological message about the gender of the positions e/g. the 1999 constitution of Nigeria as amended in its description of governors and President uses the word He, assuming therefore that the occupier of that position must necessarily be a he biologically or possess the quality of 'leadership' as so defined by men for a man.

4. **Inadequate skill, training and education:** Another barrier to women's participation in public role and politics is the lack of access to adequate quality education, productive skill and leadership training or experience that are required for policy discussions and campaigns. Their gender roles as wives and mothers as well as workers consume so much of their time that they are unable to sufficiently access political information and education required to sharpen their oratory skill. Through the experiences of social clubs and associations, men they often exhibit more advantage in leadership skill than women who often do not get similar exposure

5. **Meeting times and Venue** of political meetings especially where critical decisions are taken are usually not open and the times are usually odd (late nights, weekends and public holidays) these are

times when the rules and norms of the party are set and position of party leadership are discussed. The conventional day time meetings are known to prolong for a long time and without the provision of crèches or convenient facilities for pregnant women. This tradition does not consider the role of women as family care givers thus technically denies women of effective participation in politics.

6. **Finance and access to funds** are key requirement in democracy specifically for campaigns and logistics. Unfortunately, women's experience of economic exploitation, labour discrimination and weak income base make them lack sufficient funds to compete with the men. The notion that politics is not for women also leads to weak finance mobilisation since potential contributors assume that the woman is naturally not likely to win elections, nor would she make an impact in the political process.

7. **Culture of Violence and Blackmail** the pervasive culture of violence and blackmail which has become a part of our politics especially during election discourages a good number of women from campaigns and voting. Beyond physical violence, there is the psychological violence that women particularly suffer from when they are taunted with sexist and derogatory language, intrusion into personal space which are often calculated mischief, fabrications and contortions.

8. **Family & Traditional Pressure:** Politics in Nigeria has been tagged a 'dirty game' and politicians as 'mischievous, and deceitful' so much that generally people who consider themselves decent avoid partisan politics as well as voting. In the same vein the woman gender that is described as 'calm, gentle and honest' is discouraged by family and friends not to join partisan politics. Indeed, most of the women that participate in politics are considered to be divorcees, widows and single women even when they are married they are hardly appreciated on their merit except as attachment to a male. Traditional roles of motherhood, wife, home and community care giver as well as an economic participant combine to put pressure on the woman such that creating time for political activities is usually a huge task

9. **Economic system of exploitation and poverty:** the most important barrier to the participation of women in politics is the system which exploits their productive and reproductive rights without adequate compensation for the maximisation of profit. Just like workers are generally exploited in a capitalist system for profit, women suffer double oppression first based on their biological function and then on their class position which makes them vulnerable and pauperised.

Recommendation for Overcoming Patriarchy in the political process

1. It is a consensus of many development discourses that if development is to be genuine and sustainable then it must integrate women who constitute about half the population in the process of decision making on how resources are produced and distributed. Therefore, the voices of women need to be heard and respected beyond their sexuality and reproductive roles and be seen as equal partners in development and the political processes.

2. There is the need to ease the burden of household labour on women by providing crèches, while men are encouraged to share in some family responsibilities e.g., school drops, homework, payment of bills, maintenance etc easing the burden will provide women with more time for developing political skill

3. Women particularly need to be constantly educated and informed politically and on broad development issues. This will raise their confidence and self-esteem which is needed to navigate the harsh and usually unfriendly political terrain that is male dominated

4. As much as funds are important for campaigns and mobilisation, the insufficiency of it should also not discourage participation. A well designed fund raising strategy can be employed starting with a modest level contest e.g., house of Assembly or chair of local government council. What is more important is to be active and known for some sustained and impactful development activity. Using a political platform or a CSO/Community platform, a woman can be a community mobiliser and a voice for social justice and or women's interest.

5. It is very key for women also to take a bold and decisive step to

break through the patriarchal barriers. Stay for long night and weekend meetings prepared with a nanny, a friend or relative close by to assist with family care responsibilities where necessary.

6. The trade unions/CSOs and market associations should provide crèches and support services to women when they need to participate in critical political processes

7. However political participation is not all about partisan politics or contesting for political office, every woman can take active part in the political process by sourcing the right information, raising her voice through community space and social media. Being active members of socio-cultural organisations and trade unions either to develop their leadership skill or to participate in ensuring that at least women's issues are integrated into the policy making process.

8. However most fundamental of all is the need to reorganise the women's movement (include trade unions, academia, civil society, human right activists) framed within the understanding of the existing material condition that sustains the oppression and subjugation of women in politics. To understand how the political subjugation of women is linked to the general condition of exploitation and therefore the need to respond to the women's question beyond numbers, legal reforms and the creation of liberal spaces.

Summary and Conclusion

While patriarchy as a practice has existed through many socio-economic systems, the contemporary state of women's participation in politics needs to be understood within the context of the existing material condition and aided by class division. As Patriarchy takes advantage of the biological function of women to thrive using the family as an instrument, the economic exploitation within the society further subjugates and oppresses the woman in a class society; she suffers from low self-esteem, lack of confidence and a meekness that keeps her away from active political participation.

The success of women in politics like that of any group cannot be achieved within a system which creates and perpetuates the condition for the oppression and subjugation of women without overhauling and dismantling that system.

A transformative social re-orientation is required to change values and attitude that bares women from maximising their potentials in politics. Even at the very least, the process of changing social- values, attitudes and perceptions require the inclusion of women in the political process through holding of various offices (positions) and make known their own ambition through consciousness and effective involvement in the political scene a condition which if absent allows or facilitates the political elites dominated by and govern women remain the same

There are lessons and inspirations that can be drawn from the women of history in Nigeria's political journey. There inspirations of women from other parts of the world who have broken through the glass ceiling to occupy spaces in the political arena. There is the reality of an increasing level of hopelessness, poverty, loss of dignity and despair that have become the trade mark of our governance system. These are motivations and compelling reasons to encourage a reorganisation of the women's movement, towards a collective struggle for the emancipation of the people of Nigeria in general and the women of Nigeria in Particular

In conclusion this paper submits that the exclusion of women in mainstream politics and their weakness in influencing the political space is not just a reflection of the power of patriarchy in creating political apathy in women if experience of history is considered. While the celebration of men as political giants question the legitimacy of our democracy (Agbalajobi 2007, Nkoyo, 2002). However, that this situation has further worsened the vulnerability of women and created widespread insecurity in its ramification is a confirmation of the contradiction inherent in the operating system.

Therefore the struggle for the inclusion of women in the political process is the struggle to demystify patriarchy and the struggle to demystify patriarchy is the struggle to dismantle the system that encourages exploitation and thus oppression of any form.

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CSOS ADDRESSING THE MENACE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF CAJA IN KANO STATE

BY
KABIRU SAIDU DAKATA*

Introduction

Globally, university system is established to provide desirable learning and working environments where students and lecturers can pursue their studies, work and scholarship without being intimidated. This system is expected to provide unique examples in eliminating inequalities and anomalies among all segments of the academia. Sadly, the issue related to sexual assault in Nigerian university system presents a different and grim picture. Just recently, Nseyen (2018) reported the sacking of Professor Richard Akindele by Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife for demanding sex from Monica Osagie a postgraduate student to upgrade her mark. It is amazing and disturbing that this is happening in an environment that is often believe to be a moulding and filtering ground for building a virile leaders and intellectuals that will mount the stage of leadership tomorrow. While it is well addressed in college and university campuses in most developed countries of the world through specific policies and mechanisms of enforcement, it remains a taboo topic in African colleges and universities particularly in Nigeria (Balogun, Ahmed, Iyekolo & Ayorinde, 2013).

According to Adamolekun (1989), sexual assault in Nigerian university system appears to be under-researched and even less reported. Accordingly, Isely and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997) observed that sexual assault is not discriminatory to gender or status. This is because both males, females, lecturers and students are affected by it. Though, studies have shown that the number of female and student victims is far greater than male and lecturer victims. Agbonna (2008) stated that female victims are much more likely to be assaulted by an acquaintance (such as a friend or co-worker), a dating partner, an ex-boyfriend or an intimate partner than by a complete stranger. Contrarily, in a study of hospital emergency room treatments for rape, Balogun, Ahmed, Iyekolo and Ayorinde (2013) stated that the male victims as a group sustained more physical trauma, and were more likely to have been held captive longer.

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Ironically, the affected victims find it difficult to report the issue to appropriate authorities because of the fear of stigmatisation and victimization. The general corruption and spread of sexual harassment in the university system deepened over the years because both the university administrations and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) have not invested significantly in developing and implementing a code of ethics to guide the conduct of staff and students (Jibrin, 2019).

Academic institutions in West Africa have increasingly been facing allegations of sexual harassment by lecturers. This type of abuse is said to be endemic, but it's almost never proven. After gathering dozens of testimonies, BBC Africa Eye sent undercover journalists posing as students inside the University of Lagos and the University of Ghana. Female reporters were sexually harassed, propositioned and put under pressure by senior lecturers at the institutions – all the while wearing secret cameras. Although the Nigerian authorities and especially the University of Lagos was forced to act because of the publicity generated by the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) Sex-for-Grades documentary, the reality is that the Nigerian university environment encourages and is quite tolerant of sexual assault and rape of female students especially.

Beyond the mere tokenism of punishing the two lecturers captured in the documentary, the authorities must be forced to implement sweeping reforms of the university environment by outlawing any form of emotional relationship between teachers and students, putting structures in place to make academics account for the awesome powers they enjoy over students.

Conceptualising Sexual Assault

There is no universal acceptable definition of sexual assault. In fact, definitions vary depending on the perspective from which this type of assault is viewed (e.g., political, legal, clinical or scientific). The legal definition of the crime of sexual assault is determined by each jurisdiction (Wikipedia, 2012). Generally, sexual assault is defined as unwanted sexual contact. The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (2010) defines sexual assault as unwanted sexual contact that stops short of rape or attempted rape. This includes sexual touching and fondling. Sexual assault can be defined as any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality, using coercion, threats of harm or physical force, by any person regardless

of relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work (Johnson, 2017). Adeleke, Olowookere, Hassan, Komolafe, and Asekun-Olarinmoye (2016) noted that sexual assault encompasses a wide range of activities ranging from rape to physically less intrusive sexual contacts, whether attempted or completed. It involves lack of consent; the use of physical force, coercion, deception or threat; and/or the involvement of a victim that is asleep, unconscious, under aged, mentally incapacitated or physically impaired as a result of voluntary or involuntary alcohol or drug consumption (Home Office, 2004).

For Pierce (2003), sexual harassment may include some request for sexual favours either directly or by implication: sometimes ordered in exchange for rewards such as academic success or promotion. In this context, the female student may be deliberately touched, kissed or fondled and brushed against her will by male students or lecturers. Very often, sexually oriented or obscene comments, for example comments about a person's physical appearance or sexuality may be directed at her coupled with being questioning persistently about her private life. Furthermore, uninvited visits, displays of erotic materials such as posters, photographs and pornography and threats of physical assault via cell phones, they all amount to sexual harassment. The National Centre for Victims of Crime states (2011) noted that sexual assault takes many forms including attacks such as rape or attempted rape, as well as any unwanted sexual contact or threats. Usually, a sexual assault occurs when someone touches any part of another person's body in a sexual way, even through clothes, without that person's consent. According to Ado, Anthonia and Babagana (2010), sexual assault may include rape, forced vaginal, anal or oral penetration, forced sexual intercourse, inappropriate touching, forced kissing, child sexual abuse, or the torture of the victim in a sexual manner. It is a gender-based issue and a violent crime against both the individual and the society. They further said that an estimated 300,000 women are raped and 3.7 million are confronted with unwanted sexual activity annually, the actual magnitude of female sexual assault globally is unknown because it is one of the offences not often reported.

According to Garcia-Moreno and Watts (2010), one in every five women is a victim of sexual assault and globally, 35% of women have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence (WHO, 2013). The reported figures are said to be inaccurate and often underestimate as most cases of sexual assault are under-reported by the

victims because of the associated stigma (Kullima, Kawuwa, Audu, Mairiga & Bukar, 2010). In Nigeria, Akhiwu, Umanah and Olueddo (2013) observed that only 2 of 40 cases of sexual assault are reported, attributing this amongst other reasons, to the arduous legal requirements needed to prove the cases and the associated stigma. Kullima, Kawuwa, Audu, Mairiga and Bukar (2010) noted that the reported incidence of sexual assault in Nigeria ranged from 13.8% among female students in Maiduguri to 15% among young females in Ibadan (Ajuwon, 2005). Until 2002, the management of sexual assault especially prevention was a major challenge in our setting (Akinlusi, Rabiu, Olawepo, Adewunmi, Ottun & Akinola, 2016).

Causes of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment can be caused by as many different factors as can be found in the literature. In the work of Abdulrasaq Olatunji, et al (2013), with a title "Lecturers' Perception of Causes and Consequences of Sexual Assault In Tertiary Institutions Of Kwara State, Nigeria," it shown that out of 300 respondents, 71 (23.66%) were of the opinion that inadequate security in the school environment is the major cause of sexual assault, 58 (19.31) identified decline in the school cultural values and 48(15.32) perceived that alcohol/drug consumption and 41 (13.66%) were of the opinion that academic stress and disturbed emotion lead to engagement in sexual assault. However, 5 (1.66%) partially believed and saw the strong spirit of familiarity with lecturers and other peers as a least factor responsible for sexual assault in tertiary institutions.

The Effects of Sexual Harassment

According to Silva and Hill (2005), the effects of sexual harassment ranged from stress related symptoms such as loss of memory to self-blame, lack of trust and concentration in class. Changes in the lifestyles of the victims include non-attendance of classes as well as cancellation of courses. The types of sexual harassment and the forms as well are extremely widespread at universities and everywhere in the community. According to Campbell, Cabral and Dworkin (2009), sexual harassment can be devastating and most sexual harassments have nothing to do with flirtation or sincere sexual or social interest. Rather it is offensive, often frightening and insulting to women. Women are often forced to leave universities to avoid sexual harassment and some individuals might experience serious psychological, social, educational and emotional –related problems.

Educational effects

According to Quaicoe-Duco (2010), sexual harassment has a destabilizing effect on the education of female students. The academic performance of the female students suffers. The female students find it very hard to concentrate on their work. Some even lose interest in studying and transfer to new universities or simply leave school as a result of hopelessness and pregnancy if they had unsafe sex with their perpetrators.

Psychological effects

According to Campbell et al., (2009) cognitively, victims tend to form negative stereotypes in their minds about males and begin to ruminate and constantly check to see if there is anything that caused the male students or lecturers to sexually harass them and end up developing dissociative identity disorder (Comer, 2013). Individuals with dissociative identity disorder are preoccupied with constant checking of one's self in the mirror to an extent that their day-to-day functioning becomes grossly affected and experience aloofness and neuroticism because they are demotivated (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2008). This de-motivation can cause withdrawal and gradually develops into depression. Various scholars postulate that sexual harassment can be very traumatic to the individual, female students can develop a phobia for men and may experience an intense anxiety, mood swings, become melancholic in the presence of men and prefer to stay inside the house (Bennett, Gouws, Kritzinger, Hames & Tidimane, 2007; Comer, 2013; Ryckman, 2008; Nolen-Hoeksema, 2008). Silva and Hill (2005) elucidate that sexual assault is one of sexual harassment that causes victims to suffer severe or chronic effects, the same psychological effects such as rape. Victims become targets of retaliation, backlash or victim blaming after the incident of sexual assault. Indeed, the treatment of the female victims during investigation can be ruthless and it can add further damage to the victim's psyche life.

Social effects

Quist-Arcton (2003) asserts that there is a list of environmental changes that might occur to sexually harassed victims. Should the people know about the harassment, the victim might wonder who knows and what they are thinking about the case. Also, the victim might overhear conversations from other students around her about her case and she might become the

subject of gossip and derogatory information and speculations. As a result, the judgements by all who know the victim, either negative or positive can create a huge burden to carry through the university environment (George, 2001). Franklin (2006), states that the victim can become publicly sexualized a walking icon of misplaced amorous attention.

Emotional effects

Due to the psychological, social and educational effects, the female victims may develop emotional problems as well. Female victims of sexual harassment become vulnerable and tend to experience an intense anger towards their perpetrators or all males around them (Ryckman, 2008). Feelings of anger are all typical of acute phase of the posttraumatic stress disorder. Anger is usually a central feature of a survivor's response to trauma. This anger could provide victims with an increased energy to persist when dealing with the fact that they had been subjected to sexual harassment even they have no strength to carry on (Schultz & Schultz, 2013). According to Balick (2004), 68% of the female students who had been sexually harassed felt very upset about the sexual harassment they experienced, 55% felt embarrassed and 32% felt afraid and scared. To cope with stress, female students may be extroverts and promote risky sexual behaviour to enhance positive moods (Wiebe, Drew & Croom, 2010) while in the process apply defence-mechanism such as denial (Comer 2013; Nolen- Hoeksema, 2008) Dastile (2004), also comments on the lack of trust in the university in general which develops as a result of harassment. In most cases the victim and the perpetrator are usually acquainted with each other which can lead to lack of trust because the victim could have been dependent on the perpetrator. Victims might have seen the perpetrator as a role model. There is distrust to those who sincerely want to help them and hatred for the male perpetrators because of betrayal or violated trust. The victims avoid certain places that might remind them of the incidence. A particular place or event may suddenly re-create aspects of harassment thus resulting in emotional reactions. Emotional responses following incidences of sexual harassment could also depend on the victim's history of sexual abuse. Sexual harassment could revive wounds from the victim's past such as prior incidents of rape or incest.

Operational Definition of Terms

1) Tertiary institutions: In Nigeria, Tertiary institutions are the post-

secondary section of the education system which is given in universities, polytechnics and colleges of education.

2) Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances made by male lecturers and male non – academic staff to female students which could be verbal or non – verbal.

3) Civil society organisations: Civil society organisations are groups of interested like minds who volunteer to engage in advocating the public's rights and wishes of the people, including but not limited to health, education, environment and economic rights.

Role Of Civil Society Organisation in Addressing Sexual Harassment

Civil society organisations (CSOs) are groups of interested like minds who volunteer to engage in advocating the public's rights and wishes of the people, including but not limited to health, education, environment and economic rights. They are non-State, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the social sphere that are separate from the State and the market. CSOs represent a wide range of interests and ties. They can include community-based organisations as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In the context of the UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework, CSOs do not include business or for-profit associations.

Although several civil society groups are working in the area of sexual harassment, it was discovered that there is hardly any working specifically around campus sexual harassment. According to Aisha Ado Abdullahi, a lawyer and the director of Kano-based Coalition Against Rape and Violence, CARAV, a coalition of civil society organisations working in the area of rape and sexual harassment, "It is always difficult getting victims of sexual harassment on the campuses of tertiary institutions to report such issues, probably because they are afraid of the stigmatisation that will follow reporting such incidents."

In September 2015, the Nigerian Feminist Forum, NFF, a non-governmental organisation, cried out about the increasing incidence of sexual harassment of female students and the failure of school authorities to deal with the problem or sanction perpetrators. In a statement it issued, the NFF said it was "dismayed and alarmed by what appears to be an overwhelming rise in reported cases of sexual assault and rape of female university students by male members of the academic staff and students across university campuses

in Nigeria," calling for stringent actions to stem the tide. The forum contended that sexual harassment in tertiary institutions continues to be a menace because the schools do not have clear policies to deal with the issue and that they must take more concrete steps to deal with the problem, including providing care and support to victims and their families.

On its part, the Youth Alive Foundation (YAF), a national civil society organisation, has been working together with the relevant stakeholders to ensure the improvement of the legal framework that will give the female students a protection against sexual harassment in the tertiary institutions. The organisation has in December 2019, organised a stakeholder' dialogue on the Anti-Sexual Harassment Bill that is currently at the Nigerian senate. The dialogue brought together various Civil Society organisations, Media Practitioners and students' leaders to directly interact with the sponsor of the bill and the then Deputy President of the Nigerian Senate, Senator Ovie-Omomo-Agege with a view of making their inputs to the bill. While speaking during the dialogue, Senator Ovie-Omomo-Agege said the CSOs are critical stakeholders whose contributions will be accommodated bill, he encouraged the participants to show up at the public hearing organised by the senate to receive inputs from relevant stakeholders (The Cable, March 18, 2020).

CAJA's Effort in Addressing the Prevalence of Sexual Harassment in Tertiary Institutions in Kano State

Centre for Awareness on Justice and Accountability (CAJA) is a non-governmental and non-partisan organisation that focuses on promoting Justice and Accountability as strategy for promoting good governance. The vision of the organisation is to be a leading organisation campaigning for good governance, anticorruption and justice reform in Nigeria, its mission is to promote Justice and Accountability through Research, Advocacy, Public Awareness and Capacity Building. It maintains core values of Fairness, Openness and Honesty. The specific objectives of CAJA are:

- To enlighten the public on the importance of demanding for accountability
- To Advocate for Justice, Equity and Fairness for the vulnerable people
- To build the capacity of the CSOs/CBOs on promoting justice and accountability at the grass root levels.
- To work with the key stakeholders in Nigeria to ensure the reform

of the justice system

- To initiate and implement innovative programmes that will ensure accountable governance system at all levels.

In 2018 the Centre for Awareness on Justice and Accountability (CAJA) had led the formation of a movement tagged "Movement Against Corruption in Tertiary Institution (MACTI)." Members of MACTI were drawn from various students' associations and CSOs in the state. CAJA has been supporting the work of MACTI members in their respective institutions. Their activities include campaign against all form of corrupt practices in tertiary institutions, like; sexual harassment, money for marks, examination malpractice, etc. The activities of MACTI had exposed various corrupt practices in some institutions which attracted various degree of punishments to the perpetrators, including the suspension of a lecturer who demanded money from students for their Continue Assessment (C.A), dismissal of lecturers found guilty of sexual misconduct and the ban of the sale of handouts in some tertiary institutions in the State.

Why We Prioritised Effort Against Sexual Harassment

Our longtime experience of implementing anti-corruption activities in tertiary institutions revealed that the sexual harassment stands to be unique from other various corrupt practices because of the lack of effective channels to report cases of sexual harassment. Yes, the institutions will always argue that the students can report cases of sexual harassments, but in most cases the students are not aware of these channels of reporting. For the few reported cases, the victim hardly get justice because the committee will take longer time than necessary and the members will be more interested in covering the perpetrators than punishing them. This situation will put the victims in a more traumatic condition that can affect their studies and make their stay in the institution unpleasant, like it happened in the case of one Na'ima who had to withdraw herself because of the trauma she was going through.

Similarly, there is the problem of not documenting evidence by the victims, to prove sexual harassment. Even though sexual harassment has been listed in the students' hand book of most of these institutions as one of the major crimes, we got to understand that some of the institutions have not been giving students the students' hand book for years despite charging them money for that in their first registration. Also, because victims have come to accept

sexual harassment as normal, they don't bother sharing their situation at the right time, with colleagues or anyone that can be of help to them. Cases are known when the worst has happened, as it happened in the case of a married female student who died in the process of aborting the pregnancy she got from her lecturer. Her husband got to know that while going through the messages in her phone, where he traced a chat between his late wife and a particular number which he later confirmed that it was her male lecturer's phone number.

Our Approach

As a process of overcoming this problem, CAJA adopts an All-Inclusive Implementation Approach in which every relevant stakeholder will be given a chance to contribute in the most effective way, to ensure a successful intervention. To achieve this, CAJA works with students' associations, Dean Students Affairs, academic and non-academic staff associations, Anti-corruption and Transparency Unit (ACTU), Movement Against Corruption in Tertiary Institution (MACTI), Independent Corruption Practice and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and Kano State Public Complaints and Anti-Corruption Commission.

Major activities

The following were our major activities in addressing the prevalence of sexual harassment in the tertiary institutions in kano state:

1. **Research:** It was aimed at obtaining reliable data to carry out an evidence-based advocacy. With the support of our partner, Youth Alive Foundation (YAF), CAJA conducted two surveys in 2019. They included:

   a) *Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) Survey on Corrupt Practices in Tertiary Institutions.* 500 copies of questionnaire were administered in three selected tertiary institutions in Kano state. The survey sought to know the most corrupt practice in the tertiary institution and the type of most corrupt practices committed by students, academic staff and non-academic staff. The data obtained from this survey revealed that sexual harassment is the second most corrupt practice in the tertiary institutions in Kano state after examination malpractice, and is the most corrupt practice involving both academic and non-academic staff of the tertiary institutions.

It was also revealed that victims of the sexual harassment don't report because they don't know the designated unit to report to, and because of the fear of victimisation or expulsion. On whether there are measures put in place by the institutions to address the problem of sexual harassment, the report discovered that, such measures if really exist, they are very weak in most of the institutions.

b) *The Sexual Harassment in Higher Education (SHE) Survey.* A total of 1000 copies of questionnaire were administered in five selected tertiary institutions in Kano State. This was part of the national survey conducted by a consortium of civil society organisations, including the Centre for Awareness on Justice and Accountability (CAJA), and led by Youth Alive Foundation (YAF). The survey which was aimed at gathering information around students' experiences of sexual harassment on campus, raise awareness on the issue and bring about change, was carried out in 19 tertiary institutions across five states and sampled over 3000 students. The report has shown that 51.7 per cent of female undergraduates have suffered one form of sexual harassment or another in school. The forms of sexual harassment experienced were mainly physical touch/forceful kiss (45%), verbal harassment i.e., verbal request for sex (36%), actual sex either coerced or manipulated (10%) and rape (6%).

The finding revealed that victims were not courageous to report cases of sexual harassment because nothing will be done. 30% of the respondents are with this opinion, 27% said the issue was resolved when they reported. Lack of evidence by the victims can affect the investigation as the report shown that 11% of the respondents could not provide any evidence to validate their case. However, as at the time of the survey 8% of the respondents' cases were being investigated, while 8% of them said they decided not to report again.

Lack of clear channels of reporting was what survey found as one of the discouraging factors to report cases of sexual harassment, according to 56% of the respondent, there were no clearly defined channels of reporting sexual harassment in their schools, hence the victims ended up reporting to the wrong channel of which no

proper action will be taken at the end. About 30% of the victims reported their cases to another lecturer, 24% reported to the Head of Department (HOD), 11% reported to the counsellor's office, 8% reported to nobody, 5% reported to their parents, while 3% reported to the Students Union Government (SUG) office. Only 32% of the respondents said their institutions have Counselling Office for victims of sexual harassment, 33% said there is none in their school, 29% did not say whether there is such office or not, while 6% said they don't know if there was such office in their institutions or not.

Even for those institutions with the Counselling Office, some of them are not functional, ineffective and provide no support. The report of the survey shown that only 8% of the respondents believed the effectiveness of the Counselling Office, 18% said the office can provide some support, but the belief of the 22% of the respondents is that the office is not functional. Those who said the office is not effective are 17% and 3% were of the opinion that the office could not provide any support to the victims. In terms of being aware of the school's policies that prohibit sexual harassment, only 25% of the respondents are aware of those policies, 45% are not aware and 30% did not mention if there are aware or not.

2. **Anti-Sexual Harassment Campaign in the Tertiary Institutions in Kano State:** The campaign was carried out through rallies and sensitisation lectures. The aim of the campaign was to put the issue of sexual harassment in the front burner for students to openly share their situation with the led campaigners if sexually harassed.

3. **Whistleblowing Training for Students Leaders:** the training was aimed at building the capacity of students' leaders on how to support victims of sexual harassment to gather evidence and report the case to the relevant internal unit or external agency if the internal unit seems to be lopsided in handling the case.

4. **Advocacy Visit to The Major Stakeholders:** For example, advocacy visit to the ICPC Zonal Commissioner on strengthening partnership, advocacy visit to the heads of tertiary institutions in Kano state, to have their buy-in on our campaign against sexual harassment and other corrupt practices in tertiary institutions, etc.

Conclusion

In Kano state, as in other states of Nigeria, the sexual harassment is not prevalence only in the universities, even in the other categories of the tertiary institutions, the menace is in the increase. Lack of clearly defined channels of reporting cases of sexual harassment have contributed in victims either not reporting or reporting to the individuals who are mostly colleagues of the perpetrators, hence denying justice to the victims. The measures (if any) put in place to address the menace are weak. Therefore, there is need for more coordinated effort by the relevant internal and external stakeholders to tackle the problem of sexual harassment in the tertiary institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the above discussion, the following recommendations can be offered:

1. Review of the existing laws and policies that prohibit sexual harassment in the tertiary institutions: the current laws and policies seem to be obsolete and ineffective, therefore, the heads of the tertiary institutions need to put more efforts to review them to make it easier for the cases of sexual harassment to be proven. Such reviewed laws and policies should make provision of serious punishment of the proven cases of sexual harassment so that to serve as detriment to others.
2. Establishment of a specific unit to handle sexual harassment related issues: in most of the institutions in the state, victims of sexual harassment do not know the right unit to report their plight to, hence they end up reporting to individuals who may be colleagues of the perpetrators, who will be more interested in covering their colleague and not ensuring justice for the victim.
3. Frequent sensitisation to the students: the students, especially the newly admitted students, need to be sensitised on frequent basis on how to avoid falling victim of sexual harassment. This can be done by the various students' associations in the schools or by the civil society organisations, or both. It can be done through various means like distributing Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, organising monthly public lectures, organising debates, etc.

4. Adequate security measure should be ensured in the nook and crannies of the school premises. To adequately maintain security, school authorities should install Close Circuit Television (CCTV) in strategic places so as to monitor activities going on.
5. External Anticorruption agencies, especially the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) need to be actively involved in the investigation and punishment of perpetrators of sexual harassments in the tertiary institutions.

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SECTION 6: HEALTH

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR ANOTHER PANDEMIC: MENTAL HEALTH IMPLICATIONS AND RESPONSIVENESS TO WHOLISTIC CARE

BY

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Introduction to Covid-19 Pandemic

In December 2019, a cluster of pneumonia cases were observed in Wuhan China and these were linked to a novel coronavirus. This virus, known as the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has been found to be the cause of this disease and was designated by the World Health Organisation in 2020 as Covid-19, which stands for coronavirus disease 2019.[1]

Though the origin of the Covid-19 virus was initially shrouded in uncertainty, supposition and conspiracy theories, investigations carried out in Wuhan at the beginning of the outbreak linked transmission of the virus to a sea food market where most cases had visited. Subsequently, person to person transmission became the most common mode of spread. Transmission is mainly through direct close contact with an infected individual through respiratory droplets which are released when sneezing, coughing or talking within a distance of two meters. Other modes of transmission include touching surfaces that have been contaminated and in turn, touching the eyes, mouth or nose.[1]

Reports have shown that most individuals who get infected with the Covid-19 virus usually have mild to moderate disease affecting mainly the respiratory system. These group of people will most likely recover without requiring special treatment. Individuals who are most likely to experience severe disease include persons who are obese, older persons and people who suffer from underlying medical problems such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease or cancers.[2]

Dry cough, fever and malaise are the commonest symptoms of Covid-19. Others include body aches, sore throat, diarrhoea, headaches, loss of smell and or taste.[2] Redness and itching of the eyes with or without respiratory symptoms have also been highlighted as some of the early ocular symptoms of Covid-19.[3]

The voices and role of ophthalmologists in an infectious disease pandemic cannot be overlooked, especially in this case as the whistle blower who was the first doctor that reported this new disease was indeed an ophthalmologist. It is therefore worthy of note that an ophthalmologist sounded the alarm and ended up losing his life to this menacing disease after contracting it from an

asymptomatic glaucoma patient! This further buttresses the point that the ophthalmologist in many cases is the first to attend to and diagnoses cases of existing diseases and even newly emerging diseases.[4]

On the 30th of January, 2020, the WHO declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) but the fast and wide spread of the virus necessitated its declaration as a global pandemic on the 11th of March, 2020. Notably, by the 4th of April, 2020, over 1 million cases had been reported worldwide which was more than a tenfold increase in less than one month.[5] Furthermore, as at the second week of March 2021, up to 120 million cases had already been reported worldwide with over 2.6 million deaths.[5]

On the 27th of February, 2020, Nigeria detected her first case of the corona virus (Covid-19) and this marked the beginning of a tumultuous journey for the giant of Africa. Similarly, a little over one year later, Nigeria had also reported more than 160 thousand cases and over 2000 deaths from both imported and local disease transfers.[6,7]

In spite of the tragic experiences Nigerians faced in the wake of the corona virus emergence, the Nigerian government was not caught completely unawares as a result of previous Ebola virus exposure. A "coronavirus preparedness group" was therefore instituted by the Government, through the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to engage point of entry screening for travellers, establish auxiliary "Covid centres" and protective activities.[8] The National Reference Laboratory with diagnostic capacity for epidemic prone pathogens was also strengthened.[9] The NCDC thereby supported about 22 States to establish Emergency Operation Centres (EOC), train rapid response teams in all 36 states, provide essential public health advisory (case definition and preventive information) and build capacity for contact tracing and case management.[10,11] The existent Polio infrastructure was also invaluable as it served as model after which Covid-19 response teams operated.[12] Nigeria worked passionately, in line with global best practices, to minimise the spread of Covid-19 and manage the inevitable health crisis that ensued.[12]

Since the incidence of Covid-19 in Nigeria, several researches have been conducted with a view to learn as much as possible about the virus within our indigenous context, understand the way it interacts with and affects people and develop effective means of managing its incidence. While some researchers focused on the area of anxiety, psychological wellbeing and coping strategies, others focused on the genetic structure of the virus and treatment options,

others still focused on the political and economic consequences of corona virus in Nigeria.[13,14,15,16]

Several global and indigenous reports have shown that the best preventive measures against Covid-19 include: practicing social distancing (maintaining a distance of at least six feet or two meters from others), avoiding crowded places, regular hand washing or use of alcohol based sanitiser, avoiding close contact with sick individuals, wearing of masks when out in public, respiratory hygiene, adequate ventilation when indoors, ensuring universal precaution in healthcare settings, and many more personal protective measures, including use of protective eye wear when examining patients.[1]

Notwithstanding the shock and consequent Covid-19 related tragedies experienced by Nigerians, the country once again rallied round to tackle the issues on ground by applying various collaborative strategies including: government-imposed lockdowns, instituting policies concerning social distancing, mandatory use of face mask in public places, regulation of number of people allowed at gatherings, regulation of religious gatherings and closure of markets and other business premises where overcrowding tend to occur. These measures were however unfortunately difficult to effectively enforce.[16]

Definition of Terms

Epidemic – This is when an infectious disease spreads quickly to more people than would be normally expected in a particular place.[5]

Pandemic – An epidemic that spreads across countries or continents. It affects a larger number of people and area than an epidemic. The WHO declared Covid-19 a pandemic when it was observed that the illness was severe and spreading quickly over a wide area.[17]

Emergency preparedness – This involves the steps that are taken to ensure safety before, during and after an emergency or disaster. It involves been prepared to reduce the effect of a disaster.[18] It can also be applied to an epidemic or pandemic.

Responsiveness – can be defined as a quick and positive reaction to something or someone.[19]

Holistic care – This is care that incorporates the whole of a person, which includes psychological, emotional, physical and spiritual dimensions.[20]

Emergency Preparedness for Subsequent Pandemics and Role Of Stakeholders In Mitigating The Effects On Well-Being And Development

It is highly unlikely that the last or worst health emergency the world will encounter will be Covid-19. There is therefore a potent demand for sustainable health emergency preparedness in order to successfully manage the next one.

In the past, it has been observed that as soon as an outbreak is perceived to be under control, donors, Governments and indeed people in general begin to pre-occupy themselves with other pressing concerns in a cycle known as "panic-then-forget". This has forestalled the development of effective health emergency preparedness plans worldwide and calls have been made to permanently break this cycle.[21]

It is imperative to note that no one size fits all plan exists, however certain baseline similarities in emergency preparedness plans can be considered.

The Covid-19 pandemic has taught Nations across the world how a disease outbreak is capable of disrupting health systems and economies thereby threatening vulnerable populations especially when measures are not taken to anticipate and halt it. This has led to the awakening of many Governments to the concept of emergency preparedness.[22] Although the topical issue at hand is Covid-19, the world is also at risk of various other pandemics ranging from infectious diseases with other micro-organisms to their drug resistance.[22]

Doctor Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who is the WHO Director-General stated as follows: "Over the years we have had many reports, reviews and recommendations all saying the same thing: the world is not prepared for a pandemic. The corona virus disease has laid bare the truth: when the time came, the world was still not ready".[21] Following this call, many countries however came together to re-affirm their commitment to health emergency preparedness.[21]

Emergency preparedness is a way of proving that "prevention is better than cure" as it takes less resources to prevent than to manage a condition. Reports show that investments in preparedness would cost only US$ 5 per person annually, whereas the cost of Covid-19 pandemic is already well more than US$ 11 trillion and counting.[21]

Before the advent of Covid-19, investments in preparedness on the international scale was consistently low. The WHO, which was under-resourced, lacked the capacity to enforce international health regulations and most member States disregarded WHO's travel restrictions. Nations also failed to mobilise multilateral response while national Governments underinvested

in local preparedness and acted too slowly to mobilise effective responses. Furthermore, communications were perceived to be unclear, inconsistent and mostly politicized with the unfortunate result that almost all actions came too late.[23]

Lessons learnt from this pandemic have shown that there are several measures to take in order to ensure that the world is more prepared for another health emergency. Not surprisingly, they can be easily looked at in line with many of the sustainable development goals.[24] These include the following:

1) **Poverty eradication:** the eradication of poverty has the potential to guarantee lifestyles that are healthy. This would naturally in turn result to good health and wellbeing, thereby boosting one's immunity, giving the body a fighting chance against invading pathogens such as the corona virus. In this way, many diseases and or the severe spectrum of their sequalae are prevented.[24]
2) **Access to basic services:** Universal access to basic services such as energy, water and sanitation, contributes immensely to good health. This in turn beefs up immunity and general resilience.
3) **Education:** Inclusive education with the likely consequence of decent work also speaks to a general mental, social and physical wellbeing. Understanding and acceptance of preventive measures and appropriate means of control or treatment is essential in the campaign to prevent or control any future pandemics. This can easily be communicated to persons who have quality education with necessary emphasis on gender equality and the education of even the people at the grassroot who are more likely to pass it on effectively one to another with resultant better acceptance rate.

   Education of the masses on the roles of vaccines, their safety profile and mode of action is vital in the prevention of fear vis a vis vaccine hesitancy and possible insecurities. Stakeholders ought to ensure that vaccine hesitancy campaigns at all levels are implemented in order to avoid failure during vaccine roll out programmes. To guarantee success, it is therefore imperative that vaccine education gets integrated into health education programmes even in schools in order to avoid it being done as a matter of urgency whenever a pandemic emerges. This measure is not only likely to prevent recurring spikes of pandemics in the long run but will also foster

community acceptance, prepare individuals and thus already existing systems for the emergence of new vaccines likely to be produced to combat other pandemics in future.

4) -Building capacity of stakeholders: Training and retraining of front-line workers and indeed all medical personnel, irrespective of their specialties, on storage and appropriate use of PPE at all times is of great import. This should be regularly instituted by health systems, hospital administrators and departments thereby ensuring instant readiness at all times with the added advantage of preventing unnecessary deaths of health personnel, an unfortunate yet needless outcome often seen at the onset of many pandemics.

5) -Weaknesses in supply, storage and cold chains have also been exposed by the events surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in health systems in underdeveloped countries like Nigeria. The economic and human cost of this fragility has been enormous. To fill this gap, local manufacturers need to be motivated and patronized.[25]

6) -Provision of Mental Health Support Services: The imposition of lock downs in many cases resulted in anxiety, fear and uncertainty which in-turn led to several mental health breakdowns and relational issues. Mental Health practitioners should be trained to engage safely with clients and the uptake of their services encouraged and destigmatised in society. Tele-mental health services and other modern techniques should also be encouraged among communities.

7) -Partnerships in the face of a pandemic and preparedness for the future: Promotion of collaborations between various social agents both locally and globally are of great import in controlling a pandemic and preparing any emergency responses for the future. Partnership should therefore be explored and maintained with channels kept open so that there is little or no delay when emergency responses are needed in the face of any future pandemics. In line with this, mid action reports and identification of hard-hit areas ought to be done such that possible second waves or future pandemics of similar causative agents are guarded against.

8) -Political will and financial investments: Commitments have to be made by Governments of Countries around the world in line with the international health regulations and global best practices with a

view to ensuring that another pandemic does not rear its ugly head and meet the world poorly prepared again. It is therefore foremost that financial investments in health and health related matters should take a front row in any national budget. In the face of appropriate financial and political investments, health security can be advanced, prevention and mitigation of future pandemics can be ensured, and protection of the future including that of generations to come can be achieved in line with the sustainable development goals.[21] Consequently, it is imperative to foster industry, boost technology, innovation and resilient infrastructure such that this goal is achieved. Various means of making certain this happens exist, some of which include-

a) The establishment and maintenance of strong institutions would effectively inspire trust at all levels such that corruption which could invalidate interventions, such as the provision and allocation of stimulus funds or palliatives for the poor and hard hit economically during a pandemic, is deterred.
b) The universal acceptance alongside utilisation of artificial intelligence and virtual clinics free from political harbingers in the medical sphere is a means that has been explored in developed climes but not widely so in underdeveloped countries like Nigeria. However, if inventions of artificial intelligence with their acceptance by regulatory bodies and medical personnel can be freely employed where infectious diseases are feared, then stronger care can be provided without trepidation by medical personnel who may not have PPE and dread transmission.[25]

- Cooperation among Member States of the WHO: This has the advantage of guaranteeing outbreaks are contained within countries in which they originate thereby minimising or preventing spread across international borders.[21]
- Community empowerment and participation: Lessons from Covid-19 have shown that investment in preparedness needs to be high-priority especially at the community level. The grassroot need to be actively involved, as it is said: nothing for us without us. Community gatekeepers and the Local governments must therefore

be provided not only with the means to implement policies but should also be involved in making decisions and planning for their health and survival abnitio.[21]

- Involvement of religious and spiritual leaders: Religious leaders can provide a supportive role to the government and health professionals by actively disseminating correct information and encouraging members to obey established laws and abide by required best practices.
- Multi-sectoral collaboration: The roles played by partner organisations in relation to Country or global preparedness and financing cannot be over-emphasised. Dishonest or censured information from possible sources of outbreaks should be discouraged. In the same vein, free and honest communication on all possible pandemics without fear of ridicule or sanction ought to be encouraged with warnings such as those of the whistle blower Doctor Li Wenliang not taken for granted but heard and indeed ensured protection.[2]

Using influenza pandemic as an example, specific actions to be taken by national authorities and WHO for emergency preparedness have been highlighted as shown in the table below. This includes pandemic phases and a summary of recommended actions for each phase as outlined by WHO. Recommendations are grouped according to the five components of preparedness and response which include:

1. Planning and coordination
2. Situation monitoring and assessment
3. Reducing the spread of disease
4. Continuity of health care provision communications.

Table 1: Summary table of recommended preparedness actions (a case of influenza pandemic)

PREPAREDNESS COMPONENTS	PHASES 1-3	4	5-6	POST PEAK	POST PANDEMIC
PLANNING AND COORDINATION	**Develop, exercise**, and periodically **revise** national influenza pandemic preparedness and response **plans.**	Direct and coordinate rapid pandemic **containment** activities in collaboration with WHO to limit or delay the spread of infection.	Provide **leadership** and **coordination** to **multisectoral resources** to mitigate the societal and economic impacts	Plan and coordinate for **additional resources** and **capacities** during possible future waves.	**Review** lessons learned and share experiences with the international community. **Replenish** resources.
SITUATION Continue MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT	**Evaluate** the bust national **surveillance** systems in collaboration with national animal health authorities, and other relevant sectors.	**Develop** ro veillance. Monitor containment operations. Share findings with WHO and the international community.	**Increase** sur **tor and assess** the evolving pandemic and its impacts and mitigation measures.	**Actively moni** surveillance to detect subsequent waves.	pandemic characteristics and situation monitoring and assessment tools for the next pandemic and other public health emergencies.
REDUCING THE SPREAD OF DISEASE	**Promote beneficial behaviours** in individuals for self-protection. Plan for use of pharmaceuticals and vaccines.	Implement rapid pandemic **containment** operations and other activities; collaborate with WHO and the international community as necessary.	**Implement** individual, societal, and pharmaceutical measures.	**Evaluate** the effectiveness of the measures used to update guidelines, protocols, and algorithms.	Conduct a **thorough evaluation** of all interventions implemented.

CONTINUITY OF HEALTH CARE PROVISION	**Prepare** the health system to **scale up.**	Activate **contingency** plans.	**Implement** contingency plans for health systems at all levels.	**Rest, restock** resources, **revise** plans, **and rebuild** essential services.	**Evaluate** the response of the health system to the pandemic and **share** the lessons learned.
COMMUNICATIONS	**Complete** communications planning and initiate **communications** activities to communicate real and potential risks.	Promote and communicate recommended **interventions** to prevent and reduce population and individual risk.	Continue **providing updates** to general public and all stakeholders on the state of the pandemic and measures to mitigate risk.	**Regularly update** the public and other stakeholders on any changes to the status of the pandemic.	Publicly **acknowledge** contributions of all communities and sectors and communicate the lessons learned; **incorporate** lessons learned into communications activities and planning for the next major public health crisis.

Source: Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response: A WHO Guidance Document. Geneva: World Health Organisation; 2009.

Mental Health Implications

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only increased the demand for mental health, but has also disrupted the access to mental health services. A survey of 130 counties that was published by the WHO advocated for additional mental health investments in the wake of Covid-19.[26] Determinants of increased mental health problems in this pandemic include isolation with consequent lack of physical contact, bereavement, loss of employment or income, fear, anxiety and stress, all setting off mental health conditions or exacerbating already existing ones. In addition, many individuals either out of boredom or

a need for consolation; resorted to heavy alcohol ingestion and or drug use which worsened their mental health conditions.[26]

Some complications of Covid-19 itself such as agitation, delirium or stroke could be neurological and or distress related. Individuals who have pre-existing substance abuse, mental or neurological disorders have also been found to be at risk of severe SARS-CoV-2 infection and therefore, at a higher risk of poor outcomes and even death. Post-Covid sequalae such as cognitive, physical and psychological impairments also occur and are a growing concern.[26]

In the survey carried out by WHO, over 60% of countries reported disruptions to mental health services for vulnerable groups. The impact of the pandemic on mental health and ways to mitigate it is worse in developing countries compared to their developed counterparts. For example, telemedicine and tele-therapy were reportedly deployed in over 80% of high-income countries to bridge gaps in mental health, while low-income countries reported less than 50%. Funding for mental health remains low globally. Less than 2% of national budgets and 1% of international aid are allocated to mental health which is definitely not adequate. Since the pandemic, only 17% of countries have full additional funding to cover mental health activities.[26]

Several indigenous studies were conducted to investigate the influence of the coronavirus pandemic on the mental health of Nigerians and to discover proper management strategies. A strong recommendation from the study was the need for considerable investments in digitally enhanced health care delivery and medical surveillance systems with a built in public mental health component.[27]

The WHO has recommended that countries allocate more resources to mental health as an integral component of their plans for response and recovery. Many people will survive this pandemic, but survival does not translate to forgetting all that have happened in the course of the pandemic. Beyond this pandemic, more attention should be designated to mental health which has hitherto endured years of chronic underfunding. Investments in mental health will ultimately reap rewards. Pre-Covid-19 estimates reveal that almost $ 1 trillion in economic productivity is lost every year in the United States from depression and anxiety alone. However, studies have demonstrated that every US$ 1 spent on evidence-based care for depression and anxiety gives a return of US$5. [26]

Focus On Wholistic Response

The total human being is made up of his/her body, mind and spirit. The

expression of both mind and spirit makes up a very essential part of holistic care. Holistic medicine emphasises the individual's ability to be part of his/her own healing process and engage in self-directed care.[28] In holistic healthcare, emphasis is made on the social, economic, physical, emotional as well as the spiritual needs of the person, including the person's response to illness and the effect of that illness on the ability to meet self-care needs. The aim is to seek and improve quality of life as a principal patient outcome.[28]

Holistic care addresses patients' physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs, thereby restoring their balances which have been disrupted by complex psychological, social and cultural needs. This enables them to be able to carry out their everyday activities and consequently improve their lives. Using only the biomedical approach to healthcare is insufficient to restore health, exposes patients to serious threats, prolongs hospitalisation and consequently increases treatment costs.[29] In this approach, patients also enjoy support from family, friends, community and also receive spiritual support and guidance to help in the recovery process. Studies have shown that religion and spiritual beliefs are associated with better health and psychological wellbeing, whereas constant religious struggle may increase mortality.[30]

There are many evidence-based practices and strategies that have been shown to improve all aspects of well-being before, during, and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Among these promising strategies, the holistic care approach could also be considered as an effective means of improving health policy during the pandemic. This involves providing bio-psycho-socio-spiritual care. It also offers a continuum of healthcare that provides promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services. For this holistic-comprehensive approach to be effective in the control of Covid-19 pandemic, a sustained commitment from entire communities, stakeholders and policymakers is required in order to achieve better health outcomes for all.[31]

Several physical, social, economic and psychological factors have been found to be associated with the outcomes of Covid-19. The nature of society has also been found to influence the psychological response to the pandemic and their willingness to manage mental health issues. It is therefore, important to understand the individual as a whole person not just as a patient. A holistic perspective in health policy entails addressing the determinants of health at all levels which is important to organise and develop goal-directed comprehensive interventions for Covid-19. Five main elements have been listed in holistic policy: "(1) considering the whole individuals and the interactions between the social systems, (2) comprehensive understanding of other risk factors

related to health, such as psychology, culture and socioeconomic status, (3) developing community partnerships, creating reciprocal relationships and establishing open communication, (4) increasing collaborative practice for health promotion, and (5) improving sustainability in health systems and healthcare."[16]

The Centre for Disease Control (CDC) developed the holistic-comprehensive approach as best practice to improve health policy for the Covid-19 pandemic in order that health workers properly respond before, during, and after the pandemic. It is encouraged that this should involve collaborations between all stakeholders at the local, national and international levels.[16]

Table 2. Best Practices to Implement a Holistic-Comprehensive Approach before, during and after the Covid-19 Pandemic

Period of Pandemic	Best Practices to Implement a Holistic-Comprehensive Approach
Before	Develop community resilience and recovery after the outbreak.
	Improve coordination of care and connecting individuals with community resources.
	Manage available resources to keep people informed during the outbreak.
	Coordinate the supply of essential medicines.
	Increase emergency referral centers during the pandemic.
	Evaluate public health surveillance for emerging threats.
During	Ensure effective communication with the local community.
	Take appropriate measures to ensure immediate relief and support being given.
	Coordinate emergency resources to support bio-psychosocio spiritual needs
	Develop health policy addressing stigma and mental health issues.
After	Evaluate the strategies used to control the outbreak.
	Facilitate healthy behavior change.
	Build partnerships with stakeholders to strengthen community capacity and skills.

Source: Setyawan et al. A Holistic-Comprehensive Approach: Best Practices to Improve Health Policy for Covid-19 Pandemic. National Public Health Journal. 2020

Conclusion

Lessons learnt from the current Covid-19 pandemic should be used for the next one. There is a need for global vigilance so as to firstly prevent major outbreaks and secondly flatten the peak of incidence of an already existing outbreak, thereby forestalling the overload of health care systems.

Sustainable emergency preparedness is essential in order to deal with the next pandemic and mitigate against future losses. By acting now, collectively and with urgency, future national and global crises can be averted.

Provision of holistic care should be emphasised in the management of Covid-19 patients and the pandemic generally as many facets are involved. Inclusion and active participation of the grassroot with sustained commitment from entire communities, stakeholders and policymakers is required to develop programmes that will aid in achieving better health outcomes for all even in the face of possible future pandemics.

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BEYOND COVID-19 PANDEMIC: MENTAL HEALTH IMPLICATIONS AND RESPONSIVENESS TO WHOLISTIC CARE

BY
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Background/Introduction

After a pandemic, most individuals are forced to develop new coping skills as well as adapt to the life changes it brings, more changes include the incidence of a new trend of psychological disorders like depression, anxiety, and substance use dependency, severely evident as symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) emerging from exposure to unprecedented life-stressors during the pandemic. Individual's vulnerability to psychosocial risk posed by a pandemic differs. Some factors like; family history of a post-traumatic stress disorder, previous firsthand experience to a pandemic or disaster, poor coping skills, existence of a life-threatening stressor and absence of a social support structure could determine how individuals respond to the psychosocial effect of the pandemic. In particular, people who contract the disease, those at heightened risk for it (including the elderly, people with compromised immune function, and those living or receiving care in congregate settings), and people with preexisting medical, psychiatric, or substance use problems are at increased risk for adverse psychosocial outcomes (Pfefferbaum & North 2020).

The incidence of Covid-19 pandemic blew a great punch of shock at the entire world, overwhelming the health systems of even high-income countries. Consequently, the situation has elicited medical responses from the government and the public sector. Nigeria recorded her first case by an air traveller from Italy in February 2020. The prevalence of Covid-19 grew steadily in Nigeria, moving from an imported case and elitist pattern to community transmission (Amzat, Aminu, Kolo, Akinyele, Ogundairo & Danjibo 2020).

A case of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), outbreak that began in December 2013 started spreading rapidly across West African countries from Guinea to Liberia to Sierra Leone and then to Nigeria. The first account of the Ebola virus outbreak in Nigeria was in 2014 when an infected airline traveller from Liberia came into Nigeria on 20 July 2014, a frontline health worker got exposed as she provided care to the traveller. From this index case, the disease quickly spread to involve 19 laboratory-with confirmed EVD cases and one probable case in two states (WHO, 2014). The index Ebola virus disease patient in

Nigeria died eventually 5 days after.

The unmitigated spread of Ebola Virus Disease could be excused to the fact that the country had never experienced a widespread outbreak of a pandemic in time past, which was evident, by the poor preparedness before the incidence was curtailed. The government of Nigeria was commended by international bodies for their swift action to curbing the effect of the pandemic. Reports revealed that after no new case was recorded within 42 days, on the 20th of October 2014, the World Health Organisation lauded the efforts of the Nigerian Government's highlighting her strong leadership and effective coordination with appropriate response that included the rapid establishment of an Emergency Operations Centre. The government of Nigeria declared she revised its national preparedness and response plan to ensure that the country is well prepared for other imported cases of the disease (WHO 2014).

Six years down the line, after the huge commendation and accolades to the establishment of an emergency operations centre by the Nigerian government and her open declaration of a revised national preparedness and response plan for any epidemic, the government was still involved in a search for emergency isolation centres to attend to covid-19 patients in the first week of incidence, indicating her negligence as a nation (government and people) in translating lessons learnt from previous pandemic and unpreparedness and proactivity in planning even after international alarms and warnings on a wave of a pandemic.

The coronavirus disease of 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic dazed the world with a shocking wave as most health systems were taken unaware thereby creating a huge burden on the health system of many nations. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Covid-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on January 30, 2020 (WHO 2020). Subsequently, in Nigeria the Coronavirus Preparedness Group was instituted in January 2020 as the government declared her strengthened effort towards heightened surveillance at the airports and entry points to the country. The World Health Organisation classified Nigeria as one among the 13 high-risk African countries susceptible to increasing spread of corona virus given the porosity of our borders and our weak state of the healthcare system (Marbot 2020). Nigeria recorded her Covid-19 index case from Italy, on 27 of February after visiting some other states in Nigeria before testing positive to Covid-19. Sadly, findings reveal that Nigeria has the highest fatality rate from Covid-19 in West Africa (Sobowale 2020).

Findings on the account of Ebola virus disease outbreak in Nigeria shows that, an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) was set up by the government. It consisted of six different units. The EOC was the key in the intervention process, which guaranteed control and planning (Otu, Ameh, Dawodu, Alade, Ekuri, & Idris 2018). Whether these centres were functional and operational after the outbreak was not captured.

The intense effort made by the government making to eradicate the virus led to the mobilisation of 5 major agencies, directing 1 coalition formed and strengthening efforts of the umbrella ministry charged to respond to the health concerns from the pandemic. Some of the agencies were newly instituted while the existing ones had added responsibilities. They include; the Coalition of Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI), the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), the Nigerian Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), the Nigerian Institute of Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD), the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC), the National Orientation Agency (NOA) alongside the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH). Unfortunately, none of these agencies have the responsibility to address the psychosocial needs of victims in isolation centres or the psychosocial effect of the pandemic on the general public.

The first case of coronavirus in Nigeria was recorded in Lagos state same state where the index case for Ebola virus was recorded. The public health approach was insufficient as the government was overwhelmed and couldn't cater for the physical needs of victims without any consideration for their psychological needs.

Experiences from the Ebola virus and Lassa fever outbreak should have been sufficient to strengthen Nigeria's preparedness for the Covid-19 outbreak. Many lessons to learn for a future pandemic from the way the country responded to the record of the index case using contact tracing and border closures as strategies to curb the spread of the virus. Consequently, the early days' initial bottlenecks included poor contact tracing and delayed closure of all entry points into the country (Amzat et al 2020).

If lessons learnt from the Ebola Virus Disease with a case fatality rate of 42.1% (Muanya, 2014) could not be translated in preparation for another pandemic like the Covid-19 pandemic in the space of 5 years then as a nation, then we are sailing on an already capsized boot. The unexplained coincidence of the route of entry for the index cases for the outbreak of both viruses calls for deeper analysis. How the country handles concerns from Covid-19

pandemic gives us an insight to Nigeria's preparedness to the outbreak of a new pandemic.

This paper assesses the early response to Covid-19 in Nigeria after the index case. The paper also explores the mental health effects emanating from the Covid-19 pandemic, identifying successes and gaps in the responsiveness by individuals, communities, professionals and the Nigerian government with the aim to elicit appropriate response by government and the general public in pandemic eras with respect to planning, preparedness and adherence to precautionary measures as well as addressing the mental health needs of victims and survivors.

Mental Health Implication of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

The Covid-19 pandemic was accompanied with severe psychosocial effects on individuals particularly and not exclusively among the young population. The major group whose psychological well-being is adversely affected includes youths, business owners, menial job workers and generally health workers and, of course, the general public had a wanton feel of these effects. This translated into the development of symptoms of psychological distresses like post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression.

Strict adherence to social and physical distancing was proffered by the WHO and the FMOH as a precautionary measure to compliment using of facemask and washing of hands. Nigerians live communally and rely basically on social support. The idea of "social distancing" negates regular social interaction, which is the bedrock of human society (Amzat and Razum, 2018). The pandemic deprived most individuals of this life pattern affecting relationships from person to person. The psychological effects of contagion and quarantine are not limited on the fear of contracting the virus (Barbisch, Koenig & Shih 2015). Other factors that could lead to psychosocial effect include; feelings of helplessness about life generally, being separated from loved ones (either by the lockdown or those infected and isolated from loved ones), loss of freedom, and increased uncertainty about the advancement of the disease (Li & Wang, 2020) these could even lead to suicidal ideation and attempts (Kawohl & Nordt, 2020). A recent Covid-19 research revealed that, children and youths are particularly at risk of developing symptoms of anxiety (Orgilés, Morales, Delvecchio, Mazzeschi, & Espada 2020).

The prolonged psychological effects could lead to dampened resilience and loss in ability to strengthen individual wellness and self-care reinforced

by fear of contracting the virus and accompanying stress from the drastic change in behavioural patterns. Loss of job, economic meltdown and financial hardship could lead to increased anxiety and feelings of uncertainty. Having infected relatives or acquaintances leads to a worsening in anxiety symptoms (Saladino, Algeri & Auriemma, 2020).

Health Care Workers are at risk to develop symptoms common in catastrophic situations, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, burnout syndrome, physical and emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and dissociation (Grassi and Magnani, 2000). Most health workers are stigmatised and feels isolated from family members and friends as the response towards them suggest negative attitudes for fear of contacting the virus as they interact daily with victims. Research has also shown that health care providers are particularly vulnerable to emotional distress, given their risk of exposure to the virus. They are concerned and daily engrossed about infecting and caring for their loved ones. More worrying is the unfavourable and unsupportive Nigerian work environment in Nigeria. During the pandemic most health centres experience, shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE), longer work hours, and involvement in emotionally and ethically fraught resource-allocation decisions (Quote). Some medicals centres especially privately owned for sake of quest for money engaged in unethical practices, who actually tested positive for Covid-19, without government approval (Adelakun 2020).

Quarantined individuals are at an increased risk of experiencing a wide range of negative emotions, such as fear, anger, guilt, and feelings of loss of control. Due to these reactions, people are likely to feel less safe in their physical environments, and they may be practicing hand/face hygiene, disinfecting surfaces, and engaging in other health behaviours excessively (Harper, Satchell, Fido, Latzman, 2020). The "stay-at-home" campaign and prohibition of social gatherings as well as regulation of work activities and limited social interaction adversely affected individual's quality of life. The dreadful manifestation of Covid-19 at the community level significantly affects various dimensions of the quality of life (QoL) of all individuals (Algahtani, Hassan, Alsaif & Zrieq, 2020). Studies have found that the outbreak of infectious diseases, such as Covid-19, negatively affect the physical, social, and psychological functioning of individuals and societies, and have significant economic consequences (Qiu, Shen, Zhao, Wang, Xie, & Xu, 2020). The new social normal adversely impacts livelihood and survival chances, amidst grossly inadequate palliatives (quote). Implementing preventive measures

affects people's daily life activities and certainly influences individuals' general functioning and well-being (Mazza, Ricci, Biondi, Colasanti, Ferracuti, Napoli, & Roma, 2020).

Significant challenges posed by Covid-19 pandemic include; scarce medical resources to cater for patients needs – resources like medical personnel, ventilators, personal protective equipment (PPE), inadequate medical facilities or isolation centres, insufficient government support and corruption in distribution of palliatives and financial aids among others and a lack of psychosocial testing, assessment and treatment for Covid-19 patients undergoing psychological symptoms.

Lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic globally should support Nigeria's preparedness and responses in times of pandemic and outbreak. Efforts should be collective from individuals to the government level in curbing the spread of contagion. It is therefore expedient to investigate appropriate responses in pandemic eras, escalate the gaps that exist for better decision making to circumvent future occurrences.

Individual Responses

1. Adherence to precautionary measures – Lockdown could lead a person to eat more with a likelihood of this translating to excessive weight gain. Most people would spend longer times on the screen (television and phones); alter sleep patterns with might lead to the development of insomnia. Others may be obsessed with precautionary measures like constant hand wash and manifestations of paranoia when they hear someone sneezes even if they are several metres away. It is important for individuals to maintain a healthy lifestyle during pandemic eras like; eating right, taking vitamin D compliments and keeping physical and social distances.
2. Propagating unverified news out of fear - We all need to be intentional and thoughtful when communicating on social media and other communication platforms, showing supportive behaviours around the new coronavirus disease (IFRC 2020). At the early days of the virus there was an existence of insufficient knowledge about how the new virus is transmitted, treatment options available and precautionary measures. People depended on information from significant others, which may not be accurate in terms of source

and associated biases. Individuals should be focused on sharing facts and not their fears to others.

3. Self-care and Resilience – Attending to one's psychosocial need. Talking to a professional when you begin to feel symptoms of depression or other psychological distresses.

4. Providing useful information to health workers - Some of the cases of Covid-19 among health care provided were from patients with a subclinical coronavirus infection which was presented with other severe medical conditions hiding vital information from health workers (Ayeleso, 2020).

5. Stigmatisation of victims – The psychological effect people experience could fuel damaging stereotypes on this infected with the virus during a pandemic. Stigma can undermine social cohesion and prompt possible social isolation of groups, which might contribute to a situation where the virus is more, not less, likely to spread. This can result in more severe health problems and difficulties controlling a disease outbreak (IFRC 2020). Research has shown that stigmatisation could cause people to hide their illness for fear of discrimination as well as create a barrier to help seeking behaviours. Social media is useful for reaching a large number of people with health information at relatively low cost (Fayoyin, 2016). It is essential to verify and filter information before propagating them as this can instil unnecessary fear, which may stem from such information sharing.

Community and Organisational Responses

1. Faith based Organisations - Many people and faith-based organisations have continued to defy the directives on social distancing and public gatherings by organising social events, while some worship centres also conducted congregational services way over the specified maximum numbers of people. Some worship patterns demands physical contacts.

2. Awareness to Members – Community leaders were taken unaware and couldn't respond when asked by community members about Covid-19.

3. Community Coalition – Community support force was broken as everyone was skeptical in organising town hall meetings to agree in supporting those encountering a worse hit in the community.

Information on the Covid-19 infection were translated into major local languages by the NCDC to ease smooth understanding of messages across literacy levels using simple and easy to understand languages. The hashtag #Takeresponsibility was propagated on social media. This is to emphasise the role of the individual both in the prevention of Covid-19 and the social upkeep of their health while the pandemic lasts (NCDC 2020). However, the extent to which public health education has influenced positive behavioural changes among Nigerians remain vague (Amzat, 2020).

Professional Responses

1. The role civil society organisations/ Non-governmental Organisations – CSOs have a great role to play in terms of promoting public awareness on the virus and eliciting social behavioural changes, engaging in advocacy activities to the key influencers and the government with the aim to illicit appropriate policies and make decisions to support the general wellbeing of the citizenry. In addition, they play crucial role in resource mobilisation including supplies and regulation of distribution of PPEs and palliatives. CSOs are fundamental players in connecting community group as well as promoting mutual benefit and help among groups. NGOs and INGOs are key providing monitoring and evaluation guide to implementing agencies for accountability and sustainability. civil society organisations often facilitates understanding of government activities, allowing citizens to better understand and evaluate policy decisions and the execution of government authority, along with providing citizens with the skills to voice their concerns and act collectively (NDI 2020).
2. The role of Health Care Workers (HCWs) – HCWs are essential in providing patient-centered care to individuals infected with the virus and beyond that other individuals who would need to access medical health all through the period of lockdown. As many businesses were shut down over the pandemic period, medical personnel were in the frontline of the list of essential service providers and

the demand for their services across the globe was overwhelming. Besides support provided by health care workers at designated isolation centers, they are also responsible for integrated care for individuals on self-isolation, monitoring symptoms of the virus to reduce fatality cases. Beyond the Covid-19 pandemic, it is crucial to equip the emergency healthcare workers to be medically and psychologically prepared to address future challenges (Munawar & Fahad 2021). The Ebola response showed the importance of investments that build health system resilience, notably investments in the health workforce (Kruk, Myers, Tornorlah & Dahn 2015).

3. The role of Financial Institutions – While focus was hinged on addressing the health impact of the pandemic, the economic effects of lockdowns are leading to an unprecedented global recession, which will have ramifications well into the future (Rutter, Horton & Marteau 2020). The international financial institutions (IFIs), including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and regional and specialised multilateral development banks were overwhelmed by demands from members to support the debilitating economic and health of the pandemic. A CRS report revealed that more than half of the IMF's membership has requested IMF support, which informed the financial institution to increase her lending capacity to about $1 trillion, to support governments responding to Covid-19 pandemic. In longer cues at the banks were recorded as financial hardship hit the lives of Nigerian. People were in more demand to withdraw their savings due to uncertainty and demands after each cycle of lockdown was relaxed. The Central Bank of Nigeria was proactive in policies that supported a few Nigerians. The CBN established a number of measures to tackle the impact of the coronavirus, including establishing a fund to support the country's economy targeted at households and micro and small enterprises (Frempong-Kore, Atieku & Asare 2020). Additional, providing intervention funds for in healthcare systems.

4. The roles of the Media – The media plays a relevant role in times of pandemic as people in confinement relies on information from various media channels spending longer time on their television, social media sites and radio. Emphasising efforts to find a vaccine

and treatment can increase fear and give the impression that we are powerless to halt infections now. Instead, promote content around basic infection prevention practices, symptoms of Covid-19 and when to seek health care (IFRC 2020).

Government Responses

1. Establishment of isolation centers – We had to standardized healthcare center across states that could be converted immediately to an isolation center (NCDC 2020).
2. Making decisions and policies to reduce the spread of the virus.
3. Provision of palliatives to support livelihood - specific stressors to individuals included greater duration of confinement, having inadequate supplies, difficulty securing medical care and medications, and resulting financial losses (Pfefferbaum, 2020).

Conclusions

The Covid-19 pandemic has alarming implications (physical, psychological and economical) for individuals and the general public. Strategies in place are in adequate to address the distresses accompanying the pandemic. Nigerians' responsiveness for individuals, professionals and the government in times of a contagion should be assessed and lessons learnt translated in preparedness in times of uncertainty. In addition to those providing medical care, psychologists and social workers should be incorporated in the emergency response team. Further training of health system leaders is important in monitoring psychosocial needs and delivering psychological first aid to patients, health care providers, and the general public.

Recommendations

1. Prevention efforts such as screening for mental health problems, psycho-education, and psychosocial support should focus on these and other groups at risk for adverse psychosocial outcomes.
2. The integration of mental health considerations into Covid-19 care will be addressed at the organisational level through state and local planning
3. Provision of accurate and verified information by the general public responses and responsibility

4. The National Emergency Management Agency should be empowered to design programmes focused on educating and training Nigerians on issues around psychological wellbeing. Beneficiaries should be inclusive of health care providers.
5. Strong public awareness campaigns focused on early engagement with traditional, religious and community-based leaderships and coalition groups would play a key role in disseminating appropriate information on the pandemic.
6. Continuous assessment and promotion of mental health wellness among individuals and families would significantly reduce the general negative impact of the pandemic.
7. Telemedicine – attending to the online community with appropriate psychosocial messages to support individual resilience will go a long way in strengthening self care and coping mechanisms in times of pandemic.

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THE NIGERIA PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM IN THE ERA OF EMERGENCY: Covid-19 CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS

BY
ADAH FRANCIS ABAH

"The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on mental health is complex, diverse and wide ranging, affecting all parts of societies and populations. The extraordinary increase in mental health needs is taking its toll on already burdened mental health services which are under-funded and under-resourced in many countries on every continent affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 has exposed the serious gaps in mental health care, and now more than ever world leaders need to prioritize and ensure that quality mental health support is accessible to everyone, everywhere." – Ingrid Daniels, President World Federation for Mental Health

Introduction

Like a whirlwind, Covid-19 is blowing across the world leaving in its wake death, devastation to world economies, overwhelmed health systems, disruptions to social structures, mental health challenges (arising from disruptions in treatment, fear and anxiety experienced) amongst others. With the first case of the virus reported in Wuhan, China in December, 2019, the virus has spread to 219 countries and territories including Nigeria[1] . Nigeria recorded its first case on the 27th of February, 2020. As at 22nd March 2021, Nigeria has tested 1,727,467 samples; recorded 161,737 confirmed infections; 11, 808 active cases; discharged 147,899; and 2,030 lives have been lost[2]. On the global scene, as at 22nd March, 2021 over 123,961,421 covid-19 confirmed cases recorded, with 99,876,408 recoveries and 2,729, 278 lives lost[3].

The year 2020 was indeed a challenging year for the world especially since no one was prepared for a pandemic of such magnitude. But the world has learnt a lot and countries all over the world are putting in place strategic plans for the future in preparation for unforeseen challenges and pandemics. 2021 seems a more promising year with several discoveries of vaccines to contain the virus. Countries in Europe, the United States of America and

1 https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/countries-where-coronavirus-has-spread/
2 Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), 2021 https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/
3 European Centre for Disease Prevention & Control, 2021 https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/geographical-distribution-2019-ncov-cases

indeed Nigeria are embarking on mass immunizations of their citizens. Though giant strides have been made, more challenges still exist pertaining to vaccine safety and apathy. Notwithstanding, the world is poised to bring the virus under control while healing from the loss of human life, resuming physical and social interactions, rebuilding economies, health systems and addressing mental health and psychosocial support needs.

In Nigeria, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and the Presidential Task Force for Covid-19 are responsible for preparedness and response activities. Also, national and international Non-Governmental Organisations, civil society organisations and United Nations agencies are involved in responding to the pandemic and bringing it under control. However, with a weak health system as a result of decades of underfunding and inadequate infrastructure, Nigeria is struggling to meet its health needs. It is important that the country invests in its health system to meet the ongoing challenges posed by Covid-19 pandemic while also attending to the other epidemics including Malaria, Measles, Lassa fever, and Meningitis. Lastly, during the ongoing pandemic in Nigeria people have experienced psychological distress due to fear of getting sick, losing a loved one or collapse of health system. Also in a country, where many people live on less than a USD$1 a day and rely on daily work to sustain their families, the pandemic as a result of government lockdowns, curfews, quarantine etc. has had a significant impact on their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing due to increased stress, anxiety, depression or other mental disorders over uncertainty to meet daily needs. From the foregoing, one question comes to mind viz; how is the country responding to these daring challenges?

Nigeria Health System

Nigeria has a weak health system as a result of decades of neglect, underfunding and inadequate infrastructure. Key findings from a report by ACAPS in May 2020 include the following:

- Yearly health spending is low. Only USD$27.84 per capita, which is below other ECOWAS countries such as Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire.
- Nigeria and other African countries with Covid-19 cases have less than one hospital bed and one ventilator per 100,000 people.
- As at 2017, Nigeria had only 120 intensive care unit (ICU) beds around 0.07 ICU beds for 100,000 people.

- In 2004, Nigeria was recorded among the countries with the lowest rate of bed spaces per capita. Less than 1.7 per 1000 people.[4]
- Understaffed health care personnel in some parts of the country.
- Nonfunctioning health care facilities in conflicted affected areas such as the north eastern part of the country. With two-thirds of health facilities in such areas not functioning due to conflict related damage.

Rapid investment in Nigeria's health system is critical due to the danger of Covid-19 and other diseases. In its current state, the health system would be overwhelmed if the number of Covid-19 cases continues to rise.

Nigeria Mental Health System

There is limited information about Nigeria's mental health system. In Nigeria mental health services are placed at the primary health care level in a health policy provision adopted by the federal government in 1991. An individual's life, family members, social and economic capability is significantly impacted by mental problems such as neuropsychiatric and substance use disorders. According to Nigeria's federal ministry of health 1 in 5 people will experience a significant mental health problem in their lifetime with many chronic that require long term treatment. Neuropsychiatric and substance use disorders are also responsible for an estimated 14% of all disabilities as reported by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Also, with people diagnosed with mental health disorders, only 10% have accessed treatment within the previous 12 months.

The majority of the Nigerian population is greatly disadvantaged as mental health services are mostly located in the large cities. For instance, most mental health services are provided by government institutions such as federal neuropsychiatric hospitals and university teaching hospitals. According to a report by WHO-AIMS on Nigeria's mental health system, 95% of psychiatrists work only in government administered mental health facilities and 5% for NGOs, for profit mental health facilities and private practices.

The country also suffers from inadequate number of personnel as there are less than 150 psychiatrists, around 1 per 1 million and very few neurologists.

4 ACAPS Thematic Report: Covid-19 in Nigeria, May 2020

Also recorded, is around 5 psychiatric nurses per 100,000 of the population and few number of other mental health professionals such as clinical psychologists, social workers and occupational therapist. Another challenge confronting the country is 'brain drain' resulting in the country losing its newly trained professionals who are in search of greener pastures to western countries. In comparison to other countries in Africa such as South Africa, Egypt and Kenya; Nigeria is lagging behind in regards to mental health personnel as those countries have more psychiatrists per 100,000 persons and also higher proportion of psychiatric beds.[5] Also, Nigeria's mental health systems support for delivery of services is weak with inadequate supply of psychotropic drugs required for treatment and lack of incorporation of mental and neurological health measures in information systems.

To improve the quality of mental and neurological care for Nigerians the ministry of health aims to effect reforms in the following areas[6]:

- Mainstreaming mental and neurological health within national health, social welfare, education and criminal justice policy.
- Integrating mental and neurological health into the primary care system.
- Strengthening and developing existing systems for human resource development, information and communication.
- Decentralisation of specialist mental and neurological health services.
- Strengthening management of mental and neurological health services.
- Encouraging inter-sectoral partnerships with other key governmental organisations and NGOs.
- Linking to educational programmes in schools, work places, the community and media.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

What is Health?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as a state of

5 WHO-AIMS Report on Mental Health System in Nigeria, 2006

6 National Policy for Mental Health Services Delivery – Federal Ministry of Health, Nigeria, August 2013

complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not just merely the absence of disease or infirmity.[7] According to Merrian-Websters dictionary, health is a condition of being sound in body, mind or spirit.

What is Mental Health?

Mental health is defined as state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. In this positive sense, mental health is the foundation for individual wellbeing and the effective functioning of a community[8].

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we cope with stress, relate with others and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage and throughout life. During the cause of an individual's life, it is possible to experience mental health problems affecting thinking, mood and behaviour[9]. Factors contributing to mental health problems include:

- Biological, such as genes or brain chemistry.
- Life experiences such as exposure to trauma or abuse.
- Family history of mental health problems.
- Problematic drug use.

When an individual enjoys mental health wellbeing, it attracts advantages such as:

- Ability to realise their full potential.
- Ability to cope with the stresses of life.
- Able to work productively.
- Contributing meaningfully to their communities.

What is Psychosocial Support?

The term **Psychosocial** highlights the close connection between psychological aspects of human experiences and the wider social experience.

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7 The World Health Organization: definition of health. https://www.who.int>aboutwho

8 UNHCR's Mental Health & Psychosocial Support – for Persons of Concern, Global Review 2013

9 https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health

Psychosocial effects affect different levels of functioning comprising cognitive (perception and memory as a basis for thoughts and learning), affective (emotions) and behavioural. Social effects concern relationships, family and community networks, cultural traditions and economic status, including tasks such as work or school. Psychosocial wellbeing is the combination of psychological and social factors which are responsible for the wellbeing of people as they can't be separated or isolated from each other (for instance, biological, emotional, spiritual, cultural, social, mental and material aspects). Thus, **psychosocial support** addresses the ongoing psychological and social problems of individuals, their partners, families and caregivers[10].

Psychosocial support focuses on the following areas[11]:

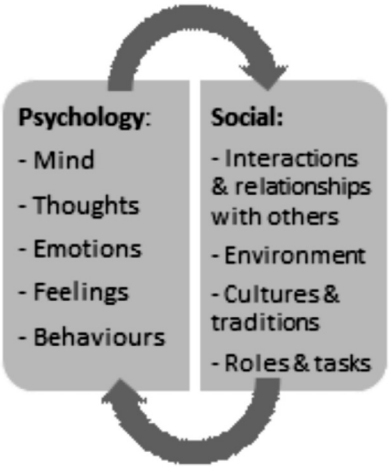
- Assisting individuals, families and communities improve their psychosocial wellbeing.
- Encouraging better connections between people and building better relationships.
- Encouraging caring and respectful relationships that communicate understanding and acceptance.
- Promoting everyday consistent care and support for family and community.

Psychosocial support is a continuum of care and support influenced by both individuals and social environment in which people live during and after an emergency and prevents immediate or long mental health disorders.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) refers to any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial wellbeing and/ or prevent or treat mental disorder.

10 https://www.who.int/hiv/topics/psycosocial/support/en/
11 https://www.arc-online.org

Definition of Psychosocial



Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Impact in Emergencies[12]

Emergencies create a myriad of problems experienced at different levels: the individual, family, community and society. At every level, emergencies wear away protective supports that are normally available, increase the risk of diverse social or psychological problems, and are inclined to increase pre-existing problems. While social and psychological problems will occur to variable extents in most groups, it is important to note that every individual will experience the same event in a different manner and will have different resources and capacities to cope with that event.

Psychosocial problems in emergencies are highly interconnected, yet they may be predominantly social or psychological in nature. Problems of a predominantly social nature include the following:

- Pre-existing (pre-emergency) social problems (e.g., belonging to a group that is discriminated against or marginalised; political oppression);
- Emergency-induced social problems (e.g., family separation; lack of safety; stigma; disruption of social networks; unemployment

12 Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Global Protection Cluster Working Group and IASC Reference Group for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings, 2012.

and poverty; breakdown of community structures, resources and trust; difficult interactions with the host communities); and

- Humanitarian aid-induced social problems (e.g., overcrowding and lack of privacy in camps; undermining of community structures or traditional support mechanisms; aid dependency).

Likewise, the following are problems of a predominantly psychological nature:

- Pre-existing problems (e.g., severe mental disorder and depression);
- Emergency-induced problems (e.g., grief; non-pathological distress; alcohol and other substance abuse; depression and anxiety disorders; sense of disorientation and uncertainty about the future; posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)); and
- Humanitarian aid-related problems (e.g., anxiety due to a lack of information about services or about perceived differences in access to aid).

Therefore, mental health and psychosocial needs in emergencies encompass far more than psychological conditions like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or disaster-induced depression. A selective focus on these two problems is inappropriate because it overlooks many other MHPSS needs in emergencies. Moreover, it focuses on deficits, ignoring individual, family and community resources. In emergencies, people are affected in different ways and require different kinds of support. One of the key principles is ensuring the availability of complementary types of support.

Nigeria Psychosocial Support System: Does It Exist?

Nigeria is not new to emergencies or humanitarian crises such as insurgency or natural disasters that require timely and effective responses. The country has suffered for a protracted period of time from conflicts affected areas of the north-east Nigeria, farmer-herder crisis, rampant kidnappings and banditry. These events which are ongoing have had a profound impact on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of the people affected either first hand or through indirect exposure to violence.

Victims often report sufferings from psychological distress, for example, deep fear, insomnia, nightmares, anxiety and mysterious somatic symptoms, such as body pains, stomach aches and headaches. Some of the victims

exposed to these distressing events may experience symptoms which will decrease overtime without need for any specific intervention while other victims may require psychosocial intervention to cope and promote healing. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, mental health and psychosocial needs of conflict affected people are not adequately provided for due to issues such as instability of the situations, limited resources, and a lack of support from authorities and family/community separation. The inability of people to access health, social and educational services worsen an already precarious situation.

In Nigeria, mental health and psychosocial support programmes are being implemented mostly by international organisations and became one of the priority responses in 2015. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) was one of the first organisations to implement community based mental health and psychosocial support programmes in north-east Nigeria. Other organisations responding to the mental health and psychosocial support needs include Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), Save the Children and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Mental health and psychosocial support is relatively new in the country and would require specialised human resources for training, guidance and support for mental health and psychosocial support and strengthening the mental health and psychosocial coordination system at the national level.[13]

Nigeria Psychosocial System during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The NCDC and Presidential Task Force on Covid-19 are responsible for stemming the spread of Covid-19 in Nigeria. The Key focus areas of the Nigerian government on the fight against Covid-19 include:

- To gain inter-sectoral support to prevent the spread of the virus.
- Imposition of restriction on the movement of people and goods across Nigeria's local and international borders, and sponsoring health and enlightenment campaigns to increase the knowledge of citizens about the virus.
- Encouraging testing by equipping and expanding laboratory

13 Mental health & Psychosocial Needs in Conflict Affected Areas in of North East Nigeria 2017 https://odihpn.org/magazine/mental-health-and-psychosocial-needs-and-response-in-conflict-affected-areas-of-north-east-nigeria/

networks for Covid-19 across the six geopolitical zones of the country.

Though, these were all laudable actions undertaken by the government, they were all focused on preventive measures and case management excluding one very critical intervention from discussions - the psychosocial wellbeing of Nigerian citizens. The ongoing pandemic has significantly affected people's lives, livelihoods, and way of life which has resulted in a number of psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation etc. Also, intensified by the pandemic are anger, boredom and loneliness.

To prevent further damage, it is imperative that mental health and psychosocial interventions are provided to improve psychosocial wellbeing, coping mechanisms, resilience and positive mental health. These can be achieved by promoting community unity, investing in mental health services through integration of mental health services in the primary health care centers, training more personnel for psychological counseling through existing traditional institutions and engaging innovative means such as electronic devices and applications and providing clear, accurate and regular communication about covid-19[14].

1. Psychosocial Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Nigerians

Thus far, very little information has been documented about the impact of the Covid-19 impact on the mental health of Nigerians. Prior to the outbreak of the virus, Nigeria was not prepared to respond effectively to the mental health crises. And with the emergence of the virus this has further exposed the weak mental health system and total health system of the country. According to the WHO, global statistics on mental health were not so good.

Globally, it is reported that anxiety and depression are the cause of monetary losses of over USD$1 trillion per year. Also, global estimates states that mental health conditions contribute to 25% of years lived with disability. Around half of all mental health conditions start by age 14. And depression being the leading cause of disability, affecting 264 million people. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people between ages 15-29 with a person dying by suicide every 40 seconds. People living in conflict affected areas such as north-east Nigeria, 1 in 5 is suffering from a mental

14 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342372240_The_need_for_psychosocial_support_amid_COVID-19_crises_in_Nigeria

health condition. For those with severe mental disorders tend to die 10-20 years earlier than the general population. Despite these astounding statistics, funding for mental health is grossly poor and even less than 1.6% health budgets of developing countries[15]. The impact of the covid-19 pandemic on mental health is multifaceted and diverse affecting all parts of societies and populations. Possible impacts of Covid-19 include the following:

1.1. Impact of Covid-19 on the general Nigerian Population – Increased Mental Health Distress

Across the country, people are suffering economically. Majority of the population depend on daily pay to survive. Government in the bid to stop the spread of the virus introduced restrictions and lockdowns. However, these measures have significantly affected the people's means of sustenance. The lockdown and isolations, not being able to meet with loved ones and fear of losing family members or livelihoods has resulted in people experiencing increased anxiety, depression, and loneliness. These issues place individuals at a risk of short term and also long-term mental problems.

1.2. Impact of Covid-19 on People with Existing Mental Illness

The Covid-19 pandemic has created an increased risk for those with existent mental illness due to disruptions in treatment services, medications and support services. These disruptions could increase existing mental health symptoms or trigger relapse among people in this population. Also, heavily impacted by the pandemic is community-based psychosocial support activities such as support groups which regularly brings people together have come to a halt with group members unable to meet for months. Such activities have physical distancing restrictions which must be adhered to or face sanctions by government authorities. Demand for in-person or face-to-face mental health services have reduced significantly due to the fear of infection especially among older people and lack of and proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). These challenges have necessitated the need for mental services to begin moving towards using digital and telecommunication solutions such as digital phones and web-based applications.

15 The Impact of Covid-19 on Global Mental Health: A Briefing. United for Global Health, 2020

1.3. Impact of Covid-19 on Substance Users

The Covid-19 pandemic has put intense pressure on the country's weak health systems, livelihoods (as a result of job losses), educational system (with young people unable to go school) and social gathering (with restriction on religious gathering etc.). To deal with these stresses, people tend to use different coping mechanisms some of which are potentially harmful such as alcohol and substance use which can worsen issues. Problematic substance use can lead to increase in violence (interpersonal and domestic violence) and increase in other harms such as spending enormous time on addictive behaviours like gaming and gambling, and also having suicidal ideation. In a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) psychosocial support programme (UNODC Drug help net) implemented during the lockdown in some states in Nigeria to cater to the mental health needs of recovering drug users, results were mixed. Some drug users complained about experiencing relapse and using more quantity of substances. Others reported a reduction of substance use because they did not have the money to buy substances. Most of the drug users complained of hunger which increased their anxiety over their inability to provide for their families these inclined them towards using substances to forget their problems.

1.4. Impact of Covid-19 on Health Workers

Nigeria's health workers are at the forefront of the fight against Covid-19 and are exposed to the risks of infection, getting sick and even death. This challenge has caused an exceptional amount of stress and anxiety on the health workers and risk of mental ill health including burn out due to working for prolonged hours, suicide and stigmatisation. Ensuring the good mental health of health workers is essential to the fight against Covid-19. Therefore, mental health services and adequate hazard compensation allowances for health workers should be prioritized. Some western countries such as the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and the United States of America have instituted dedicated teams providing mental health and psychosocial support for health workers. Support is offered via workshops and support groups led by social workers and other trained staff, individual assessments and mental health treatment.

1.5. Impact of Covid-19 on Patients and their Families

For people infected with the virus, they have to cope with the separation from their family, physical pain and discomfort, also, fear, anxiety and

uncertainty about their condition. Family members and relatives have to cope with risk of infection, separation from ill loved ones, and the uncertainty of whether or not their infected family members will survive and in worse cases death of their loved ones at which point they may not get the opportunity to say good bye or bury them. Also, due to stigma, fear of discrimination and intimidation, many Covid-19 patients hide and refuse to disclose their health status, further undermining efforts to prevent the spread of the virus.

1.6. Impact of Covid-19 on the Elderly

The elderly members of the society between the ages of 60 and above or with health conditions such as lung or heart disease or diabetes are particularly at risk of suffering serious health complications should they be infected with the Covid-19 as such, they are advised to restrict their movement, avoid crowds and practice good personal hygiene[16]. The elderly are also vulnerable to mental illnesses such as dementia and Alzheimer's. The pandemic could further exacerbate their situations due to long periods of isolation; reduced physical activity and reduced cognitive stimulation which all increase the risk of cognitive decline. In Nigeria, there are currently no measures in place to address the mental health needs of elderly people as they can't easily access health services in hospitals due to restrictions and fear of infections.

1.7. Impact of Covid-19 on Young People

In Nigeria, during most of the year 2020 young people were stuck at home. Both primary, secondary schools and tertiary institutions (as part of the strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)) and consequent lockdowns were stuck at home. This situation led to heightened levels of stress and anxiety among young people. The mental health challenges experienced due to lack of interaction with peers could affect brain health and development. During the lockdowns, some children enjoyed healthy quality time with their families while others were exposed to domestic violence and child abuses which have now gone to show the importance of raising children in a secure and loving environment[17].

16 Covid-19 advice – High Risk Groups https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/covid-19/information/high-risk-groups

17 Mental Health Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic: Implication for Sub-Saharan Africa. Psychology Research & Behavior Management, 2020

1.8. Impact of Covid-19 on Women

In China, it was reported that women report more symptoms of anxiety and depression than men. In Nigeria, women are showing increased anxiety and depression due to fear for the safety and health of their partners, children and even themselves. During the lockdowns, women were more at risk of sexual and domestic violence from their partners and relatives. Such experiences have immense mental health consequences including anxiety, depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The Government needs to put in mind women in their Covid-19 pandemic response plans to prevent violence against women, create safe spaces for victims and survivors and systems to report violence safely and access psychosocial support.

1.9. Impact of Covid-19 on Persons in Humanitarian Settings

According to the WHO, 1 in 5 of people in conflict settings has a mental health condition[18]. The Covid-19 pandemic has further worsened the mental wellbeing of those in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps as they are not only contending with safety and livelihood for themselves and their families, but are further exposed to the risks of contracting a deadly virus. For most IDP's living in poverty, it is not possible to follow public health guidelines such as, wearing a face mask, physical distancing and frequent hand washing with soap and water to protect themselves against the virus. In Nigeria, were there are thousands of people living in IDP camps especially in the North-east region of the country, it would be challenging to cater to the mental health needs of the affected people. However, the government and various international organisations have ongoing mental health and psychosocial support services in some of those areas. It is important to enhance such activities to speed up recovery, rebuild communities and save lives[19].

2. Factors Facilitating Mental Health Problems/Disorders

The following factors are impacting negatively on the Nigerian population and may lead to mental health problems if not addressed:

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18 http://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/mental-health-conditions-in-conflict-situations-are-much-more-widespread-than-we-thought

19 The Impact of Covid-19 on Global Mental Health: A Briefing. United for Global Health, 2020

2.1. The Direct Impact of the Disease

Particularly at risk of developing mental health problems are frontline health workers, survivors of the disease, families and children who have lost loved ones and those with preexisting mental disorders. These groups of people have experienced increased stress, fear and discrimination from stigmatisation which could lead to mental disorders.

9.2. Restrictions and Limitations of Physical Interactions

The restrictions imposed by the government to curb the spread of the Covid-19 have limited access to social support structures, food, medication and access to treatment for mental health services. These restrictions could lead to loneliness, depression and other mental disorders.

9.3. Uncertainty and Stress Resulting from Loss of Means of Livelihood

The Covid-19 pandemic has incredibly affected the socioeconomic position of many Nigerians. Many people in the formal sector of the economy have lost their jobs while many who work in the informal sector cannot go out freely to earn their daily wages due to lockdowns and restrictions on movement. The informal economy provides the livelihood for 60% of men and nearly 75% of women and majority of these people live in the city. Farmers are also significantly impacted by the pandemic as many cannot go to their farms and perishable goods which are harvested cannot be transported to the markets in time, thus increasing mental health problems.

The Nigerian government has put in place some measures such as financial packages (Survival Fund) and palliative sharing initiatives to mitigate the economic hardships, but these initiatives are not far reaching with only a few members of society having benefited from them[20].

3. Psychosocial Impact of Covid-19 on Different Strata of Society and Suggested interventions[21]

The following table highlights the psychosocial impact of Covid-19 on

20 Mental Health Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic: Implication for Sub-Saharan Africa. Psychology Research & Behaviour Management, 2020

21 S. Dubey et al. / Diabetes & Metabolic Syndrome: Clinical Research & Reviews 14 (2020) 779-788 - Psychosocial Impact of COVID-19. www.elsevier.com/locate/dsx

different strata of the society and suggested interventions to combat the crises:

	Social strata	**Psychosocial issues**	**Intervention**
1.	Covid-19 positive tive patients & quarantined individuals	• Loneliness • Anxiety • Panic • PTSD • Depression	• Secure communication-channel between patient & family. • Delivery of progress-reports & discussion with families on further treatment plans through telephone, video-calls, WhatsApp, e-mail etc. • Close monitoring of mental state of quarantined persons using tools like impact of event scale-revised (IES-R) & through smartphone technology. • In-time referral • Psychotherapy by stress-adaptation model. • Psychiatric follow-up post-discharge, if needed.
2.	Health care providers	• Fear of worthlessness • Guilt • Overwhelming work-pressure • Deprivation of family while being in quarantine • Burnouts • Depression • Fear of infection and outcomes • Uncertainty • PTSD • Substance abuse	• Clear communication & regular accurate updates regarding precautionary measures. • Sustained connection with family & friends through smartphone. • Shorter working duration, regular rest period, rotating shifts. • Sufficient supply of appropriate PPE. • Arrangements for well-equipped isolation wards specific for infected HCPs, insurance system for work-related injuries. • Long term psychological follow-up.
3.	Children	• Boredom • Anxiety related to educational development	• Proper parenting • Online classes, online study material. • Clear, direct, open & detailed

		• Irritability • Developmental issues • Fear of infection	information about disease transmission & precautionary measures • Maintenance of sleep cycle, physical exercise schedule. • Educate about proper hygiene practice.
4.	Old age	• Irritability, anger, fear, anxiety, cognitive decline. • Deprivation from pre-scheduled check-up and/or follow-up sessions. • Difficulties in acce ssing medicines due to travel restriction and lockdown.	• Home-based physical exercise during quarantine. • Sessions via telephone, online video-conference for physician guidance & mental health services. • Essential drug-delivery system via online approach.
5.	Marginalised community	• Depression • Stress • Financial insecurity • Stigma of discrimi nation • Health crime	• Protection of basic human rights. • Providing proper accommodation. • Adequate food and waters supply from government & NGO. • Affordable health care delivery. • Education about social distancing, hygiene. • Deploy mental health social worker to address specific need and referral to psychiatrists, if needed.
6.	Psychiatric patients	• Hampered routine psychiatric follow-up • Dependency (Add iction) • Violence	• Structured letter therapy. • Counselling via telephone, online chat. • Online based psycho-reduction therapies. • Proper supply of prescribed medications.

4. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support: Recommendations on What Nigeria Needs to be Doing

Nigeria and many other countries were not set up to respond to the growing mental health crises caused by Covid-19 and they definitely are not prepared now. Now more than ever, mental health and psychosocial support needs to become a priority and the government needs to put in place enabling structures for everyone, everywhere both now, during this pandemic, and in the future to access mental health and psychosocial support services.

11.1. Integration of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support into all Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plans

The Nigerian government needs to invest more into mental health and prioritize it as an essential right. The United Nations has issued guidance and best approaches to incorporate mental health as part of pandemic response and recovery plan. These include 3 key pillars:

- Apply a whole society approach to promote, protect and care for mental health.
- Ensure widespread availability of emergency mental health and psychosocial support.
- Support recovery from Covid-19 by building mental health services for the future[22].

11.2. Increase Funding for Mental Health as Part of Covid-19 Response

In Nigeria, funding has been focused primarily on physical health. This needs to change so as to respond swiftly to mental health needs which can be devastating if left unchecked. Overall mental health is still lagging behind and investing now in mental health will contribute to building a better and healthier society.

11.3. Leverage Innovations

Covid-19 has forced an acceleration in innovations in mental health due

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to the need to now deliver services under new stringent conditions. The use of technology (such as smartphones, web-based applications) in treatment has importantly facilitated in reaching out to people in isolation. More innovation can be adopted to facilitate mental health and psychosocial support.

11.4. Use of Mass Media for Dissemination of Relevant and Accurate Information

In Nigeria, there are still a large number of people without access to digital phones and internet services. The use of mass media such as radio, television and print media can be used to disseminate information on Covid-19 and mental health services. Religious institutions could broadcast services on air for members to help strengthen their faith and obtain spiritual guidance. These can help improve mental health of the general population.

11.5. Ensure Mental Health is Built into the Nation's Healthcare Plan

Since there is no health without mental health, the health budget of Nigeria should have a significant portion dedicated to mental health and psychosocial support development. This will improve services and service utilisation[23].

11.6. Adopt and Adapt International Guidelines for Emergency Response

The Nigerian government and health agencies should adopt and adapt existing international guidelines for emergency situations such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings and the WHO guidelines for implementation on response activities for Covid-19 and in planning for mental health and psychosocial support responses.

11.7. Training of Community Members

A growing trend is community-based working, where community members can be trained to respond to problems and not necessarily need health professionals to be on ground. Under this programme, community members are provided with PPE's and can provide psychosocial support such as counselling, support groups, sensitisation to increase awareness and reduce stigma, prevention measures and community based rehabilitation[24].

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5. Conclusion

Mental health and psychosocial support need to be made a priority and integrated into the Covid-19 pandemic response plan in Nigeria. This will further curb the mental health problems caused by the pandemic and improve the mental health and psychosocial support system. Psychosocial support and other beneficial interventions must continue during and after the pandemic targeting high risk groups such as survivors, bereaved family members, children, the elderly, healthcare workers and people with preexisting mental health disorders. This can be achieved by working closely with them, understanding their needs and finding the most relevant and sustainable solutions to their problems. The covid-19 pandemic has helped focus public and political attention on the importance of mental health and psychosocial support in all societies and learning from this experience will help the country and the world respond effectively in cases of future pandemics.

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THE NIGERIA MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM (MHPSS) IN THE ERA OF EMERGENCY: COVID-19 CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS

BY

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Background

The psychosocial aspect of health encompasses the mental, emotional, social and spiritual factors that might affect health care and its outcomes, either positively or adversely. There are variety of factors that determine the psychosocial health of patients and in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, might influence how patients react to the infection and their course of recovery. While it is natural to experience feelings of anxiety, stress and uncertainty as a result of the pandemic, being diagnosed with Covid-19 or admitted to an isolation centre worsens these emotions.

The prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Nigeria ranged from 19%-85% among survivors of conflicts (Aderibigbe, 2014). Given the lack of coordinated systematic mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) response, humanitarian actors and communities themselves have made some efforts to provide MHPSS to survivors of disasters (Aderibigbe, 2014). However, when provided it is not coordinated, at scale, sustained or supervised; and its impact is not measured. Therefore, implementation of the IASC-MHPSS framework will contribute to improved system of MHPSS response to promote recovery of mental health, livelihoods and social cohesion (Aderibigbe, 2014). Recommendations for multi-sectoral collaboration and response are made.

Despite the evidence on the relationship between extremely stressful situations and poor mental health, little is being done to prevent the mental and psychosocial consequences of emergencies in Nigeria. Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC-MHPSS Guidelines 2007) is a multi-sectoral and interagency framework developed to coordinate different minimum but high priority activities that have been shown to be effective in promoting mental health and psychosocial wellbeing in emergency settings. But yet to be implemented in Nigeria (Aderibigbe, 2014).

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Introduction

During humanitarian response, the concern of aid workers is to get people to safety and to provide shelter, basic medical care, food and safe water; but there is usually little time to attend to their minds (Aderibigbe, 2014). Being a mental health professional who has responded to different types of traumatic situations in Nigeria which includes conflict, crisis and current pandemic, reports on people committing suicide or acts of self-harm following these traumatic events are received. Some experienced serious impairment of their mental and social functioning and those with pre-existing mental health conditions could not access healthcare services for their medications and follow up (Aderibigbe, 2014). These actions fall within the overall logic of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS).

In this context, MHPSS has to do with any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychological well-being or prevent or treat mental disorders (UN refuge Agency, 2020). The support may include interventions in health, education or interventions that are community-based (UN refuge Agency, 2020). MHPSS services are considered to be an integral part of humanitarian response (Myer, & Morand, 2015) and are targeted to address mental health and psychosocial problems that are characteristics of victims of emergencies. It is important to note that in emergencies, people are affected in different ways and would therefore usually need different kinds of support (Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), 2013). To address this, the MHPSS services is not a stand-alone service but uses a multi-layered system of complementary support that meet the needs of different categories of people (Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), 2013). Over the years, the field of MHPSS has been given utmost attention as humanitarian organisations have been concerned about the mental health needs of affected people (International Centre for Investigative Reporting, 2020).

According to NEMA (2010), the frequency of both natural and human-induced disasters in Nigeria has increased considerably in the last two decades with the most recent being Covid-19. Impact of which can be physical, psychological and social on individuals and communities. People affected by humanitarian crises are particularly vulnerable to poor mental health and psycho-social problem, especially when there are limited supports and services for recovery (Norris et al. 2002). Therefore, humanitarian responses should include mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in addition to medical treatment of physical injuries (Van Ommeren, Saxena & Saraceno

2005).

In the last fifteen years there has been a considerable increase in the number of emergency situations in Nigeria (NEMA 2010). Emergency situations can be caused by natural or man-made disasters. OCHA reported that between January 2013 and January 2014, an estimated 9.5 million people were affected by natural and man-made disasters including insurgency and subsequent state of emergency in the north-eastern part of Nigeria (OCHA 2014). Then emergence of corona virus in 2019.

The Coronavirus 2019 (Covid-19) is a newly emergent infectious disease caused by the novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) virus, originated in December 2019 from mainland China, with initial cases emerging from the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province (CDCP, 2020; Li et al., 2020). On 30th January 2020, World Health Organisation (WHO) officially declared the Covid-19 epidemic as a public health emergency of international concern (Emanuel et al., 2020), followed by designation as a pandemic on 11th March (i.e., presence of illness across multiple continents). The rapid spread of Covid-19 places huge strain on capacity, responsiveness and resilience of public and private healthcare systems worldwide (Legido-Quigley et al., 2020). Uncertain prognosis, looming severe shortage of resources for testing and treatment and for protecting responders and health care providers from infection, Imposition of unfamiliar public health measures that infringe on personal freedom and growing financial losses, and conflicting messages from authorities are among the major stressors that undoubtedly will contribute to widespread emotional distress and increased risk for psychiatric illness associated with Covid-19. Deaths generally constitute a very small proportion of those affected by disasters; the greater consequences are the physical, social and psychological impacts (Goldmann & Galea 2013). The sudden nature of these events can have huge impacts on the psychological state of the survivors.

Since the first confirmed case of Covid-19 in Nigeria on February 27, 2020, the number of confirmed cases has risen to 1,182 by April 25, 2020 (Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, 2020b), hence the swift response by the Nigerian government. First, a presidential task force was set up to galvanise intersectoral support to prevent the spread of the disease. Second, the government-imposed restrictions on the movement of people and goods across its international and local borders, and various public health enlightenment campaigns were instituted. Third, the federal Ministry of Health prioritised testing as one of the key interventions of the Covid-19 response in Nigeria by

expanding a laboratory network for Covid-19 across the six geopolitical zones with 13 laboratories activated (Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, 2020a). The Nigerian government and the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control and Prevention have been consistent in their regular report of the daily status of new patients as well as their physical condition and the places they recently visited (Aluh, & Onu, 2020). This is to ensure that people remain well informed about the status of the pandemic. As at today 15th March, 2021, 1,684,305 samples for Covid-19 has been tested, 160, 657 confirmed case, 13, 245 active cases, 145, 399 discharged cases and 2, 013 death reported. Lagos has the highest confirmed case (lab) 56, 962, FCT 19, 470 and Plateau 8, 988. While the least Kogi state with 5 confirmed cases (lab) (Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, 2021).

The discourse on Covid-19 in Nigeria mostly revolves around preventive measures and active case management. However, one crucial aspect of the disease that seems to be missing from the public debate among the government officials is how to improve the psychosocial well-being of the patients, their relatives, and the general population (Aluh, & Onu, 2020). Despite the comprehensive preventive measures, there remains the challenge of possible current and future psychosocial consequences of the disease. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is inducing fear, and a timely strategy to provide psychosocial support is urgently needed for the society (Xiang et al., 2020). Interventions to improve social capital, coping resources, resilience, and good community and family cohesion will be needed to promote psychosocial well-being during and after the Covid-19 pandemic (Aluh, & Onu, 2020).

The prevalence of psychiatric disorder is high in Nigeria and it is also recognised as one of the leading causes of disability globally (WHO 2009). Failure to recognise and manage survivors of emergencies that are at risk of psychiatric disorder can lead to an increase in the burden of mental problems on the already weak health system (Aderibigbe, 2014). It can also affect recovery and productivity of individuals, communities and the country. Anecdotal evidence and some research have shown that posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a significant problem among survivors of conflict in Nigeria. A study by Obilom & Thatcher (2008) shows prevalence of 41% of PTSD among respondents exposed to the ethno-religious crisis in Jos (Nigeria) nine months following the crises (Obilom & Thatcher 2008). A recent study of over 300 patients who presented to an emergency department with Covid-19 infection showed a 30.2% prevalence of PTSD 30 – 120 days after recovery

(Brauer, 2021).

Studies conducted in other countries have also shown a definite increase in the incidence and prevalence of other mental health problems among survivors of disasters, especially if there are no sufficient protective factors. Other common sequelae include: depressive and anxiety disorders, alcohol and substance abuse and somatization (Goldmann & Galea 2013; Steel et al. 2009; Murthy & Lakshminarayana 2006; Norris et al. 2002). Furthermore, in emergency situations, disruptions of healthcare facilities, drug supplies and social support, reduced access to religious and traditional healing, increased stigma, discrimination and inhumane treatment of people with pre-existing or disaster-induced mental health impairment can worsen their condition (Murthy & Lakshminarayana 2006).

According to global burden of disease (2010), mental health disorder is one of the top-five leading causes of years lived with disability in Nigeria (IHME 2013). Emergency situations in Nigeria can further lead to increased need and demand for mental health services which translate into increased burden on the already weak mental health system. Poor mental health also interferes with the ability of children to learn, and prevents adults from productive functioning at work and at home. This leads to increased poverty, subsequently affecting economic development of the country (Levinson et al. 2010).

Challenges with ability of survivors to cope, recover, rebuild and return to normalcy are often overlooked. The aid given by government and other non-government agencies in humanitarian responses in Nigeria is focused on relief distributions of household items, nutritional support and physical treatment of injuries. There is a disaster response policy in Nigeria and provision of psychosocial support for survivors is stated. However, there is currently no specific framework or detailed implementation plan in the FMoH and NEMA that is developed for MHPSS in emergencies (WHO & MoH 2006; Abdulmalik et al., 2013).

Problems Encountered following Covid-19

Previous research has shown a broad range of psychosocial impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on people at the individual, community, and international levels (Qiu et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020). It has also been known to trigger a wide variety of psychological problems, such as panic disorder, anxiety, and depression (Rubin & Wessely, 2020). Boredom, loneliness, and anger are likely to be heightened in isolated individuals (Park & Park, 2020). They are likely to

experience helplessness, stigma, and anxiety about falling sick or dying (Hall, Hall, & Chapman, 2008). This may be complicated in the Nigerian setting, given the already fragile economy and the severe economic impacts of the lockdown on almost half of the population who are daily wage earners (Aluh, & Onu, 2020). The additional impacts of poverty, hunger, and crime are likely to induce high levels of stress and anxiety or exacerbate previous psychiatric morbidities among the population during the pandemic (Patel & Kleinman, 2003). Mental health is determined by several factors including socioeconomic variables. According to Aluh and Onu (2020), the recent decrease in the crude oil prices because of lockdown in foreign markets has affected the ability of the Nigerian government to finance the 2020 budget, causing a bleaker outlook for economic recovery. One of the likely early effects of the economic adversity may be a decrease in health and quality of life, an increased rate of suicide, an increase in substance abuse, and a high prevalence of malnutrition. Unemployment and other factors such as low income and low insurance coverage, which are usual pervasive challenges, become worse during periods of economic adversity as is the case with the Covid-19 pandemic; and these can result in reduced access to mental health care.

Youths: There are reports that young people are more susceptible to mental health and other disorders due to measures taken to contain Covid-19 (AU, 2020). Prevention measures for the pandemic caused lot of uncertainty and disruption in the ways of working leading to closure of businesses and job losses. This negatively affected the livelihoods of many African young workers putting them in a precarious situation. Social distancing affects socialisation, recreation, leisure and has wellbeing implications, and young people who are particularly main actors in sport, culture and their related events are disproportionately affected (AU, 2020). According to a report (ILO, 2020), 38 per cent of young people are uncertain of their future career prospects, with the crisis expected to create more obstacles in the labour market and to lengthen the transition from school to work. This has had an impact on their mental well-being. The survey found that 50 per cent of young people are possibly subject to anxiety or depression, while a further 17 per cent are probably affected by it *"So many people are reading the news all day as we are just at home, some of it is fake news and we're getting so scared, some people I know are having panic attacks. We're trying to figure out how to stay safe while still staying mentally healthy, Depression is going to go up during this outbreak you don't realise it's here until it's too late"*. The findings from the OECD survey also

confirm significant psychological impacts of social distancing and quarantine measures on young people causing stress, anxiety and loneliness *"Not everyone has a family to support them through this. Lots of people's friends are their family and now they can't see them at all, only online. People will be feeling so isolated more than they have ever done before"*. This is also affirmed by the findings of studies conducted in the UK (Etheridge & Spanting, 2020) and the US (McGinty et al, 2020) showing that young adults (aged 18 to 29) experience higher level of distress compared to other age groups since the onset of the pandemic. Evidence from previous pandemics suggests that exposure to domestic violence increases during lockdown measures, leaving adolescents, children and women vulnerable to violence by family members and intimate partners with long-lasting psychological impacts. For instance, 55 percent of children interviewed reported increased violence during the Ebola epidemic in West Africa in 2014 (UN, 2020). Since the outbreak of Covid-19, online enquiries to violence prevention hotlines have risen up to 5 times while emergency calls reporting domestic violence against women and children have increased by 60% compared to the same period of the previous year in Europe according to the WHO (WHO, 2020).

The closure of schools affects students' mental well-being as teachers and classmates can provide social and emotional support. Education professionals also play an important role in helping detect and report abuse against children (Campbell, 2020). In addition, the postponement or cancellation of exams in around 70 countries, including high-stake final school exams, exposes youth and children to uncertainty, anxiety and stress (UN, 2020). The impact of the crisis on the psycho-social and subjective well-being of young people also depends on the household they live in and individual circumstances such as prospects of job and income losses; housing quality; the illness or loss of loved ones; and the presence of existing medical conditions and vulnerable persons in the household (OECD, 2020). A study in Nigeria also reported that school closure during the pandemic has negative implications as there will be increased number of school dropouts by adolescent girls' due to forced marriages and teenage pregnancies (Partner West Africa Nigeria, 2020).

Female: Women are often the main caregivers in their homes, communities, and health facilities, which puts them at an increased risk of contracting Covid-19. In the UK, 77% of the NHS workforce and the majority of informal carers are women. More broadly, an analysis of 104 countries revealed that women form 70 % of workers in the health and social sectors, and

50% of unpaid carers. (CARE, 2020). At the same time, over 70% of CEOs and board chairs in global health are men, while just 5% of are women from low- and middle-income countries. Women are the majority of health facility service-staff – such as cleaners, laundry and catering staff. They are more likely to be exposed to Covid-19 whilst in the work environment (CARE, 2020). In some areas, women have less access to personal protective equipment or correctly sized equipment. Despite women constituting the majority of health and social care workers, reports show men are concentrated in senior roles and that very few are held by women (CARE, 2020). Community Health Workers play an essential part in ensuring their communities stay healthy (and understand how to stay healthy). Similar to the global health and social workforce, 70% are women (Knox-Peebles, 2020).

Although so many women are working on the Covid-19 frontlines, women, therefore, have little say in the policy measures put in place to address the crisis. Incidences and reports of violence against women within the household have also risen. This points to female psychological distress due to short-term loss of work and earnings, and subsequent violent behaviour and/or confinement at home with abusive partners during lockdown (Sili, 2020). As a result, in the long-run women's psychological well-being might be affected even more adversely than men from financial and emotional stress, combined with physical violence (Sili, 2020).

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) calculates that on average women around the world perform 4hours and 25 minutes of unpaid care work every day compared with 1hour and 23minutes for men (Pozzan, & Cattaneo 2020). Women, more commonly manage the household, and are required to balance between reduced family income, higher household expenditure and price surges. In a study conducted in Nairobi 77% of participants noted an increase in food prices and 87% reported that household expenditures had increased (Population Council, 2020a). Women also bear the increased household chores resulting from the lockdown and reduced income. According to the Population Council study in Nairobi, women are more likely to report doing more of the cooking (49% vs. 24% of men), cleaning (61% vs. 25% of men), and childcare (67% vs. 36% of men) since the outbreak (Population Council, 2020b). In populations where women and adolescent girls are responsible for food security within the household, food shortages and increased food insecurity places them under heightened pressure and could expose them to intimate partner violence or reliance on negative coping

mechanisms, such as resorting to transactional sex, sexual exploitation and abuse, and entering girls into child marriages (CARE, 2020).

Nigeria has long been facing a gender-based violence crisis, with 30% of women and girls aged 15-49 having experienced sexual abuse. Lack of coordination amongst key stakeholders and poor implementation of legal frameworks, combined with entrenched gender discriminatory norms, has hampered government and civil society efforts to address gender-based violence (Partner West Africa Nigeria, 2020). These efforts have been further compromised by the Covid-19 pandemic. The reports of domestic violence in Nigeria are following a similar trend to elsewhere in the world. Since various versions of lockdown were put in place across the country on 30 March, reported cases of gender-based violence have substantially risen (Partner West Africa Nigeria, 2020. Whilst disease outbreaks threaten populations' health, the aggressive response measures of governments, such as lockdowns, often increase women and girls' vulnerability to violence. Indeed, since governments across the world began imposing lockdowns to fight the Covid-19 pandemic, countries have witnessed a rise in reports of gender-based violence similar to Nigeria (Partner West Africa Nigeria, 2020. From the UK and US, to Singapore and China, authorities have reported increasing cases of domestic violence and demand for emergency shelter. There is rightfully major concern regarding the situation in many developing countries, where there is often an unfortunate widespread societal acceptance of gender-based violence (Young & Aref-Adib, 2020).

Emergency Response in Nigeria: The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is responsible for coordinating emergency response in the country and is jointly operationalizing the national disaster response framework with other relevant government agencies, Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS), and local and international agencies like UN agencies, Save the children, MSF, Oxfam and ICRC (NEMA 2002). Their main activities in emergency response are search and rescue, shelter, distribution of relief items, water, food, security, medical care, restoring family links and rehabilitation. NRCS s community-based volunteers are most of the time the first-line responders in emergency situations in Nigeria but their activities cut across all phases of emergency (Aderibigbe, 2014).

Evidence shows that exposure to extremely stressful situations is linked to mental health problems, that stressful events such as emergencies can disrupt social structures, including social supports involved with the care of persons

with pre-existing psychological disorder, that social interventions tend to have secondary psychological effects and psychological interventions tend to have secondary social effects on people exposed to emergencies (Hobfoll et al. 2007).

In 2007, there was an interagency agreement on guidelines to coordinate MHPSS interventions that are provided to survivors of emergency situations. As explained above the guideline consists of 25 action sheets explaining minimum MHPSS responses to provide in emergencies (IASC 2007). Development of IASC-MHPSS Guidelines was based on evidence of the importance of MHPSS in emergency situations. Examples are the results from review by Hobfoll et al. (2007) shown below:

1. Promoting a sense of safety by bringing people in emergency situation to safe place, identification of loved ones and social support reduced the prevalence of mental health disorders among survivors of natural or manmade disaster (emergencies).
2. Promoting connectedness, sense of belonging and hope through social support and sustained connections with loved ones, social groups and religious group are related to positive emotional outcomes and recovery from traumatic events.
3. Promoting people's sense of worth through skills development and availability of resources to overcome adversity improves their capacity to cope and recover from traumatic events.
4. Using psychopharmacological treatment to promote calming among people that are agitated and depressed as a result of exposure to traumatic events increases their daily functioning, social interaction and rational decision-making capabilities.

Hobfoll's review suggests that those affected should be provided with these resources and support to help them through the transition to normalcy.

Some of the MHPSS interventions provided by different humanitarian actors in Nigeria are described below. In general, it is important to note that these interventions are not being implemented at scale, sometimes missing completely and in few cases where implemented, they are not done systematically and there is no specific coordinating system or structure for their implementation, monitoring and impacts evaluation (Aderibigbe, 2014).

Social considerations in basic services and security: The main actors involved in some forms of MHPSS interventions during emergencies in Nigeria

are: national emergency management agencies (NEMA), State emergency management agency (SEMA), and local government emergency management agency (LEMA); Ministry of Health (MoH), Red Cross (NRCS & ICRC), UN agencies. Other NGOs include Oxfam, MSF, Save the Children and other CBOs and FBOs. Some of the recent emergencies they have been involved in include the 2012 floods, continuous northern region ethno-religious crises, communal clashes and on-going nationwide terrorist attack and insurgency by Boko Haram and the Niger/Delta crises in the Southern region of Nigeria, Ebola epidemic, kidnapping and banditry and Covid-19 pandemic.

All these actors are involved in advocacy for social considerations in provision of basic services like food and nutrition, shelter, water and sanitation, basic medical health and essential household items. As an example, NRCS volunteers who are usually the first responders in emergency are also members of the affected community; hence they understand the culture and tradition of the people to whom they are rendering assistance.

***Strengthening community and family support*:** Main actors involved in this level of intervention are the community members themselves, social groups within the community, traditional and religious leaders. Sometimes, NRCS and emergency management agencies and other NGOs might be involved (Aderibigbe, 2014). Nigerians have strong faith in God and often rely on spiritual beliefs when in critical situations. For example, most Christians trust God for everything and rely on their beliefs to maintain hope for a better tomorrow. Most Muslims believe that Allah is the giver of life and resources, and that he can take these away at any time, giving a sense of meaning to losses. They also believe in the saying "You are your brother's keeper", which promotes people helping each other therefore decreasing social isolation (Aderibigbe, 2014).

Religious and community leaders (sometimes with support from SEMA and NRCS) coordinate mass burial and communal healing ceremonies. Community members and social groups provide community traditional support. For instance, religious group members, clans and peers assist in mourning and providing supportive parenting care to those that lost loved ones and orphans (Aderibigbe, 2014).

The Restoring-Family-Link department of NRCS is involved in family tracing, exchanging family messages, re-unification and seeking to clarify fate of people who remain missing in emergency situations (ICRC 2014). UNICEF and Save the Children provided child friendly spaces, recreation kits, kits for

formal education and nutritional support for the children affected by floods in 2012 and those displaced by Boko Haram terrorist attack (Save the Children 2012; UNICEF 2013).

Focused non-specialised supports: For this level of intervention, spiritual support is the most common form of intervention for coping and recovery in Nigeria. Major actors providing some forms of individual or group-focused non-specialised interventions for people that require it (survivors of GBV, direct torture or attack and ex-combatants) in Nigerian communities are religious leaders (IFRC 2012). Sometimes, Red Cross volunteers and community health workers provide PFA and referral of people that require immediate medical attention to Health Facilities (IFRC 2012; IFRC 2014).

In 2012, NRCS trained 30 volunteers and staff from emergency-prone regions of the country on basic psychosocial support in emergencies. Although this is a good step forward, the training was one-off and not in- depth, and the quantity of staff and volunteers trained was inadequate (IFRC 2012). Also, ICRC trained 14 NRCS staff members on psychological consequences of emergencies and how they can help those affected to cope better with the situation by providing counselling and stress-coping mechanism (ICRC 2012). Save the Children trained CHWs to provide psychosocial support to orphans and vulnerable children in emergency situations (Kids club and Caregiver's forum) in the northern part of Nigeria (Save the Children 2012).

Despite these efforts much is still lacking. For example, there was no report on training of doctors, nurses, community and religious leaders, national society field volunteers and teachers on psychosocial support in emergency situations, even though these are the people that community members turn to for help during crises.

Specialised services: Mental health services is available in Nigeria but grossly inadequate and mostly found in urban areas. The public health facilities, local NGOs and private hospitals are mainly involved in the provision of specialised care to those that require psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy in emergency and non-emergency situations in Nigeria. Although there are effective treatments for mental health disorders, many people turn to traditional or spiritual healers for treatment of mental distress and disorders. Only 2% of people with neuropsychiatric problem use mental health services in the country (Wang et al. 2007).

There is about one psychiatrist to one million population and fewer psychologists, social workers and therapists to provide psychosocial support.

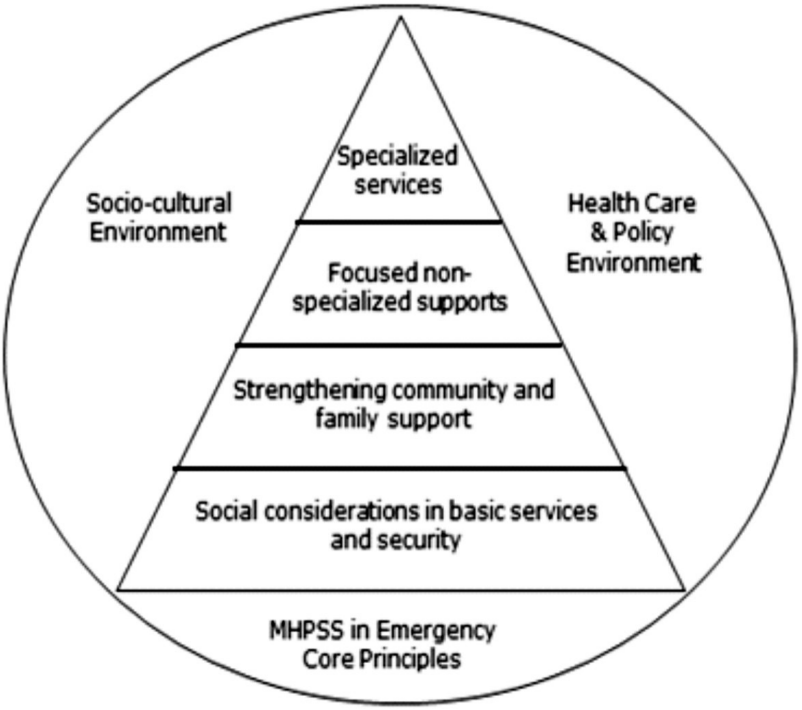
Hence, treatments available are mainly medical without ancillary and complementary care for families and communities or interventions to address social needs (WHO & MoH 2006).

Lessons Learnt from Implementation of IASC-MHPSS Guidelines from Case Studies in Other Countries

1. The key lesson learnt from global review (WHO 2013) is that implementation of IASC-MHPSS Guidelines helps to highlight needs/ gaps in the system and how emergency situation can be used to rebuild mental health system. An example is the Afghanistan case study, priority MHPSS issues were identified and different cadre of health workers were trained to provide appropriate MHPSS services (Ventegovel, 2012; WHO, 2013).
2. An important lesson learnt from Kenya is that creating an inter- agency MHPSS taskforce is useful to coordinate and adapt IASC-MHPSS Guideline to the country's context and local capacity; and develop strategic plans that will guide and coordinate immediate response (Horn & Strang, 2008).
3. At the same time, a longer-term and sustainable plan can be developed that includes policies and other broader determinants of mental health. As seen in Afghanistan case study, the country invested in improving accessibility to services, training of different cadres of professionals to provide MHPSS, provision of other resources and community engagement (Ventegovel 2012; WHO 2013). These concurrent efforts can help to promote a successful transition for handing over to the government in the long-term.
4. Another lesson from Kenya is that coordination of different actors and integration of MHPSS into other sectors can be very challenging. Hence, it is essential that the MHPSS taskforce be led by an expert in the field (Horn & Strang 2008).
5. Furthermore, involving front-line humanitarian workers and volunteers in planning and training has shown to be helpful to ensure cross-cultural appropriateness of interventions, encourage better understanding and possibility of sustainable implementation of the guidelines, and well-coordinated response in Kenya (Horn & Strang 2008).

6. The last lesson from various countries is that contextual factors will influence implementation and outcomes of MHPSS interventions. Therefore, the adaptation of IASC-MHPSS framework; future analysis of MHPSS system; and recommendations for MHPSS interventions in Nigeria can be linked to particular contextual factors that play major roles in MHPSS delivery in Nigeria (Aderibigbe, 2014). These are: (i) Healthcare environment (ii) Policy environment and (iii) Socio-cultural environment (figure 1).

Figure 1: Recommended modified IASC-MHPSS model for Nigeria



Source Aderibigbe, 2014

Gaps in Implementation of MHPSS Interventions in Nigeria

Although some actors provide some forms of MHPSS interventions to survivors of disasters/emergencies in Nigeria, a coordinated MHPSS framework is not being implemented.

The main gap identified is the lack of coordination and oversight of MHPSS interventions; and the importance of a coordinated inter-agency taskforce has been shown from lessons learnt above. In Nigeria, emergency response is usually coordinated by NEMA with support from OCHA who are also supposed to oversee implementation of IASC-MHPSS Guidelines. But since structure for implementation of the guidelines does not exist, donor agencies usually provide assistance through NRCS or other local NGOs but sometimes they provide aid directly to the affected community or through health facilities. In these cases, lack of supervision and coordination can hamper accountability for quality and suitability or cultural appropriateness of aid that is given to the beneficiaries. There is the need to look at the socio-cultural aspect of the people so as to gain acceptability by those intended to assist.

Gaps in specialised mental health services: As mentioned earlier, the general mental health system in Nigeria is weak in terms of adequate human resources like psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, psychologists, social workers, etc. - which may be due to migration to other countries. The system also needs capacity strengthening in terms of training different cadres of mental health professionals; decentralisation of mental healthcare to community level (still at pilot level); adequate supply of genuine psychotropic drugs; improving condition of mental health facilities; mental health information management system; and skills and knowledge of IASC-MHPSS Guidelines and tools (strategic plan and framework).

Also there is no formal avenue for professional interaction and referral between PHC mental health staff and other emergency care providers, especially humanitarian aid workers and community volunteers (WHO & MoH 2006).

Gaps in non-specialised MHPSS services: Most of the actors implementing the lower levels interventions do so through community involvement. Therefore, there is need to build local capacity of community members to provide better quality non-specialised MHPSS services. For instance, community members like community leaders, CHWs, teachers and volunteers who are usually engaged as first- responders in MHPSS interventions can be trained to provide PFA (Aderibigbe, 2014). In addition,

services provided by traditional and spiritual healers are not documented or regulated.

Gaps in MHPSS-related policies: There is no specific MHPSS strategy, structure, and implementation and evaluation framework in Nigeria. Also, Nigerian policies for national disaster response that concerns mental health and national mental health service delivery policies that concern emergency response are poorly enforced and implemented. However, it is possible to integrate IASC-MHPSS Guidelines into the emergency response policy and plan.

Although protection of human rights and dignity of people affected by humanitarian crises are being highly advocated for by all actors, there are still significant gaps in this aspect (Hammond 2013).

Challenges

Nigeria will be faced with challenges posed by the gaps identified above in implementing standard IASC-MHPSS Guidelines that is socio-culturally appropriate and that can be provided by its local capacity. There is a need for coordination of humanitarian actors involved in MHPSS in Nigeria; and capacity building for provision of intervention at all levels in terms of tools, skills, knowledge, structures and systems (Aderibigbe, 2014).

Conclusion

It is possible to prevent and manage negative mental and psychosocial impact of severely traumatic events through coordinated MHPSS interventions. The effectiveness of these interventions can be significant in reducing the burden of mental illness and the burden on health system in the country. These interventions can promote coping, recovery and rehabilitation. The IASC-MHPSS Guidelines provide a useful framework for MHPSS intervention planning and coordination. Implementing the guidelines will help to highlight the gaps in the system and give opportunity to address them.

However, determinants of MHPS wellbeing are broad, including: national policies, social protection, living standards, working conditions, community social support, exposure to adversity; and the quality and accessibility to the health system and availability of mental health professionals to mention a few.

Therefore, it is important to note that while implementation of MHPSS guideline will contribute to the overall mental health and wellbeing of those affected by emergencies in Nigeria, there are other bigger issues that need to be addressed concurrently. For instance, there are hardly policies for social

support like employment, accommodation; reintegration, poverty reduction and counselling that can help promote recovery for survivors of humanitarian crises in Nigeria. All these constraints put the country in a vulnerable position for the implementation of IASC-MHPSS Guidelines. Should Nigerian stakeholders then give up on establishing a coordinated MHPSS in emergency policy at this time? Probably not; implementation of IASC- MHPSS Guidelines can be done while efforts are being made to address the bigger issues through concerted efforts of different sectors.

Implementation of IASC-MHPSS Guidelines in Nigeria will help in coordinating timely and high-quality mental health and psychosocial assistance to the increasing number of people that are being impacted by the on-going emergency situations in the country. It will also help in reducing and even preventing mental health and psychosocial consequences of emergencies among survivors. It will improve the quality of MHPSS provided and reduce burden on the health system. When people are in healthy state of mind they will be able to function well in their community and work thereby contributing to the country's development.

Recommendation

The Nigerian Government

(i) The Nigerian government should address MHPSS of people affected by the on-going crises and layout plan for future emergencies in the country as priority health and social issues that require immediate solution. This will be achieved by accelerating the integration of mental health into primary-level healthcare services which might help to scale up the process across the country, coupled with the existence of a taskforce that will coordinate, plan, adapt, and implement the IASC-MHPSS Guidelines, using important stakeholders such as the Division of mental health within the Ministry of Health, NEMA, Red Cross, CBOs, FBOs, Academia, media, national and international NGOs involved in MHPSS interventions; and other relevant government agencies.

(ii) The taskforce of the MHPSS should undertake periodic situation analysis in Nigeria, development of detailed national strategic plan and frameworks for its implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, as well as the development of a comprehensive data

on mental health. It can also create awareness; build local capacity in terms of skills, knowledge, tools, systems and structures; and community engagement.

(iii) The Nigerian government should establish a system that promotes community-level continuity of care and home-based care or support of self-care (e.g., clear referral system, especially back-referral), SMS reminders to patients to take their drugs and working with the local community to protect those with severe mental health impairments can be included as part of the primary mental health services (Eaton & Agomoh 2008; WHO 2013; Brian & Ben-Zeev 2014). To effectively achieve this, there should also be training and supervision of primary-level healthcare staff to provide essential mental health services including basic pharmacological and psychosocial interventions to relieve symptoms and restore function that is being piloted in the southern part of Nigeria can be scaled-up especially in the conflict-prone regions.

(iv) Government should explore the possibility and potency of building relationships with traditional and spiritual healers where appropriate, which can be implemented in the country, in the light of the role they all play in the mental health space.

(v) Other broader determinants of mental health also need to be addressed, e.g., ensuring source of livelihood for those affected or displaced, rebuilding their communities and infrastructure, State/ formal social supports for survivors and those with psychological problems; and early conflict resolution. This will require multi-sectoral approach and detailed plan of how this will be implemented during disaster response and recovery.

(vi) Legislation to ensure appropriate implementation of related policies, IHL and other Human right laws should be developed or enforced.

National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA)

(i) As national and state level institutions for emergency preparedness and response, NEMA and SEMA are best placed to co-lead the MHPSS taskforce with MoH because it is responsible for coordination of emergency response in Nigeria.

(ii) The emergency response plan can be updated to include detailed plan for MHPSS interventions in emergency situation - that is, who will do what when, and where? This will require resource mobilisation to ensure availability of capacity and other materials required for emergency preparedness, planning and response.

Humanitarian Organisations

(i) Humanitarian organisations such as the ICRC and IFRC among others, should support NRCS to initiate the need for the country to have specific plan for the implementation of coordinated IASC-MHPSS Guidelines. Other specific areas they should consider include: support for Rapid (Mobile) Survey that will help in data gathering regarding post-emergency prevalence of psychosocial problems among the general population, humanitarian workers and high-risk groups (e.g., detainees, victims of sexual violence, family of missing persons and unaccompanied children).

(ii) The current MHPSS response in the northern and Niger-Delta regions can be intensified with further engagement of the community members in decision-making, implementation and evaluation of interventions, using the PHC mental health staff and CBOs as implementing partners.

(iii) Support the integration of MHPSS into community-based health and first aid in action (CBHFA) activities. Activities like: PFA, raising community awareness on psychological wellbeing, fight against discrimination of people with mental health problems, case identification, and referral of people with psychological problems to health facilities and livelihood projects.

(iv) Provide technical assistance and resources for successful implementation of IASC-MHPSS Guidelines, and its transition into a sustainable mental health system following the emergency recovery phase.

Academia

(i) There are several research gaps that the academia need to fill with reference to key issues such as: The post-emergency prevalence of PTSD, depression, anxiety, substance-use disorder

and other prioritized mental health and psychosocial problems; The determinants of post-disaster mental health problems in Nigeria (stressors and protective factors); Qualitative studies can also explore the perspectives of the affected people; Key factors to consider in adapting IASC-MHPSS Guidelines to meet socio-cultural context of Nigeria; The effectiveness of MHPSS interventions, using culturally appropriate methods and indicators; To what extent are MHPSS interventions actually meeting the perceived needs of the affected population; The roles of traditional and religious healers in MHPSS; local coping mechanisms and effectiveness of traditional support interventions.

Media

(i) The Media should be involved in raising community awareness on mental health issues. By so doing, it will bring to limelight the sufferings and psychological impairments of the survivors of disasters, the on-going terrorist attacks and other conflicts in the country. This may help to gain interest, willingness and overall commitments of national and international decision makers to improve MHPSS in emergency response.

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A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE EXISTING STRATEGIES FOR COMBATTING SUBSTANCE/DRUG ABUSE IN NIGERIA

BY
MAIKANO MADAKI, PhD*

Abstract

With the increase in substance/drug abuse and other related offences all over the world and in Nigeria, the existing structure put in place to fight the menace is more-or-less over-stretched and seems to be overwhelmed. Many researchers have established the relationship between substance/drug abuse and crime. To combat the problem, the United Nations Office of Drug and Crime (UNODC) organised three different conventions in 1961, 1971 and 1988 respectively to develop elaborate strategy and compel member-countries to establish an internal control system. Earlier, many legal frameworks were provided in Nigeria since before independence (in 1935 and 1936) and after (1966, 1972, 1975 and 1988) to ensure control of drug related offences. In 1988 the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) was established to complement and support efforts from the existing law enforcement agencies like the Nigeria Police. However, these formal agencies are given the mandate to adopt the conventional/legal approach in the fight which revolves around arrest, investigation, prosecution and punishment, but all to no avail. This is because of many factors. First, there seem to be organisational rivalry between the agencies and other inadequacies, and second, political influence, which affect their performance; hence, the dramatic increase in drug-related problems in the country. The ability of the agencies to ensure social control as external forces is key to prevention and control of the menace. By and large, considering some of the major causes of drug abuse, community involvement would serve as an excellent strategy in the fight against substance/drug abuse in Nigeria. Rather than relying on the conventional approach, it will be a good idea to mobilise, engage, and strategically involve the community in the prevention and control to complement the legal approach like in India, Kenya and United States. With family and community support and cooperation, this fight would be a huge success in the near future. This requires change in approach and strategy – from solely conventional/legal to community approach with support and guidance from the formal organisations.

Key Concepts: conventional/legal approach, substance/drug abuse, community approach, review

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Introduction

For many decades, the problem of drug-abuse has bedevilled Nigeria with negative effects manifesting in all sectors and institutions. The phenomenon has become a contemporary global social problem to the extent that researches have established very strong relationship between drug-use and crime. Drug-users record greater involvement in crime all over the world. Hence, crime rise as drug-use increases. The problem of drug-abuse is found most notably and disturbingly among large number of youth (both males and females) in many countries, including Nigeria. According to Umar (2016), in the distant past, alcohol and tobacco were the first licit and legal drugs to be abused and both served as gateway to the abuse of other psychoactive substances. However, the new dimension and trend drug-abuse has taken attracted the attention of many scholars, researchers, administrators, policy-makers and community leaders due to the evident shift from abuse in traditional drugs to abuse of over-the-counter licit drugs that include syrups. This practice seems to be very common among male and female youths especially in northern Nigeria. There is also growing concerns about the involvement of Nigerian nationals in the global illicit drug trade as an organised crime.

In an attempt to combat drug-related problems in the world, the United Nations Office of Drug and Crime (UNODC) organises three different conventions in1961, 1971, and 1988 to develop elaborate strategy for the control of drugs. Member-countries agreed to initiate internal mechanisms to support the effort of the UNODC which in Nigeria led to the establishment of National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in 1988. The fight against drug problems involved other related agencies and ministries like the Police, NAFDAC, Customs and Immigration services and Federal Ministry of Health. Despite that, the incidences of drug-abuse in Nigeria continue to grow especially with the introduction of codeines and other licit drugs into the practice which attracted the community to join the fight. With the return of Nigeria to democracy in 1999, the phenomena of drug-use, drug-misuse, drug-abuse, drug-dependence and, generally, substance abuse have become very pronounced among youth, especially during political rallies, campaigns and elections.

In view of the above, this paper attempt to critically review some of the formal and informal strategies in combating substance/drug abuse in Nigeria. It is intended to x-ray the strengths of the conventional/legal approach vis-à-vis inter-agency relationship in the fight against illicit drugs and drug dealings.

Further, the paper would highlight the relevance of community approach in the fight against substance/drug abuse, 'although some people consider drug use a private matter and drug control another example of government intrusion into people's private lives (Siegel 2000:441)'.

Conceptual and Theoretical Clarifications

Drug use, drug misuse, drug abuse and drug dependent are terms used by experts to explain drug related issues in the world. However, the term commonly used across nations to define drug problem is drug abuse. Drug is anything that one take which alters the working of the body system in some ways. It can be taken in form of liquid, powder, tablet, leaf or solvent by smoking, drinking, sniffing, inhaling, injecting, or even swallowed. Watt (1997) defined drug as any substance that when consumed alters one or more of the functions and or structures of the human body. But Radda (2016) sees drug as anything that when injected, ingested swallowed or taken in to the body has the capacity to change body metabolism, while drug abuse refers to a situation where drugs are used by people without recourse to expert advice. A guide on the signs and dangers of drug abuse published by the UNODC (2016) defined drug as a substance that affects changes in the physical, emotional and thinking process of the drug users, while see drug abuse as an inappropriate use of drugs. It is the use of substances like Heroin, Marijuana, Cigarette, Alcohol, prescription pills like Codeine, Morphine and Tramadol to get high. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (World Drug Report, 2011), drug/substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs.

Social control theories maintain that all people have the potential to violate the law and that modern society presents many opportunities for illegal activity. Criminal activities such as drug abuse are often exciting pastimes that hold the promise of immediate reward and gratification (Siegel, 2007). Social theorists argue that people obey the law because behaviour and passions are being controlled by internal and external forces. Some individuals have self-control, manifested through a strong moral sense which renders them incapable of hurting others and violating social norms. Other people develop a commitment to conformity which is adhered to because there is a real, present and logical reason to obey the rules of society (Briar and Piliavin, 1965). In addition, people's behaviour including criminal activity is controlled by their attachment and commitment to conventional institutions, individuals and processes. If that

commitment is absent, they are free to violate the law and engage in deviant behaviour.

Early version of control theory speculated that low self-control was a product of weak self-concept and poor self-esteem. People who felt good about themselves and maintained a positive attitude were able to resist the temptations of the streets as noted by Briar and Piliavin (1965) that those who believe criminal activity will damage their self-esteem and their relationships with others will be most likely to conform to social rules, they have a commitment to conformity. In contrast, those less concerned about their social standing are free to violate the law. Reckless (1967) further argued that a strong self-image insulates a youth from the pressures and pulls of crimogenic influences in the environment. According to Kaplan (1978), youth conform to social rules of society, seek membership in normative groups and perform conventional tasks as long as their efforts pay off in positive, esteem-enhancing feedback. If they feel threatened, rebuked or belittled, they may experience 'self-rejection'. Youths who maintain both the lowest self-image and the greatest need for approval are the ones most likely to seek self-enhancement by engaging in criminal activities.

Another version of social control theory appears to be relevant to this paper is the social bond theory articulated by Travis Hirschi (1969). Hirschi links the onset of criminality to the weakening of the ties that bind people to society. He assumes that all individuals are potential law violators, but they are kept under control because they fear that illegal behaviour will damage their relationships with friends, parents, neighbours, teachers and employers. Without these social ties or bonds, a person is free to commit criminal acts. 'Among all ethnic, religious, racial and social groups, people whose bond to society is weak may fall prey to crimogenic behaviour patterns' (Hirschi, 1969, cited in Siegel, 2007:229). Further, Hirschi argues that the social bond a person maintains with society is divided into four main elements: attachment, commitment, involvement and belief. While the attachment supposed to be with the family, friends and the community, the commitment shall be to the family career, success and future goals, and belief revolves around honesty, morality, fairness, patriotism, and responsibility. In addition, individual should be involved in school activities, sports, community organisations, religious groups and social clubs.

Evidently, the social control theories provide a structure upon which community approach to the fight against drug abuse can rest in the sense that

strong self-control mechanism could be adequate enough to restrain someone from committing any crime. With commitment and attachment to societal values, much anti-social behaviour could not manifest.

Causes and Implications of Substance/Drug Abuse

In 2014, it was estimated by the Population Division of the UNs Department of Economic and Social Affairs that between 165m and 350m people aged 15 – 64 had used an illicit substance at least once. In 2012, the estimated annual prevalence for cannabis use in Nigeria is almost 9 percent of persons aged 15 – 65, moving to 11.6 percent in 2014. Many factors in the society cause drug abuse, and it has a lot of implications on the users, their families and the community at large. Some of these effects are social, some are economic, some psychological, and so on. According to Madaki (2016), among the main causes of drug abuse include broken home/inadequate parental supervision, decay in family values, moral decadence, unemployment, peer group influence, curiosity, idleness, availability of drugs and bad politicians. In particular, among the factors that predispose women and girls to drug abuse include domestic violence, inadequate parental supervision, poverty, influence of friends, forced marriage, sexual deprivation, relieving stress, trauma, self-medication lack of care and affection, and so on. In tandem with the position above, Umar (2016) also identified some of the reasons for drug abuse as availability of drugs on-the-streets, affordability, curiosity, family and peer group influence, emulation of role models, uncontrolled advertisement, idleness, academic pressure, sickness (for example, illicit drugs prescribed to chronic ill-patients as pain reliever), enhance performance like in sports and sometimes ignorance.

There seem to be an increase in the number of substance abuse and drug related problems in Nigeria to the extent that many people have a family member, a relative, a friend or a neigbour deal in drugs. In addition, the law enforcement agencies, in particular the NDLEA or the Police arrests drug dealers and abusers almost on daily basis. For example, in a study conducted by the Centre for Gender Studies, Bayero University, Kano on Social Problems in Kano State in 2017, the NDLEA have recorded the following:

Seizures, Suspects Arrested and Convictions Recorded

Year	Seizures	Suspects Arrested	Convictions
2012	4,107.893kg	705	192
2013	4,253.2kg	567	217
2014	7,522.2kg	503	182
2015	12,364.328kg	680	552
2016	40,779.657kg	838	339
Total	69,027.97kg	3,293	1,482

Source: NDLEA, Kano State Command (2017)

Generally, statistics have shown prevalence in cannabis and psychotropic substances use. For example, between June 2015 and June 2016, NDLEA, Kano State Command seized up to 22,291.767kg drugs, with Cannabis sativa (3,072,695kg), cocaine (76.5grms), heroine (14.7grms) and psychotropic substances (19,127.872kg). These figures indicated that the commonly abused substances are psychotropic and not hard drugs. For Zango (2016), the common substances abused by youths in Kano State include inhalants/hallucinogens like rubber solvent, suck-and-die and sleep-inducing drugs like Benylin, Lexotan, Kuftan, Codeine, Valium 5, Librium, Ativan, and Roche. Others are stimulants/ Narcotics like Tramol, alcohol, Butalozene, *Gadagi* and Indian-Hemp which is known with various names – 'marijuana', 'hashish', 'ganja', 'wee-wee', 'pot', 'morocco', 'stone', and so on. But Umar (2016) explained that the types of drugs being abused particularly in Kano State include 'scorpion gas, angel breeze, monkey tail, chasing the dragon, flying stone, man-die-go or woman born another, fire-for-fire, cough syrups, psychotropic/synthetic drugs, solvent and solution, Gigabyte 1,2,3, suck-and-die, Lizard dump and rotten human remains.

The implications of drug abuse are diverse across localities. Communities with high levels of drug abuse usually have increased levels of crime and violence, accompanied by higher levels of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect. WHO (2014) report indicates that over 70 percent of the global

murders were triggered under the influence drugs, while up to 64 percent of violent crimes (murder, rape and armed-robbery) are committed under the influence of drugs. In addition, substance/drug abuse brings about drowsiness and relaxation, nervousness, restlessness, severe abnormal cramps, watery/ dry eyes, nasal discharge, depression, emotional imbalance, mental illness, low intelligence, low performance and memory loss. Others are headache, stomach ache, vision and hearing loss, high blood pressure, decrease appetite, insomnia, increased mental activity, brain damage, and subsequently death. It also destroys the potentials of the drug users particularly the youth which may hinder social, economic and political development. According Radda (2016), drug abuse affect productivity and suppress potentials of the addicts, hinders peace, spread diseases, disorganise families and communities, cause violence and crime and creates inequality. According to a guide on the signs and dangers of drug abuse by UNODC (2016), drug abuse has the following effects:

1. It weakens body organs which consequently may lead serious illness and subsequently to death.
2. Drug abuse makes the abusers to venture into violent and criminal activities which make them be threat to the family and the community at large. That may attract the law enforcement to take appropriate action.
3. Drug abuse deforms not only the human brain, but also the physical appearance of the users.

Globally, substance abuse tends to be very common among youth, as such, it erodes youth potentialities in almost all spheres of life as leaders of tomorrow. The skills and exuberance youth are known to display under normal circumstances may be paralysed due to involvement in substance abuse. Youth that are expected to take part and contribute to the development of their community are regrettably involved in drug abuse and other antisocial behaviour, for example, crimes. In Nigeria, it is reported that almost all the violent crimes and insurgence attacks are committed under the influence of drugs. To some extent, mass involvement of youth in drug abuse in Nigeria and Kano State (the leading state in drug abuse for many years) breed violence especially with the kind of politics and politicians we have. Due to illiteracy, poverty and high-level unemployment in the country and Kano State in particular, such categories of youth can serve as easy target for recruitment into criminal gangs, insurgent groups, and political vanguards in

the electioneering process. Report by the UN (2012) reveals that up to 64 percent of all cases of violent crimes (armed robbery, rape and murder) in the world are committed under the influence of drugs.

Conventional/Legal Approach in Combating Substance/Drug Abuse

Historically, several efforts were geared in order to address the problem of drug related offences in the world both at local and international levels. Some of the legal frameworks that have provided the sources to Nigeria's drug laws are The Correction for Suppression of Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs (1936), The International Opium Correction (1972), The Single Correction on Narcotic Drug (1972), The Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances, 1988 (also known as Vienna Convention), among others. Earlier in 1935, the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance was launched to prevent and control the emerging dealings in illicit drugs in Nigeria. After independence, several other decrees were enacted in order to intensify the fight against drug abuse. These include: The Indian-Hemp Decree No. 19, 1966; The Indian-Hemp (Amendment Decree), 1975; The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (Amendment Decree) No. 48, 1989 and so on, while the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999 as amended) included all narcotics in the exclusive list. The act establishing the NDLEA (1989) was passed 'to enforce laws against the cultivation, processing, sale, trafficking and use of hard drugs and to empower the Agency to investigate persons suspected to have dealings in drugs and other related matter' (NDLEA Act 1989:3). The act further provided some special powers to the agency to intensify the fight against drugs and other related offences. These include:

1. The Agency shall have power: to cause investigation to be conducted as to whether any person has committed an offence under this Act; and with a view to ascertaining whether any person has been involved in offences under this Act or in the proceeds of the proceeds of any such offences, to cause investigations to be conducted into the properties of any person if it appears to the Agency that person's life style and extent of the properties are not justified by his ostensible source of income.
2. For the purpose of inquiring, into and ascertaining whether an offence under (1) above has been committed, the Agency may, by notice in writing, call upon any person to furnish to it with a time specified

in the notice, such information, returns, accounts, books or other documents in custody or such person as the Agency may consider fit and proper within the circumstances.

3. The Agency shall not exercise the power conferred upon it by (1) above without first obtaining the approval of the Attorney-General of the Federation.

4. For the purpose of carrying out or enforcing the provisions of this Act, all officers of the Agency involved in the enforcement of the provisions of this Act shall have the same powers, authority and privileges (including power to bear arms) as are given by law to members of the Nigerian Police.

5. The Agency may at its discretion pay reward to any person, not being a person employed by the Agency, in respect of any information or service rendered to the Agency which may be of assistance to the agency in the performance of its duties under this Act.
(Source: NDLEA Act, 1989:5).

To ensure compliance with the legal approach in the fight against drug dealings and other related acts and also comply with the international best practice, the NDLEA act have provided for specific functions of the agency as presented below:

(1) Subject to this Act and in addition to any other functions expressly conferred on it by other provisions of this Act, the Agency shall have responsibility for:-

   a. The enforcement and the due administration of the provisions of this Act;

   b. The coordination of all drug laws and enforcement functions conferred on any person or authority, including Ministers in the Government of the Federation, by any such law;

   c. Adoption of measures to identify, trace, freeze, confiscate or seize proceeds derived from drug-related offences or property whose value corresponds to such proceeds;

   d. Adoption of measures to eradicate illicit cultivation of narcotic plants and to eliminate illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances with a view to reducing human suffering

and eliminating financial incentives for illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

e. Taking such measures which might require the taking of reasonable precautions to prevent the use of ordinary means of transport for illicit traffic in narcotic drugs including making special arrangements with transport owners;

f. Adoption of measures which shall include coordinated preventive and repressive action. Introduction and maintenance of investigative and control techniques;

g. Adoption of measures to increase the effectiveness of eradication efforts;

h. The facilitation of rapid exchange of scientific and technical information and the conduct of research geared towards eradication of illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

i. Taking measures for the early destruction or disposal of the narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances which have been seized, confiscated or forfeited;

j. Facilitation or encouragement of the presence or availability of persons, including persons in custody who consent to assist in investigations or participate in proceedings relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

k. Enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement to suppress illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

l. Establishing, maintaining and securing communication to facilitate the rapid exchange of information concerning offices and improving international co-operation in the suppression of illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substance by road, sea and air;

m. Reinforcing and supplementing the measures provided in the convention on Narcotic Drugs 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the United Nations Convention Against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and its grave consequences;

n. Taking such measures that may ensure the elimination and prevention of the root causes of the problems of narcotic drugs and

psychotropic substances;

o. Strengthening and enhancing effective legal means for international co-operation in criminal matters for suppressing the international activities of illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

p. Collaborating with government bodies both within and outside Nigeria carrying on functions wholly or in part analogous to those of the Agency concerning amongst others.

   i. The identities, whereabouts and activities of persons suspected being involved in offences mentioned in this Act
   ii. The movement of proceeds or property derived from the commission of such offences
   iii. The movement of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances specified in the second schedule to this Act, and instrumentalities used or intended for use in the commission of such offences
   iv. The exchange of personnel and other experts
   v. The establishment and maintenance of a system for monitoring international dealings in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in order to identify suspicious transactions and persons engaged in them.

q. Taking charge, supervising, controlling, coordinating all the responsibilities, functions and activities relating to arrest, investigation and prosecution of all offences connected with or relating to illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, notwithstanding any law to the contrary; and

r. Strengthening co-operation with the office of the Attorney-General of the Federation, the police force, customs agencies immigration agencies, welfare officials, health officials and other law enforcement agencies in the eradication of illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

(2) All drug units under existing institutions dealing with offenders or offences connected with or relating to illicit traffic in narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances shall relate and be responsible to the Agency in the performance of their duties and functions.

(Source: NDLEA Act, 1989:4-5).

To effectively conduct its functions, the NDLEA is designed to have three units: general and assets investigation, prosecution and counselling unit. The general and assets investigation unit is charged with prevention and detection of offences in violation of the NDLEA act, and also work with the Nigerian Customs Services in monitoring movement of goods and persons in any custom area, customs stations, customs ports or customs airports and searching cargoes and incoming and outgoing vessels. That include search of crew members, passengers and their luggage. Further, the unit is responsible for detecting consignments suspected of containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Maintain surveillance and Harbour and dock areas and airports and border control points, while investigate assets and properties of person arrested for committing any offence. It also identifies and trace proceeds involved in any offence under the NDLEA act and effect forfeiture. The prosecution unit is asked to prosecute offenders and support the general and assets investigation unit with the provision of legal advice and assistance. The counselling unit, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health, has responsibility for campaigns, seminars and workshops aimed at educating the public on the dangers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substance; thereby stimulate interest and awareness about drug-related problems. In addition, after care rehabilitation, social integration and education of addicts to promote the welfare of the convicts are made to be the responsibility of the unit, among others. The steps provided by the act to process a suspected person or person arrested are:

- Suspects to declare assets;
- Secure Freezing order and Order of forfeiture;
- NDLEA disposal of forfeited assets and properties;
- Public auction of forfeited assets or property; and
- Prosecution

Other relevant agencies (for example, the Nigeria Police, the Nigeria Customs Service) were given the mandate to enforce the laws to ensure prevention and control of production, distribution, trafficking, and consumption of illicit substances through criminal justice administration. Despite all these, it appears that there seems to be a dramatic increase in the menace across the country since the return of Nigeria to democratic rule in 1999 and with women, girls and children getting involved in it. In addition, other challenges facing the agencies like political influence, inadequate staff, inadequate logistics,

inadequate training and corruption, among others, compounds the problem. That signalled the need for community participation in the fight against substance/drug abuse.

Inter-agency Relationship in the Fight against Substance/Drug Abuse

Many formal agencies in Nigeria are involved in the fight against drug abuse and other related offences. These agencies include the Nigeria Police Force, the Nigeria Customs Service, the Nigeria Immigration Service and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the National Agency for Food and Drugs Control (NAFDAC), the State Security Service (SSS), the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), Ministries of Justice and Health, the judiciary, among others. The expectations and the provision by the law are for these government agencies to have synergy and collaborate for the prevention and control of production, distribution, trafficking, enterprising, use and abuse of drugs and other related substances provided by the law. Harmonious working relationship amongst the agencies could go a long way in achieving the goal much more effectively in the country. But in a situation where they operate as rivals to one another, the whole aim can be defeated and the fight could take longer time and even without tremendous success recorded. Although all the related law enforcement agencies have specific roles and responsibilities, in the process of discharging their duties are expected to comply with the laws provided. They all have boundaries, areas of jurisdiction and operational guidelines provided by the acts that established each of the agencies. However, in some situations the agencies may overlap in certain aspects and operations. These are areas that the agencies must support each other and maintain good working relationship or synergy to produce the needed results.

Inter-agency relationship in the fight against crimes in general and drug-related offences, in particular, is an important aspect in the law enforcement. It is no longer a news that Nigeria been an international transit hub for illicit drugs for many years, and now transforming into a production field, may require concerted effort between the law enforcement agencies to convert the crime. One-single agency (for example, NDLEA, Nigeria Customs or the Police) may not be able to cater for the growing wave in substance/drug abuse and other related offences due to organisational deficiencies and inadequacies. As such, harmonious working relationship between the formal agencies would go long way in addressing the problem of substance/drug abuse in Nigeria. However, even in the developed world, the collective efforts by the

relevant agencies and the judiciary could not adequately address the problem of substance and drug abuse due to many reasons. Among them is that drug related offences generally occur within the family and in the community, and unless there is community cooperation in the fight, many will remain unsolved. Crime reporting is mainly done by the community and family members, while detection, investigation, seizure/forfeiture, prosecution and punishment are done by the formal agencies and the judiciary. As such, many of those cases may not be reported voluntarily or detected by the formal agents, couple with the inter-agency rivalry (especially in the developing nations like Nigeria), which prompted community involvement in the fight all over the world. Different countries have adopted community strategy to combat drug related offences to complement the conventional/legal approach and also help neutralise the inter-agency rivalry.

Community Strategy in the Fight against Substance/Drug Abuse

Over the years, efforts were made by different administrations before and after independence to combat the problem of drug abuse in Nigeria. Some other attempts were made globally for over a century to address the challenges of drug related issues particularly in the areas of production, distribution, trafficking and consumption. Through such efforts, in addition to different national and international conventions and congresses on drugs, many decrees, laws, policies and even agencies were enacted and established to strengthen the fight against drugs. Agencies of law enforcement (for example, Police, Customs, NDLEA and Immigration) collaborate in many respects to attack the problem which appears to be consuming huge amount in taxes. Despite these, drug trafficking and consumption or abuse continue to persist across nations with attendant consequences of increased violence and crime, hence, require collective effort through community involvement. For Fraser (1984), experts agree that family life is an important factor in precluding or promoting drug abuse. Some have argued that poor parent-child attachments lead to lack of commitment to conventional activities, and that this is sufficient to produce conditions fostering use. Programmes that produce parent-child bonds of attachment would appear likely to reduce drug misuse.

In an attempt to address the problem of substance/drug abuse, many countries like India, Kenya and USA have involved the communities. Since the drug dealers and the users live in the community (in some cases, with single and/or poverty-stricken parents), it is always easier to identify, arrest

and prosecute with the cooperation from the community. The approach yield fruitful results in these communities.

> … drug control efforts rely on the involvement of local community groups to lead the fight against drugs. Representatives of various local government agencies, churches, civic organisations and similar institutions are being brought together to create drug prevention and awareness programmes (Siegel, 2000:460).

Through the community efforts, all members and leaders (both traditional and religious leaders), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs) can come together to take the lead in the fight against drug abuse which render government effort through its agencies a complementary one. The most important place to start the drug war is in the home and the key players remain the parents and other family members. Since government cannot be able to prevent all drugs from coming into the country, institutions could not be able to provide enough awareness and education to guarantee drug-free society. In addition, the law enforcement agencies like the NDLEA and the Police may not arrest all the drug dealers/barons. This means that community involvement (starting with the family) would be of significant value.

Siegel (2007) reveals that different drug control strategies that aimed to deter drug use by stopping the flow of drugs, apprehending and punishing dealers, and cracking down on street-level drug deals were launched. Others focus on preventing drug use by educating potential users to the dangers of substance abuse and by organising community groups to work with at-risk- population in their area. For Platt (1995), provision of skill acquisition centres and training in the community for drug users is of utmost importance. The training will help overcome the barriers to employment, and help with motivation, education, experience, the job market, job-seeking skills and personal issues. Drug abusers who obtain and keep employment will end or reduce the incidence of their substance abuse.

Weingart (1993, cited in Madaki, 2020) opined that community effort in fighting drugs can be classified into different categories. The first involves law enforcement-type effort, which may include block watches, cooperative police-community efforts, and citizen patrols. Some of these citizen groups are non-confrontational; they simply observe situations and notify appropriate authorities, while some groups engage in confrontational tactics that may even

include arrest of drug related offenders or even contract private security guards to help in neighbourhood patrols. Another tactic is to use the civil justice system to harass offenders through which land lords can be sued for housing drug dealers as observed by the community. Community-based treatment efforts, in which citizen volunteers participate in self-help support programmes are also introduced, while other methods are designed to enhance the quality of life, improve interpersonal relationships and upgrade the neighbourhood's physical environment.

A report of one-day Policy Dialogue on drug abuse organised in Kano State (2016:29) recommends the following strategies to prevent drug abuse:

1. Enhance protective measures, for example, strong family bonds, parental monitoring, parental involvement and intensive supervision;
2. Target all forms of drug abuse while being culturally sensitive;
3. Use interactive skills-based training (resist drugs, strengthen personal commitment against drug use, reinforce attitude against drug use);
4. Family-focused initiative, which involve effective parenting skills; and
5. Involve communities and schools, and engage in media campaigns against illicit drugs.

The global best approach in the fight against any social melee in any society is community mobilisation, sensitisation, involvement and participation in the process because individual members of each community belong to a family unit. As such, addressing the problem from the grass root and later at community level will complement the effort of the government and reduce the burden on the agencies.

> Parents should ensure that prescription drugs must never be used unnecessarily, illicit drugs must be completely absent and alcohol must be used in moderation. It should be made clear to all young people that the expectation is that they will never touch a drug or alcohol …. If they make it… without using drugs or alcohol, they are virtually certain to never have a problem with substances (Birkenshaw, 2014:4).

The family is seen as a unit that produces and orients children to ensure compliance to the cultural values for better tomorrow. In view of this, with greater awareness among parents, the problem of drug abuse can be drastically reduced in the event the parents learn to live in peace to minimise marriage

breakdown and impart good moral training, education and quality supervision on their wads. Garba (2005) posits that building partnerships and networks between parents, community, NGOs, CBOs, local governments will enhance information sharing and will lead to the development of a common strategy and the pooling of resources for successful fight. In addition, citizen-sponsored programmes may restore a sense of community in drug-infested areas, reduce fear, and promote conventional norms and values (Davies, et. al., 1993).

Community effort may involve drug education and prevention strategies aimed at convincing youths not to get involved in drug abuse. Emphasis should be made on educational programmes that teach children to say no to drugs. Among the popular and most widely used programme is Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) in the US where elementary school course is designed to give students the skills for resisting peer pressure to experiment with drugs. More than 10,000 communities in 49 counties now use the DARE programme (Siegel, 2000). According to Siegel (2000), DARE have five major focus areas:

a. Provide information about drugs
b. Teach students techniques to resist peer pressure
c. Teach students respect for the law and law enforcement agents
d. Give students ideas for alternatives to drug use
e. Building the self-esteem of students.

Unless with extra-ordinary commitment and determination on the side of the community in the fight against drug abuse, it is difficult to get people out of drug culture, particularly that war on drugs is very expensive. Banning drugs creates networks of manufacturers and distributors, many of whom use violence as part of their standard operating procedures (Siegel, 20000). Residents have to organise community watch, provide street lights, monitor uncompleted buildings and other structures and disband all drug joints to broadcast the message that they have local pride and do not want drug related problems in their area.

Some of the features identified by Umar (2016) that can help easily identify drug addicts in Nigeria include dark lips, palms and feet, reddish watery or white dry eyes, frequent use of dark glasses, abnormal perfume use, always in possession of either matches or lighter, possession of small arms and light weapons, lying/dishonest, secretive, increase in demand for money, theft, isolation, absenteeism, low performance and low grades, improper dressing, large stomach, excessive day time sleeping, among others. Signs of drug abuse

in teenagers listed by a guide published by UNODC (2016) include depression, aggression, fatigue, mood swings, slurred speech, poor hygiene, bloodshot eyes, difficulty in concentrating, and anxiety, panic, fear, and paranoia. These features may help in community identification of drug users as individuals and in group for further community action. Community mobilisation and education would enhance community involvement in the fight against substance/drug abuse. According to Hawkins, et al (1995), there are principles of prevention at community level include:

1. Focus on reducing known risk factors
2. When reducing risk enhance known protective factors
3. Address risk and protective factors at appropriate developmental stages
4. Intervene early – before the target behaviour stabilizes
5. Include those at high risk
6. Address multiple risks with multiple strategies.

The above principles emphasise the need for a developmentally adjusted, multi-component risk reduction strategy that cuts across traditional, health, education and human service delivery systems.

Conclusion

The fight against any social problem, and in particular drug abuse, is a collective responsibility. People as individuals and as groups have a significant role to play. In order to have a sensible, psychologically upright and emotionally balanced society, it is high time now to form a formidable force which comprises of both the conventional/legal approach and the community strategies to fight substance/drug abuse in Nigeria. It appears that the formal approach alone cannot adequately handle the succinct increase in drug abuse and other related problems, as such; government agencies must involve the community in an effort to contain the situation and achieve the desired results. It is apparent that government cannot be able to prevent all drugs from coming into the country, and institutions could not be able to provide the needed level of awareness and education to guarantee drug-free society. In addition, the NDLEA and other relevant agencies like the Police may not identify and arrest all the drug dealers/barons in the country. Community involvement (starting with the family) will be of significant value because the global best approach in the fight against any social problem (substance/drug abuse inclusive) is community mobilisation,

sensitisation, involvement and participation.

Every family is expected to impart societal values through training, adequate supervision and quality education to their members, while parents learn to live in peace to minimise chances of broken home and by implication reduce social problems – drug abuse inclusive. The community also plays a critical role through self-help groups and associations in monitoring people's conduct to ensure compliance with the cultural values and the existing laws. Any behaviour that may seem to constitute nuisance to the community can easily be arrested. However, families noticeably with difficulties in the provision of basic needs, have to be assisted by the community in the spirit of being brothers-keepers. This approach proved to be very useful in many societies across the world as it sanitises the community and help in addressing emerging social challenges.

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DRUG/SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG YOUTH IN NIGERIA: TYPES, CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

BY

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Introduction

The phenomenon of drug-abuse has now become a contemporary global social problem that is found among youth (males and females) in many countries. In 2014, it was estimated by the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population division that between 165m and 350m people aged 15 – 64 had used an illicit substance at least once. Very disturbingly, large number of youth in Nigeria is engaged in drug/substance and other related abuses. In 2012, the estimated annual prevalence for cannabis use in Nigeria is almost 9 percent of persons aged 15 - 65. In 2014 it moves to 11.6 percent. In Kano State, statistics have shown prevalence in cannabis and psychotropic substances use. For example, between June 2015 and June 2016, the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Kano State Command seized 22,291.767kg drugs: Cannabis sativa (3,072,695kg), cocaine (76.5grms), heroine (14.7grms) and psychotropic substances (19,127.872kg).

Youth that are generally regarded as leaders of tomorrow are now regrettably found to have been experimenting with drugs/substances, even up to the extent of becoming drug/substance-dependents. In fact, studies have established a very strong relationship between drug-use and crime. Hence, crime rate rises as drug-use increases. Due to the tendency of drugs to induce other social vices, and the reality of drugs affecting the quality of life of those involved, many countries established drug control agencies. In Nigeria, for example, the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) was established to regulate drug and other related activities.

With the return of Nigeria to democracy, the phenomena of drug-use, drug-misuse, drug-abuse, drug-dependence and, generally, substance abuse have become very pronounced among youth, especially during political rallies, campaigns and elections. Drug/substance use and abuse among youths has become quite widespread. In the developing countries like Nigeria, the use of drugs/substances has been increasing dramatically over the years. The continuous intake of drugs and substances (even in small quantities) lead

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to undesirable consequences. Substance/drug abuse plays a major part in illness, premature death and traffic accidents (Howard, 1995). In other studies, family and peer influence, individual characteristics including behaviour and personality can also be considered as factors that influence children and adolescents to engage in drug/substance abuse (Brook, Whiteman, Gordon, & Cohen, 2014). There are several ways for youth to be at-risk of drug/substance abuse. Fatoye & Morakinyo (2002) cited that researchers have identified a number of demographic and behavioural characteristics of youth that contribute to their risk of involvement with drug/substance abuse. These include ethnic minority status; aggressive, antisocial behaviour; difficulties in school and school failure (including educational disabilities). These risk factors are common denominators in the backgrounds of youth today. This paper seeks to address drug/substance abuse among youth in Nigeria with a focus on the causes and implications on the socio-economic and political development.

In Nigeria, the issue of drug/substance and other related consumables of abuse is certainly not a new phenomenon. Nevertheless, researchers, academics, and policy makers have focused on studying the phenomenon. Many of today's youth face conflicts that they can barely handle in a very young age. Factors such as modernisation have brought many social changes in the society. Children are being taken for granted, usually by parents who both work and have no time for their children. The issue of broken family, peer pressure, and other pressing issues that would make a youth feel inferior of him/herself are additional factors. Typically, youth like utilising ways to express themselves and unfortunately, this search for self–expression has often led to deviant practices such as joining gangs, engaging in pre-marital sex and engaging in drug/substance abuse. Spooner (2005) stress that growing numbers of children are being neglected, abused, and ignored. And that without some positive steps taken, the dark spectre of generational trouble could become real. Child-care advocates reports that up to 15% of 16 to 19-year-olds are at risk of never reaching their potential and simply becoming lost in society (Spooner, 2005).

It is against the above background that this paper focuses on understanding the issue of drug/substance abuse among youth, types, factors and its consequences on the socio-economic and political development of the country. The paper is divided into seven parts. The first part is the introduction and the second part consists of conceptual clarifications, the third part presents theoretical explanations leveraging on the propositions of scholars in respect

of relative deprivation and social structure and anomie, availability-proneness, differential association, social disorganisation, among others, respectively. The fourth part dwells on the types and prevalence of drug abuse. The fifth part focuses on the factors associated with drug/substance abuse; the sixth section dwells on the consequences of drug/substance abuse in relation to the socio-economic and political development of Nigeria while the last part of the paper presents recommendations and conclusions.

Conceptual Clarifications

This section presents key concepts that are relevant to the context used in respect of the issue of drug and substance abuse in Nigeria. Applying the concepts and their meanings to some different contexts other than the one referred to in this paper may give different layers of meaning to the issue of drug and substance abuse as the case may be.

1. Drug

The term drug is thought to originate from an old French word "drogue" or "droge-vate" referring to medicinal plants preserved in dry vessels that invokes psychoactive properties. The term drug is generally used in reference to any material other than food of natural or synthetic origin that invokes psychoactive properties by altering the body's functions physically and/or psychologically. Drug also refers to a substance taken for both therapeutic and non-therapeutic purposes (Ossaine, 2005). Other experts have defined drug as any medical or chemical substance that when taken into the body by any means causes a change in the body (Kilonzo & Mbatia, 1999). Drug alters the body functions either positively or otherwise depending on the body composition of the user, the type of drug used, the amount used and whether used singly or with other drugs at the same time.

2. Substances

Substances are any material other than food which due to their chemical nature affects the structure or functioning of the living organisms especially psychologically (Szasz, 1975). Examples of substances are heroin, cocaine, inhalants, solvents, glues, tube repair solution, petrol, gasoline, spot removers, nail polish, nail polish remover (dissolver), spirit (mentholated spirit). Others are amphatemines (aji garau), syrups like benylyn, cleaning fluids, bula (robin blue), *kashin kadangare*, *burkutu*, *pito*, *zakami*, kolanut, *hankufa*,

dankamaru, *angur*, *gagai*, etc.

3. Drug Dependence/Addiction

Drug dependence is defined as the set of physiological, behavioural and cognitive manifestations in which the use of a drug is a priority for the individual. This term is usually linked to tolerance, or the need to consume more of a substance to achieve the effects of previous consumption. Physical dependence can be seen as a state of adaptation of an organism on the presence of the drug and this is manifested by the appearance of intense physical discomfort such as tremors, chills, insomnia, vomiting, pain in the muscles and bones, etc. when consumption of the substance is stopped, then the same physical discomfort will occur when the substance´s action on the organism is influenced by drugs which is designed to block its effects. Psychological dependence refers to the situation in which a person feels an emotional need and urge to consume a drug on a regular basis in order to feel good, relax or be satisfied so as to obtain pleasure or avoid discomfort, although he/she does not need the substance physiologically, but may be associated with different contexts or social interactions. When a dependent person does not consume, then withdrawal syndrome appears. It is a cluster of symptoms that affect an individual who is suddenly deprived of any toxin or drug on which he/she is physically dependent and which previously had been consumed on a regular basis.

4. Youth

The term youth refers to anybody in the period between early childhood and old age or those between 6 - 30 years. It is defined further as 'a psycho-mental and socio-economic age category with certain time honoured attributes like physical and mental agility, buoyancy, freshness, vigour, curiosity, deviance, vulnerability, malleability, a "can do it" disposition, etc. (Odekunle, 2002:8). According to Attahiru (2007), the concept youth is multi-dimensional and consists of several age ranges even at the international level. For some countries, the age range of the youth is from 12 years to a maximum of 40 years. UN defines the youth as people in the age category of 15 to 24 years while the Commonwealth of Nations recognises the age between 16 and 29 years. The Nigerian state defines the youth to include those in the age bracket of 18 to 30 years. The relevance of these definitions depends on the objective situation of social policy in a given social formation.

5. Drug/Substance Use, Misuse and Abuse

Understanding the meanings of drugs or substances is related to other basic terms and this involves distinguishing between the use, misuse and abuse of drugs or substances itself. However, the boundaries that separate drug/substance use and abuse are ambiguous and debatable, and vary from drug/substance to drug/substance, user to user. On the one hand, drug/substance use is a general term referring to both legitimate and illegitimate use of drugs/substances, while misuse denotes the use of prescription/legitimate drugs that alter mood or intoxicate ignoring the fact that overdose of such drugs have serious adverse effects. On the other hand, abuse reflects the misuse of both legitimate and illegitimate drugs for non-therapeutic or non-medical effect; use to intoxicate or alter mood. This refers to any use of drugs/substances for non-medical purposes almost always for altering consciousness. Furthermore, drug/substance abuse denotes use of substances that change the mental or physical state of a person and that may be used repeatedly for that effect leading to abnormality (Home Office, 2009). In spite of these narrations, it has been argued that there is no common pharmacological property/ingredient distinguishing drugs from substances. The distinction is social (Goode, 1992). The table below shows a schema depicting the thin lines between the three behaviours.

Table 1: Distinguishing between Drug/Substance Use, Misuse and Abuse

Behaviour	Description	Focus
Drug/ Substance Use	General term referring to both legitimate and illegitimate use of drugs/substances	Legal and illegal drugs
Drug/Substance Misuse Inappropriate use	Use of prescription/legitimate drugs that alter mood or intoxicate ignoring the fact that overdose of such drugs have serious adverse effects.	Legal drugs
Drug/Substance AbuseBad or excessive use	Misuse of both legitimate and illegitimate drugs for non-therapeutic or non-medical effect. Use to intoxicate or alter mood. Socially and medically disapproved usage of drugs.	Legal and illegal drugs

Types of Drugs/Substances of Abuse

In trying to get an overall picture of drug/substance abuse in the society today, reference is made to knowing and investigating the types of drugs/ substances in use. Some of the drugs/substances put users to sleep while some wake them up. Several methods have been used in classifying drugs. Some methods are based on compliance with laws where drugs are classified as legal or illegal, example; alcohol, tobacco, coffee, hypnotics, sedatives, inhalants, etc.; and opiates cannabis, cocaine, synthetic drugs, hallucinogens, etc. respectively. There has also been a differentiation between soft and hard drugs, noting that the soft-hard distinction is rarely used because of the rise to erroneous interpretations. Given the broad and varied nature of what is consumed and abused today, the following categorisations are considered for the purpose of this presentation – depressants, hallucinogens, narcotics, over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs, sedatives, stimulants, solvents/ inhalants and tranquilisers.

Depressants

These are drugs that slow the body's vital functions, with slowing effect, able to sedate or lower the rate of the body's vital functions. They are popularly referred to as "downers" with depressive action properties. They are also regarded as part of the most widely used and abused drugs in existence believed to relive stress and anxiety, and some induce sleep. Depressants produce a host of other side effects including problems dependence. Alcohol is the commonest depressant used to ease tension, cause relaxation or help users to forget their problems.

Hallucinogens

This is a general group of pharmacological agents that can cause psychoactive subjective changes in perception, thought, emotion and consciousness. Unlike stimulants and opioids, hallucinogens induce experiences that are qualitatively different from those of ordinary consciousness. These experiences come often in form of things like trance, meditation, dreams or insanity. Hallucinogens have a long history of use within medicinal and religious traditions worldwide. They are used in Shamanic forms of ritual healing and divination in initiation rites. Hallucinogens are drugs that alter the sensory processing unit in the brain producing distorted perception, feeling of anxiety and euphoria e.g., marijuana, LSD, etc. Overall,

hallucinogens are substances that alter sensory processing in the brain, causing perceptual disturbances, changes in thought processing. Examples include volatile solvents and aromatic hydrocarbons.

Narcotics

The term narcotic is believed to have been coined by a Greek physician Galen to refer to agents that numb or deaden, causing loss of feeling or paralysis. It is from an ancient Greek meaning "to make numb" originally referred medically to any psychoactive compound with any sleep-inducing properties. It is based on the Greek word *narcosis*, the term used for the process of numbing or the numbed state e.g., heroin, cocaine, cannabis, morphine, opium (powder), codeine (liquid or syrup), methadone, tobacco, etc. Narcotic drugs are substances whose ultimate effect is to produce insensibility and torpor. In the context of International Drug Control (UNODC) terminology and information on drugs, narcotic drugs mean any drug defined as such under the 1961 Convention (UN). Narcotics are substances and preparations that induce drowsiness, sleep, stupor or reduced consciousness, insensibility, etc. Narcotics are drugs that cause drowsiness or induce sleep and can also relieve pain. Heroin for example produces dream world where all cares and worries disappear, physical pain diminishes, fear disappear, foolish courage develops and natural inhibitions are dropped.

Over-the-Counter Drugs

Over-the-counter drugs are drugs or medicines sold directly to a consumer without a prescription from a healthcare professional. Over-the-counter drugs are usually referred to as "ok" drugs and are acceptably sold without essentially any prescription. In many countries, many over-the-counter drugs are available in stores e.g., supermarkets, filling stations, licensed pharmacy stores, chemists, etc. Cough syrups and many other brands of drugs are accessible through these outlets periodically.

Prescription Drugs

Medicine is used to connote substances that are used to prevent or treat the symptoms of illness. Prescription drugs are licensed drugs or medicines that are regulated by legislation to require a medical prescription before they can be obtained. A drug prescribed by a physician is what is referred to as medicine. In view of this, such drugs presented by physicians are known as

prescription drugs and can only be authorised by professionals and licensed medical practitioners.

Sedatives

Sedatives are drugs that relieve stress and anxiety, induce sleep, ease tension, cause relaxation or help users forget their problems. They are social opposites of stimulants e.g., alcohol, Valium, chloroform, etc. They are used to get relief from tension or anxiety. They are commonly regarded as hypnotising drugs.

Stimulants

Stimulants mean drugs, substances and/or consumables that increase body activity by producing greater alertness; when taken they cause a person to act faster than usual. They are substances that stimulate the Central Nervous System (CNS); they are performance enhancers and promote wakefulness. Drugs under this category include marijuana, nicotine, cocaine, amphetamines, etc. Stimulants increase the activity of mood elevating regions in the brain, that is, they excite or speed up the CNS producing a feeling of mental alertness, excitation, euphoria and wellbeing. Generally, they are used for their ability to increase alertness and endurance to keep people awake for a long period of time, to produce feel of wellbeing. While stimulants are believed to produce severe psychological dependence (Garba, 2003), overdose brings about agitation, increases in body temperature, hallucination and aggression (Odebunmi, 2008; Umar et al., 2010). Furthermore, users experience pleasant effects initially, such as a sense of increased energy and sometimes a state of euphoria. Overall, stimulants speed up mental and physical processes, which can produce desirable effects in the short-term by increasing levels of dopamine in the brain. While users may feel great due to the short-term effects of stimulants, long-term abuse of these drugs can have significant consequences.

Solvents/Inhalants

Solvents and/or inhalants are drugs or substances administered through the nostrils. When the drugs are used for a long time, they cause euphoria, emotional dis-inhibition, sneezing, fatigue and perpetual distortion. They cause damage to the lungs, brain, and liver and could lead to blindness e.g., nail polish remover, glue, gasoline, rubber solution, petrol, etc. They are also

called miscellaneous group of drugs/substances. This group includes inhalants like nitrous oxide, volatile solvents and household products like glues, spot removers, tube repair kits or *sholisho*, etc.

Tranquilisers

These are drugs legally used to control the behaviours of psychiatric patients suffering from psychoses, aggressiveness and agitation but are abused to release uncomfortable emotional feelings by reducing anxiety and tension and promoting a condition of relaxation. They are usually identified by their brand names such as ampazine, thorazine, sparine, pacetal, librium, valium, etc. This category of drugs produce a feeling of calmness, relieving anxiety and tension e.g., diazepam. Tranquilisers are also believed to produce calmness without bringing in drowsiness.

Another classification criterion is based on the effects produced in the CNS. Thus, Chalout (2001) proposed a typology that distinguishes between drugs that are depressants, stimulants and perturbers of the CNS. The Table below provides a complete account based on this criterion. The first group includes alcohol, opiates and psychotropic drugs such as hypnotics, anxiolytics and antipsychotics. Among the second group are major alertness stimulants (e.g.,, amphetamines and cocaine) and minor alertness stimulants (e.g.,, caffeine and nicotine), and mood boosters (anti-depressants). In the third group, consisting of psychedelic drugs, are hallucinogens, cannabis, synthetic drugs and solvents (e.g.,, glues, adhesives, etc.).

Table 2: Classification of Drugs/Substances According to their Main Effects

SN	Classification	Drugs/Substances and Main Effects
1.	Central Nervous System (CNS) Depressants	a) Alcohol b) Hypnotics: Barbiturates and non-barbiturates c) Anxiolytics: diazepam d) Narcotic analgesics: i. Opium and derivatives: Heroin, morphine, codeine, etc. ii. Synthetic narcotics: methadone, etc. e) Antipsychotics (major tranquilizers)

2.	Central Nervous System (CNS) Stimulants	a) Alertness stimulants. i. Major: amphetamines, cocaine ii. Minor: nicotine, xanthenes (coffee, tea, cocoa, etc.) b) Mood Boosters: antidepressants
3.	Central Nervous System (CNS) Perturbants (Psychedelic)	a) Hallucinogens: mescaline, LSD, etc. b) Derivatives of cannabis: marijuana, hashish c) Volatile solvents: glue, etc. d) Designer drugs: MDA, MDMA, etc.

Source: European Network on Exchange Early Detection Drug-consumption (2012)

In line with the breakdown of the explanations on the table above, drug/substance use fall into categories depending on their general effects on the body. Depressants and stimulants each have different effects on users. Another distinction between hallucinogens and narcotics also applies. As the names imply, depressants mute mental and physical activity in varying degree, depending on dosages, while stimulants excite and sustain activity and diminish symptoms of fatigue. The depressants are morphine, heroin and marijuana; are substances of abuse that persist globally by users. For instance, users that frequently take heroine morphine, both white, powered substances derived from opium, by injection either subcutaneously or directly into their veins. Both produce highly toxic or poisonous effect, so users must prepare diluting them before use. Almost immediately after injecting either substance, the user becomes flushed and experiences a mild itching and tingling sensation. Diverseness gradually follows, leading to a relaxed state of reverie. Soon, however the user needs higher doses of the drug to reach this state of euphoria. Thus, the addicts build up a tolerance for the drug as well as a physical dependence upon it. As this tolerance increases, the addict becomes comparatively immune to the substance's toxic manifestations.

Theoretical Explanations on the Nature of Drug/Substance Abuse

The issue of drug/substance abuse has been a serious concern for different societies. The people who experiment with drugs/substances continue to use them because the drug/substance either makes them feel good, or stops

them from feeling bad. While frequency or the amounts of drugs/substances consumed do not in themselves constitute abuse or addiction, they can often be indicators of drug/substance-related problems. The reasons for abusing drugs/substance and the implications of drug/substance abuse are so complex that several theories have been propounded on it. Hence, there is no single theory of drug/substance abuse, socio-psychological theories largely look at the theories that explain what drug/substance abuse is, why people abuse drug/substance and the consequences of drug/substance abuse among the victims. In examining the issue of the abuse of drugs/substances, reference to the propositions of scholars in respect of trait, bio-social, relative deprivation and social structure and anomie theories is worth making. Other theories such as the availability-proneness, differential association, frustration aggression, social disorganisation, gateway theory, among others, are instructive too.

One of the problems faced by developing nations today, including Nigeria is the growing number of individuals who are using or abusing drugs and/or substances and other emerging consumables. It has been noted that youths have taken to drug abuse (Ejikeme, 2010; Adebiyi, 2003). The rate at which youths abuse drugs and substances is so alarming and worrisome that calls for more efforts to eradicate the problem. As youths are abusing drugs/substances, there is the knowledge that drug abuse and addiction have destructive or devastating consequences, youths still get into drugs. "Not only that it destroys the affected individual, but it has a pervasive effect on all those who know or work with the individual" (Barber, 1967:85). Drug and substance abuse remain a tragedy in Nigeria. Despite the establishment of the Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) years ago, the rate at which people abuse drugs is becoming higher every day. Similarly, there is an argument that traditional drinks, e.g., palm wine, locally made gin (ogogoro or kai-kai, burukutu, etc.), though dangerous to the body if taken habitually, are still in use among community members in Nigeria. Youths in the remote places are prone to abusing such locally made drugs especially gin (kai-kai), palm wine and *burkutu*. *Burkutu*, which is normally called BKT is believed to be an intoxicating drink in Nigeria. It is a strong and intoxicating drink made from guinea corn. Even though it is an intoxicating wine that is being abused, it is protenous (Albert, 1995:125).

Several features of a normal life are believed to actively promote drug use. For instance, recognising a close connection between drugs and physical well-being is a clear indication. For example, it is widely learnt that drugs

relieve various physical discomforts. If you have a headache, take aspirin. Also, people associate use of alcohol, an important part of the drug world, with certain social and life events. Drugs often play important roles in some people's celebration or mourning rituals. In addition, people think of substance use as a way to attain desired moods or psychological well-being, which perhaps is a universal desire (Weil, 1996). People learn that, when they fall into undesirable moods, they can alter their feelings with substance use. A single substance use may generate a new mood, such as euphoria, or alter an existing one, such as depression.

Scholars have observed that lack of supervision is also connected to poor relationship between children and parents, as children who are often in conflict with their parents may be less willing to discuss their activities with them. In other words this implies that children with a weak attachment to their parents are more likely to be delinquent and abuse substances. The assertion of social control theory as posited by Hirschi (1969) that weak social bonds do fail to prevent both association with delinquents in abusing substance and delinquency itself. Sub-cultural theorists have examined why this is the case. Miller (1958) suggested that the idea of masculinity may make young males more likely to abuse substances. Being tough, powerful, aggressive, daring and competitive may be a way young boys attempt to express their masculinity. Acting out these ideals make young boys more likely to engage in antisocial behaviours and substance abuse. From the foregoing, it is apparent that the abuse of drug constitutes a menace to society, and has devastating effects on the youth. It affects their future since they engage in the habit at a transitional period between childhood and adulthood.

Factors Associated with Drug/Substance Abuse

The causes of drug abuse are complex involving many issues some of which are situated or revolve around the individual, some of which are external to the individual and are situated within the society or the environment where the individual resides. As such, the factors associated with drug/substance abuse can be explained in terms of the various social, economic, political, legal and cultural forces existing within the society. Most of these factors determine the types and patterns of drugs/substances that are being abused. In Nigeria, getting precise statistical data of the number of drug abuse cases, misuse or addicts routinely proves difficult. However, findings have shown that there is no single factor that is solely considered to be responsible for drug/substance abuse; rather the combination of two or more factors is scientifically considered as responsible

for the behaviour. The contributing factors could be social-cultural, biological, psychological, technological and environmental in nature (Siegel, 2004). By and large, several scholars tend to adopt a particular perspective or view point in an attempt to explain the factors associated with drug/substance abuse. The table below provides a summary of factors:

Table 3: Summary of Factors Associated with Drug/Substance Abuse

Factor Level	Description	Theory/Framework
Individual	Pleasure/Benefits Curiosity/Experimentation Emotional and Psychological Stress Integrating Period of Physiological & Psychological Self Self-Medication Syndrome Genes and Heredity	UtilitarianismTrait TheoryBio-Social Theory
Socio-Economic /Structural	Peer Group Influence Economic Depression Blocked Opportunities, PovertyUnemployment, Occupational Demands Availability of Drugs/Substances Urbanisation, Indiscipline Party politics, Weak Family Ties Weak Social Values, Poor parental Care Weak Government Plans/Initiatives Media Projections & Portrayals	Strain Theory Social Structure and Anomie Relative Deprivation Availability-Proneness Differential Association Gateway Theory Stepping Stone Hypothesis
Environment	Exposure to Poor Environmental Settings, Ghetto Areas, Neighbourhood characteristics, Location matters Exposure to Abusive Parents Proneness to Drugs/Substances Parent-Child Relationship	Social Disorganisation The Chicago School Frustration Aggression Theory

Individual-level Factors

This sub-section focuses on issues around the individual including

pleasure/benefits that gives users benefits such as alertness, increased performance, agility and reduction in fatigue. Researchers have found that the feeling of pleasure is one of the emotions connected to survival. The feeling of pleasure or reward is a strong biological force, if something brings strong pleasure; we develop behaviours that individuals learn quickly to reproduce events that bring pleasure. A person involved in drug use/abuse may frequent his/her habit in anticipation of the reward (pleasure) may reproduce. The output overtime alters user's thoughts, perceptions, emotions, actions and behaviours. For the factor on curiosity and experimentation, the WHO (2003) gave five basic reasons why young ones get into drug and substance abuse. They want to feel grown up, want to fit in, want to relax and feel good, want to take risks and rebel and want to satisfy their curiosity. Emotional and psychological stress as a factor entails situations that, for whatever reason, lead to loneliness and frustration, boredom, idleness, anxiety, depression, low self esteem/worth and fatigue. The explanation here is that serious problems usually manifest in form of personality disorders, emotional maladjustment, mental retardation and even psychic disturbance.

Other individual-level factors are elf medication, which has become a typical habit among Nigerians partly influenced by the availability of chemists, vendors and many other outlets in that respect. In addition, the integrating period of physiological and psychological self is believed to occur within the age brackets of 10-12; 15-17 or 18 depicting the transition periods between childhood and adolescence or early adulthood stages of development. The periods between primary school to secondary school ages where young ones exhibit some form of youthful exuberance – a "can-do-it" disposition, a feeling of becoming grown up and capable of taking bold decisions without recourse to any parent and/or parental guide. Most of members of the society in such transition stages demonstrate some low level of frustration. The issue of genes and heredity are also critical as far as drug and substance abuse issue is concerned.

Socio-Economic/Structural

This sub-section focuses on issues external to the individual including peer group influence, economic depression, blocked opportunities, poverty, unemployment, occupational demands, availability of drugs/substances, urbanisation, indiscipline, party politics, weak family ties, weak social values, poor parental care, weak government plans/initiatives and media projections and portrayals. The factor on peer influence calls for making reference to

Sutherland's differential association theory, explaining the adage that "birds of the same feather, flock together". When applied to drug/substance use, peer influence can be described as one of the set of external social environmental pressures, which influence experimentation or continuation with drug consumption. Peer influence includes cognitive and situational factors. Cognitive in form of perception of the person's behaviour (modelling) and perceived drug use norms of the peer group while situational segment refers to the direct peer pressure on individual to conform and the importance of socialising and conformity in group.

In addition, economic depression, bustles of city life, desire to achieve success in a competitive world, academic pressure, warped materialistic value system in the society – the craze-to-get-rich quick syndrome and profit maximisation are critical. Blocked opportunities and failure to achieve or attain cultural goals, failure to get job, employment, good education, degree, a wife; admission into a tertiary institution, etc. are highly influential. Poverty is another critical factor affecting the stabilizing roles of parents and capable adults and/or guardians. Rising, and not too well checked, unemployment is alarming and has a significant role in pushing members of the society into drugs and substances. In the same vein, occupational demands push members of the society into drugs/substances, for instance Long Distance Drivers (LDDs), soldiers, students, artists, athletes, truck pushers, brick layers, etc. fall into this category with significant influences. Availability of drugs and substances also play a major factor; this is supported by easy access and acceptability. Physical, economic and social aspects of availability are greatly considered. In this case, Smart's (1984) Availability-Proneness Theory becomes relevant. Urbanisation and party politics involving the unpatriotic use of youth in politics via drugs and weapons becomes detrimental. Other issues are weak family ties, weak social values, weak government plans/initiatives/programmes, government policies e.g., demolition, displacement, ban on Okada, downsizing, retrenchment, unlawful sack reflect a situation of removed stimuli or something of value for survival. Such conditions can lead to compulsive drug/substance use with psychological dependence. Disasters such as flood or fire incidence where things of value are lost also serve as fueling outlets. Media portrayals/projections and the internet; and other group and cultural influences are key factors too.

Youthful exuberance could also be adduced to be a factor for substance abuse in Nigeria. Fareo (2012) had attributed the manifestation of substance abuse among youths to experimental curiosity. He explained that the curiosity

to experiment the unknown fact about illicit substance subsequently result to continuous substance abuse among youths. The first experience in substance abuse produces a state of arousal such as happiness and pleasure which in turn motivate them to continue.

To buttress the fact about the factors responsible for substance abuse, Nalah and Audu (2014) were of the view that a factor responsible to substance abuse among youths is peer group pressure. Karofi (2012) further added that peer group influence is a significant factor because a certain skill is required for the injection of drugs and peers initially play an important role in helping a new recruit to learn the technical skills. The conclusion he arrives is that selective peer group interaction and socialisation comprised the probability that the most powerful factors related to drug usage among youths are imitation and social influence. One major obstacle militating against the control of substance abuse in Nigeria is unemployment. The chronic social disability occasioned by corruption, uncontrolled greed, political instability and a mismanaged economy has impacted negatively on youths, forcing them to exhibit neurotic need for money and power. Many people with selfish motives as manifested by desire to amass wealth and not by any altruism or desire to improve the society are lured into substance use and trafficking. Other factors such as poor parenting, experimentation, dysfunctional family system and faulty moral values have been reported as being responsible for increasing substance use (Abasiubong, Udobang, Idung, Udoh and Jombo, 2014: 55).

Environment level

This factor level examines exposure to poor environmental settings. Specifically, this section emphasises on the influence of the environment in terms of broken homes, school, work place, neighbourhood, and community/ ghetto areas in predisposing members of the society to drugs/substances. Sources of drugs/substances are mostly believed to be found in the lower economic areas such as slums, shops, public transport outlets, etc. Similarly, crime is viewed as a likely a function of neighbourhood dynamics and not necessarily a function of the individuals within neighbourhoods. Furthermore, exposure to environmental settings such as cold-prone areas, weather conditions, riverine areas e.g., Warri, Russia, necessitate taking hot drinks, which makes alcoholism typical over there. Growing up in dis-organised locations with disturbing levels of poverty, divorce, squalor, violence-prone areas, thuggery, hostility, low social control, areas in shambles, ghetto areas stand the high chance of luring members into drugs/substances. The issue of

proneness to drugs/substances reveals that locations, spots, manufacture areas, sale areas, drug dealing corridors, under the bridges, motor stations, etc. remain hot spots with high tendencies for flourishing drug/substance behaviours. A core principle of social disorganisation theory (1942) is that location matters. Unfavourable conditions in communities in form of drop outs, single parent homes, unemployment and other deviant neighbourhood characteristics breed unwanted behaviours – drug/substance abuse inclusive.

Indiscipline and lack of adequate parental care – first line of defence in drug abuse war, conflicts with parents and/or having abusive parents and other family factors have an influence in the use of drugs and substances. Level of parental supervision, the way parents discipline a child, parental conflict or separation, criminal parents or siblings, parental abuse or neglect and the quality of the parent-child relationship are important. Children brought up by lone parent are more likely to abuse drugs and substances than those who live with two biological parents. However, once the attachment a child feels towards their parent(s) and the level of parental supervision are taken into account, children in single parent families are no more likely to abuse substances than others. Conflict between a child's parents is also much more closely linked to substance abuse than being raised by a lone parent. If a child has no parental supervision, they are much more likely to abuse substances. There is a strong correlation between lack of supervision and the abuse of drugs and substances or drug use and delinquency. This also appears to be the most important family influence on delinquency (Erhun and Adeola, 1995).

In explaining factors responsible for drug/substance abuse, Ekpenyong (2012) identified neglect by parents or guardians as a factor responsible for substance abuse among youths. More so, this ideology was supported by Carson, Butcher and Mineka (2000) as they argued that children who are exposed to negative role models early in their lives or experience other negative circumstances such as having parents who are drug addicts, drug traffickers, alcoholics among others may likely engage in substance abuse (Yunusa, 2015).

Similarly, Liddle and Rowe (2006) have identified marital breakdown or divorce among couples as a factor responsible for substance abuse among the youths. They noted that marital breakdown affects the quality of parenting on children and may consequently result in an increased risk of substance abuse among them. They added further that visible change in family structures such as remarriages and cohabitation which is on the increase is also responsible for substance abuse among youths. In addition, Davison, Neale and Kring (2004), Berk (2007) and Mahasoa (2010) have identified factor such as

rapid social changes in the home and environment due to globalisation and urbanisation to also be responsible for substance abuse among youths. They explain further that the society is not only characterised by changes in roles, norms, ideologies and values, but also by rapid technological changes which are used in some daily activities. Similarly, other supporting evidences include the National Centre on Addiction and Substance Abuse (NCASA, 2011); Ekpenyong (2012); and Atoyebi and Atoyebi (2013) explaining that substance abuse among youths is seen to be intrinsically connected to the increasing urbanisation and globalisation.

Also, Yunusa (2015) posit that, being part of a particular environment or society where there is a higher exposure to substance abuse can also increase the likelihood of a person becoming involved in substance abuse. Therefore, Visser and Routledge (2007) argued that, all social contacts such as the availability of substances in an environment needs to be put into consideration in order to understand the causes of substance abuse among youths. Similarly, scholars such as Liddle and Rowe (2006); and Parry and Pithey (2006) have argued this point further by explaining that the degree to which hard drugs and alcoholic beverages are accessible to people affects the amount and pattern of their usage. This is evident in a large number of licensed bottle stores, bars and relaxation spots found in some towns, cities and metropolitan areas.

The Consequences of Drug/Substance Abuse

Drug/substance abuse pose a very big problem in the world today and it is ruining the lives of many millions of people both in adolescent and general population. The problem has spread at a high rate and has penetrated every part of the world. In effect, no society has been spared from the devastating havoc caused by drug and substance abuse. While drug/substance abuse has implications on the socio-economic and political development of a society, it is notable that there are many adverse consequences, which affect the user, immediate family and the entire society. The adverse consequences can be divided into broad categories, namely, social, economic, political, physical, psychological, medical and physiological. Specifically, however, the consequences of drug and substance abuse on the socio-economic and political development of a nation cannot be overemphasised. Socially, the consequences on the user, family and the society or nation are devastating. The preponderance of youth addicts roaming the streets negatively affects the economy as a result of low productivity and shortage of efficient manpower.

Public safety is subverted, as drug addiction is leading to incitement of both sexes to prostitution and criminal behaviour. Drug/substance abuse problem affects the Criminal Justice System (CJS), as more personnel and resources are deployed to handle drug/substance cases. The major destroyer of youth usefulness on this earth is nothing more than the abuse of drugs and other substances. Eze and Omeje (2017:1) strongly believe that no matter the usefulness of drugs, that their harmfulness is more than the usefulness, and that it affects the abuser and the people around him.

Many of today's youth face conflicts that they can barely handle in a very young age. With factors such as modernisation, many social changes have been brought into the society. The issue of broken family, peer pressure, and other pressing issues that would make a youth feel inferior of him/herself are additional factors. Advocates indicate that up to 15% of 16 to 19-year-olds are at risk of never reaching their potential and simply becoming lost in society (Spooner, 2005).

Drugs and substances increase the likelihood of many kinds of criminal activity, because drug-related crime occurs primarily in the form of trafficking-related activity, including violent conflicts among trafficking groups competing for increased market share. As such the scope for crime and violence is enhanced because of the economic opportunities provided to criminal groups by illicit drug markets, as criminals compete for a share of those markets; that, in turn, may have dire consequences for the local community. Rivalries between local drug dealers and traffickers can develop into violent confrontations in and around public places and, as a result, make such places dangerous for the general public. Communities may become dependent on local illicit drug markets that support whole economies. Thus, both are unable and unwilling to challenge the status quo. The authorities themselves may also be in no position to challenge violent drug-related crime in certain communities, as they too are at risk of violence or they have been influenced by corruption and are consequently in a state of inertia (Collins, 1981).

The stress and fear generated by exposure to crime and violence; interfere with the daily lives and normal developmental progress of people particularly young people. For example, their ability to trust and have a sense of personal safety; their ability to develop skills to control their emotions; their freedom to explore the local environment; and their ability to form normal social relationships is being challenged. Thus, the social harm caused to communities by the involvement of both adults and young people in drug-related crime and

violence is immense. The very fabric of society is challenged by the continued presence in communities of drug-related crime.

Drug/substance abuse blocks meaningful use of time, energy and creative thinking and destroys a person's ambition to progress by making him/her hopeless and unproductive; thereby robbing the nation off. These serious facts notwithstanding, various research reports have confirmed that Nigerian youths in both urban and rural areas and of different socio-economic backgrounds have indulged in the use and abuse of dangerous and illicit drugs/substances. When this fact is viewed against the background that youths are often larger in number as compared to other age groups in any society, there is much cause for alarm and concern. Over the years, the indulgence of youths in drug abuse has caused a lot of problems in Nigeria even in higher institutions. A person who is not intoxicated with drug can control himself or herself from quarrel but a drug addict cannot. So when they could not control the drugs in them, crisis will emanate. On the havoc being caused by drug abuse, Sampers (1994:11) lamented thus:

> I invoke the memory of the thousands of young people who, combating or consuming drugs, have lost their lives and also invoke the future of our children who are threatened by drugs and gin. I call on the solidarity of the world to commit ourselves to this formidable challenge of blocking the way to organise crime.

Akah and Akunyili (2003:2) reserves that recreational use of marijuana develops into a chronic pattern of substance abuse. And this abuse leads to a variety of psychological disorders which take an appalling toll on individual well-being, and severally tax treatment facilities. Vandalism, thuggery and gang warfare have also been linked to drug abuse (Dukku, 2010) with the image of the family and the society at large being tarnished through domestic violence, divorce and other related problems. With these problems, individuals, immediate families, nations and/or societies are left robbed, visionless and highly unproductive.

Conclusion

This paper dwells on the phenomenon of drug/substance abuse as a global social problem with devastating socio-economic and political consequences to societies, Nigeria inclusive. The problem has become quite widespread

dramatically, especially among youths in the developing countries where the continuous intake of drugs and substances (even in small quantities) lead to undesirable consequences such that researchers, academics, and policy makers have focused on studying the phenomenon. Relevant concepts reveal more underlying meanings to drug and substance use contexts in Nigeria, making reference to i*nvestigating the types, classifications,* methods and factors. Some drugs/substances put users to sleep while some wake them up. Classifications range from alcohol, tobacco, coffee, hypnotics, sedatives, inhalants, etc.; and opiates cannabis, cocaine, synthetic drugs, hallucinogens, etc. Other differentiations lie on legal and illegal, soft and hard, etc. lines.

The paper unveils causes of and/or factors associated with drug/substance abuse as complex involving many issues some of which are situated or revolve around the individual, some are external to the individual and those situated within the society or the environment where the individual resides. Factors such as modernisation have brought many social changes in the society, the issue of broken family, peer pressure, and other pressing issues propel the youth into consumables.

There is no single theory of drug/substance abuse; socio-psychological theories largely look at the theories that explain what drug/substance abuse is, why people abuse drug/substance and the consequences of drug/substance abuse among the victims. The combination of two or more factors is scientifically considered as responsible for drug/substance abuse behaviour. The contributing factors could be social-cultural, biological, psychological, technological and environmental in nature. No society has been spared from the devastating havoc caused by drug and substance abuse. There are implications on the socio-economic and political development of a society. In other words, there are adverse consequences affecting the user, immediate family and the entire society. The paper further indicates that the adverse consequences can be divided into social, economic, political, physical, psychological, medical and physiological leaving individuals, families, nations and/or societies robbed, visionless and highly unproductive.

Recommendations

1. Communities should identify drug/substance dependence individuals, and refer them to hospitals for treatment. Pushers and sellers are well known by community members; therefore the community can identify them and send them to courts and be

charged for possession of illegal drugs.

2. The Nigerian government at all levels should always be educating the public on the dangers of drug/substance abuse through awareness programmes for the Nigerian youths, etc.
3. Communities, through community-based organisations (CBOs) should invite educators and raise awareness about substances/drugs and their effects especially on socially abused substances such as alcohol and nicotine.
4. Parents should assign adequate time for socialisation of their children in order to impart good morals, ethics and ideals.
5. Drug enforcement agents should be empowered with adequate resources to be effective in the fight against drug/substance use and misuse in the societies.
6. Funds should be set aside to translate relevant health information and how to access help; this information should include information on drug/substance abuse, family violence, early child care, nutrition, and navigating the school system.
7. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for Food and Drug Abuse Control (NAFDAC) and other control groups should not relent in carrying out their responsibilities on drug/substance abuse in order to make Nigeria a drug/substance abuse free society with a special focus on the Nigerian youths as the future leaders of the great country.
8. The Nigerian government as a whole should always be educating the public on the dangers of drug/substance abuse through awareness programmes for the Nigerian youths, etc.
9. Adults and those in position of authority should not stereotype "drug" and "users".
10. Drug/substance users should not form the pool of our social outcast. They should be allowed the freedom to express their views regardless of what they are, and to debate these views with others. The ultimate aim is to assist them to drop the habit and this can be achieved by sound education on the negative effects of drug/substance abuse on psychological, social, physical, emotional and moral development of the individual.

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SECTION 7: BOOK REVIEW

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ENTRY: THE ROOT CAUSE OF HERDER–FARMER CRISIS IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

BY
OBODO, NNEAMAKA IJIE, PhD*

Book Title: The Root Cause of Herder–farmer Crisis in North Central Nigeria

Authors: Plangshak Musa Suchi PhD & Sallek Yaks Musa PhD

Publisher: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung; West Africa Sotrac-Mermoz Villa Dakar Senegal

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Summary of Contents

The main purpose of this book, as Suchi & Musa explain, is to unravel the root cause of the crisis between farmers and herders in North Central Nigeria (p. 2). Though the herder–farmer crisis as opined by the authors is an age-old phenomenon that is rampant in African societies but its frequency in North Central Nigeria has persisted and taken a violent dimension (p. 1). The crisis has become widespread with recorded incidences across the six geo-political zones of the country (p. 3). The North Central zone is particularly hit by increasingly herders attack on farming communities which has culminated into a crisis with adverse consequences for security of the region (p. 3). This has led to the destruction of lives, property and human displacement (p. 1).

As a result of this, Fulani herdsmen militias have been ranked among the three most deadly terrorist groups by the Global Terrorism Index in 2017 (p. 3). The dominant picture of the crisis as portrayed in literature is that of violent attacks often in form of a guerrilla style community invasion by Fulani herdsmen on unsuspecting farming communities. In recent years, there has been a deliberate targeting of farm produces either using animals to trample and encroach on the land or using direct labour to destroy cultivated crops with machetes and sticks while the villagers are asleep (p. 6) as stated by the authors. This has not always been the case between the warring groups as it could be traced that they once experienced a relatively peaceful and symbiotic relationship (p. 1). Herders were allowed to graze their animals and settle often in allocated area of land provided by local communities while the cow

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dung is given to farmers and if conflict ensued, traditional authorities were able to resolve it.

The authors believe that there is no general consensus as to stating the real reasons for the crisis even though opinions like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and the Right of Residence and Establishment in 1979 which Nigeria is a signatory to has enhanced/given right to the free movement of herders to the North Central zone (p. 2). This in essence is attributed as a speculation which has foremost caused the crisis between farmers and herders. Also, without taking into considerations human and housing growth and development and the probable eroding of grazing routes, is seen as a contributory cause. The authors also noted that from media reports there were accusations and counter-opinions that the effect of global warming has caused resource scarcity leading to a search for greener pastures by the herders hence, a crisis. Other speculations include; border porosity and ineffective border control, exploitation of identity mainly religion and ethnicity for political purposes.

The impacts of the crisis as reviewed by the authors in literature includes; heightened fear of people in affected communities thus hindering their social, economic and political activities, loss of crops and cattle and movements of people are restricted (p. 10). There are also reports of disturbing pattern of failure on the part of security forces to protect people from vicious and deadly attacks by armed groups (p. 15). The impacts of the crisis have led Nigerians to wonder about the responses of the government. As opined by the authors the President Muhammadu Buhari government has attempted to implement and institutionalise the Ruga grazing system across the federation in a bid to resolve the crisis. But this has resulted in heated debates in the country (p. 4).

Notwithstanding the glaring causes, Suchi & Musa sought to know the root cause as the causes stated above are seen as either assumptions or surface causes of the crisis between herder–farmer in North Central Nigeria. The book is segmented into the introduction; background and research questions, literature review and theoretical framework, methodology, results and discussion and finally, policy implication and conclusion.

Critical Evaluation

This is a research study aims at understanding the root cause of the crisis between farmers and herders in north central Nigeria. The theoretical framework hinges on resource scarcity theory but no information was given as

to who propounded the theory, its strengths or weaknesses if any. By doing so, it avails the readers the opportunity to further understand the theory better. Then, the authors delved into rural banditry and explained that it is tied to incessant conflict between farmers and herders (p. 17). In addition, they argued that the crisis between the farmers and the herders cannot be understood outside the underlying sociopolitical and economic structures of inequality and injustice in the Nigerian society (p. 17). Also stating that the Fulani tribe was elevated politically above other ethnic minorities in the North Central region during precolonial times leading to legacies of injustice in post-colonial era which birthed the development strategies adopted by the political elites today (p. 17).

Basing the arguments to explaining the theory using identity issues dividing the people along ethnic lines is somewhat perceived as a deviation from the original focus of explaining the crisis using resource scarcity or eco-violence theory as earlier stated as the theory adopted for the study. Instead, the authors would have explained the identity crisis issues of the contending parties by incorporating another theory that best explains real or imagined threats of a group using theories like identity or integrated threat theory. This in essence takes care of the identity component of the culture, tradition or beliefs of the tribe or ethnic group while the resource scarcity or eco-violence theory takes care of the climate change issues leading to resource scarcity, thus a movement towards north central Nigeria resulting into a crisis between the warring parties. The authors failed to also explain the relevance of the theory adopted to the study.

The methodology used in the study was appropriate. The population and sampling used was appropriate also as they were able to justify the reasons for their selection. The results and discussion were to answer the research questions bothering on the root cause of farmers and herders crisis in north central Nigeria. The first research question was to understand the nature and pattern of the herder–farmer crisis in north central Nigeria. For Benue state, respondents largely agreed that the farmers and Fulani herders have enjoyed mutual beneficial relationship in times past but currently the relationship has not been sustained. As opined by one of the respondents:

'before now Fulani were able to sleep in our homes but now, he cannot trust even his Fulani friends and if I must sit with them, there must be security because I do not know if they are carrying something in their pocket to kill me' (p. 34).

In a contrast opinion, it is believed that the reason for a cordial relationship

at the time was because the respondent perceived that the Fulani herders that came to Benue state in the early 70s came with an intention. The intention to expand their territory as believed by Usman Danfodio as part of the Sokoto Caliphate. For the respondent, the inability to capture Tiv or Jukun kingdom made them to return to dwell amongst the people to better understand them in order to rehash a revenge (p. 34). The authors did not give an opinion summary after listening to the interviewees. In Guma Local Government of Benue State, a representative of the Muslim community was interviewed to understand the frequent disputed between farmers and herders and the participant explained that the peak of the crisis was in 2014 as the killings were massive and widespread (p. 36). The authors summarily opined that the immediate cause of the crisis in some parts of Benue state was a result of the killing of the Fulani Ardo in a border community of Akweku which escalated to remote communities in Agatu (p. 39). However, the reviewer observed that no interview was conducted with any Fulani respondent. Reasons for not conducting interviews with them was not provided by the authors.

In Nasarawa state, the responses gotten is similar to that of Benue state but the Doma people expressed that rarely retaliated as they believe that they are peace loving and also, if a retaliation occurred the Doma people will suffer more as 75% of the people are famers (p. 40). On the other hand, a key informant interview conducted with the Fulani Ardo in Doma revealed that the rampant destruction of farm crops in Doma is due to lack of adequate grazing routes (p. 40). He stated that:

if we have grazing routes where our cattle can pass to get green pastures and drinking water, the problem of crop destruction will be abated. Sometimes, the conflict manifests because of ethnicity as the farmers easily feel offended with the herders in the bush and when they display aggression on the Fulani herder, if he is a bit strong, he will retaliate thereby leading to escalation of violence (p. 42).

In Keana community in Nasarawa, the Fulani representative pointed that the farmers were the primary aggressors (p. 45) as the MACBAN chairman had often stated in series of meetings with security agencies, traditional rulers, community leaders and an NGO, Search for Common Grounds that in most of the crisis, the farmers were always the first to attack them except it was a revenge attack from his people (p. 45). In concluding the reports from Nasarawa on the nature and pattern of the crisis, the authors feel that the unfortunate state of the crisis should be properly investigated while it is

useful to consider the impact of the implementation of the anti-open grazing law in Benue state on the relationship between the warring parties in border communities of Nasarawa state (p. 45). In Miango community, Plateau State, there is a serious hostility between the farmers and herders as stated in the book (p. 48). Several interviews were conducted in Bassa, Miango community with many respondents who focused more on the damages done by the Fulani herders (p. 46, 47 & 48) but only one interview was conducted with a representative of the Fulani herders (p 48) to ascertain their view on the subject matter. In Roboil community in Plateau State, the Chairman of MACBAN was interviewed (p.52).

Answering the research question on the causes of the crisis, it was observed that similar responses were offered by respondents in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State in the nature/pattern of the crisis in north central Nigeria. To this effect, it would have been appropriate to have respondents answer the causes or nature and not both to avoid the repetition that was done. The section of the book called discussion (p. 95) was not necessary as the authors had already started discussion by interrogating and analysing the responses from participants in the results. It would have made more sense if every discussion was incorporated at the end of each result's analysis from study locations. The chapter which discussed the policy implications was a good initiative but the preceding chapter which was to analyse the research question on what the responses of the government have been on the crisis in affected communities was not conducted (p. 2). It is on this basis that the policy implications would have been derived from.

Gap in the study

The impact of the crisis which can be described as the aftermath, was analysed very briefly. The authors instead summarised the impact without availing the readers inputs from respondents (p. 96) as one of the research questions intended to be answered was the impact of the herder–farmer crisis on the socio-economic development of the North Central zone (p. 2). The impact of the crisis is a very important aspect of the book that was given little attention.

The gender implication of the aftermath of the causes of the herder–farmer crisis in Northern Nigeria as posited by other authors with related topics include;

It was observed that violent clashes between farmers and herders are

largely viewed as attacks perpetrated by male aggressors while women and children are categorised as vulnerable groups who are caught up in a vicious web of violence. According to Harnischfeger (2008), this further shows that women are mostly visualized as victims who bear the brunt of the violent but failed to recognise that there are some women who are stakeholders in the agriculture sector and are likely to share the grievances and concerns of male farmers and herders. Ademola-Adelehin, Donli, Achakpa, Osakwe, Suleiman (2018) further buttressed this opinion by categorising women's involvement in the violent conflict between farmers and herders to include women as primary parties and direct actors in the conflict, women as secondary parties that are interested in the outcomes and women as shadow parties that work behind the scene to influence the dynamics of the conflict. For Ademola-Adelehin et al (2018), the impacts of the farmers and herders conflict in the North were classified into social and economic. The social impacts are as follows;

The loss of family members and relations represent one of the most traumatic experiences of women in famer-herder conflicts as it disrupts the family structure. Corroborating this, Mubi (2018) opined that the loss a psycho-social impact and the experience can lead to trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder that manifests in poor mental and physical health, reduced quality resulting in difficulties to manage work and family life. Ademola-Adelehin added that the effects from this experience is often repeated as a cycle from one generation to another thus branding themselves as victims which leads to an aggressor cycle of good and evil narratives. More so, the sudden loss of a husband creates a vacuum in the family and subjects a woman to become breadwinners unprepared. This additional role they take on tends to lead them to poverty and dependence especially when they lack skills, experience and support system.

It is also largely believed that displacement and dislocation of families occur when the conflict between farmers and herder occur. As a result, people are forced to leave their homes to seek refuge with friends and families or in worst cases move to temporary camps for internally displaced persons. Forced displacements in a way creates other problems like destruction of normal patterns of living, poverty and worsened economic status. Most importantly as a social impact, there is a breakdown in the relations between farming and herding communities. Though, the conflict would have de-escalated, there still exists a breakdown of mutual trust. This is evident in the once jointly celebrated ceremonies of pastoralists and farmers women, intercultural festivities like

funyenng ceremony formerly practiced by Taroka and Fulanis in Plateau, communal farming (gaiya) activities and also the reluctance to communicate in the language of the other group for fear of being mistaken as members of the opposing group (Ademola-Adelehin 2018).

Concerns were also raised about increased fear and high sense of insecurity by communities in Plateau as the fear weaken the resilient capacity of the people in the communities because of alleged proliferation of small and light weapons being carried by farmers and herders. Young people in such communities serve as ethnic defenders. The conflict also resulted to the destruction of the means of livelihood as farmlands were deserted due to insecurity and fear of attacks by armed groups (Mubi 2018). The reduced access to farms, theft, destruction of farms, killing of animals and reduction in sales of farm produce negatively impacted on the economic activities and livelihood of women.

Women have weak capacity for economic resilience as women and children who they depend on for labour are forced to find alternative means of livelihood like begging for alms, domestic helps while children are made to hawk or work as labourers on farms with others doing menial jobs. This in turn has increased the level of vulnerability of children as some are maltreated, some are used for transactional sex and drug abuse. This results to some of these women and children incurring sexually transmitted diseases. Thus, women and children were badly affected. Women also involved themselves in prostitution in order to feed themselves and their children. In most cases, they suffer various forms of sexual and gender-based violence in the course of prostitution (WANEP 2020).

On the side of herders, milk and butter were always given to women and children which they are sold to meet their daily need but the persistent crisis has reduced the quantity of dairy products thereby affecting their income (Centre for Democracy and Development, 2021). The cattle are not producing milk adequately because of less food consumption, they are chased by farmers because they encroach into farmlands and some are inflicted with diseases. This has made the women associated with the herder to have less milk to sell resulting to some begging or stay at home idle.

The conflict has resulted to a reduced visitation to markets that are far from the affected communities as these markets are described as 'bush markets' where things are bought at cheaper rates. However, people have begun to visit such markets for fear of being ambushed, attacked and raped while farmlands

that are located in far areas are also becoming deserted as the farmers fear for their lives. The crisis has left many as widows/widowers and children as orphans which results in increasing the number of beggars in rural and urban centres (Centre for Democracy and Development, 2021).

Crops are damaged by cattle as a result of land encroachment leading to reduction in the output and income of farmers and as a result of this, the farmers or community members engage in reprisal attacks by stealing cattle or killing Fulani herders or community members. This in the long run results to an increase in food/meat prices. Other socio-economic implications on both genders include loss of produce in storage leading to food scarcity and/or food insecurity.

Observations and Conclusion

Given the current state of knowledge as regards farmers/herders crisis in North Central Nigeria, the book provided precise answers on the root causes of the crisis. It was able to distinctively identify the drivers of the crisis between the farmers and herders. However, the book failed to answer other research questions. It was also observed that there were more respondents other than the Fulani herders. It gives a form of bias in the analysis. The book partly achieved its objectives as the major goal to unravel the root causes of the crisis was achieved.

In comparison to books with similar titles published about the same year like 'Increasing farmer-herders conflict in Nigeria: an assessment of the clashes between the Fulani Herdsmen and Indigenous Farmers in Ukpabi-Nimbo Community in Enugu State by Akerjiir, A.S' and 'Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Western Zone of Bauchi State Nigeria by Garba, M, Usman, H &

Salawu, J.A' amongst other books, the root cause of herder–farmer crisis in North Central Nigeria has shown its relevance to the scope of deliberations centred around farmers and herders. It is also an added knowledge to literature though the authors in some pages expressed their writings in journalistic forms.

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BOOK REVIEW

Title of Text: *The Root Cause of Farmers-Herders Crisis in North Central Nigeria***.**

Authors: Plangshak Musa Suchi and Sallek Yaks Musa
Publisher: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung
Place of Publication: Jos
Date of Publication: March, 2022
Number of Chapters: Five
Number of Pages: 128 (including Preliminaries, References, Appendices, Table of Contents and List of tables)

Reviewer: Dr. Isaac Otegwu, Department of Political Science and Diplomacy, Veritas University, Bwari, Abuja.

Introduction

The book was published by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung in March, 2022. The back cover of the book presents an image of a dry, deserted and devastated area depicting the consequence of protracted crisis. The book comprises 8 chapters spanning 128 pages including the executive summary, references, appendices, table of contents and list of tables. The authors Plangshak Musa Suchi and Sallek Yaks Musa are lecturers in the Department of Sociology, University of Jos and in view of the fact that the subject under investigation can be classified under Rural Sociology, they are professionally qualified to have conducted the research and written the book.

Summary of the Chapters

In chapter one the authors introduced the subject matter of the book and asserted that conflict between farmers and herders is an age old phenomenon which characterizes interactions between farmers and herders in various African societies. They rightly pointed out that in recent years, the conflict has assumed a violent dimension in various parts of Nigeria. As far as the North Central part of Nigeria is concerned (the region which has recorded the highest incidences of the deaths and attacks), the authors noted that several communities are embroiled in a perennial cycle of violence between the nomads and farmers culminating in crisis situations. The huge toll recorded from incidences of deaths and attacks in North Central Nigeria particularly Plateau, Nasarawa and Benue states in their position makes the crisis deadlier than the Boko Haram insurgency in North East Nigeria.

The authors however asserted that this cycle of violence has not always characterized inter group relations between herders and farmers. It is on record that these groups once had relatively cordial relations. Plangshak and Sallek opined that herders were in times past permitted to settle in areas mostly allocated to them by local communities and that they had cooperative relationships with locals. In the event of pockets of conflicts, traditional authorities often played a mediatory role thereby enhancing peaceful coexistence among the farming communities and their hosts.

The authors also averred that recent draught and desertification occasioned by the impact of global warming has culminated in an increase in movement of herders southward in search of pasture for their herds due to resource scarcity. This southward movement according to studies identified by the authors, engender farmland encroachment and inevitably generates conflicts. The authors also mentioned population growth and poor town planning, porous borders and ineffective border control etc as possible factors in the escalation of conflicts between farming communities and herders. It is on this note that the research sought to unravel the root causes of violence between groups that once enjoyed peaceful, cooperative and harmonious relationships.

In the second chapter Plangshak and Sallek carried out a review of relevant literature and theoretical framework. They noted that the escalating herders' attacks on farming communities in the North Central zone and the country at large which has assumed worrying dimensions, has led to the ranking of the Fulani herdsmen militias among the three most deadly terrorist groups by the Global Terrorism index of 2017 (factual error, the Fulani has long before this period been classified as the third deadliest terrorist group in the world). This has been captured in several research works before now.

The literature review was specifically conducted under various sub themes including; Historical Relations between Farmers and Herders, Nature and Pattern of Framers-Herders Crisis, Causes of Farmers-Herders Crisis, Impact of Farmers-Herders Crisis and Responses to Farmers-Herders Crisis.

In the first instance the authors reiterated the fact that the violent nature of farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria has not always been so. In their view these groups have a long history of interpersonal and inter group relationship. Having been given portions of land to settle on by farming communities, herders would move their herds for grazing and return with them at the end of each grazing day until the end of the raining season when they would migrate again. This mutually accepted remained peaceful. The herders were

also noted to be respectful of the culture and traditions of the hosts with very few or no serious cases of gross violation of the customs, norms and values of host communities.

Secondly, the violent confrontation between these groups is a recent phenomenon. The authors noted that the conflicts as portrayed assume a violent character often in the form of guerilla invasion by the herders on the local communities. These attacks are often carried out late at night or in the wee hours of the morning when majority of the people were fast asleep. Some communities were often served threats and advance warning. In some other cases there are deliberate targeting of farmlands where animals are used to encroach and trample upon farmlands thereby destroying crops. The authors also reported that herders wielded sophisticated and small and light weapons and ammunitions like AK-47 riffles, cartridge dane guns, pump action gun etc in the region while grazing their animals. Eventhough the herders claim that such weapons are for self defence against Cattle rustlers, the authors posited that experience reveals that they carry these weapons not for self defence as claimed but for attacks on innocent people.

In the third instance, Plangshak and Sallek with hindsight from various studies identified many factors which cause farmers-herders crisis. Some of these factors include resource scarcity as well as long running competition specifically over land and water resources between the herders and farmers. Other studies according to the authors ascribe the crisis to more to intense competition over scarce economic resources mainly crop and grazing land, freshwater and forest damaged by the negative effects of climate change and rapid population growth rather than other factors like identity struggle, local politics and manipulation of ethnicity and religion. The authors averred further that even though competition over scarce resources is a contributory factor, this is facilitated by a lack of an effective state control policy on land usage, weak state capacity and corruption in the administrative and law enforcement apparatuses.

Fourthly Plangshak and Sallek underscored the fact that the impact of the crisis between herders and farmers has of late assumed a multifaceted and multidimensional dimension. They lamented that aside from the loss of several lives and goods like crops and cattle which engender food insecurity in the region, the crisis also heightens insecurity among the people thereby militating against social, economic and political activities in the affected local communities. They reported that commercial activities have been at

their lowest ebb in some communities in the affected states of Plateau, Benue and Nasarawa. In many communities farmers no longer go to farms due to fear of being killed or abducted by the rampaging herders. In many other communities, the crisis has resulted in displacement of communities and loss of lives and livelihoods. The authors therefore deplored the fact that the impact of the crisis in terms of loss of lives, property, livelihoods and internal displacement has been colossal.

Lastly the authors acknowledged the efforts of the Muhammadu Buhari led government to implement and institutionalize the RUGA grazing system across the country. This they noted has been viewed with contempt and generated heated debate as citizens view it as an attempt to seize lands and hand them over to the Fulani herders. Therefore evidence abound from this scenario that there is a general distrust for the government. The authors also brought to the fore the impression that there is apparently a lack of political will by the government to contain the spate of violence ensuing between herders and farmers. Moreover, the security agencies have also been indicted for not demonstrating adequate response mechanisms to contain the attacks on local farming communities. They provided numerous instances where the security forces either failed to or were hesitant in responding to distress calls by communities under attacks. These and the apparent security negligence reveal the general lack of will by effectively control security forces to ensure that they are held accountable for their failure to protect the local communities against the invading herders.

Plangshak and Sallek also asserted that various theoretical perspectives abound in the explanation of herders-farmers crisis in Nigeria. Some of the theoretical perspectives provided by Plangshak and Sallek include securitization, fulanisation and sedentarisation.

In their view, the securitization perspective involve statements, articulation and representations which hold the position that herders are a threat due to the fact that they use weapons and their conflict with farmers is often fatal resulting harm on farming communities. With regards to the fulanisation thesis the authors attempted to describe the herders as an objective threat to farmers and ethnic and religious values in Nigeria. They noted that the fulanisation perspective tend to link pastoralism with islamization and terrorism to produce a compelling regime of truth even when it is known that not all fulanis in Nigeria are pastoralists or Muslims while again, many members of farming communities are pastoralists and Muslims. The Sedentarisation position lastly

views herders and their herds as subjects and objects to be secured.

Plangshak and Sallek briefly made reference to the resource scarcity theory as enunciated by Homer-Dixon (1999) where it is posited that environmental scarcity can contribute to civil violence, including insurgencies and ethnic clashes. They were however not explicit in establishing the nexus between resource scarcity and the clashes between herders and farmers. They also failed to specifically and clearly state the theoretical foundation upon which the research was situated.

In the third chapter the authors discussed the methodology used in generating data for the study. The research design adopted was the social constructionist ontology and the interpretivist epistemology. The study in their view was designed along the case study and qualitative research strategy. The rationale behind the choice of this design was its suitability in explaining the topic under investigation.

The authors further gave a detailed geographical description of the study area while noting that the region possesses enormous natural resources, agricultural farmlands and that the land is conducive for agricultural activities. Thus agriculture is the major means of livelihood by most rural dwellers in the region. They also noted that the North Central Zone is the most ethnically diverse region of Nigeria as it is home to the numerous ethnic groups that contribute to the over 370 ethnic groups in the country.

As far as population and sampling are concerned, the authors noted that various groups including women, men, youth groups at community levels, traditional rulers, religious leaders, ethnic groups, occupational or livelihood groups, local government authorities and security agencies in the states make up the study population. These in the authors' views were drawn from two (2) purposively selected Local Government Areas.

The data collection methods as stated by the authors hinged on In Depth Interviews (IDI) with the respondents and Key Informant Interviews (KII). They noted that Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was avoided because of the sensitivity of the subject, the likelihood of participants not providing critical information among others. Therefore, primary data obtained was complemented by secondary data obtained from various published texts like previous research, government commissioned reports etc.

With regards to the data analysis techniques, transcription and translation was done to the KIIs while data was analysed using thematic and exploratory method of data analysis.

The fourth chapter comprised of results and discussion. The authors discussed the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of communities in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau states. Under Benue state, they selected Mbawa Community of Guma Local Government Area and Usha Community of Agatu Local Government Area. In Nasarawa state, the authors identified Doma and Keana Local Government Areas. While in Plateau state they selected Miango Community in Bassa Local Government Area as well as Taragol Community of Bokkos Local Government Area.

The authors also examined the nature and pattern of the farmers-herders crisis in the various communities and Local Government Areas of the three states selected. Based on the IDIs and KIIs conducted, their research corroborated extant literature which averred that the herders and farming communities had historically enjoyed peaceful, mutually beneficial and harmonious relationships. However, in the present times crisis between these groups largely manifest in forms of dispute over crop destruction by the herders, systematic rustling of cattle belonging to n on fulanis, targeted killings, kidnapping and other criminal activities associated with the crisis.

Furthermore, the authors discussed the causes of the farmers-herders crisis in North Central Nigeria using the communities and Local Government Areas in the selected states. Some of the causes as identified in extant literature include competition over scarce economic resources particularly arable land and fresh water for crop production and cattle grazing. Other factors identified by the respondents are religious intolerance and ethnic differences, inadequate grazing routes. The authors consequently averred that crisis between the herders and farmers is caused by a multiplicity of intertwined socio-economic and political factors which are anchored in the social structure of the Nigerian society as well as the character of the Nigerian state. They noted that while farming communities considered most of the crop destructions as acts of mischief on the part of the herders, the herders in turn blamed it on the blocking of grazing routes and in some cases lack of adequate grazing routes.

Another factor which the authors found in the survey was the involvement of under aged Fulani herders in herding cattle. They noted that instances of grazing by under aged herders who often operate under the influence of drugs were found to be common across the three state surveyed.

The study thus adds a voice to extant research which situated the root cause of the crisis within the social structure of the society than on environmental factors. It is on the strength of this finding that the authors opined that there is

something the state and actors in the society can do to improve the situation here and now and end the crisis between herders and farmers not only in the North Central both in Nigeria as a whole.

In the concluding chapter the authors presented certain recommendations. These were directed to the Federal Government, State and Local Governments and Civil Society and Non Governmental Organisations. To the federal government, the authors first of all lamented that response is generally assessed as reactionary and ineffective and so recommended among others the need to address the underlying socio-economic and political factors associated with the crisis as well assisting the victims of the crisis with various humanitarian aid and security and safety measures from further attacks. States and local governments were acknowledged to have taken certain steps towards addressing the scourge but these have largely been ineffective. Therefore they were called upon to device a coordinated and collaborative approach involving all state Governors in the region to address the crisis. Mediated and promotion if peace, tolerance and understanding were noted to be key in this regard. For the Civil Society and Non Governmental Organizations, efforts so far made to curtail the crisis have not translated into lasting peace, therefore they were called upon to channel their efforts towards addressing the root cause in a coordinated manner. The equipment of existing community peace volunteers was underscored. This should be complemented with early warning and early response training for the community peace vanguards.

In conclusion the authors observed that the root cause of the crisis in North central region is deeply seated within the social structure of the Nigerian society and the character of the Nigerian state.

General Remarks

It must be pointed out at this juncture that the back cover of the text does not aptly capture its content. I am of the view that the back cover should have captured picture(s) or scenario depicting the topic of the text being farmers-herders clashes and not what appears vague conveying no meaning or relationship to the topic. Furthermore, the title of the book should capture "causes" and not "cause" since there are several causes of the conflict which the study set out to unravel.

Furthermore, porous borders was mentioned albeit in passing in chapter one. I expected that they would have carried out a detailed analysis of this factor in the discussion chapter, but that was not done. It is on record that there

are more than one thousand illegal entry points and borders which are mostly poorly manned or unmanned altogether. These entry points are used by illegal aliens to find their way into the country with small arms and light weapons for the purpose of committing atrocity in the country. This is a crucial factor in the farmers-herders conflicts which the authors should have elaborated upon.

Even though the book set out to identify the root causes of farmers-herder conflicts in the North Central region, I humbly submit that there is a need for them to have analysed the food, human and national security implications of the crisis. This would have laid a sufficient basis for their recommendations. With respect to food security implications, it is a fact that the recurring violence between herders and farmers has negative implications for food security. In many communities in the country and the North Central in particular, faming activities have been significantly hampered due to fear of imminent attacks on the famers. Consequently many farmers are unable to go to their farms because of fear. The result of this trend is the resultant food scarcity. It is on record that in most North Central states several hectares of farmland across many local government areas remain uncultivated, as intimidated farmers stayed away from their farms. These disruptions have impoverished farmers and herders alike, created food shortages in some communities, and aggravated malnutrition particularly among children.

Furthermore, the emergent food insecurity in the region invariably impact upon human security. Suffice to note at this juncture that human security implies safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression" and "protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life. Therefore the increasing attacks by Fulani herders have led to the destruction of lives and properties, displacement of people from their communities; and a growing numbers of widows; widowers and orphans, who now reside in Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps following the continued attacks of armed herders on both farming and pastoral communities across different areas of the states.

Additionally, the crisis between farmers and herders has consequently made it herculean for Nigeria to internally maintain peace and security talk less of amicably resolving the crisis especially in the affected region. National security has thus been jeopardized.

It is also observed that generally, the book was not subjected to rigorous editorial scrutiny hence the various typographical, grammatical and factual errors contained therein. Some of these errors are identified and provided hereunder.

Typographic/Grammatical/Factual Errors

Page 1 line 6: huma (instead of human) displacement

Page 1 line 31: SeAttled (instead of settled)

Page 5, line1: animal milk is called nono and not fura da nono

Page 5 line 7: to this also is that the herders, not correct

Page 5 line 35: settled "on" and not "in"

Page 6 line 4: Wee hours of the night, not correct. Wee hours mean the early hours of a day, or the period immediately after midnight.

Page 8, line 33: Nigerian English is tailored after the British style so the authors should have used "programmes" instead of "programs"

Page 9, line 14: Poses negative effect "on" and not "for" the other

Page 9 line 16-17: "From another angle, it is possible to argue that whereas competition over scarce resources is a contributory factor" hanging or incorrect

Page 9, line 33: The authors' position that the crisis is also rooted in the Islamization of the Middle Belt is misleading and factually wrong. This is because there are several recorded cases of attacks on predominantly Muslim communities. I also opine that there was and is no attempt at Islamizing the Middle Belt. Therefore the assumption that farmers-Herders crisis can be situated within the Islamization thesis is not tenable in any academic discourse.

Page 9 line 41: "spill over" effect and not "spilled over" effect

Page 15, line 5-6: "Distress calls" and not "call for distress"

Page 15 line 35: "respond to distress calls" and not "respond to calls for distress"

Page 19, line 13: Federal Capital Territory not capitalized

Page 19, line 23: Reliance on 2006 population figures is not apt. There are current authoritative figures that could have been quoted.

Page 22, line 19: "Completely Open" and not "Completely opened"

Page 22, line 23: "Doma LGA was created in 1999 carved out from Plateau state." This is a factual error.

Page 28, line 9-10: "Miyetti (Allah is missing) Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria"

Page 33, lines 24 and 29: "Community" was written instead of "communities"

Page 35, lines16-17: "there is clearly, there is open hostility between…." Clumsy

Page 38, lines 19 and 21: "GweWest" instead of "Gwer West"

Organizational/Structural Errors

In chapter two, the authors reviewed literature according to sub themes including historical relations between farmers and herders, nature and pattern of framers-herders crisis, causes of farmers-herders crisis, impact of farmers-herders crisis and responses to farmers-herders crisis. Consequently the analysis in chapter four should have been tailored or structured in line with these subheadings. This was not done as the fourth chapter did not present or analyse data on impact of farmers-herders crisis and responses to farmers-herders crisis. This is a major structural flaw.

Page 21: Population and Sampling

The restriction to two (2) purposively selected Local Government Areas from each of the Three (3) state is not scientific. The authors could have selected One (1) Local Government Area from each Senatorial District in each state. This would have been more scientific and in accordance with Social Science research standards.

Furthermore, the selection of only twenty four (24) respondents from each state (bringing the total number to 72) is grossly inadequate and not convincing. The opinion of seventy two (72) respondents is in my view not adequate or sufficient enough. Their views cannot aptly account for or serve as basis for analysis of the topic under inquiry. Besides, what statistical instrument or formula was used to arrive at twelve (12) participants from each community/ Local Government Area (not mentioned). This is a major flaw which robs this research of its scientific basis/ foundation.

Page 23: Data Collection Procedure

Most of the information under this sub-heading should have been discussed in the previous sub-topic i.e method of data collection, while others should have come under limitations of the study. Therefore, the data collection procedure heading is not only repetitive but unnecessary. In other words lines1-16 should have been subsumed under item 3.4 while lines 17-28 should have been conveniently captioned "limitations of the study" or "problems encountered in the field".

Page 27: 4.1.2 was captioned "socio-economic and demographic characteristics of communities in Benue state", but 4.1.2.1 which should have been on the local government area under Benue state, rather focused on Doma

local government which is indigenous to Nasarawa state. This is an oversight which the researchers should have been careful to avoid.

In every academic research or report of this nature, the table of contents and list of tables are normally presented in the preliminaries but in this book, they were provided at the tale end of the book. This is at variance with academic writing. It is also noteworthy that the last chapter of an academic report of this nature should have a conclusion before policy recommendations but the authors rather presented the policy recommendations before the conclusion. This in my humble opinion is not correct.

It is observed that the book does not have International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) or International Standard Book Number (ISBN).

There are numerous assertions, claims and facts which the authors provided but were not backed by authoritative sources. There were several of this across the chapters.

Additionally, the referencing was not done in line with the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style. While some dates were presented in brackets, others were not.

Concluding Remarks

Having noted the above, I submit that the book is a commendable effort and thus recommended as a veritable reference material for further research by scholars. It is a must read for policy makers in their search for lasting solutions to the recurrent clashes between farming communities and herders not just in the North Central Zone but Nigeria in general. Security agencies will also find the book informative as useful intelligence can be garnered therefrom to assist in arresting the situation and preventing further crises. Lastly, traditional institutions across affected states who are interested in fostering peaceful coexistence between the aggrieved groups will also benefit from the findings of this research.

ROOT CAUSE OF HERDER–FARMER CRISIS IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA: PEACE AND SECURITY PERSPECTIVES

BY

PROFESSOR OSHITA O. OSHITA*

I. Introduction

Since the emergence of Nigeria as an independent State in 1960, the country has been battling with multifarious challenges of socio-economic and political development, one of which is the relationship between the nomadic Fulani herders of northern Nigeria and the sedentary crop farmers, predominantly of north central Nigeria and the Southern part of the country. At the beginning, contact between the two occupational groups in north central Nigeria was peaceful as they both managed the available resources orderly. As conflicts would always arise wherever people lived, early efforts to address the conflicts between the groups included the creation of Grazing Routes by Local and Regional authorities in Northern Nigeria. The Traditional Leaders, Emirs, Mai-Angwas (Minders of Communities) and Elders were responsible for resolving the conflicts between the crop-producing sedentary farmers and the nomadic Fulani animal herders.

Federal, State and Local Governments in Nigeria at different times set up Committees and Taskforces to address issues relating to the recurring (resource) conflicts between herders and farmers in various parts of Northern Nigeria, and more recently, in other parts of Nigeria and beyond. Conflicts between crop farmers and animal farmers (a.k.a 'farmers and 'herders') have become increasingly widespread and disturbingly violent in Nigeria posing a challenge for individuals, communities, States and the country as a whole. This phenomenon constitutes an obstacle for stakeholders of peace, security and development as it stirs negative sentiments around occupational, cultural, geographic, political and religious dimensions of Nigeria's diversity. What used to be a convivial conversation about access and sharing of scarce resources between Fulani herders and indigenous crop farmers has unfortunately become emotionally-charged inter-ethnic quarrel and violent attacks between previously peaceful occupational groups.

Sixty-two (62) years after, a number of socio-economic, cultural and political dynamics have adversely impacted the relations between the itinerant Fulani animal herders and their hosts, the sedentary farming communities. Due

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to a combination of factors, the conflict is recurrent and persistent, becoming the most volatile occupational and cultural battle in Nigeria. Indeed, this previously ignored inter-group conflict, which was confined to the two occupational groups in the agricultural sector, became so ferocious that some of its elements metamorphosed into bandits and were designated terrorists by the Federal Government of Nigeria in a gazette signed on November 29, 2021, after a court order to that effect in a suit number FHC/ABJ/C's/1370/2021. All of these were done pursuant to Sections 1 and 2 of Nigeria's Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011. The International Crisis Group (ICG), reported that the predominantly Fulani herders and mainly Hausa crop farmers have, over time, mobilised armed groups, 'bandits' and 'vigilantes' respectively, for self-protection (ICG, 2020). In the absence of effective intervention by the government, these streams of self-help platforms, along with the politicization of the conflict gave rise to ***yan sa kai*** (volunteer guards) for the crop farmers and ***yan-bindinga*** (gun owners) for the Fulani herders, thereby exacerbating the conflict into ruthless banditry (ICG Report, 2020, Suchi P.M. and Musa, S.Y. 2021:8).

Plangshak Musa Suchi and Sallek Yaks Musa, both of the Department of Sociology, University of Jos, Nigeria, conducted a Study on the Root Cause of Herder–farmer Crisis in North Central Nigeria, commissioned by the African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL) with the Support of the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung of Germany. Published in 2021, the Scope of the Study covered Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau States in north central Nigeria. The Research involved Seventy-Two (72) interviews with "traditional rulers, community leaders, religious leaders, representatives of local government authority, farmers, herders, security agencies and the civil society across selected affected communities in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau States with a view to understanding the root cause of the herder–farmer crisis in the [North Central] region" (Suchi, P. M. and Musa, S. Y. 2021: P. VII).

The researchers linked the conflict with multiple but interrelated socio-economic and political factors connected with the nature and character of the society and the Nigerian State, with particular focus on Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau States. In the Study, the researchers identified the immediate triggers of the crisis in the Study areas to include, the destruction of food crops by the Fulani herders and/or cattle rustling by other criminal elements. According to the Study, the farmers attributed most of the incidences of crop destructions to the deliberate acts of mischief by the herders due to the increasing use of children for grazing and night grazing, which obstructed visibility. On the other

hand, the Fulani herders blamed the incidences of the conflict on the blocking of the marked grazing routes and diminished grazing areas (Suchi, P.M. and Musa, S.Y. 2021: VII-VIII). The researchers identified other drivers of the herder–farmer crisis in north central Nigeria to include:

1) Scarcity of economic resources, especially arable land and fresh water, which some of the participants associated with explosion in human and animal population; influx of herders, land grabbing by the elites, and expansion of farming activities and cattle grazing;
2) Socio-political marginalisation of ethnic and/or occupational groups especially the marginalisation of Fulani herders in the political affairs of some farming communities, including discriminatory policies;
3) Deeply entrenched ethnic animosity between farming communities and the Fulani herders, which is further associated with cultural tension between the two parties;
4) Religious prejudice and sentiments between the predominantly Christian farmers and the Muslim Fulani dominated herders;
5) Weak security and justice institutions which mostly manifest in poor handling of the cases of crop destruction by security and justice agencies across the communities; and
6) High level of unemployment and endemic poverty in the rural communities (Suchi, P.M. and Musa, S.Y. 2021: p.VIII).

The authors concluded that there was a mix of other propellants of the herder–farmer crisis in north central Nigeria and indeed across other parts of the country. I would be reviewing the Report using the inverted pyramid approach to highlight the peace and security viewpoints of the Study. The main purpose of this review of the report on The Root Cause of Herder–farmer Crisis in north central Nigeria is to examine the Peace and Security Perspectives of the Study with a view to interrogating the implications for Nigeria's Socio-economic and political development. To accomplish this task, I would begin with the clarification of some relevant concepts.

II. Conceptual Clarifications

To promote a common understanding in this discourse, it is necessary to

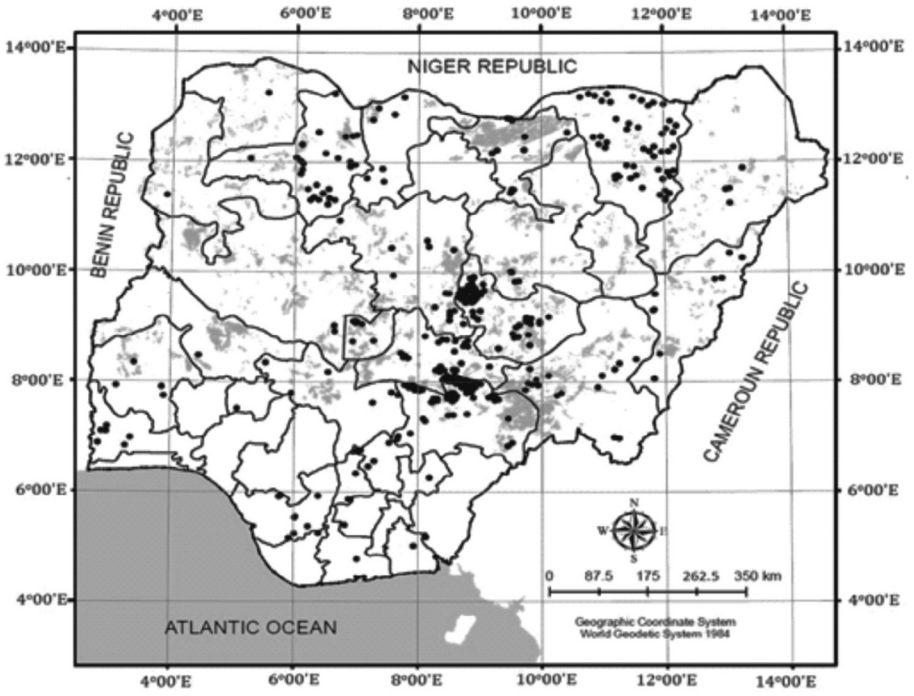
clarify some relevant concepts. In doing so, I have chosen to select some key terms in the broader thematic area for clarification.

- **Herder–farmer Conflict** is understood as the clash between crop farmers and animal farmers in the context of their occupational pursuits. The conflict is primarily about access to resources (land, water, fodder, etc.);
- **Agriculture** is the cultivation and breeding of plants, animals and fungi for food, fibre, biofuel, medicinal plants and other by products used to sustain and enhance human life (ILO, 1999);
- **Development**: this refers to growth, progress, advancement and change in one sector or another;
- **Innovation** can be seen as the application of better solutions that meet new requirements, unarticulated needs, or existing market needs (Maryville, 1999);
- **Science** is knowledge about the structures and behaviour of the natural and physical world, based on facts gotten through observation and experiment;
- **Technology** can be the use of scientific knowledge in practical ways in industry, for example in designing new machines for application in various industrial sectors;
- **Climate Change** is the alteration of weather pattern over a period of time, adversely impacting living and non-living habitat in varying ways across the globe.
- **Urbanisation** is the growth, development or expansion of settlements in previously semi-rural or sub-urban habitat.
- **Transhumance** refers to the cross-border movement of nomadic herders between international boundaries.
- **Desertification** is the phenomenon of the degradation of forested ecosystems through tree-felling, causing the area to become a desert. Human activities including over-grazing could result in desertification.

III. Dynamics of the Herders-Farmers Conflict in Nigeria

Let me seek your permission to begin with a disclaimer. I am aware that many

of us inadvertently belong to one side or the other in this conflict because we are affected, either as individuals or as members of affected groups and communities. I am also aware that, culturally, we are either 'crop farmers' or 'animal farmers' of one kind or the other, small or large-scale. Whichever we turn out to be, by accident or incident, it is my personal view that, the herder–farmer conflict is primarily an economic rather than cultural, ethnic or religious issue. For a combination of reasons, farming activities of all kinds transcend ethnic, religious, geographical or cultural boundaries in ways not easily imaginable.[1] Below is a map showing the geographic spread of the herder–farmer conflict in Nigeria.



Source: Ibrahim Muhammed et al (2015): An assessment of farmer-pastoralist conflict in Nigeria using GIS.

1 In years past it could have been a fact that crop farmers were non-Fulani and that animal farmers (herders) were exclusively Fulani. However, with the expansion of occupational interests, some of the animal farmers today may not be Fulani, while some crop farmers may be Fulani, thus undermining the age-long occupational stereotypes linked with each group.

Beyond the violence that often results from the conflict between crop farmers and pastoralists and the resultant insecurity, the other casualties are the hitherto peaceful human relations and the agricultural economies and development of affected communities. In the win-lose battle that ensues, one thing remains clear – no side ever wins, nor does the conflict get resolved through violent conflict. Rather, all the parties stand to win through dialogue that is focused on win-win **durable solutions.** From my years of experience in the management of conflicts in Nigeria, I have observed that:

1. Violent conflicts between sedentary farmers and pastoralists adversely affect individuals, the communities, Local, State and National economies;
2. There are huge potential economic benefits of peace and amity for the sedentary farmers and herders/pastoralists in the agricultural and socio-cultural economies of Nigeria;
3. Crop and animal farmers often experience the expansion of their businesses with attendant economic benefits from peaceful occupational coexistence that results in phenomenal contribution to the Nigerian economy in terms of production;
4. Public agricultural business education, along with broad-based and inclusive sensitisation and awareness-creation in smart agricultural practices are indispensable in the peaceful resolution of herder–farmer conflict; and
5. Win-win durable solutions to herder–farmer conflict must be based on informed knowledge of the society, including the sensitivities of the affected occupational groups and other stakeholders.

Root-Causes of the Herder–farmer Conflict

Experience shows that there is no single root-cause of the herder–farmer conflict. Rather, there is a mix of root-causes of the conflicts between sedentary farmers and pastoralists at the regional, national and sub-national levels. Such root causes at the various levels include:

(i) Poor Implementation of the ECOWAS Protocols

On the 29th of May, 1979, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) signed a treaty giving Community citizens the right to enter, reside and establish themselves

in the territories of Member States. However, *Paragraph 1* and *2* of *Article 3 of* ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Residence, and Establishment stipulate the documents that must be possessed by anyone under this treaty and the conditions attached to the period of stay.

The ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Regulation on Transhumance between ECOWAS Member States 1998 and the ECOWAS Regulation on Transhumance between ECOWAS Member States 2003 seek to regulate transhumance by ensuring that herd movements are regulated and take place along defined corridors allowed by member states. This is in recognition of transhumance as mode of livestock production to attain self-sufficiency in food production, food security, economic and political stability in the region.

While a number of member countries have been able to regulate the movement of herders in search of pasture upon fulfilling the conditions laid down in the Protocols, Nigeria has been unable to enforce the conditions and the miscellaneous provisions contained therein. A document was designed for nomadic herders, the International Transhumance Certificate (CIT), which could be compared to a passport that facilitates cross-border transhumance for pastoralists and their livestock. The Certificate enables authorities to monitor the herds before they leave the country of origin; to protect human and animal health; to make it possible to inform the host communities of the arrival of transhumance animals. The certificate has details of the composition of the herds, the vaccinations given, the itinerary of the herds, the border posts to be crossed and their final destination. It is common to find the transhumance herders moving through Nigeria without the CIT.

The absence of a clear action plan for livestock breeding and the weak implementation of the ECOWAS Protocols on transhumance in Nigeria encourage impunity among herders thereby instigating violent conflicts. The ECOWAS Strategic Action Plan for the Development and Transformation of Livestock Sector in the ECOWAS Region 2011 - 2020 could be a useful guide for evolving a Comprehensive National Livestock Policy that will be in synchronization with the ECOWAS Plan.

(ii) Demographic factors

Population increase is putting tremendous pressure on land. Population growth means more land is required for cultivation. In many cases, this involves the expansion into transhumant routes and blockage of access to watering points. In addition, areas that had been demarcated and in government gazettes are also facing increasing pressure due to population growth and demands for

farmlands. Thus, when herders attempt to water and graze their cattle, they often trample on crops and destroy the huge investment by crop farmers.

Urbanisation has also increased road networks and other industrial developments. In different parts of Nigeria, urbanisation has taken the bulk of the traditional pastoral grazing land and stock routes. Rapid urbanisation and population growth have resulted in the construction of mega farms, housing estates, airports, schools, roads, among many others, on otherwise grazing areas thereby constricting the total land space available for grazing the increasing population of animals. Older generations of pastoralists used these routes, traversing them with their families, especially the young, who in turn maintain good memory and transmit the course of the routes to the subsequent generation. As urbanisation sets in, these routes are blocked with either farms or other constructions thereby denying pastoralists a thoroughfare. The pastoralists on reaching these blocked points often search for alternative 'routes' to bye-pass the blockages. Clashes erupt between farmers and pastoralists as a result of blockage of the routes.

(iii) Demarcation and Gazette of Grazing Reserves and Stock Routes

In Nigeria like in many other countries, animals moved on defined pathways known as stock routes prior to independence. At independence, the grazing routes were divided into:

(a) **Primary routes (transnational)** - international routes passing through other countries into Nigeria through the States boundaries of North Western, North Central and north eastern axes, through other States in Nigeria, and entering other countries such as Benin, Niger, Chad and Cameroon;

(b) **Secondary Routes** - these are routes that begin and terminate within a State in Nigeria; and

(c) **Tertiary routes**-these routes are within a local government; they are routes within a local community where animals from a community go for grazing and drinking of water.

In the 1960s, grazing areas were created by the government of Northern Nigeria. The National Livestock Development Project (NLDP) under the Federal Ministry of Agriculture had documented about 415 grazing reserves in Nigeria exclusively carved out for grazing and subsistence farming. Lack of demarcation and gazetting had made most of the grazing reserves to diminish.

Out of the over 20,000km of Primary Stock Routes identified in Nigeria, the Federal Government through the National Livestock Development Project (NLDP), in collaboration with a few States, has surveyed and demarcated over 13,260km nationwide. However, many States were unable to gazette these routes for a number of reasons. It is only when these routes are gazetted that they have the legal backing stipulating punitive measures for encroachment.

(iv) Inadequate Development of Grazing Reserves

Grazing Reserves are common property earmarked for settlement and utilisation of feed and water resources by all livestock producers. While records indicate that there are about 415 grazing reserves spread across Nigeria, the exact number that have been fully established could not be ascertained. It is further noted that the few that exist have been encroached upon. Furthermore, the few that exist do not have requisite infrastructure such as boreholes, earth-dams, clinics, and pasture among others. While these reserves are owned by the state governments, most do not invest in them. The primary structure responsible for coordinating the development and management of grazing reserves and stock routes at the state level are ineffective. The policy committees on grazing reserves and stock routes in the states comprising stakeholders across ministries and security agencies to articulate development strategies and mitigate conflicts are dysfunctional.

The Federal Government has been the main developer of these reserves, primarily through the construction of pasture, earth-dams, boreholes, livestock service centres, access roads, clinics, amongst others. Key Development Institutions such as the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have supported grazing reserves development. Despite the intervention of these institutions, the inadequate facilities in the reserves have made pastoralists to continue to wander without limits in search of pasture and water.

(v) Declining Efficiency of Traditional Conflict Management Mechanisms

Conflicts between pastoralist and sedentary farmers have existed as a common feature of economic livelihoods in the country. The conflicts were contained by customary institutions that were functioning following the principle of reciprocity and resolutions which were found within the confines of the local communities. These institutions have become weakened due to the non-integration of traditional institutions in the security architecture of the country. In the past, the traditional rulers were custodians of the grazing

routes. They demarcate, protect and adjudicate on the matters of stock routes. With the enactment of the Land Use Act of 1978, this important schedule has been eroded from the traditional rulers, who are the people on ground and on whose lands these routes exist. The exclusion of traditional rulers and the consequent diminishing role of the traditional institution have exposed the routes to encroachment and blockages, thus minimising the opportunity for the peaceful resolution of conflicts by traditional authorities.

There were also people known as Stock Routes Guards within local communities. These were people appointed by the traditional rulers as custodians of the stock routes. They monitored encroachments, blockages and even the movement of livestock for the traditional ruler who in turn reports same to his superiors. At present, the use of Stock Routes Guards dedicated to monitoring livestock routes at the local level is not optimised. The conflicts over land use especially between sedentary farmers and herders in the country have been complicated by the contradictions in the land tenure system between customary and granted land rights and the accumulation of land in the hands of big 'gentlemen' farmers, leaving small-scale producers landless.

The Land Use Act of 1978 caused traditional institutions to gradually lose control over the land. Central to the problem has been the decisions by some State governments to convert parts or whole forest reserves into private farms or settlements. Awareness, enlightenment, sensitisation and strong dialogue mechanisms with communities and their traditional leaders along transhumance corridors are imperative for the peaceful sharing of resources between pastoralists and sedentary farmers.

(vi) Climate Change

Climate change is identified as an underlying factor in the conflicts. Climate Change is the alteration of weather pattern over a period of time, affecting rainfall, heat, drought, flood, among others. The Sahara Desert is said to be advancing south wards at the rate of 6.0 percent every year. Nigeria is believed to be losing about 350,000 hectares of land every year to desert encroachment. This has led to demographic displacements in villages across 11 states in the North. It is estimated that Nigeria loses about $5.1billion every year owing to rapid encroachment of drought and desert in most parts of the north.

Desertification is also blamed as both a cause and driver of violent clashes between sedentary farmers and pastoralists. Desert encroachment has done away with established grazing routes, thus forcing pastoralists to move through cultivatable land with their livestock, causing damage to crops. In recent

times, sedentary farmer-herder conflicts have increased in magnitude and spread southwards of the country. These conflicts are now being witnessed in predominantly crop cultivating areas which had no prior experience of livestock keeping. Indeed, the sedentary farming communities label the herders as "invaders", considering the destruction to their crops and water points.

The Lake Chad Basin, which serves as a source of fresh water, fisheries, and pastoral and agricultural lands for a population of approximately 22 million people living in Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Niger, and Nigeria, has been degraded by climate change. A major water resources concern of the lake is shrinkage, with the present expanse being less than 3,000 square km from a maximum surface area of approximately 25,000 square km. The deteriorating situation in the Lake Chad Basin has become a source of grave concern as it has forced migration of herders into Nigeria with compelling conflicts between migratory herders and sedentary farming communities along the way to the Benue valley. The shrinkage of Lake Chad also has a negative impact on, among other things, large scale irrigation schemes in Nigeria, negatively affecting food security.

(vii) Movement of Herders and Cultural Dimensions of Migration

Transhumant pastoralism is a way of life for the herders. Animal production has advanced over time with new technologies and researches which provide better husbandry and veterinary techniques. However, some pastoralists, due to their socio-cultural beliefs, still maintain that animals should move from one place to another in search of feed and water. This socio-cultural belief is difficult to correct and should be addressed as part of the bane of transhumance.

The challenge is also that the current livestock of herders are of poor productivity, with very low yield. The belief among the herders is to maintain large stock of animals per family mainly as status symbol. This has given rise to a large low yield cattle population exerting untold pressure on the available vegetation resulting in competition for resources and violent conflicts. Massive public awareness on the benefits of modern animal production as against the traditional methods is lacking. Use of the mass media, most especially the radio, which is listened to by about 90 percent of pastoralists, to create awareness will help in educating them towards modern animal production that is operated as a business. The preponderance of the Frequency Modulated (FM) radio bands as opposed to the Short-Wave radio bands, which used to penetrate distant parts of the country, has limited the reach to pastoralists and their hosts, not to mention the paucity of targeted programming content.

(viii) Ricochet Effect of Conflicts in other parts

Some countries of the Maghreb region as well as a number of West African states have witnessed one form of conflict disorder or another in the last few decades. These conflicts have forced pastoralists to move to places considered 'safe' for grazing to secure their lives and property. Over the years, Nigeria has become one of the designated destinations with the resulting transhumance movement bringing additional pressure on available land and pasture in the country. The ensuing competition for access to grazing resources in the absence of a clear sustainable resource-development and sharing strategy between the occupational groups continues to aggravate conflicts between them.

Aside from the push factors due to violent conflicts in other countries, domestic socio-economic, political and recurring communal crises in parts of Nigeria have progressively narrowed the belt of 'safe' space for grazing in-country. Nonetheless, statistics show increasing human population as well as an annual increase in the convergence of different cattle herds making their way into Nigeria from neighbouring African countries. The resulting multitude of pressures, including the weak mediating role of the government, has compelled both pastoralists and sedentary farmers to sometimes adopt extreme self-help responses, leading to liberalised violence and insecurity across Nigeria.

(ix) Cattle Rustling

Rustling of cattle has also been identified as an underlying factor in the herders-sedentary farmers' conflicts. About 60,000 heads of cattle were reported to have been stolen in 2013. A number of herders often erroneously blame nearby farmer population for their loss of livestock. Another dimension to this is that some rich and influential persons often purchase and give their cattle to pastoralist groups in trust for herding. In order to protect these cattle, they 'assist' the herders with firearms such as AK 47 assault rifles to enable them respond adequately to the level of threat posed by the cattle rustlers. The bearing of firearms by some herders has tended to increase less friendly interaction with some farming communities across the country.

(x) Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation

The proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in Nigeria is also a predisposing factor to the violent conflicts between sedentary farmers and pastoralists in Nigeria. Nigeria has expansive international borders that are either ungoverned or poorly governed. Massive quantities of Small Arms and Light Weapons come in through these highly porous borders on a daily

basis. Dialogue and mediation were easier between the occupational groups when sophisticated guns had not become part of the dressing mode of nomadic herders while they traversed the farmlands. The presence and easy access to weapons as opposed to the traditional bow and arrows of the nomadic herders has made pulling-the-trigger an option of first choice by the herders than the usual dialogue and peaceful negotiation of any acts of contravention in the fields.

(xi) Retreating or 'Refrigerating' State Phenomenon

In Nigeria, State presence is increasingly diminishing in the lives of communities in both urban and rural areas. As government minimises its presence in the lives of the people, there is a declining sense of duties and obligations to the State among the citizens. As a result of the phenomenon of State retreat, non-state actors, particularly, armed groups are grabbing the spaces left off by the government. In the process, these armed non-state actors swing the loyalty of citizens away from government. One of the consequences of this scenario resulted in the spectacle of ungoverned spaces. This is the case with the Boko Haram and its off-shoot, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), who collect taxes from communities in exchange for promise of security and protection.

The Peace and Security Perspectives

The Root Cause of Herder–farmer Crisis in North Central Nigeria is no doubt an important contribution to the literature on the herder–farmer conflict in North Central Nigeria, and indeed in Nigeria as a whole. The Study provided a platform for an empirical engagement among a broad-range of stakeholders in the herder–farmer conflict in North Central Nigeria through experience-sharing. Interacting with persons and groups from both sides of the conflict and documenting the experiences garnered from 72 in-depth interviews across North Central Nigeria, including "with traditional rulers, community leaders, religious leaders, representatives of local government authority, farmers, herders, security agencies and the civil society across selected affected communities in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau States" is a significant contribution towards understanding and managing this highly destabilising conflict disorder in Nigeria. The researchers reviewed the historical relations of farmers and herders as well as the relevant literature in the general area of the conflicts between farmers and herders.

Based on the research objective, which is to identify the root cause of

herder–farmer crisis in North Central Nigeria, the study sets out to answer the following five (5) research questions:

1. What is the nature and pattern the herder–farmer crisis in in north central Nigeria?
2. What are the remote and immediate causes of the crisis?
3. What impact does the herder–farmer crisis have on the socio-economic development of the North Central zone?
4. What have been the responses of the government and the affected communities to the crisis?
5. What measures should the government take to address the crisis in the region?

In responding to these questions, Suchi and Musa reviewed the responses in different literatures. These included the Amnesty international (2018) and the ICG (2017, 2018, 2020), which attributed the crisis to resource scarcity and the resultant competition between farmers and herders, while De Haan (2002) believed that the destruction of crops by the herders was the root cause of the crisis. However, it could be argued that there is no single root cause that is accountable for the herder–farmer crisis in north central Nigeria. Rather, the herder–farmer crisis can be attributed to a cluster of root causes. Whichever turn out to be the root causes of herder–farmer crisis, it is important to know that the conflicts were preventable if the early warning signs were carefully monitored and appropriately responded to by the government or its concerned authorities.

The root causes of the herder–farmer in Nigeria include adverse climatic change impacts, which Nigeria has continuously failed to address in spite of budgeting huge sums annually in the Great Green Wall Initiative. Poor governance infrastructure and weak public institutions are also responsible for the poor land use management. Besides, de-forestation has remained a serious practice in Nigeria, with the Federal, State and Local governments being culprits in the unsustainable cutting of trees. Besides, Nigeria has no known climate change adaptability programme while the absence of a dependable energy source continues to worsen the dependence of the poor on coal for their energy needs.

The theoretical frameworks explored in the Study are cast in critical socio-constructivist model, using discourses of Securitisation, Fulanisation and

Sedenterisation (Suchi, P.M. and Musa, Y.S. 2021: 16). As the researchers rightly posited, all of these theoretical perspectives have a link with environmental resource scarcity and the nature of socio-economic, political and cultural practices that continue to dominate public conversations in Nigeria. In this regard, I appreciate the caution of the authors in the last paragraph of page 17 that care must be taken not to undermine some of the significant historical and political roles played by colonialism in accounting for the journey that brought Nigeria to where it is today (Suchi, P.M. and Musa, Y.S. 2012:17).

This Research is a very significant contribution to the literature in the subject area. However, the Report could have been better with improved editorial intervention. Apart from poor quality printing, there are avoidable errors in a number of the pages. For example, on page 11, Table 1, some of the words are incomplete, particularly on the 5th column where the word 'numbe' was printed instead 'number'. Same is the case on page 12, column 5, row 23. On page 12, row 22, column 5, there is 'killings ofkilling…' Also, on p. V, unless otherwise dictated by the Sponsors, 'Summary' at the top of the page should be replaced by Table of Contents. However, a table of Contents is placed on p. 117.

Conclusion

Discussions around the herder–farmer crisis have pointed to a number of possible pathways to resolving what has become a recurring national problem. In recent time the herders-farmers conflict has thrown up a variety of issues bordering on culture, politics, ethnicity, geography, among others. There are a number of options being canvassed by different interest groups, including grazing reserves, ranching, border security management, food security, militarization, vigilante, climate change mitigation, land use Act, Government policy, Laws and protocols, etc. It has also been discovered that the conflict between herders and crop farmers in Nigeria is not just a national but a regional problem. The solutions must therefore have national as well as trans-national dimensions.

The point is that Nigeria cannot address the problem in totality unless policy makers, law makers, the executive and judicial arms of government are purged of emotional trappings and made to employ empirical, rational and economic planning parameters that focus on sustainable development and smart agricultural practices. This is because there is no conceivable future economy of Nigeria that can do without the mutual co-existence of **sedentary**

farmers and pastoralists as they constitute **two crucial sides** of one **coin**. Both occupations depend on rain-fed practices. Admittedly, without exception, each of us at different times have encountered the effect of this coin either in **our stomach** or in **our pocket.**

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