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In this issue 2021**

Oil and Widow Empowerment In 2kings 4:1-6: Financial Lessons Forwidow In Post Covid 19 in Nigeria <i>Ajewole, Adewale David &Ajibulu, Veronica Vou</i>	-5-13
Exploring arts as a tool for cultural identity in the post covid-19 period in Nigeria <i>Akinpelu Emmanuel Bola</i>	-14-20
Effectiveness of Social Media Platforms and Socioeconomic Lessons from The Covid-19 Pandemic, Information and Communication in Adamawa State <i>Aminu Alkali Abbas</i>	-21-27
Burial Poster Speaks: Communications of Age, Bereavement and Grief Following Loss of Loved ones in Ebonyi State, Nigeria <i>Ekpechu, Joseph Ogbonnaya Alo</i>	-28
Effects of Flooding on Small Scale Farmers in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria <i>Chinedu Lilian Mba&Ewa Ebere</i>	29-37
Thomas Kuhn's Scientific Revolution and Development in Post Covid-19 Nigeria: A Critique. <i>Louis Obi Chinyeaka Cyriacus Onyenekwe Awurumibe, Douglas N.U.</i>	38-44
Peacemaking and Peacebuilding vis a vis Community Policing in South Eastern Nigeria: The Bakassi Boys Example <i>Obi, Louis U. & Chukwu Peter Damian Ezechi</i>	-45-52
Covid-19 Pandemic, Poverty and Inequality in Africa <i>Clara C. Obi-Ochiabutor &Chukwunweike A. Ogbuabor &Callistus Iyidiobi & Ebube Akpamgbo, G. Elias & Co. Law Firm Lagos & B. I Ogbuabor</i>	-53-60
Evaluation of African Technological Capacity to Handle Post Covid-19 Public Health Emergencies: A Study of Nigeria <i>Ogbu Obinna Samson & Mbah Eusebius Chinedu</i>	-61-71
Feminism and Covid-19 Survival Strategies in Igbo Traditional Religious Society <i>Okafor, Emmanuel Ikenna &Amunnadi, Chukwudi Ani & Okolo, Rosemary, Ngozi</i>	-72-78
The Impact of Religious Tourism on Economic Development in Nigeria <i>Okobia Faith Nkem</i>	-79-86
Managing Gender Issues In covid-19 Pandemic Era <i>Ejiroghene A. Oghuvbu &Ugo Chuks Okolie &Daniel Mevayerore Igbini</i>	87-95
Economic Diversification and Innovation: Some Policy Lessons for Post Covid Africa. <i>Washington N. Opara</i>	-96-119
Covid – 19 Pandemic Poverty And Crime in Nigeria: A Biblical Response <i>Osajie, Justina Nwazuni</i>	110-117

Religion and Socioeconomic Self-Reliance in Africa <i>Ude, M. S.</i> - - - - - - - - - -	118-123
Evolving A Viable Theology Of Righteousness For Societal Transformation In Nigeria <i>Ugwa James Kalu</i> - - - - - - - - - -	124-134
Overcoming The Impact Of Covid -19 on Poverty Among Nigerian Families <i>Charity Ngozi Uzuegbu & Obasi-Igwe Inyomoma & Sunday, Obike Emmanuel</i> - -	-135-143
John 4:19–24 and Implications for Ecumenical Unity Among Churches in Nigeria <i>Jones Otisi Kalu</i> - - - - - - - - - -	144-151
Does Foreign Direct Investment Enhance Growth In Africa’s Largest Economy? Further Evidence And Policy Implications <i>Anthony Orji & Godson Umunna Nwagu & Jonathan E. Ogbuabor & Emmanuel Nwosu & Onyinye I. Anthony-Orji</i> - - - - -	152-166
Analysis Of The Macroeconomic Determinants Of Savings In Africa’s Largest Emerging Economy <i>Onyinye I. Anthony-Orji & Anthony Orji & Jonathan E. Ogbuabor & Emmanuel Nwosu & Samuel Izuchukwu Ezugwu</i> - - - - -	167-180
Visual Arts And The Challenges In The Way Of Their Developmwnt In Nigeria <i>Azuka, Abigail Nzoiwu</i> - - - - - - - - - -	181-185
Law as an Instrument of Mental, Social and Economic Emancipation <i>C. A. Ogbuabor & Clara C. Obi-Ochiabutor & C. N. Iyidobi & Perpetua E. Ogbuabor & B. L. Ogbuabor & Joseph Onugwu</i> - - - - -	186-198

**OIL AND WIDOW EMPOWERMENT IN 2KINGS 4:1-6: FINANCIAL LESSONS FOR WIDOW
IN POST COVID 19 IN NIGERIA**

By
Ajewole, Adewale David,
Department of Religious Studies,
University of Ibadan, Oyo, Nigeria,
&
Ajibulu, Veronica Vou
Department of Christian Education,
Federal College of Education, Okene, Kogi, Nigeria

Abstract

The work reveals that both in Old and New Testaments, the people are instructed by God to care for the poor among them. After one of the prophets in Elisha's circle died, his family fell into debt. The fate of a destitute family in ancient Israel was typically to sell some or all of its members into slavery, where at least they would be fed. The widow is on the verge of selling her two children as slaves and begs Elisha for help. Elisha comes up with a plan for the family to become economically productive and support themselves. He asks the widow what she has to work with. "Nothing," she says, "except a jar of oil" (2 Kings 4:2). Apparently this is enough capital for Elisha to begin with. He tells her to borrow empty jars from all her neighbours, and fill them with oil from her jar. She is able to fill every jar with oil before her own jar runs out, and the profit from selling the oil is enough to pay the family's debts. The findings reveal that the economic downturn in Nigeria was triggered by a combination of declining oil price and spillovers from the COVID-19 outbreak, which not only led to a fall in the demand for oil products but also stopped economic activities from taking place when social distancing policies were enforced. The paper uses historical –critical and exegetical methods. The paper uses Weberian Analysis Theory of Power as a theoretical framework which dealt women's empowerment. The paper asks the following questions, such as; how can individual family who was affected and indebted during COVID 19 survive after the pandemic? What is the present government put in place as a survival strategies for indebted families, businesses, and companies that were forcefully short down during and post pandemic periods? Can we survive in this on with gifted resources dominated by few people of this country? Finally, the work recommends and concludes that Elisha creates an entrepreneurial community within which the woman is able to start a small business. This is exactly what some of the most effective poverty-fighting methods do today, whether via microfinance, credit societies, agricultural cooperatives, or small-businesses supplier programs on the part of large companies and governments.

Key Words: Oil and Widow Empowerment, Post COVID 19, Widow in Post COVID 19 in Nigeria

Introduction

Economics is so central to human activities and it has become a dominant force in human life. It affects every domain of our human existence- individual, family life and national life. Economic and poverty affect the way we think about ourselves and the world in which we live. This study analyses the

COVID-19 situation in Nigeria, the economic crisis and the structural causes. According to (Adegboye Adekunle and Gayawan, 2020: 3054), the COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching effects on the global economy. It affected the global travel business, national health care systems, the food industry, events industry, education and global trade. Due to globalization, there are expectations of spillover effects to emerging and developing countries due to their dependence on developed countries for the importation of goods and services. A recent literature has emerged that examine the effect of COVID-19 on economic activities. Yet, the recent literature has not examined the effect on COVID-19 on economic aggregates in developing countries such as Nigeria. The impact of COVID-19 on the Nigerian economy has not been explored in the recent literature. This study fills this gap in the literature. Economic crises or recessions are often caused by market corrections.

Besides, the book of 2Kings 4:1-7 vividly reflects on the first record of the special case of a widow who her husband had been a prophet came to Elisha for aid. The fundamental problem facing the family here was the death of her husband had brought on desperate circumstances: outstanding indebtedness she was unable to meet had occasioned her creditor's instances that her two children are taken as slaves to work off the debt. Therefore, with little oil she had through Elisha prayer and her investment, she was able to pay her debt and the family economy was boasted and multiplied. The paper asks the following questions, such as; how can individual family who was affected and indebted during COVID 19 survives after the pandemic? What is the present government put in place as a survival strategies for indebted families, businesses, and companies that were forcefully short down during and post pandemic periods? Can we survive in this on with gifted resources dominated by few people of this country? Finally, the work recommends and concludes that Elisha creates an entrepreneurial community within which the woman is able to start a small business. The paper will use historical-critical and exegetical research methods to carry out underpinning issues affecting widow and how they could be empowered after COVID 19 Pandemic in Nigeria. Secondary data sources would be used where published books, journals and general books such as Dictionary, Encyclopaedia Bible Commentaries and others related literatures.

Theoretical Framework

Weberian Analysis Theory of Power

In the view of (Robeyns (2003:61-96), this theory explains that an individual's 'class situation' is dependent upon his/her 'market situation', on the measure of power he or she has to influence the workings of the market in his/her favour and on the rewards his or her skill and expertise can command in a competitive market (society). In actualizing oneself, the following power resources are, thus, necessary: (a) Economic resources: That is, control over land, labour, or capital, as well as the goods and services produced. (b) Social resources: Social status or standing based on social roles or on meeting socially valued criteria. (c) Political resources: Use of resources of state institutions to enforce authority and decisions. (d) Informational resources: This entails acquisition of knowledge by means of formal and informal educational training. (e) Moral resources: Legitimacy often accorded to decision makers, their roles or the decisions they make e.g. social approval given to non-state actors. The Weberian Power Analysis presented that a more detailed explanation of how women's empowerment could be attained in any given society (i.e. through availability of necessary resources for women's utilization). Significantly, the Weberian Power Analysis theory believes in the social reality of women's empowerment as being facilitated by unrestricted accessibility to societal resources, especially education, economy and politics.

Conceptual Clarification

Empowerment

According to (Samman, & Santos 2009:61-90), the concept of empowerment has become widely used in development literature, especially with regard to reducing vulnerability, disempowerment and the poverty affecting half of the world's population today, of which rural women constitute one of the greatest proportions. Consequent to its value laden problem, the concept has no certain definition. The

recent concentration on widows' empowerment and their obvious vulnerabilities has often been ignored in more general discussions on women's empowerment. The essence in supporting widows owe to the fact that they are more vulnerable than any other class of women, especially as they endure hardship as the sole providers of their households, and often face social deprivations sustained by unjust traditions. Most studies on women's empowerment rationalize the importance of providing enabling environments for beneficiaries to make their choices and operate as agents in transforming their lives

The presentation of the Text 2Kings 4:1-6

- א** וַיֹּאמֶר אַחַת מִנְשֵׁי בְנֵי-הַנְּבִיאִים צָעֲקָה אֶל-אֱלִישָׁע לֵאמֹר, עֲבָדְךָ אִישִׁי מֵת, וְאַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ, כִּי עֲבָדְךָ הָיָה נָרָא אֶת-יְהוָה; וְהַנְּשֵׂא--בָּא לְקַחַת אֶת-שְׁנֵי יְלָדָי לּוֹ, לְעֲבָדִים.
- 1** Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying: 'Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two children to be bondmen.'
- ב** וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיָה אֱלִישָׁע, מָה אַעֲשֶׂה-לָּךְ, הַגִּידִי לִי, מַה-יְשׁ-לְּכִי (לָּךְ) בְּבֵית; וַתֹּאמֶר, אֵין לִשְׁפֹחֶתְךָ כֹּל בְּבֵית, כִּי, אִם-אֶסוּדָה שָׁמֹן.
- 2** And Elisha said unto her: 'What shall I do for thee? tell me; what hast thou in the house?' And she said: 'Thy handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.'
- ג** וַיֹּאמֶר, לְכִי שְׂאֲלִי-לָּךְ כְּלִים מִן-הַחוּץ, מֵאַתָּה, כָּל-שְׂכַנְכִי (שְׂכַנְיָךְ)--כְּלִים רְקִים, אֶל-תִּמְעִיטִי.
- 3** Then he said: 'Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.'
- ד** וּבָאת, וְסָגַרְתְּ הַדְּלֹת בְּעַדְךָ וּבְעַד-בְּנֵיךָ, וַיִּצְקֶתָ, עַל כָּל-הַכְּלִים הָאֵלֶּה; וְהִמְלֵא, תְּסִיעִי.
- 4** And thou shalt go in, and shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and pour out into all those vessels; and thou shalt set aside that which is full.'
- ה** וַתֵּלֶךְ, מֵאַתָּה, וַתְּסַגֵּר הַדְּלֹת, בְּעַדְךָ וּבְעַד בְּנֵיךָ; הֵם מְגִישִׁים אֵלָיָה, וְהִיא מִיִּצְקֶת (מוֹצֶקֶת).
- 5** So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons; they brought the vessels to her, and she poured out.
- ו** וַיְהִי כִּמְלֵאת הַכְּלִים, וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל-בְּנָהּ הַגִּישָׁה אֵלַי עוֹד כְּלִי, וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיָה, אֵין עוֹד כְּלִי; וַיַּעֲמֵד, הַשָּׁמֶן.
- 6** And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son: 'Bring me yet a vessel.' And he said unto her: 'There is not a vessel more.' And the oil stayed.
- ז** וַתָּבֹא, וַתַּגִּד לְאִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים, וַיֹּאמֶר לְכִי מְכָרִי אֶת-הַשָּׁמֶן, וְשָׁלְמִי אֶת-נְשִׁיכִי (נְשִׁיכְךָ); וְאַתָּה בְּנִיכִי (וּבְנֵיךָ), תַּחְוִי בְּגוֹתֶךָ. {פ}
- 7** Then she came and told the man of God. And he said: 'Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy sons of the rest.' {P}

The Variant Texts of the 2Kings 4:1-7

According to (Tremper Longman 111 and Raymond Dillard, 2007:175), the variations between the Masoretic Text, the Greek translation and revisions, and the manuscript finds at Qumran that there was some fluidity in the text of Kings prior to the emergence of the Masoretic Texts as the received textual tradition for the Old Testament. Rather than view the differences as exclusively secondary variations on the tradition represented by the Masoretic Texts, scholar have identified some variants as

part of a textual tradition that antedates the tradition represented by the Masoretic Texts. For instances, in 2Kings 4:1-7, the Old Greek reflects the proto-Theodotion (*kaige*) recension, which largely agrees with the Masoretic Texts, whereas the Lucianic recension appears to retain the chronology of the Old Greek translation, based on a text of Kings from the Masoretic Texts.

In the view of (Hobbs,1985:43), in 2Kings 4: 2a, Tagrum identifies the word אֶלֶּיהָ “to her” is omitted by Septuagint and in 2Kings 4:2b, there, the word הַגִּידִי לִי “tell her” is omitted by Septuagint. He adds that the Masoretic Texts reads כָּרַל “to you,” either a dittography from the next line, or an Aramaism. Such peculiarities of style are found in reported speech of this kind. In verse Masoretic Texts adds the word בְּבֵית “at home”, but in G^LG MSS, Lucianic recension consisting of boc₂e₂ adds the word αὐτου “it.” The G- Septuagint omits the second בְּבֵית which means “at home,” scholars affirm that the הַגִּידִי is either a noun in opposition to שֶׁן “oil” or a first person singular imperfect of הָגַד “hedge.” Also, in verse 3b, the word רָקִים implies as “vessels” is translated correctly by G^B as κευα which denotes “empty jar”, but several minor G MSS (Lucianic recension) mistakenly read καυα “new.”

The Exegetical Study of Keywords in 2Kings 4:1-7 on the Context of Widow Empowerment

The reference to בְּנֵי־הַנְּבִיאִים מִנְּשֵׁי אִתָּהּ אִשָּׁה אֶחָת “a certain woman from the wives of the sons of prophets” would indicate that the “sons of the prophets” lived reasonably independent lives and were not a monastic-like order. The targumic identification of הָגַד יְרָא “your servant feared Yahweh” with the royal servant Obadiah of 1Kings 18:3, on the basis that both were God-fearing men needed to be taken seriously. A further embellishment is added by Josephus in his claim that the woman herself was also in danger of being sold into slavery.

According to (John Owens,1998: 551), the first word צָעָקָה *‘sā ‘āqāh’* used as verb *qal* perfect third person feminine singular which implies “cried out,” “outcry”, “outcry,” “cried of distress” and “outcried clamour.” A poor widow of the scholars of the prophets complained to Elisha of her distress, namely, that a creditor was about to take her two sons as servants (slaves). The Mosaic Law gave a creditor the right to claim the person and children of a debtor who was unable to pay, and they were obliged to serve him as slaves till the year of jubilee, when they were once more set free.

Secondly, the word *hv'n* “*nashah*” used as noun masculine singular which denotes “to lend”, “be a creditor,” and the word is taken from stem *-qal* participle active. Also, the term הַנְּשָׂא “creditors” is written הַנְּשָׂא; the Ancient Israel had strict laws governing the practice of lending money, whether the laws were intended to correct abuse or whether they represented an initial ideal is difficult to say here. The two versions of the laws are found in Exodus 22:24-26 and Deuteronomy 24:10-13. The release of economic slaves and the cancellation of debt are not isolated economic transactions. Along with a Sabbath rest for the land, these legal provisions are rooted in God’s action in creation and the release from Egypt (the basis for the Sabbath), the gifted nature of the land and God’s concern for the poor. Those who make loans to the poor are not making gifts of personal charity but expressing in a generosity embedded in law the giftedness of the land to the people. But Deuteronomy anticipates that some will be reluctant to make loans to the poor because of the year of cancellation.

Thirdly, the word *db,l, ‘ebed’* really means “slave”; but the English Bible renders it “servant” (*a*) where the word is used figuratively, pious men being “servants of the Lord” (Isa. 20:3), and courtiers “servants of the king” (Jer.37:2); and (*b*) in passages which refer to Hebrew bondmen, whose condition is far above that of slavery (Ex. 21: 2-7). Therefore, where real slaves are referred to, the English versions generally use “bondman” for “*‘ebed*,” and “bondwoman” or “bondmaid” for the corresponding feminines. In the view of (Wilhelm Bacher, and Lewis Dembitz 2020:34), the Hebrew servant referred to in the Torah is of two classes: (1) he whom the court has sold without his consent; and (2) he who has willingly sold himself. The court may sell a man for theft only, as noted above. A man may sell himself (Lev. 39) because of extreme poverty, after all his means are exhausted; he should not sell himself as long as any means are left to him. He should not sell himself to a woman, or to a convert, or to a Gentile. Should he do so, however, even if he sells himself to a heathen temple, the sale is valid; but it then becomes the duty not only of his kinsmen, but of all Israelites, to redeem him, lest he become “swallowed up” in

heathendom. The sale of a Hebrew into bondage should be made privately, not from an auction-block, nor even from the sidewalk, where other slaves are sold.

Fourthly, the most common word for "oil" in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word *shemen*. It occurs 192 times, and in the large majority of those cases it refers to "olive oil," so much so that the expression "tree(s)/wood of oil" (1 Kings 6:23 1 Kings 6:31-33 ; Isa 41:19) is a natural way to refer to "olive wood." In one place it refers to the "oil of myrrh" (i.e., an aromatic gum resin that comes from a shrub-like tree) used in the beautification process of Esther and other women in the Persian royal harem (Esther 2:12). The New Testament Greek word that corresponds to Hebrew *shemen*, "oil"; it occurs eleven times and refers exclusively to "olive oil." The Mount of Olives was named for its numerous olive groves and the olive oil presses located at its base. The term *yitshar* "fresh oil," occurs twenty-one times, most frequently in parallel with "new wine," referring to the fresh olive oil produce of the land, the stores of which were a sign of the Lord's blessing of prosperity.

The corresponding Aramaic word is *mesah*, "(anointing) "oil," (2 occurrences, Ezra 6:9 ; 7:22), which refers to the oil needed for the temple cult and is directly related to the Hebrew verb *mashach* "to anoint." Beside, Oil was used as a commodity of trade or personal income, for various kinds of common daily consumption (as part of the bread diet in tabernacle grain offerings, as fuel for lamps in the tabernacle, or homes, as a lubricant for one's hair and skin, sometimes with a special sense of honour, as an aromatic substance, as a medication, or in healing contexts, for royal and religious ritual procedures and in figurative expressions (e.g., for fertility and prosperity).

Above all, (Kenneth Barker 1994:540) opines, having learnt from woman that she had nothing that could provide sustenance for the family except a small flask of oil, Elisha instructed her to borrowed utensils from her neighbours and, she done so, to shut herself up in her house and fill them with the oil that would come from the flask. She could thus repay her creditors and use the overabundance for her family economic sustainability. The widow was empowered with little oil she had by Elisha and she sold the oil, and as well paid off her creditors and used remaining resources for her family economic and financial sustainability throughout the periods of famine in the land.

The COVID-19 Pandemic and Nigerian experiences

In the view of (Adeniran & Sidiq, 2019:453), the spread of COVID-19 entered Nigeria through an infected Italian citizen who came in contact with a Nigerian citizen who was subsequently infected with the coronavirus. The first cases of coronavirus was confirmed and announced in Nigeria on January 28, 2020. The coronavirus infected people in Lagos and then spread to other parts of the country from March to May. COVID-19 spillover to the Nigerian economy Direct effect There are five main ways through which the COVID-19 pandemic spilled over into Nigeria. One, the COVID-19 pandemic affected borrowers' capacity to service their loans, which gave rise to non-performing loans (NPLs) that depressed banks' earnings and eventually impaired banks' soundness and stability. Subsequently, banks were reluctant to give additional loans to borrowers as more and more borrowers struggled to repay the loans granted to them during the COVID-19 outbreak. Two, there were oil demand shocks which was reflected in the sharp decline in oil price. While speaking on the above assertion, (Adenomon & Maijamaa 2020:334) posit that the most visible and immediate spillover was the drop in the price of crude oil, which dropped from nearly US\$60 per barrel to as low as US\$30 per barrel in March. During the pandemic, people were no longer travelling and this led to a sustained fall in the demand for aviation fuel and automobile fuel which affected Nigeria's net oil revenue, and eventually affected Nigeria's foreign reserve. Three, there were supply shocks in the global supply chain as many importers shut down their factories and closed their borders particularly China.

Thereafter, (Altig, Baker, Barrero, & Bloom, 2020:567) add that, Nigeria was severely affected because Nigeria is an import-dependent country, and as a result, Nigeria witnessed shortage of crucial supplies like pharmaceutical supplies, spare parts, and finished goods from China. Four, the national budget was also affected. The budget was initially planned with an oil price of US\$57 per barrel. The fall in oil price to US\$30 per barrel during the pandemic meant that the budget became obsolete and a new

budget had to be formed which had to be re-priced with at low oil price. Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic affected the Nigerian stock market. Major market indices in the stock market plunged when investors pulled out their investments into so-called safe havens like US Treasury bonds. Stock market investors lost over NGN2.3 trillion (US\$5.9bn) barely three weeks after the first cases of coronavirus was confirmed and announced in Nigeria on January 28, 2020. The movement restriction Both the State and Federal governments imposed movement restrictions in some areas across the country to control the spread of the novel coronavirus and using monetary and fiscal policy measures. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the monetary authority, the Central bank, said it would provide support to affected households, businesses, regulated financial institutions and other stakeholders to reduce the adverse economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Besides, (Elsevier Atkeson, 2020:65) revealed that the central bank provided support in six ways. One, it granted extension of loan moratorium on principal repayments from March 1, 2020. This meant that any intervention loan currently under moratorium would be extended by one year. Two, it offered interest rate reduction on all intervention loan facilities from 9% to 5% beginning from March 1, 2020. Three, it offered amount of NGN50bn (US\$131.6m) targeted credit facility to hotels, airline service providers, health care merchants, among others. Four, it provided credit support to the healthcare industry to meet the increasing demand for healthcare services during the outbreak. The loan was available only to pharmaceutical companies and hospitals. Five, it provided regulatory forbearance to banks which allowed banks to temporarily restructure the tenor of existing loan within a specific time period particularly loans to the oil and gas, agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Six, it strengthened the loan to deposit ratio (LDR) policy which allowed banks to extend more credit to the economy. On the other hand, the fiscal authorities had to review and revise the 2020 national budget of N10.59 trillion (US\$28 billion). The government announced that the budget was reduced by NGN1.5 trillion (\$4.90 billion) as part of the measures to respond to the impact of Coronavirus on the economy and in response to the oil price crash. The new budget was benchmarked at US\$30 per barrel from US\$57 per barrel in the previous budget.

Financial Lessons for Widows in Post COVID 19 in Nigeria

Basically, according to (Bernburg, 2016:78), majority of the women who bear the brunt of dehumanizing widowhood rites are low-income, uneducated/semi-educated and rural women. This is the group that cannot exercise its right under the laws of the land and lack the courage, self-confidence and wherewithal to forestall violation of its rights. This contrasts with the attitudes of sophisticated and educated career women. The degree to which widowhood rites is imposed depends on the age of the widow, level of education, parity status (with children or barren), nature of her relationships with her husband and in-laws, the cause of husband's death, the widow's occupation and the degree of mutual respect and cohesiveness among the family members (Afolayan, 2011:56).

In the view of (George, & Onyekachi, 2013:98) revealed that education and civilization has been pervasive in eroding the practice of widowhood rites. In recent times, the mandatory forty days confinement of widow is being done with some flexibility. Widows are dis-empowered, maltreated and exposed to other injustices not experienced by widowers. Evidently, women who have little or no education do not question tradition. It appears that the gravity of the deprivation of widows depend on their social and personal attributes, namely, level of education obtained by widows, kin, in-laws and community of residence. Educated and enlightened widows experience less of the problems when compared to their less educated counterparts. Widows in rural areas are more prone to these problems than those in urban areas. In accordance with the above assertions, the paper hereby outlines the below various ways widows could be empowered for their households sustainable development in Nigeria. There are as follows:

a. Empowering Widows with fund for Small Businesses in Nigeria

To address the economic challenges of the pandemic, (Adenomon, & Maijamaa, 2020:54), Nigeria's federal government approved the \$5.9 billion (N23 trillion) Nigerian Economic

Sustainability Plan in July 2020. The plan costs roughly 1% of GDP and is intended to stimulate and diversify the economy, retain and create jobs and extend more protections to the poor. The recovery plan includes investments in clean energy, agriculture and infrastructure. The most noteworthy piece of green spending is a \$619 million commitment to the Solar Homes Systems Project, which will help install solar home systems for up to five million households, serving about 25 million individual Nigerians who are not currently connected to the national grid. It also provides monetary incentives for private solar installers and aims to create more domestic jobs in the solar industry. The widows are to be grouped in each local government areas, sensitizing them on various available businesses of their choice and then empower them with fund to start up the business of their choice. For instance, the widow in Elisha's time had knowledge of oil business and she was empowered with that little oil left, she traded with and made profits which enabled her to pay off her husband's creditors and used remaining money for her family sustainable development during and after economic meltdown in Israel.

The Economic Sustainability Plan also includes a National Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSMEs) Survival Fund to cushion the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and create an environment for small businesses to thrive. MSMEs are the engine of the Nigerian economy; there are over 37 million MSMEs in Nigeria that contribute nearly 48% of the nation's GDP. COVID-19 has severely constrained MSMEs in Nigeria, with many either laying off staff or going out of business. The MSME Survival Fund will support the private sector to help diversify the economy, with a particular focus on widows in oil businesses such as red oil business by going to various villages to buy red oil from villagers and then reselling it in the cities. Sixty percent of the MSME Survival Fund has been reserved for women entrepreneurs, who make up at least 41% of micro-businesses in the country. These interventions will help to empower women and close the gender gap, promote gender equality and equal representation and build a fairer Nigeria.

b. Empowering widows who had knowledge in Farm productions

However, (Aregbeshola, & Khan, 2018:784), there is more to be done to reduce emissions and dependency on fossil fuels, strengthen climate change adaptation and put Nigeria's post-COVID-19 economy on a trajectory of green and resilient development. While investments in solar accounts for only 10% of the entire stimulus plan, there are opportunities to embed green recovery and resilience in the rest of the package. For example, the plan proposes an agricultural program to significantly increase the acreage under cultivation — which is expected to create jobs for thousands of young people — and implements measures that guarantee steady income for farmers. This program should incorporate climate-smart agriculture strategies such as drought-resistant crops and land and water management to achieve emissions reductions and adaptation commitments made in Nigeria's climate pledge and its 2016-2020 Agriculture Promotion Policy.

The plan also invests in public works such as roads and promotes natural gas, which Nigeria sees as a bridge from more polluting fossil fuels to clean energy. As it makes these investments, Nigeria needs to ensure that it doesn't lock into an emissions-intensive pathway and forget to build in resilience to climate change. The Nigerian government pledged to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions 20% below business as usual by 2030 under its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and identified several climate adaptation priorities under its National Adaptation Strategy. Nigeria should aim to mainstream these targets and priorities into national budgets and its COVID-19 economic recovery package and look for opportunities to enhance its climate ambition as it invests in long-term growth and jobs.

c. Reforming Fossil Fuel Subsidies and Economic Diversification in Nigeria

In addition, (Adenomon, & Maijamaa, 2020:453), Nigeria is also taking broader steps to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. It is one of only a few countries so far to remove fossil fuel subsidies during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the reforms. Leaders made the decision due to the recent drop in oil prices and a need for funds to manage the pandemic and the economy at large. The subsidy removal is expected

to save the government at least \$2 billion a year. The removal of fossil fuel subsidies is promising, but will only work if substantial efforts are made to ensure that these reforms do not negatively impact the most vulnerable and widows in our country. In the past, removal of fossil fuel subsidies in Nigeria led to mass protests because it was done too quickly and may have widened the wealth gap in a steeply unequal country. Subsidy removals must be designed in a way so as not to damage trust between the government and the people. Provisions to support the poor should oil prices rise again must be carefully thought out and put in place before subsidies are removed, rather than added as an afterthought.

Basically, (Ahmed, Alhassan, & Alshammari, 2017:321), the government should go beyond subsidy removal to implement reforms that do not widen inequality, such as expanding its cash transfer program to accommodate more poor families. Nigeria is Africa's biggest crude producer: oil accounts for 80% of its exports and 50% of government revenue. The massive drop in oil prices is a further call for Nigeria to diversify its economy. Nigeria's oil sector recorded negative growth in the second quarter of 2020 and had stockpiles of unsold crude in April and May 2020. Minister of State for Petroleum Resources Timipre Sylva said that current challenges in the oil and gas industry are "a wakeup call for Nigeria to increase efforts and reduce its dependence on oil." Nigeria is already working to diversify the agricultural sector and incentivize in-country manufacturing of solar infrastructure. It will be important to avoid stranded assets by continuing to diversify the economy away from fossil fuels and carefully plan investment in renewables to line up with transmission capacity (Aregbeshola, & Khan, 2018:675).

Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to capture some of the experiences of a sample of poor widows in Nigeria, and to explore the challenges they face and the empowerment strategies they adopt to enhance their wellbeing in their rural communities. Our findings highlight the problematic role of aid organizations in filling institutional voids in the community. Although aid organizations provided major supports to the widows, they did not fully meet the expectations of the widows. The widows were dissatisfied with the services of the aid organizations because of the lack of autonomy in the control of funding and other resources. It is evident from the findings that despite the experiences of vulnerability, frustrations and constraints they face, the widows were able to make transformative choices to address their life challenges, highlighting their agency in the process. The support of widows by aid organizations should focus on how to expand their participation, inclusion and engagement in the overall empowerment process. In responding to poverty and other deprivation issues facing widows, development agencies or actors should then be more sensitive to the widows' choice of services, and their strategies should target on how to collaborate with other actors working in the grassroots to support these widows. When conventional supports are lacking, these indigenous groups often fill the void of institutional supports. Therefore, collaborating with the grassroots or indigenous support groups can be effective in addressing the needs of the local widows, especially as they operate within the same social milieu that breeds their challenges.

Recommendations

The paper hereby recommends the following ways of empowering widows in Nigeria. Firstly, there should be public enlightenment campaign to educate people about the plight of widows. These should include workshops, seminars, posters, handbills, radio and television jingles, health talks in clinics etc. The government should adequate orientations for the Nigeria's widows on small businesses and then empower them with capital or fund on the business of their choices for good sustainable development of their families in Nigeria. Secondly, relevant educational strategy should be employed in order to advance the cause of widows by influencing their conduct and knowledge about their predicament. However, the formal system of education which was imported, is elitist, discriminatory, and cannot alone provide all the education one needs for self-fulfilment. Thirdly, it is therefore necessary to heighten efforts and support the Nigerian government in her efforts to develop some of the informal education skills in order to enable citizens achieves fulfilment and fullness during the twenty first century. Finally, Widows represent the

majority of the rural populace in Nigeria who are mainly engaged in agriculture as a means of livelihood. To ensure the full and active participation of widows in the agricultural Transformation agenda, the existing agriculture policies need to be assessed for gender sensitivity. In addition the way in which budget is formulated arising from the policies should mainstream the different socially determined roles, responsibilities and capabilities of widows as applies to extension system

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EXPLORING ARTS AS A TOOL FOR CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE POST COVID-19 PERIOD IN NIGERIA

By

Akinpelu Emmanuel Bola

Department of Cultural and Creative Arts
School of Arts and Social Sciences
Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo

Abstract

Art making exist in all human society and culture, people often say that arts is a reflection of people's lives and values orientation and reorientation from time to time. Cultural Identity could be determined through art and crafts. This paper examined art and crafts as a veritable tool for cultural identity in the post covid-19 period in Nigeria and the place of arts. The paper delves into recent developments in art making by various selected artists in this post covid-19 period, how their arts has been able to contribute to individual artist's development and the Nigerian society at large. It also considered the devastating effects of Covid-19 on individual selected artists and how they have been able to manage the pandemic period. The paper was of the view that for a Nation to be categorized as developed, their arts and crafts must be properly managed, as art and crafts plays a major role in the socio economic development of the State, in this regard, Children should be well informed and trained in Societal Cultural practices. It was posited among others that the place of arts and craft being produced by individual artists is very important and should be given much attention.

Keywords: Arts, crafts, Cultural Identity, Covid-19

Introduction

The term art can also be used in diverse way, depending on the writer or Scholar's point of view. Art means many things to different people. It could be used to refer to as object of relics or as a qualifying word in a sentence. However, 'Art' in this context refers to as the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, the knowledge of arts help in producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power (Banjoko, 2009). The term 'Art' could be traced to time immemorial. Art exist in all human social environment. No society can exist without her art and culture, arts makes life, the processes involved and the products are what makes the societies to developed, Ife Art in Southwest part of Yorubaland, Others are cloth weaving in Iseyin, Cloth dying Abeokuta, Calabash carvings Oyo, Wood carvings commonly found in different part of southwest part of Nigeria, leather work Kano, Pottery making, Ghanaians', just like other African Nations also engaged in indigenous cultural practices. Arts and crafts are integral has became part of their everyday life.

Banjoko (2009), Ghana is regarded as one of the renowned producers of the African traditional arts and crafts, their work of arts range from wood carvings, brass works, sculptures, jewellery and a range of textiles. Ghana craftsmen technically fashion exquisite artistic masterpieces from wood, bamboo, leather, cement and textiles. Studies from most Scholars revealed that these traditional craftsmen could be found in most villages, town and city leaving among them up till this present period. Arts and craft are cultural identity that was handed from time to time, from place to place and from Nation to Nations. Let us consider other African Nation in other to ascertain if they also engaged in cultural practices. Archaeological deposit of figurative sculptures revealed the iconic figures of fired clay with similar characteristic and materials spanned all over the regions. These terracotta sculptures are from the Inland Niger Delta region near Djenné pronounced *JEH-nay*; also spelled *Jenne*, one of the ancient trading

cities that thrived and later conquered during the Mali Empire. Insight from safariholiday.com reflects that Uganda is another important Country that is very prominent and versatile in production of art and crafts. Most items such as jeweler, drums, carved items, greeting cards, and weapons such as spears are handmade can be found in nook and cranny of Uganda. Selling arts and crafts is a source of livelihood for those engaged in the cultural practices. Kenya is located in Eastern part of Africa, Studies shows that there are over forty tribes with unique way of life. This tribes possessed their cultural heritage has handed by their progenitor. Art and Crafts in Kenya are in fact part of their local industry that drives their country's economy, known as the jua kali sector. Jua Kali is Swahili for hot sun, which reflects the rigorous work artists have to do under the scorching sun to create marvelous pieces like pottery making, glass making, bead making, basketry and the likes Insight from safariholiday.com(2021).

Theory of Cultural Identity

The communication theory of identity (CTI) was developed by communication scholar Michael Hecht. CTI is a layered theory that conceptualizes identity as experienced at multiple levels or layers, multifaceted and dynamic, and communicated both verbally and behaviorally in diverse ways evolving over time. CTI provides an integrative framework for understanding the individual, social, and collective aspects of self and has numerous implications for health. Art making has turned into monumental practices, monumental in the sense that, art making has been introduced to contemporary studies o formal school system, from primary to tertiary education system. Tracing the tradition of origin of most traditional arts and craft from the acient to the present days may be a bit difficult. Scholars in the field of arts like Prof Adegpegba, Prof WangbojeIrein, Twin Seven seven, Prof Dele Jegede and many other Scholars have worked extensive on Nigeria traditional arts and crafts. Studies shows that this of arts were tranfered from generation to the other. Most Scholars have also published a numbers of articles in journal within and outside Nigeria, that reflects on Nigeria traditional art . Typical example of such books are a textbook on Nigeria art and craft by WangbojeIrein, this book focus on most Nigeria art and craft. While Adepegba also focused his textbook titled African Arts on general Art History and specifically traced the tradition of origin in respect to their cultural identification as to the origin, place, where, method, styles, purpose, patronage and the likes. Most scholars work on the place of origin where a particular work of art were produce. This paper however emphasized on how arts and crafts served as veritable tools for cultural identity. The paper studied selected artists and their work. It also looked into the effects of Covid19 lockdown on the artists. How they have been able to cope during the pandemic period.

Concept of Cultural Identity

Michael (2021) says Culture is the shared characteristics of a group of people, which encompasses place of birth, religion, language, cuisine, social behaviors, art, literature, and music. Some cultures are widespread, and have a large number of people who associate themselves with those particular values, beliefs, and origins. Others are relatively small, with only a small number of people who associate themselves with that culture. However, the value of culture cannot be defined by its size. No matter if a culture is widespread or kept within a small region, is young or old, or has changed over time or stayed the same, every culture can teach us about ourselves, others, and the global community. While Dictionary reference defines cultural identity as the identity of a groups or individuals (by themselves or others) in terms of cultural or sub cultural categories (including ethnicity, nationality, language, religion, and gender). In stereotyping, this is framed in terms of difference or otherness.

Cultural (and ethnic) identity is a subset of the communication theory of identity that establishes four "frames of identity" that allow us to view how we build identity. These frames include the personal frame, enactment of communication frame, relationship frame, and communal frame. The communal frame refers to the cultural constraints or the sense of "right" that people live by (which varies by cultural group). Therefore, cultural (and ethnic) identity become central to a person's identity, how they see themselves, and how they relate to the world.

Various modern cultural studies and social theories have investigated cultural identity and understanding. In recent decades, a new form of identification has emerged which breaks down the understanding of the individual as a coherent whole subject into a collection of various cultural identifiers. These cultural identifiers may be the result of various conditions including: location, sex, race, history, nationality, language, sexuality, religious beliefs, ethnicity, aesthetics, and even food. As one author writes, recognizing both coherence and fragmentation:

OdekunleOdesola Olajide

OdekunleOdesola Olajide is a traditional wood carver by profession, born to family of wood carving lineage of Late Pa Odekunle who happened to be his father. Olajide was born in late of 70s. He attended St. Benerdine Secondary School between 1990 to 1996 where he obtained his Secondary School Certificate. He obtained his Ordinary National Diploma (OND) in Statistics at Ire Polytechnic in the year 2002 and later Higher National Diploma (HND) in Statistic/ Mathematics from the Polytechnic, Ibadan in the year 2005

He has participated in a number of joint exhibitions both within and outside Nigeria. Odejide has produced a good numbers of wood carvings with different theme. Among the works are Staff of office, oponifa, ere ibeji (twine carvings), esu(devil), sango wand (ose sago), Oya, Obatala and ogun, etc

Effects of Covid-19 in Olajide's work of art

The pandemic disease popularly refers as Covid19 has serious effect in the production and marketing of Olajide during the lock down period. According to Olajide, he was of the opinion that he has never heard of such disease in his life until the outbreak of the disease in the month of March, year 2020. He opined that the disease may be as a result of God's vengeance on humanity.

In his words, Olajide observed that at the inception of the pandemic period, there was poorsale of artwork, then as time passed toward the month of June when there was total lockdown, getting raw materials for the production of new carvings was very difficult. This period was not palatable as he could not travel to where he can purchase wood for his art work. However, he was of the view that few of his apprentice that leave very close to his workshop manage to engaged in partial work for a limited period before everything was totally grounded. This resulted to total unemployment on the part of my staff.



Farmers at work, Wood Carving produce by OdekunleOdesola Olajide (2020)



Yoruba gods, Wood Carving produce by Odekunle Odesola Olajide (2020)

However, as soon as the Federal Government of Nigeria announced the partial lockdown, a number of costumers begin to request for carvings of their choice. Wood carvings are commonly used in African setting for a number of purposes ranging from religious use, by people practicing Christianity Religion, Islamic religion and traditional religion. Carvings are also being used for decorations in offices, hotels, place of worship, and public places as the case may be. There are a good number of traditional carvers in Oyo. But one can also find them in other Yoruba towns and Villages. Wood carving can be learned through apprenticeship, it can also be learned in schools but the style may be different from traditional art style. He added that his art making methods, cultural values, beliefs system, thinking pattern and other characteristic are what will make his work of art to be different from others. He identified some characteristics like big head, projected eye, tick lips and nose, incisions on the body and many others and said they are what differentiate his work from other lineage traditional work of art.

Covid-19 allowed Olajide to interact with his client through internet connectivity. Most clients sent messages through WhatsApp message platform and mail. Some even sent their specification through same media.

Therefore, art plays a major role in human development. Cultural identity can be discovered through a Nation's art and craft. Most art work produced by Olajide are ideas and thoughts from a typical Yoruba extraction.

Ajibade Moses Taiwo

Ajibade Taiwo is a native of Isheyin. Born in the year 1967. His late father was a teacher and also practiced traditional Herbal medicine, but not a weaver. He was brought up by his uncle Pa Adetunji Hamzat who later adopted him. Taiwo was however trained under the tutelage of Pa Adetunji. He has being into carving vocation right from his primary school age. Ajibade Moses is also a Pastor. He has his Ministry at Isheyin to his credit. He is happily married with children, two males and a female. The children are also versatile in their father's chosen carrier. Woven profession has become part of the family. They use to work with their father after leaving school during their secondary schools days, but are now in various tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria. They however work with their father during vacation.

Experience on weaving

Ajibade is well known within and outside Isheyin as a prolific weaver. He is very popular among his business partners and people that took weaving as a profession in Isheyin and environs. He is versatile in the weaving profession. In fact weaving has become part of him, Ajibade belongs to the lineage of Pa Ajibade Hamzat, having taken to his Master's weaving style since his childhood, he has been embarking on the production of weaving with the children of late Adetunji Adeoti and other apprentices.



Sample work of Ajibade, Taiwo.

The Nigerian traditional arts and craft are integral to the social and economic wellbeing of the. Youth participation in art making often leads to positive development. Art making in most under developed Nations is still at its cradle stage. The recent outbreak of Covid-19 exposed many Nations in terms of economic, political, socio and cultural well being. Arts and crafts needs to be given proper attention. Arts and culture need to be given its rightful place in the Nigerian economy. Although, there is no proper record to the level of the havoc meted by the pandemic in the field of arts, studies however revealed that the rate of poverty level was alarming. There was total break- down of law and order. Compared to advanced Nations like United States, where arts and craft contributed to 4.5% of her gross domestic product (GDP), an amount larger than the share contributed by industries as diverse as construction, agriculture, and transportation. Increasingly, the arts and design are used in healthcare, manufacturing, and local community and economic development initiatives. Therefore, the sector's acute vulnerability during the pandemic has potential repercussions for other aspects of the U.S. economy, Guibert(2021).

Arts and craft have suffered significant social and economic setbacks from COVID-19. Going by several devastating experiences such as restrictions on gatherings, changes in consumer behavior, the use of sanitizers, adherence to other health protocols and severe unemployment had serious effects on the masses. The full scope and scale of the impact can be hard to discern, in part because of the size and diversity of the industries and occupations that constitute arts and culture.

Covid-19

Scholars around the globe have been researching into the origin, causes, and possible solutions to the epidemic diseases. Studies shows that the acute respiratory tract infection broke out first in Wuhan, China, since 12 December 2019, possibly related to a seafood market. In addition to this information, several studies also revealed that bats may be the potential causes of SARS-CoV-2. Greg (2021), however, says up to the present period Scientists have not come out with the fact that the epidemic disease originated from China or Wuhan. Although, series of articles have been published claiming that, bats are the natural reservoirs of a wide variety of CoVs, including SARS-CoV-like and MERS-CoV-like viruses. Looking at the genome sequencing, the COVID-19 was analyzed throughout the genome to Bat CoV RaTG13 and showed 96.2% overall genome sequence identity, suggesting that bat CoV and human SARS-CoV-2 might share the same ancestors, although bats are not available for sale in this seafood market. Besides, protein sequences alignment and phylogenetic analysis showed that similar residues of receptor were observed in many species, which provided more possibilities of alternative intermediate hosts, such as turtles, pangolin and snacks. Chen(2020)

Post Covid-19 Era

Studies from COVID-19 Weekly Outlook in Nigeria revealed that the infections continue to rise; some of the health measures put in place may no longer be viable options. This will mean fewer performances, exhibitions, and opportunities for earned income are under control. This is not good for the socio-economic business activities of a nation, however, professionals in the field of arts and crafts interviewed devised new normal methods in selling their products. This methods availed them the opportunity to attract more clients.

Since the middle of year 2020, assistance from federal government programs, foundations, and the public at large have provided an important support to assist in sustaining arts organizations and professional artists during the pandemic period. These emergent means of support by no means serve as a form of encouragement to the artists to cover some unforeseen losses for the arts and cultural sector. The impact of COVID-19 on the arts and cultural sector is likely to register elsewhere in the economy as well. People interact mostly across the globe through internet facilities. The period also exposed most artists to the use of WhatsApp, you tube, Instagram, twitter and face book to showcase their product. This invariably gave them publicity across the globe.

Most video clips are good art tools reference on media houses, serves as a source of education to the public. A good number of musicians and artists also produced graphics art works, jingles and the likes to educate the masses on the need to adhere to various precautionary measures released to the public domain by the Ministry of health in other to reduce the menace. Creative art industries in Nigeria have contributed a lot through their arts to reduce the spread of the virus disease. This can be observed through their playlets, graphics, poster design, hand bill and the likes. This paper is of the view that government at all levels, Philanthropic, reputable organizations should encourage the use of arts as a toolforchanging consumer preferences and behaviors during the post pandemic period.Government should sponsor artists to produce art work that will encourage public to embrace the vaccine recently procured by the Federal government.

Conclusion

From the forgoing, art and culture could be regarded as a veritable force that can be used to preserve people's identity. Art is a reflection of a group of people's life. A close study of selected artist's art and crafts shows that the theme of their work of arts are basically on the ideas and thoughts from Yoruba extract. The paper however revealed that there is a new orientation in art making throughout the globe, artsproduction during pandemic and post covid-19 has exposed most artists to the new normal. The new normal in the sense that artists have now embraced new market strategies, methods of production and improved patronages.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby made:

- * Government should support Artists by creating good working and enabling environment that will give them avenue for development.
- * Government should come up with a policy that will create more awareness for the development of our arts and cultural values in respect to identity.
- * Government, Philanthropic and multinational organizations should support and promote our traditional art and crafts for socio-economic development.

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**EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND SOCIOECONOMIC LESSONS
FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION IN
ADAMAWA STATE**

By

Aminu Alkali Abbas

Department Of Mass Communication,
Federal Polytechnic, Mubi

&

Usman Disa

Department Of Mass Communication,
Federal Polytechnic, Mubi

Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of social media platforms and socioeconomic lessons from COVID 19 pandemic information and communication in Adamawa State. More emphasis is given to impact, influence and the tools employed in the use of social media platforms. A survey method is adopted in this study where questionnaires are distributed to 150 respondents who work with the health centres in the state designated for COVID 19 pandemic. The study found that Whatsapp and Facebook were highly used as social media platforms for information and communication on COVID 19 pandemic. The platforms are effective for patients and medical personale interaction on the pandemic. Health centres also use social media platforms for contact tracing and to encourage patients to give more feedback on the pandemic. The study recommends that other social media platforms should also be employed for more enlightenment through information and communication on the COVID 19 pandemic.

Key words: *Social Media Platforms, Socioeconomic, COVID 19 Pandemic, Information and Communication.*

Background of the Study

Socioeconomic issues existed in the main stream media, newspaper, magazine, television for decades. While health and issues of contiguous diseases like Cholera, HIV/AIDS, Ebola etc continue to occupy media spaces for a long time. Media on the other have a deliberate and conscious effort to spread information, collating and analyzing data for the purpose of informing educating and entertaining the people with a view of making an appropriate decision (QasimAkinreti, 2007).

Social networking sites or services “are primarily web based and provides a collection of various ways for users to interact such as, chats, messaging, file sharing, blogging, discussion groups and more” (Haddow and Haddow 2009). Social media which are form of electronic communication have become the highest activity on the internet. They refers to social networking sites developed to specifically help people share their views and stayin touch with friends, relative and well-wishers. Social media are also internet sites where people interact freely, sharing and discussing information about each other using multimedia mix of personal pictures, videos and audio (Bruce and Duglas, 20008). Further, “social networking sites are applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles inviting friends and colleagues to have access those files and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other”(Kaplan and Haenlien, 2010).

Kaplan and Haenlien, (2010) created a classification scheme in their Business Horizons article, with six different types of social media platform which include:

- i. Collaborative projects: example Wikipedia
- ii. Blog and microblogs: example twitter
- iii. Content communities: example youtube
- iv. Social networking sites: example facebook
- v. Virtual game world: example world of Warcraft
- vi. Virtual social world: example second life.

Sequentially, marketers make use of social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, LinkedIn etc. to reach audiences or customers much wider through various use of content tools like text, photos, videos, animated GIF, Emoji, Hashtags etc.

All these usage attract less or a minimal fraction of cost to the marketers. Consumers can now post reviews of products and services, rate prices and ask questions or voice concerns directly to business owners or marketers through social media platforms.

Before the advent of social media the main stream media have massively proliferated the activities of health communication. Electronically health technology dominated all aspects of medicine which rapidly changed the pattern of interaction between health workers and their wards. Social networking sites allows individuals, business and other organizations to interact with one another and build relationships and communities online. When companies join these social channels, consumers can interact with them directly (Zhang et al, 2011). That interaction can be more personal to users than traditional methods of outbound communication. This personal interaction instill a feeling of loyalty and trust among followers and users of the network sites.

According to Adamawa State Ministry for Local Government Affairs (2019). The state was official created on August 27, 1991 with a land mass of about 39, 742, 125km. it has a total of twenty one (21) Local Government Administrative Councils which provide administrative convenience and an easy platform for accelerated development of the grassroots. The total population figure according to 2016 estimates stands at 5,178, 950. As an agrarian state, the major occupation are farming, fishing and commercial business.

Adamawa state became the 25th Nigerian state to record at least one case of Corona Virus, with the index case a journalist returnee from Kano State. From there, the virus continue spreading across the state. The state employed and invested a tremendous resources in ensuring people are protected against the pandemic. This include positioning people psychologically, socially and economic wise to contain the situation. The state commissioned three isolation centres; the major one in Yola (Central Zone), one in Mubi (Northern Zone) and another one in Ganye (Southern Zone). Many contact tracing mechanism were employed in getting the information of all the contacts who in one way or the other interacted with those who are tested positive. Based on these, the government engaged both the mainstream media and social media in educating, informing and sensitizing the populace on the dangers and protective measures towards COVID-19 pandemic.

Socioeconomically, the people are affected with the imposition of lockdown where both economic and social activities were in stand still. Meanwhile with the aftermath of the two (2) weeks lockdown prices of goods and services skyrocketed also followed by hardship and painful experience by the masses.

Statement of problem

Social media have had positive impacts, without doubt, but there are also concerns about its effectiveness on its users and the influence it could have on the health workers and their patients with COVID-19. Social media have created a dependency among its users especially marketers who are unable to do without it.

Hospital and health centres are growing more sophisticated in their use of social media and are for instance, using a great variety of platforms to sources for information. Other health workers are less positive about some of the ways social media affects their engagement with patient. Based on these views,

the question this research seeks to answer is, what is the effectiveness of social media platforms and socioeconomic lessons learnt from COVID-19 pandemic information and communication in Adamawa State.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the effectiveness of social media platforms for contact tracing of victims of COVID-19 pandemic in Adamawa State.
2. To determine the influence of social media on health personnel and their wards in Adamawa State.
3. To determine the major social media tools and platforms used in health communication in Adamawa State.

Research Questions

1. How effective is the social media platforms for contact tracing of victims of COVID-19 pandemic in Adamawa State?
2. How has the social media influence health workers and their wards in Adamawa State?
3. What are the major social media tools or platforms use in health communication in Adamawa State?

Theoretical Background

This study was anchored on the Uses and Gratification Theory as its theoretical framework. Uses and Gratification Theory is concerned and connected with how people use mass media to satisfy their needs. The theory deals with the utilization of the mass media and the satisfactions derived from the media. “The theory is based on the assumption that the audience is proactive and seeks media that satisfy their needs and that different media compete to satisfy each individual need” (Daramola, 2003). According to McQuail (2005), media use depends on the perceived satisfaction, need, wish or motive of the audience member is almost as old as media research itself.

However, various studies have explored the mainstream media using Uses and Gratification Theory to explain how people select, use and satisfy their choices regarding the mass media. Moreover, the Uses and Gratification Theory was successfully applied to a range of new media and related technologies on (Eighmey & McCord, 1998). The Uses and Gratifications Theory could be utilized to explore the impact of the new technologies on audience the audience; and theories of the Uses and Gratifications have been refined revised and extended accordingly (Jin, 2002). This argument reflects the need to explore the use of social media as a tool for effective health communication especially in interacting, tracing and sharing information among users of social media.

Methodology

The study deals with social survey as the primary approach to data generation. It is a method used in social and behavioural sciences to examine the attitudes believes values, perception, opinions and characteristics of a clearly defined population. Its goal is to provide a comprehensive and generalized proposition about human dispositions (Wimmer and Dominick 2011).

The population of the study consist of the health workers and their wards in the three isolation centres distributed across the three socioeconomically different zones of the state.

The population was stratified to these three main centres from which proportional samples were taken using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula to determine the sample size. This facilitated the emergence of a homogeneous stratum for sampling. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) observed that stratified sampling is more representative than simple random sampling if there is adequate and accurate information about the strata.

However, a sample of 150 health workers and their wards were selected from all the three main centres of the state. Fifty (50) health workers and their wards were selected from each centres making it to 150.

Self-administered structured questionnaire was used as the primary tool of data collection and descriptive statistics was used as the tool for data interpretation. Also data obtained were analysed using frequency tables, simple percentage of respondent's characteristics and responses to research questions.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Effectiveness of social media platforms and socioeconomic lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, information and communication in Adamawa state. Structured questionnaires were administered to a sample of 150 health workers and their wards whose responses are presented and analysed accordingly below. Table 1 presents data on the sex of the respondents.

Table 1: Gender of the respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	87	58
Female	63	42
Total	150	100

The data indicates that 78 (58%) of the health workers and their wards studied are male while 63 (42%) are female. The data point that there are more male health workers and their wards than female health workers and their wards in Adamawa state but the difference is minimal.

Table 2 presents data on the age range of the respondents.

Table 2: Age range of the respondents

Age bracket	Frequency	Percentage (%)
25 – 34	36	24
35 – 44	54	36
45 & above	60	40
Total	150	100

The data indicates that age bracket from 25 – 34 have 36 (24%) health workers and their wards, 35 – 44 have 54(36%) health workers and their wards and age bracket 45 and above have 60(40%).

Table 3 present the data for the question on “what are the ways do you interact through the social media”.

Table 3: ways of interaction on the social media.

Ways	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Picture messaging	78	52
Audio messaging	24	16
Video messaging	36	24
Text messaging	12	8
Total	150	100

The data indicates that 78 (52%) respondents interact through picture messaging, 24 (16%) of the respondents through audio messaging, 36 (24%) of the respondents through video messaging and 12 (8%) of the respondents through text messaging.

Table: 4 present the data for the question on “what is the advantage of marketing business products through the social media?”

Table: 4 present the data for the question on “how effective is the use of social media for information and communication?”

Table 4: Effectiveness of social media in collecting information and communication

Effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very effective	48	32
Effective	96	64
In-effective	6	4
Total	150	100

The data indicates that 48 (32%) of the respondents shows social media is very effective in collecting information and communication, 96 (64%) effective while 6(4%) ineffective.

Table: 5 present the data for the question on “what the social media platforms do you use for more information and communication?”

Table 5: Social media platforms used for more information and communication

Social media platforms	Frequency	Percentage (%)
WhatsApp	78	52
Facebook	48	32
Twitter	6	4
Instagram	12	8
Youtube	6	4
Others	0	0
Total	150	100

The data indicates that 78 (52%) of the respondents use WhatsApp for information and communication, 48 (32%) of the respondents use Facebook for information and communication, 6 (4%) of the respondent use Twitter for information and communication, 12 (8%) of the respondents use Instagram for information and communication, also 6 (4%) of the respondents use Youtube for information and communication, while 0(%) of the use other platforms for information and communication.

Table 6 presents the data of the question on “where do you often place your product messages on social media platforms?”

Table 6: Placement of message on social media platforms

Social media tools	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Status update	36	24
Voice message	48	32
Group chats	48	32
Contact/friends tags	18	12
Total	150	100

The data indicates 36 (24%) of the respondents place their messages on the status update, 48 (32%) place their message on voice message also 48 (32%) of the respondents place their message on group chats and 18 (12%) of the respondents place their messages on contact/friends tags.

Discussion of Findings

This study lays emphasis on the effectiveness of social media platforms and socioeconomic lessons from COVID-19 pandemic in Adamawa State. In this light, the use of social media in health communication allows both health personale and their wards to express and share their views on COVID-19 and other

health issues. This is in line with the theoretical framework of this study because both the health workers and their patients use the social media to satisfy their need for information on Corona Virus.

The study found out that isolation centres in Adamawa State highly use WhatsApp and Facebook in enhancing information on COVID-19. This has no doubt because WhatsApp support sending and receiving of variety of social media contents including text, photo, videos, documents, voice calls and well as locations. Moreover, WhatsApp messages and calls are secured with end to end encryption, meaning that no third party (including WhatsApp) can read or listen to them. WhatsApp has plenty of advantage over other platforms because it also has ability to track sent messages by using double blue ticks options. It use to send series of bulk messages to various targeted contacts or customers. WhatsApp has a customer base of 1 Billion people in over 180 countries (whatsapp.com, 2019). In addition, Facebook also allow individuals, to provide photos, videos, descriptions and testimonies where followers can like, react, comment on a product for others to see. To this end, the effectiveness of social media platforms have relatively help in improving the socioeconomic and psychological status of people through information and communication.

Conclusion

The aim of every communication effort is to generate understanding between two or more parties to achieve better result. In no doubt, hospitals and other health centres have other ways of interaction with their wards in isolation centres. Social Media efficiency, interactivity and speed made it possible for them to reach their wards instantly. WhatsApp and Facebook continues to operate as the best social media platforms that focus on building a strong messaging platforms and services that works fast to satisfy customer needs and reliability everywhere in the world. On top of this health workers in Adamawa State do not only use social media for traditional communication but also to create opportunity to enhance their work and inspire patients for favourable relationship.

Recommendations

Users of social media should appreciate the effectiveness of social media platforms in improving their socioeconomic life.

Hospitals and health centres should embrace health communication and understand the importance of social media platforms in enhancing their work.

Adamawa state government should diversify the health system by improving health communication especially on COVID-19 pandemic.

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**BURIAL POSTER SPEAKS: COMMUNICATIONS OF AGE, BEREAVEMENT AND GRIEF
FOLLOWING LOSS OF LOVED ONES IN EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA**

By

Ekpechu, Joseph Ogbonnaya Alo

Sociology Department

Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike Ebonyi State, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examined the extent to which captions in burial posters communicate age, bereavement and grief of loss of loved ones in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Data for the research were sourced from 32 burial posters found in three locations in the area, and qualitative data on grieving gotten from bereaved family members. It was found among other things that captions in burial posters communicate the age of the deceased depicting death as being timely or untimely. Captions in burial posters convey social status of the deceased upon death. It was concluded that age at death intervened for the kind of captions found in burial posters.

Key Words: Bereavement, burial posters, captions, communicate age, grief, loss of loved ones

EFFECTS OF FLOODING ON SMALL SCALE FARMERS IN MAKURDI, BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

By

Chinedu Lilian Mba

Department of Geography
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

&

Ewa Ebere

Department of Geography
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

Flood is an environmental problem as well as a global challenge. It has caused several damages both in developed and developing countries. In Nigeria, flooding is experienced annually in Makurdi, Benue state which houses the confluence of rivers Niger and Benue. This study examined the effects of flooding on small scale farmers in Makurdi, Benue state, Nigeria. For the purpose of the objectives of the research, 30 farmers were randomly sampled from 5 selected communities, making a total sample size of 150 farmers. Structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Data were analyzed through the use of frequency, percentage, mean scores and standard deviation. The result of the study indicated that the mean age was 45 years, 55.4% were male, 57% were married and 50% were illiterate while only 20.4% of the respondents completed primary school. The average farm size was 1.36ha while the mean year of farming experience was 18 years respectively. 74.2% of the farmers did not have access to extension services while majority (89.6%) practiced subsistent farming. The perceived effects of flooding by the respondents on their livelihood include, hunger and starvations (2.57), displacement from original settlements (2.58), loss of farms (2.75), loss of property (2.53), high incidence of poverty among the respondents (2.56), poor health status (2.38), loss of lives (2.27) and damages on roads (2.10). The introduction of flood-resistant crop species to withstand the effects of flooding should be encouraged in the study area.

Key words: Flooding, Effects, Small scale farmers, Markurdi Benue state, Nigeria.

Introduction

Climate change constitute a very serious threat to sustainable agricultural production and food security in many parts of the world (Adebayo et al 2012). Although climate is not new phenomenon, its recent usage especially in the context of development refers to change in the prevailing climate (Etuonovbe, 2011). Climate change is arguably the most threatening environmental problem of our times. According to Ajibade et al (2015) despite the high contribution of agriculture in the overall economy, it is challenged by many factors that are climate related disaster such as flood which cause a lot of problems to farmers.

Flood is an overflow of water that submerges land that is usually dry. The European union (EU) floods directives defines flood as a covering of land by water not originally covered by water. Flooding may occur as an overflow of water from water bodies such as a river, lake, ocean or dams. Some flood develops slowly, while others such as flash flood can develop in just a few minutes and without visible signs of rain (Okeleye, 2016). Flood water typically inundate farmland making the land unworkable and preventing crops from being planted or harvested, which can lead to shortage of food both for humans and

farm animals. The entire harvest of a country can be lost in extreme flood circumstances. Some tree species may not survive prolonged flooding of their root system (Ramakrishna et al, 2014).

Agriculture on the other hand can be defined as the science, art or practice of cultivating the soil, producing crops and raising livestock and in varying degrees the preparation and marketing of the resulting products (Nkwunonwo et al, 2015). The agricultural sector in Nigeria is prone particularly to the influence of climate change due to its reliance on rainfall and temperature. The 2012 Nigeria floods began in early July 2012, and killed about 363 people and displaced over 2100,000 people. Benue, Kogi, Delta, Edo and Imo states were the most affected in Nigeria (Bariweni et al, 2012). The flood took place in the mid-season and was at its peak during harvest period. NEMA (2012) estimated that Nigeria lost 28%, 22%, 17%, 31%, 20% and 14% of yam, cassava, sweet potato, rice, maize and sorghum respectively. The effect of that flood on agriculture indicates that the negative effect will be felt up to the next century (Okeleye, 2015). Agricultural production is likely to be severely affected by climate change thereby, putting some regional marginal agriculture production prone to danger.

Flooding in key agricultural production area can lead to wide spread damage to crops, fencing and livestock. Crop loss through rain damage, waterlogged soil and delays in harvesting are further intensified by transport problem due to flooded roads and damaged infrastructure. The after effect of reduced agricultural production area as food price increase due to shortage in supply (Nemine, 2015).

Earlier in 2012, the Nigeria meteorological agency released a report warning about torrential rainfall and consequent flooding (NEMA, 2013), what was unknown then was that over 5000 farmlands would be washed away. For farms around river Niger or linked to its tributaries, the effects were most grave. They further reported that 3,200 hectares of rice plantation were washed away in Anyamelum local government area alone in Anambra State. Flood disaster also destroyed large hectares of agricultural land with lots of crops in Benue state. The losses and damages also include loss of lives, destruction of fishponds bothering the rivers, rice farms, lots of livestock (cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry), irrigation infrastructure and equipment etc.

This situation is exacerbated by both natural and human factors. The natural factors are prolonged rainfall, poor management of flood plains and wet lands while human factors are urbanization, failure in engineering flood control structures, devastation of flood plains and wetlands by man over time. The flood affected areas like Wurukum, Idye, North Bank, Wadata, among others which are close to river Benue. Agriculture is a major industry in Benue and an estimated 85% of the population earn their living from agricultural activities.

Much research work has been carried out in different states in Nigeria, for instance the works of (Jonathan et al, 2020, Obeta 2014, Aderogba et al, 2012, Amaize 2011), but not with particular reference to the study area Makurdi, which is a hub for food production in Nigeria to know the effect of flood on agriculture, this is where this research work drives its relevance. The aim of this research work is to examine the effect of flood on small scale farmers in Makurdi, Benue state. The objectives were to (a) to identify the impact of flood in the study area. (b) to identify the causes of flood in the area. (c) to examine the effect of flood on small scale farmers in the area. (d) to suggest control measures for flood management

Research Methodology

Makurdi is located between latitude 7°30' N and 8°0'N and longitude 8°24'E and 8°E. Makurdi has enormous potentials in physical and human resource as well as provision of raw material for manufacturing and processing industries, Makurdi has a land area of 804km², the population of the study area is about 287,398 persons (NPC 2006). It is located in the plain of the river Benue, in the Benue trough where the relief is generally low-lying ranging from below 90 to 150m on the average. The river Benue is the main drainage channels traversing the town into the north and south bank. Makurdi town is basically composed of sedimentary rocks of which sandstone is the dominant rock type. The low-lying areas like Wadata are overlain by shale, sandstones. Some of these are exposed in part of the town. Soils

in the area reflect the geology; there are two major soil types in Makurdi town namely, hydromorphic soil and red ferrasols.

The climate of Makurdi is the tropical wet and dry type, Koppen's AW classification, with double maxima, the rainy season lasts from April to October with 5 months of dry season (November to March). Annual rainfall in Makurdi town is consistently high, with an average annual total of approximately 1173mm (Abah, 2012). Temperature in Makurdi is however generally high throughout the year with February and March as the hottest months, temperature in Makurdi varies from a daily of 40⁰c and a minimum of 22.5⁰c (Ologunorisa and Tov, 2006). The vegetation of Makurdi town is the guinea savannah type but has been adversely affected by human activities leading to the deforestation in many parts of the town. Makurdi is inhabited by many tribes with a population of 287,398 persons. These tribes include the Tivs, Idoma, Etilo, Jukun, Egede, Hausas, Yoruba's and Igbos. The Tivs are the dominant tribe. Makurdi town is made up largely of people who engage in civil service duties, commercial activities and agrarian peasantry.

Sample Survey and Data Collection

The primary data for this research was collected through a structured questionnaire. All the five (5) communities directly affected by flood were selected for the study namely, Achusa, Idye, Kuchautebe, Adeke, Wadata. From each of these affected communities, 30 farm households were randomly sampled making a total of 150 farm households. A total of 150 copies of questionnaire were randomly administered to the five sampled communities. The questionnaire was made up of relevant questions concerning flood and its effect on small scale farmers. Other sources of data include, personal observations, photographs and literatures reviews.

3.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the effect of flood on small scale farmers. This is because there were no much flood cases experienced this year in Makurdi during the research reconnaissance in the sample area. Therefore, past flooding occurrence basically of 2017 which is the most recent will be used to draw conclusions as well as form the basis of the analysis.

To ascertain the impact of flood in the study area, the study adopted the real limit mean decision criterion for likert scale data. One way ANOVA was used to test for the significance of the effect of flood on small scale farmers. Mean and standard deviation was used to explain the impact of flood in the study area.

Research Hypothesis

This work tested the following hypothesis:

Ho: There is no significant effect of flood on small scale farmers in Makurdi.

Results and Analysis

Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

From the result, 51% of the respondents were male while the remaining 49% were female. This shows that most of the respondents were male. Also, figure 3 highlighted the marital status of the respondents. As seen on the figure, 30.6%, 38.1%, 15.6% and 15.6% of the respondents were single, married, separated/divorced and widowed respectively. On the age of the respondents, the study discovered that 35.4%, 23.1%, 23.8% and 17.7% of the respondents were aged below 31 years, 31 to 40 years, 41 to 50 years and above 50 years. This shows that most of the respondents were aged 40 years and below.

Moreso, the results also showed that 11.6% of the respondents have no formal education and primary education as their highest education. Also, 25.9%, 28.6% and 22.4% of the respondents have SSCE/GCE, B.Sc/HND and postgraduate education as their completed education respectively. This showed that most of the respondents have at least secondary school education. What this means is that

most of the respondents have basic education and hence good for this study. Furthermore, figure 6 showcased the primary occupation of the respondents. From the figure, 12.2%, 15%, 4.8% and 25.2% of the respondents were civil servants, traders, artisans and farmers respectively. Also, 12.9%, 11.6%, 4.1% and 14.3% of the respondents were clergies, students, retirees and unemployed respectively.

From the results, 38.8%, 42.9% and 18.4% of the respondents have household sizes of 1 to 5, 6 to 10 and above 10 household members. This is an indication that most of the respondents as expected have large household sizes. On the relationship between the respondents and the household head, the study discovered that 28.6%, 7.5%, 17%, 24.5% and 22.4% of the respondents were the household head, spouse, child, relative and parent of household head respectively. Going further, the result for the number of years the respondents have lived in the area was shown that 13.6%, 25.2%, 19%, 12.2% and 29.9% of the respondents have lived for below 5 years, 5 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years and 21 years and above respectively. This showed that most of the respondents have lived for more than 10 years in the area. The implication of this is that the respondents have proper knowledge of the area and could answer the questions in the questionnaire.

Impact of flood in the study area

To ascertain the impact of flood in the study area, the study adopted the real limit mean decision criterion for likert scale data. Based on this method, means of 1 to 1.40 shows slighter impact, 1.5 to 2.4 indicate less impact, 2.5 to 3.4 indicates great impact and 3.5 and above as the greatest impact. Based on this, the cluster summary mean value for the enumerated areas fell in between 2.5 to 3.4.

Table 1 depicted the impact of flood in Makurdi, Benue state, Nigeria. From the table, all the respondents with mean values above cut-off mean of 2.5 for acceptance agreed that flood enters people's compound this shows that the flood was much and got to the extent of entering compounds in Makurdi. The question of the extent of flood coverage shows that the mean of the item in all the areas were more than the cut-off mean (2.5) which depicts that the flood covered the roads. Also, the result for whether flood covered the roads in all the areas was higher than the cut-off mean for acceptance of 2.5 This means that the flood in Makurdi covered the roads and obstructed vehicular movement. More so, the mean values above 2.5 shows that the flood entered farmlands in all the areas enumerated. This is an indication that farm yield was affected through loss of farm nutrients and loss of farm inputs.

Furthermore, the results for whether the flood entered streams in all the areas or not, were higher than the cut-off mean of 2.5. This depicts that the flood entered the streams in Makurdi which affected the regular household usage of the streams. In the same way, on whether the flood entered markets in the areas enumerated or not, the mean in all the areas were above 2.5 cut-off mean for acceptance. This showed that the flood reached markets in the study area and affected commercial activities.

Table 1: Impact of flood in the study area

Items	All areas	Wadata	Idye	Adeke	Achusa	Kucha Utebe
Flood enters people's compound	3.67(.67)	3.50(.68)	3.93(.26)	3.90(.31)	4.0(.00)	3.07(1.01)
Flood cover roads	3.27(.89)	3.30(.65)	3.57(.63)	3.40(.68)	3.45(1.02)	2.67(1.09)
Flood enters farms	3.88(.39)	3.50(.68)	4.0(.00)	4.0(.00)	4.0(.00)	3.93(.25)
Flood enters streams	3.39(.65)	3.70(.47)	3.21(.69)	3.40(.68)	3.31(.81)	3.30(.47)
Flood enters market	3.24 (.80)	3.47(.68)	3.21(.68)	3.50(.68)	3.21(.90)	2.80(.76)
Cluster summary	3.24(.28)	3.30(.41)	3.21(.38)	3.40(.29)	3.21(.38)	2.67(.50)

Source: Survey, 2018.

Causes of flood in the study area

Table 2 identified the causes of flood in the study area. From the results, lack of drainage channel with means above 2.5 was accepted by the respondents in all the areas are among the causes flood in Benue state. Also, urbanization like building on drainage channels with mean above the cut-off (or

minimum mean for acceptance) was accepted among the causes of flood in the state. Similarly, with mean above the cut-off mean (benchmark mean), the respondents accepted that river Benue spill causes flooding in Makurdi.

Furthermore, with mean ranging from 2.62 to 3.20 the respondents accepted that heavy and intense rainfall causes flooding in Makurdi, Benue state. This was based on the mid-point or cut-off means which were above 2.5 minimum mean for acceptance. More so, the respondents indicated in all the enumerated areas with means above the mid-point mean that high water table is among the causes of flooding in Benue state, Nigeria. On whether human activities like blocking of drainage channel causes the flooding in Benue state, the mean gotten in all the enumerated areas were above 3. This means that the means were above the minimum mean for acceptance. Based on this, the study accepts that human activities cause the flooding in Benue state of Nigeria. The result here showed that in all the areas enumerated, the causes of flooding were the same and were lack of drainage channel, urbanization, River Benue spill, heavy and intense rainfall, high water table and human activities.

Table 2: Identification of causes of flood in the study area

Items	All areas	Wadata	Idye	Adeke	Achusa	Kucha Utebe
Lack of drainage channel	3.52(.70)	3.23(.63)	3.72(.42)	4.00(.00)	3.2(.87)	3.33(.80)
Urbanization like building on drainage channel	3.27(.89)	3.60(.50)	4.00(.00)	4.00(.00)	3.69(.66)	3.60(.50)
River Benue spill	3.12(.80)	3.40(.50)	3.00(.86)	3.30(1.02)	2.72(.92)	3.17(.38)
Heavy and intense rainfall	3.01(.86)	3.20(.76)	3.07(.90)	3.00(.91)	23.62(.94)	3.13(.73)
High water table	3.11 (.80)	3.37(.49)	2.93(.68)	3.00(.68)	2.79(.77)	3.43(.73)
Human activities like blocking of drainage channel	3.24(.28)	3.37(.81)	3.71(.46)	3.60(.50)	4.00(.00)	3.13(.73)

Source: Survey, 2018.

The effects of flood on small scale farmers in the study area

The result for the effect of flood on small scale farmers showed that the respondents in all the sampled areas accepted with means ranging from 2.9 to 4.0 that the flooding led to loss/lack of labour for farming activities. Also, with means ranging from 3.57 to 4.0, the respondents equally accepted that the flooding has led to reduction in farm yield. More so, the respondents with means of 3.36 to 4.0 accepted that the flooding have made it difficult to farm, the study discovered with means ranging from 3.0 to 3.73 that respondents in Wadata, Idye, Adeke and Kucha Utebe accepted it. However, the respondents from Achusa with a mean of 2.41 which was lower than the minimum means for acceptance of 2.5 rejected that farmers being homeless as a result of the flooding have made it difficult to farm.

On the other hand, the respondents in all the areas sampled with means ranging from 2.5 to 3.37 indicated that flooding has led to high cost of farming. Furthermore, they indicated in all the enumerated areas with means ranging from 3.07 to 4.0 that the flooding incidence has led to low profitability and motivation to farm. Similarly, the respondents in all the enumerated areas with means ranging from 2.5 to 3.33 accepted that the flooding incidence has led to poor quality of farm inputs. These showed that the flood incidence in Makurdi, Benue state Nigeria affected majorly the small scale farmers and agriculture generally in Wadata, Idye, Adeke, Achusa and Kucha Utebe through loss/ lack of labour for farming activities, reduction in farm yield, loss of farm produce, difficulty to farm because of homelessness caused by the flood, high cost of farming, low profitability and motivation to farm and poor quality of farm inputs. However, the flood incidence did not make it difficult for farmers to farm in Achusa because the incidence made them homeless.

Table 3: Effects of flood on small scale farmers in the study area

Items	All areas	Wadata	Idye	Adeke	Achusa	Kucha Utebe
Loss/lack of labour for farming activities due to flood	3.59(.69)	3.67(.48)	3.64(.62)	4.00(.00)	2.90(.98)	3.07(.47)
Reduction in farm yield due to	3.83(.38)	3.57(.50)	3.79(.42)	4.00(.00)	4.00(.00)	3.80(.41)

flood						
Loss of farm produce because of flood	3.68(.62)	3.57(.50)	3.36(1.06)	3.70(.47)	4.00(.00)	3.77(.43)
Difficulty to farm as result of being rendered homeless by the flood	3.25(.87)	3.67(.48)	3.00(1.02)	3.40(.68)	2.41(.95)	3.73(.58)
High cost of farming because of flood	3.09(.78)	3.537(.49)	3.36(.62)	3.10(.71)	2.50(.95)	3.13(.73)
Low profitability and motivation to farm	3.52(.75)	3.50(.51)	3.79(.38)	3.30(.92)	4.00(.00)	3.07(.94)
Poor quality of farm inputs	2.95(1.03)	3.33(.92)	2.50(.75)	3.20(1.00)	2.55(1.38)	3.13(.73)

ESource: Survey, 2018.

Control measures for flood in the study area

Table 4 depicts the control measures to flood incidence in the sampled areas of Makurdi, Benue state, Nigeria. From the table, respondents from Wadata, Idye, Adeke and Kucha Utebe with means of 3.23, 3.57, 3.30 respectively accepted that dredging of River Benue would help in controlling the flood in Makurdi, Benue state. on the other hand, respondents from Achusa with mean of 2.41 rejected the idea that dredging of River Benue will help in controlling the flood in Makurdi. This was because the mean was less than the minimum mean of acceptance value at 2.5. Also, respondents in all the sampled areas with means ranging from 2.50 to 4.0 accepted that planning for city development to avoid blocking drainage channels will help in controlling the flood in Makurdi. More so, with means ranging from 2.60 to 4.0, the respondents in all the enumerated areas accepted that opening up closed drainage channels is among the measures to be used to control the flood in the Makurdi.

Furthermore, with mean values ranging from 2.57 to 4.0, the respondents accepted that building of new drainage channels is among the measures to be used to control the flood. Similarly, with mean values ranging from 2.63 to 4.0, the respondents indicated that building canals is among the measures to be used to control the flood in the study area. In the same way, respondents from Wadata, Idye, Adeke and Kucha Utebe with means of 2.70, 2.86, 3.0 and 2.70 respectively accepted that ensuring accountability in ecological fund usage is a vital measure to be used to control the flood in the state. on the other hand, respondents form Achusa with mean of 2.31 (which was less than the minimum mean for acceptance) rejected that ensuring accountability in the ecological fund usage is among the control measures for flood in Benue state.

In the question of whether gathering or harvesting rain water for home use could be used to control flood in Markurdi or not, the study discovered that the respondents from Achusa and Kucha Utebe areas with mean of 2.0 and 2.23 rejected that it could be used for it. However, respondents from Wadata, Idye and Adeke with means of 3.0, 2.57 and 3.0 accepted that gathering or harvesting rain water for home use could be used to control flood in Benue state. Going further, the respondents in all the sampled areas indicated that destroying all illegal structures could be used as a control measure to flooding in Benue state. from the foregoing, it could be seen that dragging of River Benue, planning for city development, opening closed drainages, building new drainage channels, building canals, ensuring accountability in ecological fund use, gathering or harvesting rain water for home use and destroying of illegal structures are the control measures for flooding in Benue state, Nigeria.

Table 4:Control measures for flood in the study area

Items	All areas	Wadata	Idye	Adeke	Achusa	Kucha Utebe
Dredging of River Benue	3.67(.67)	3.50(.68)	3.57(.63)	3.80(.41)	2.41(.82)	3.30(1.02)
Planning for city development to avoid blocking drainage channels	3.27(.91)	3.32(.90)	3.86(.36)	4.00(.00)	3.90(.31)	2.90(1.03)
Opening up closed drainages	3.42(.96)	2.50(1.17)	3.93(.26)	3.70(.47)	4.00(.00)	2.90(.25)
Building new drainage channels	3.42(.94)	2.60(1.13)	4.00(.00)	3.70(.47)	4.00(.00)	2.57(.47)
Building canals	3.31(.92)	2.70(.99)	3.93(.26)	3.00(.79)	4.00(.00)	2.63(1.19)

Ensuring accountability in ecological fund use	2.71(.97)	22.77(.73)	2.86(.85)	3.00(.79)	2.31(.93)	2.70(1.02)
Gathering or harvesting of rain water for home use	2.57(.93)	2.70(1.12)	2.57(.84)	3.00(1.02)	2.00(.66)	2.23(.73)
Destroying of illegal structures	2.95(.99)	3.00(.95)	2.79(.88)	3.50(.68)	2.50(.95)	2.50(1.14)

Source: Survey, 2018.

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant effect of flood on small scale farmers in Makurdi

Table 5: ANOVA table for the significance of the effect of flood on small scale farmers

	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.57	4	.14	.66	.62
With Groups	6.52	30	22		
Total	7.09	34			

Source: Survey, 2018.

The result presented on Table 5 showed the ANOVA result of significance of the difference between the sampled areas on the effects of flood on small scale farmers in Makurdi, Benue state, Nigeria. From the Table 5, between groups sum of squares which showcases the differences across the sampled areas was 0.57 while the within groups difference which showcases the difference inside the groups was 6.52. This indicates that the difference was visibly more within the groups than between the group. This depicts insignificance of the difference. To confirm if the difference was significant or not, the study used the probability value. The probability value of the difference of 0.62 was higher than the maximum probability value for significance of 0.05. This also depicts insignificance of the difference. Based on this, the study accepted the null hypothesis and concludes that no significant difference within the sampled areas on the effects of flood on small scale farmers in Makurdi.

Recommendations

Makurdi is located on the plain of the Benue troughs and this is a problem because the surface construction help induce flood hazard event and also the presence of valley that serves as a pot for water accumulation and also the presence of river Benue flood are natural event and human activities only influences the frequency and severity of floods. However, the causes of flood and effect can be minimized to an applicable level if we work in agreement.

Literature has made it clear that the best defense is the way people treat their environment and make good use of weather predictions. In this study an attempt has been made in proffering very significant flood mitigation strategies. These strategies are itemized below.

- Trees should be planted along the river banks. Fringe vegetation plays a major role in making the soil capable of absorbing flood water overflowing it banks, fringe vegetation also slows down the rate of flow of water the planting of trees should also be strongly encourage.
- Earth levees should be constructed along the river bank that is quite low and readily allows spilling most especially around Wadata.
- The government should establish a well-equipped and professionally staffed meteorological station that will provide very effective early warning services for all hazards especially those ones that are meteoritic in nature (such as flooding) an early warning system device which records earth movement as well as weather system and it is capable of detecting any abnormal development and send out signal to the effect.
- If open land is available, flood hazard along a stream may be greatly reduced by the use of retention ponds. These ponds are large basins that trap some of the surface runoff, keeping it

from flowing immediately into the stream, they maybe elaborate artificial structures, or in the simplest case. Field clammed by pile up soil.

- Construction of drainage channel should not be made a political issue where contracts for channel construction are awarded based on personal interests rather professionalism should be the watch word in trying to construct drainage channels therefore, the service of professionals like hydrologist, geologist, geographer, soil scientist should be employed.
- It is also recommended that credit facilities should be given to farmers in communities at a very low interest rate so as to promote production.

Conclusion

For farmers in the study area, the nature of flood, that is the frequency of flood, effect of flood, degree of flood and the type of flood have changed a lot of things in their standard of living. Each household who basically have agriculture as their primary occupation, had no prior coping strategies before the flood, thus making them more vulnerable to the extreme weather event.

Flood has become a frequent re-occurring hazard in Makurdi. The annual rainfall amount was low, but flood event still increases. So, these increase in flood events with decreases in annual rainfall amount shows that the flood hazard keep changing from a natural phenomenon to a man-made act. Rainfall is just playing its natural role but now acting as a sub-agent in causing flood hazard in Makurdi.

Losses of farmland, loss of properties are amongst the significant effect of flood in the study area. For the small scale farmers, this obviously reduced their production coupled with their inability to get loan from either bank or the government. Most of the households are poor, discourage and not enlightened. Majority have taken into motorcycle transport to sustain their families. If this trend continues, the number of farmers will drastically reduce which will also lead to shortage of food and high cost of living.

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**THOMAS KUHN'S SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN POST
COVID-19 NIGERIA: A CRITIQUE**

By

Louis Obi

School Of General Studies
Imo State Polytechnic Umuagwo –Ohaji

&

Chinyeaka Cyriacus Onyenekwe

School Of General Studies
Imo State Polytechnic, Umuagwo

&

Awurumibe, Douglas N.U.

School Of General Studies
Imo State Polytechnic, Umuagwo

Abstract

It is an incontrovertible fact that many lives were lost and still being lost to covid-19 pandemic as a result of the bureaucratic nature of western science. The upsurge and the inability to contain the spread of the virus have dealt a serious blow to the claim that western science and technology has the solution to virtually all the problems in the world. The seemingly hopelessness in the face of the devastating effect of covid-19 has affected global economy; Nigeria is not left out. In a situation like the above, Thomas Kuhn proposes scientific revolution – paradigm shift from the status quo. This paper aims at critical analysis of Thomas Kuhn's scientific revolution as a panacea for socio-economic development in post covid-19 Nigeria. This paper adopts critical analysis research method. The data is generated from both primary and secondary sources. It is the recommendation of this paper that for sustainable socio-economic development in the post covid-19, Nigeria should embrace a paradigm shift in all aspects of her endeavor.

Keywords: Science, Development, Revolution, Covid-19.

Introduction

Western science and sophisticated technology have no doubt made an explosive and tremendous impact on human society. Such explosive impact has some far reaching consequences for the society. Often we hear of the expression Paradox of Western Science and Technology which means that the many advances of science and technical endeavours have improved the quality of human life, and are destroying life as well. However, covid-19 pandemic has in no small measure vitiated the claims that western science is the panacea to global problem. The pandemic not only altered global activities but also kept the entire world to its lowest ebb in the history of mankind.

The greatest lesson to learn from this scenario is for every country to develop its own technology that is in tandem with the needs and aspirations of its citizens. A case study is Nigeria. In spite of the numerous unprecedented achievements of science in modern times, Nigeria is yet to experience progress and development which are said to accompany such technology. A little going down the memory lane will enlighten us the more. During the covid-19 lockdown in Nigeria, most of the students were not able to participate in the virtual learning because of lack of basic materials. What about the economy, social and political lives of the citizens? Consequently, Nigeria immediately went into recession simply because the

country is dependent on other countries for virtually everything. Even China where the virus originated from did not go into recession because the country uses indigenous technology and products.

It is as a result of similar scenarios in the past that Nigeria is enmeshed in developmental quagmire. In a situation of dilemma, the best option is to take the bull by the horns. Therefore, given the hopelessness Nigeria found itself during the peak of covid-19, it is now time to take stock, make a detour and re-strategize for future occurrence. This paper aims at a critique of Thomas Kuhn's notion of scientific revolution as it relates to socio-economic development of Nigeria in post covid-19 period. Kuhn's idea of scientific revolution centers on jettisoning a paradigm that seems incapable of providing solutions to problems which it originally sets out to solve. The paper employs critical analysis of research method. The data is gotten from both primary and secondary sources. It is strongly recommended that owing to failure of erstwhile dependence on western science, Nigeria should adopt a paradigm shift in her future endeavours.

Conceptual Explications

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Coronavirus disease 2019 is not the first corona virus in human history. One of the various pandemics in the 21st century was the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) belongs to the corona virus family. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a novel coronavirus now called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China (CDC, 2019). It was initially reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019. Thereafter, on January 30, 2020, the WHO declared the Covid-19 outbreak a global health emergency (Gallegos, 2029, Ramzy & McNeil, 2020). It was on March 11, 2020, that the WHO declared it a global pandemic, its first such designation since declaring H1N1 influenza a pandemic in 2009 (The New York Times, 11, March). Illness caused by SARS-CoV-2 was termed COVID-19 by the WHO, the acronym derived from coronavirus disease 2019. It should be noted that the major challenge and mystery shrouding the virus is the means of transmission. According to Nigeria Center for Disease Control (NCDC) and WHO, when a person with coronavirus coughs or exhales, droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch the virus by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth (NCDC).

The more worrisome aspect is the evidence of asymptomatic transmission. This means that a person could be infected and spread the virus without showing clinical signs. The Covid-19 could appropriately be described as the greatest global health emergency in the 21st century. From one city to the entire world, the viral infection diffused aggressively with blatant disregard for gender, age, race, social status, national boundaries and the level of development (Osayemi, 2020). In a response to 'flatten the curve' (Loeb, 2020) governments had to enforce border shutdowns, travel restrictions and quarantine (AL Jazeera News, 20th March; UK GOV, 2020) in countries which constitute the world's largest economies, sparking fears of an impending economic crisis and recession (Bucketal, 2020). Thus following the closure of borders, travel restrictions and quarantine, the global economy was seriously affected.

The first coronavirus case to be reported in Nigeria was confirmed on Thursday, 27th February, 2020. Ehanire (2020) reports that the index case is an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria. He returned from Milan, Italy to Lagos, Nigeria on 25th February, 2020. Even though at the outset of the outbreak of the pandemic, societies, international organizations and associations vigorously exchanged ideas and updates, no immediate solution was found. Not until recently when some countries had to fund some companies to come up with vaccines. However, it should be reported that each country is interested in the well-being of its citizens.

Scientific Revolution

The concept scientific revolution defies any attempt at appropriate definition. This is due to divergent opinions and more so, it is a fusion of two unlikely words. Thus the best that can be done here is to offer a

simple description. Scientific revolution could or be likened to political revolution. The slight difference is that while political revolution calls for the removal of existing political government, scientific revolution involves a revision or replacement of existing scientific practice or belief. The term “revolution” was a phrase so much used in political parlance. The question begging for an answer is how can revolution be used in sciences, that is, why should a change of paradigm be called a revolution?

The term scientific revolution gained much prominence in the 21st century through the work of a scientist turned philosopher Thomas Kuhn. In a bid to account for the possibility of revolution in science, Kuhn makes a comparison with political revolution. According to Kuhn, political revolutions are inaugurated when it is observed that existing institutions have ceased adequately to meet the problems posed by an environment that they have in part created. Similarly, scientific revolutions are inaugurated by a growing sense, that an existing paradigm has ceased to function adequately in the exploration of an aspect of nature which that paradigm itself had previously led the way. Thus, Kuhn (1970:92) concludes that in both political and scientific development, the sense of malfunction that can lead to crisis is prerequisite to revolution. What actually does scientific revolution mean?

According to Kuhn (1970:92) scientific revolutions are those non-cumulative developmental episodes in which an older paradigm is replaced in whole or in part by an incompatible new one. It is pertinent to understand what paradigm is all about. Paradigm is a universally recognized scientific achievement that for a time provides model problems and solutions for a community of a community of practitioners (Kuhn, 1970:viii). A paradigm simply means an accepted model, a pattern or exemplar. It is important to expatiate on paradigm because it is germane to understanding Kuhn’s notion of scientific revolution. For instance Kuhn (1970:44) sees paradigm as what the members of a certain scientific community have in common. By this it means that paradigm is a model for practitioners who are engaged in realization of a particular project and not what all scientists have in common. Therefore, once there is a replacement of a paradigm by another as a result of its inability to solve problem, there is a paradigm shift; which implies a revolution. Some notable scientific revolutions in the 21st century are those of Copernicus, Newton and Einstein.

Development

Development is multi-dimensional in nature. In agreement with the multi-dimensional nature of development, Seers (Cited in Okereke, 2002:11) posits that:

The questions to ask about a country’s development are therefore; what has been happening to poverty? And what has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call result “development” even if per capita income doubled.

Development embraces multifarious economic and social objectives, concerned with the distribution of income, provision of basic needs and the real and psychological well-being of the people (Thirlwall, 2008:40). At the foundation of development according to Goulet (cited in Thirlwall, 2008:38) are three basic components namely life-sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. These represent common goals and aspirations of all individuals and societies. Life-sustenance relates to the provision of basic human needs such as food, clothing, housing and education. Self-esteem is concerned with independence and self respect. Freedom involves the capability of a people to determine their own destiny without undue external interference. No country which cannot raise her citizens from poverty, provide basic needs and dependent on another country for industrialization can claim to be developed.

According to Todaro (1979:98) development implies a situation where there has been an improvement in the basic needs, when economic progress has contributed to a greater sense of self-esteem for the country and individuals within it, and when material advancement has expanded the range of choice for individuals. In his assessment of development, Ake (1996:125) sees development as a process by which

people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choice and values. Thus, development is not a project but a process that must involve the people.

The UNDP (1990: iii) reports that we are rediscovering the essential truth that people must be at the center of all development. Development should be viewed as people inspired, human centered, citizen anchored (Obasanjo and Mabo, 1991:95). In other words, people should be seen as the agent of change and development, and development should directly affect the quality of life and well-being of mankind (Okereke and Ikpe, 2002:12). From the foregoing, it is deducible that development is a process which involves conscious efforts aimed at quantitative and qualitative changes through the use of natural and human resources to bring about improvement in the standard of living of the people concerned.

Scientific Revolution and Development in Nigeria

Going through history, it is observed that revolutions all over the world are not constantly sought except under extreme circumstances. The situation of Nigeria presently especially since the outbreak of Covid19 pandemic requires serious and urgent attention, thus there is need for a radical approach in her scientific enterprise.

Science does not progress via accretion but through discontinuities. Nigeria has in the past exploited and experimented with various methods of tackling her numerous challenges; be it in education, agriculture, health, politics, infrastructure and other areas. It is stating the obvious that in all these areas, the country has not fared better. Therefore, it is not out of place to advocate for a radical change in order to start afresh.

Development is human enterprise that is culture-specific in content and manifestation. Hence, the best form of development is the endogenous type which stems from within the people. Therefore for development to be meaningful, it must aim at the realization of the potential of human personality. According to Isioto et al (2019) one of the indices by which a nation's growth and advancement can be measured is by her technologic endowment and not by the level of her endowment in natural and human resources. Let us at this juncture, have a glimpse into scientific practice of Nigeria.

The Nature of Scientific Practice in Nigeria

Presently, Nigeria practices science based on western orientation: be it in education, agriculture, health, politics, infrastructure and so on. Science should be approached from socio-cultural needs of a people. Every scientific initiative should be dependent on the peculiarity of the people geared towards meeting their local needs. Nigerians have traditional ways of solving their problems until they came into contact with the colonial masters. Such processes like textile weaving, spinning and dyeing, ginning, carding, had been a well-established occupation in pre-colonial Nigeria. Though not the thrust of this work, it has to be reported here, that several studies have been done on the traditional skills of the pre-colonial Nigeria, with evidence regarding the positive contributions of indigenous skills and techniques, particularly to the development and growth of various Nigerian communities before colonialism. For example, the iron technology of the Nok culture around Jos, Bauchi, Daima, Kano and Zaria is dated to about 500B.C. Archeologists have excavated iron spears and axes at Nok, and iron smelting furnaces had been discovered in Taruga, and it is believed to have contributed to the development of agriculture in that area, while there had been ample evidence regarding to use of iron around the Kanji Dam in the present Niger State of Nigeria, around 2nd century B.C. which had contributed to the building of canoe and other agricultural implements around the region among others (Isioto et al). Development must be anchored on an indigenous technology if it has to succeed. According to Ake (cited in Efemini, 2010:42) development occurs in so far as it amounts to the pursuit of objectives set by the people themselves in their own interest and pursued by means of their own resources. There are several factors that have over the years affected the practice of science and development in Nigeria. Some of these are highlighted below.

Indigenous Nigerian Scientific Challenges

There are numerous challenges confronting development of indigenous science in Nigeria which became more manifest during the peak of covid19. Some are internal and others are external. However in this work, these could be reduced to the following factors: Language, Education and Politics. Language is at the root of learning and imparting of knowledge without which education cannot take place, and the standard of education of a given society determines the leadership of that society. Thus, these seem to be a correlation between language, education and politics. The question begging for an answer here is: what type of language, education and leadership does Nigeria have?

Language is a social construct through which a particular group of people is identified. It plays a vital role in the education of a people. It is very easy to identify a person through his/her language. Languages are immensely complicated structures. One realizes how complicated language is when trying to learn it as a second language. All languages are different and in part, the world is seen differently through the eyes of speakers' of different languages. It is obvious that language is much more than the external expression and communication of internal thoughts formulated independently of their verbalization (The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 1974:642-655). One's mother tongue is intimately and in all sorts of details related to the rest of one's life in a community and to smaller groups within that community. Language is transmitted culturally; that is, it is learned.

Education can be viewed as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of a society. In this sense, it is equivalent to socialization or enculturation. Education is one of the ingredients of development. However, the Nigerian educational system in its modern form is a colonial creation. In other words, it can be argued that under the colonial rule, education that was externally oriented was foisted on Nigeria. British main interest during the colonial era was the exploitation of resources in Nigeria. Yesufu (1996:53) captures it thus:

Britain's interest, until and during the Second World War, was how to develop, harness and exploit these resources for the benefit of the metropolis. Cotton, groundnut, rubber and palm oil, tin and columbite, were of direct interest to British industries, and constitute the main target of the Nigerian colonial government.

Basically, what the British gave to Nigeria in form of education was Western oriented theoretical aspect of knowledge devoid of the practical. Education is at the root of development, however because of the exploitative tendencies of the British; they concealed from the onset the essential aspect of knowledge from Nigerians.

Politics basically has to do with the art of governance. However, political culture and ideology as being perceived in Nigeria is short of the real meaning of it. What is called politics in Nigeria is simply a trivialization of participatory democracy. It is an obstacle to development because it offers legitimacy to Nigerian leaders without giving real power to the people. Little wonder the recent agitations and calls for return to regional system of government.

Towards a New Scientific Practice in post covid19 Nigeria

It is inevitable that the present western scientific paradigm has failed to address Nigerian's developmental challenges. According to Kuhn whenever it is discovered that a particular paradigm is no longer capable of solving a problem, an anomaly sets in which eventually leads to crisis. A lot of reasons can be adduced for scientific crises in Nigeria. These include:

- Negative influence posed by the colonial masters
- Abnegation of indigenous knowledge
- Improper application of western education
- Conflict of interest in technology transfer
- Faulty industrial policies after independence
- Absence of purposeful leadership

The above identified crises can be corrected if Nigeria adopts a new ideological framework- one that encapsulates the country's developmental objectives. Moreover, such framework or paradigm must evolve from the socio-cultural needs of the people. Science is an intrinsically social activity.

Recommendations

It is being recommended here that for Nigeria to achieve paradigm shift in science and enhance her national development especially in this post covid-19, the following should be adhered to:

1. Securing and using Nigerian's indigenous language.
2. Adopting new information technology.
3. Addressing Nigerian's local needs.
4. Building strong institutions geared towards knowledge production and application.
5. Nurturing and harvesting ethnic diversity.
6. Government should invest heavily on research and innovation.

Conclusion

Science and development are essentially human-centered. According to Kuhn (1970:210) scientific knowledge, like language, is intrinsically the common property of a group or else nothing at all. To understand it we shall need to know the special characteristics of the groups that create and use it. Nigeria as a country has peculiar problems that require exceptional methods of solving them since previous approaches have proved abortive. Though it may not be easy at the beginning, but what is mostly needed is radical process devoid of unnecessary external interference. The country has both the potential and capability to rewrite her history from being an underdeveloped nation to a developed one through a paradigm shift by wholeheartedly embracing indigenous technology.

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PEACEMAKING AND PEACEBUILDING VIS A VIS COMMUNITY POLICING IN SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA: THE BAKASSI BOYS EXAMPLE

By

Obi, Louis U.

School Of General Studies

Imo State Polytechnic Umuagwo-Ohaji

&

Chukwu Peter Damian Ezechi

School Of General Studies

Imo State Polytechnic Umuagwo-Ohaji

Abstract

Over the years, conflicts and other forms of crimes seem to be on the increase in Southeastern region of Nigeria because appropriate measures to checkmate them have not been applied by both the government and the citizens. Predominantly, some of the conflicts include land and boundary disputes, community leadership tussles, farmer-herders interface, oil related triggers, cultism, self-determination agitations and civil protests. The conventional methods of using traditional security agents over the years have not achieved much in terms of curbing or abetting conflicts and criminalities in the region. The recently established community policing should be charged with the sole responsibility of ensuring peace building among the warring communities. This paper aims at qualitatively exploring the approach of the original Bakassi Boys in tackling armed robbery in the past and applies it to peace building and conflict resolutions among warring communities in the zone. This paper adopts exploratory research method. Data is mainly generated from secondary sources. It is the submission of this paper that for there to be security of lives and property occasioned by violent conflicts in the region, a robust and refined method used by the Bakassi Boys should be adopted.

Keywords: Peace building, conflict, community, policing.

Introduction

The rising incidence of internecine cum intercommunal conflicts and other forms of crimes in the southeastern region of Nigeria in recent years poses monumental danger to lives and property of the people of the zone. It is observed consistently that conflicts in the Southeastern states of the country are predominantly related to land ownership and boundary disputes, chieftaincy and community leadership tussle, political contestation and thuggery, and youth agitations. Others include: cultism, vigilante operations and criminality, farmers-herders impasse, people's perceptions and reactions to government policies and programmes, oil-related triggers, self-determination agitations and civil unrests.

It should equally be noted that the incidence and prevalence of the above mentioned types of conflicts are not uniform across the states in the zone; rather, they are different and sometimes peculiar in their progression from one state to the other. Some of the not too distance prominent and unique conflicts are the Ezza and Ezillo communal land conflict in Ebonyi State, the protracted and proliferation of Ezeship tussles in some communities in Imo State, the ubiquitous farmers-herders conflict in Nimbo, Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, Oil-related and cultism conflicts in the oil producing communities of Ohaji-Egbema and Oguta LGA in Imo State, inter-state boundary conflict between Ishiagu community in Ivo LGA of Ebonyi State and Umulokpa community in Isiochi LGA of Abia State, and self-determination agitations and protests in the major centers across the South East zone. And just

recently, the UsakaUkwa and Azunchai communities of Ikwuano LGA of Abia State and ObotoAkara LGA of Akwalbom State. These conflicts, violence and insurgency have led to loss of lives and properties, and most often crippled economic activities in those areas.

The traditional approaches by government of sending security agents, setting up reconciliation and dispute committees, have not been able to bring solutions to the affected areas. Also, most of the hitherto programmes of government aimed at achieving peace were either half measures or out rightly rejected by the warring parties. The recently established community policing by the South East governors was targeted at ameliorating the excesses of criminals in the zone. However, the impact of their establishment is yet to be felt, hence it is recommended that a unique and robust task such as resolution of communal violent conflicts be assigned to them. Peaceful co-existence is a sine qua non for socioeconomic development of any given society. This paper is primarily aimed at exploring qualitatively the method used by the Bakassi Boys in handling armed robbery in the past and extends it to conflict resolutions in the zone. In order to achieve that, the paper adopts exploratory method of research. This method is appropriate for qualitative studies that entail reviews of documents, interviews and observations. The data collection is mainly from secondary sources. It is the finding of this paper that as long as the present methods of handling conflicts persist, violence will continue to remain among the warring communities. The paper therefore recommends a total overhaul and replacement with a new and refined Bakassi Boys charged solely with the responsibility of handling violent conflict management and resolutions in the zone.

A cursory Look at Peace Building and Peace Making

There is a long established notion that portrays peace as the absence of war or violence. This makes the definition of peace contentious and problematic. However, in this paper, peace is defined as a political condition that ensures justice and social stability through formal and informal institutions, practices, and norms (Galtung, 1990:291). Given the diverse opinions about peace, a common denominator is that peace is of dual dimensions. According to Johnson & Johnson (2016: 52), one of the dimensions entails violence or war at one end of the spectrum and mutual agreements that enable the cessation or aversion of hostilities at another end of the spectrum. The second dimension is designated by hostility geared towards achieving non-uniform directed towards attaining mutual goals and social justice at another end of the spectrum. Peace could also be positive or negative. On the one hand, peace is positive in a situation where individuals or groups can live in a manner that facilitates the development of their full potentials in agreement with their needs and wishes. On the other hand, negative peace connotes the absence of war or other associated forms of direct violence such as physical harm.

Whichever angle one views peace whether building or making, it can only be effective and thrive where there is security of lives and property. Peace building is aimed towards laying a sustainable foundation for peace in a society that has experienced conflict. Thus, Okoro (2012), observes that the concept of peace building in conflict and management is a viable means of preventing the possible outbreak of armed conflict or a way of guarding against its reoccurrence, continuation, and other emergencies in political, humanitarian, and human rights developments. The focus of peace building is the economic, social, and psychological universe of the ordinary people (Karamé, 2004).

Peace building is slightly different from peace making. Peace making involves stopping an ongoing conflict, whereas peace building happens before conflict starts or once it ends. Chapter VI of the UN Charter talks about peace making as a non-restrictive list of peaceful, diplomatic, and judicial means of resolving disputes.... Peace building is more than a process that has a broad post-conflict agenda and more than an instrumentalist method to secure peace. According to the UN peace building involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capabilities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peace building strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives (UNPSO Peacebuilding Orientation, 2010, p.5).

Concept of Conflict

There is no unified definition of conflict. Conflicts basically are disagreements or misunderstanding between parties. Conflicts are inevitable as a result of the inability of the state to meet those non-negotiable needs in the society. These non-negotiable needs are what Maslow regards as the basic or fundamental needs. According to Elachi (2018:24), the largely ineffective institutions of the state lack accountability and transparency in resolving the centrifugal pressures of diversity in most African and other third countries and are incapable of satisfying the basic human needs of their citizenry.

Relating the human needs theory to the crux of this paper, it is worthy to note that most of the grievances have been largely fueled by the perception of conscious attempt by the so called powerful individuals or groups to deny others their basic needs that revolve around freedom, equality, autonomy, citizenship, encroachment and outright abandonment. When conflicts of the aforementioned are not reduced or settled through negotiations or other constitutional means, it leads to violence. Often, violence is resorted to as a short cut means for resolution of conflicts. A violent conflict should be discouraged because it involves use of physical force to resolve competing claims or interest, which in the long run brings only temporary solution.

Incessant violent conflicts in the southeastern Nigeria have contributed largely to loss of lives and property. Over the years, the zone has unabated continue to witness various security challenges. According to Dembo (2012), the most worrisome fact is that the incessant violence and intolerance have caused agony, tension and aggression in the minds of Nigerians. Combating security challenges and curtailing violent conflicts in the 21st century require conventional and non-conventional methods.

Understanding the Concept of Community Policing

The concept which started decades back in the United Kingdom and the United States did not come to Nigeria until 2004. The main aim for launching the pilot scheme in the country then was to make the police closer to members of the public and by extension, get prompt information that could help them to be proactive.

Community policing has variously been conceived and understood. It can be defined as a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime (<https://cops.usdoj.gov/publications>). Also, it is seen as a strategy of policing that focuses on building ties and working closely with members of the communities. The main idea is to allow police to feel like the public can trust them (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/co>). Equally, community policing is defined as a law enforcement philosophy that allows officers to continuously operate in the same area in order to create a stronger bond with the citizens living and working in that area (<https://www.everbridge.com/blog>).

The idea of community policing is simply to co-opt civilians to collaborate with the police in the fight against crimes. According to 2014 Annual Report of Nigeria police:

The decision of the Nigeria Police to implement community policing is guided by the realization that its Philosophy and Ethos fit into the need for improve service delivery by the police and the need for the communities and other stakeholders to work with the police in partnership to achieve the goal of improved safety and security.

According to one time Inspector General of Police, Abubakar Adamu the key solution to the problem of insecurity bedeviling the country is to take policing back to the people at the grassroots level. He observes:

The concept is to give policing back to the communities and let them take the initiative in identifying the challenges that can lead to crimes and then work with the communities to

handle the crime. What we are saying essentially is that fighting crime should not be left to the law enforcement agencies alone.

Community policing should be viewed as a paradigm shift that seeks to focus on constructive engagement with people who are the end users of the police service and re-negotiate the contract between the people and the police thereby making the community co-producers of justice and a quality police service (Okeshola and Mudiare, 2013).

According to Kappeler & Gaines (2009) the potentials of community policing can be encapsulated in a few sentences thus:

[community policing] is a dramatic change in the philosophy that determines the way police agencies engage the public. It incorporates a philosophy that broadens the police mission from a narrow focus on crime and law enforcement to a mandate encouraging the exploration of creative solutions for a host of community concerns-including crime, fear of crime, perceptions of disorder, quality of life and neighborhood conditions.

An obvious prospect of community policing, according to Coquilhat (2008) is that, it offers the public a larger window into police activity and provides opportunities for 'grass roots' support for police. However, communities with existing capacity are more likely to participate in community policing, but are less likely to benefit from it because, in general, they are already proactively addressing issues to increase community safety.

The earlier concept of this initiative in Nigeria resulted in the formation of vigilante groups in every part of the country. It led to emergence of ethnic militias as vigilante groups allegedly to fight rising crime waves in the face of the inability of the police to effectively combat the menace of insecurity.

Community policing has been with Africa long before the advent of the Europeans. According to Aniche (2015), long before the coming of Europeans, the traditional Igbo society of the now South-Eastern Nigeria had devised means of policing its communities and curbing or preventing crime using primarily the age grade system and masquerade secret society. This approach according to him was very effective in enabling the pre-colonial Igbo society in not just fighting crime but also in preventing crime. The point he seems to make is that community policing is neither novel nor exogenous to Africa.

As a collaboration and tacit endorsement of community policing in the South Eastern states of the country, Premium Times Newspaper (2020) reports that the "governors of the South-east geo-political zone, on Wednesday, endorsed the new community policing model of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), for effective security in the zone". Rising from the South East Geo-political security summit, initiated by the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mohammed Abubakar, the governors in a communiqué read by the governor of Ebonyi state and chairman of the South East Governor's Forum, David Umahi, said that contents of the new community policing strategies of the police were not different from their security measures already in place in their zone. In continuation, Umahi noted that all security concerns raised by the traditional and religious leaders in the south-east zone, including those presented by the Imeobi of the Ohanaeze Ndigbo, at the last meeting of the South East Governor's Forum, have been addressed in the community policing strategy of the Nigeria Police Force. He opines:

The community policing was proper and explained to us in full details and it is not different from our Neighbourhood Watch and the Vigilante operation, the Forest Guard, the gate keepers, the herdsmen and farmers conflict committees and others. And so we saw that this is totally in tandem with what we pray. We decided as your governors to enhance this initiative of community policing, which is an official endorsement in line with what the police and what we are doing to safeguard the lives and property of our people (Premium Times Newspaper, 12 Feb., 2020).

Community policing involves integrating police personnel more closely with the communities they serve. Before the introduction of community policing it was observed that the Nigeria police lacked the capacity to adequately confront security challenges. The adoption of community policing/vigilantism was with a view toward improving trust between community members and police, and leveraging police resources through voluntary assistance by community members in public safety measures (COP Office, 2008). Similarly, policing agencies are unlikely to be successful in creating partnerships to address violent crimes until they establish trusting relationships with the communities they serve (Schanzer et al. 2016).

In the light of current security challenges in the contemporary Nigerian society and the need to curb and curtail violent conflicts; there is need for citizens-initiative outfit to complement the efforts of the conventional policing. The Bakassi Boys was formed essentially in South-Eastern zone for the purpose of curbing crimes.

The Emergence of Bakassi Boys

Historically, Bakassi Boys was a child of necessity. It was formed as a vigilante group in 1990 by shoemakers and traders in Ariaria market in the commercial city of Aba, Abia state. It was conceived following the unprecedented high level of crimes and criminalities in the market, and the police inability to checkmate the notorious activities of these vandals. Thus it could be said that the formation of Bakassi Boys was the fallout of public loss of trust and confidence in police work. The community has lost confidence in police due to police brutality, bribery and corruption, coerciveness, and lack of proper channels of communication (Ordu and Nnam, 2017).

In a study on Police corruption in Nigeria, Oluwaniyi (2011:72-3) collected the reasons some Nigerians are dissatisfied with Police Force, the respondents stated:

Even if you do not want to be corrupt, the conditions of service cannot induce one to be honest or corrupt free and it is against my religious ethos to be corrupt'; 'Police officers are ineffective in combating the spate of insecurity in the country'; 'Instead of protecting life, they take it. The state is like a danger zone, no security for people'; 'The police do not charge suspects to courts, instead, they collect bribes and release them'; 'They aid armed robbers at times by (1) giving them arms and (2) not responding to distress calls until robbers have left the scenes of the robbery attack. They also extort money from civilians'; 'They are seen to be very, very corrupt and unprofessional in their dealings'; 'They are ruthless and do not respect the rules and regulations laid down. They are crime architects.

One disturbing issue closely related to the above negative perception of Nigeria police is the widespread outcry on extra-judicial killings by the police with impunity. Instances abound like the June 8, 2005 Apo six killing which is yet to see the light of the day. This delay in the criminal justice system as well as the injustice that pervades the judicial system, has posed a lack of confidence in the system, by a majority of Nigerians (Human Development Initiative, 2014).

It seems pertinent to observe that the dismal image of the Nigeria Police accounts for the noncooperation by the public who are often reluctant to volunteer useful information to the police. Yet, the tasks of crime prevention and detection as well as prosecution of offenders cannot be successfully performed without the cooperation of the public. Other allegations leveled against the police include arbitrariness in the exercise of its powers of arrest and prosecution, corruption and perversion of justice, use of crude techniques of investigation, collusion with criminals and incessant cases of accidental discharge of lethal bullets (Olujinmi, 2005, 19). According to Akwani (2006), before the Bakassi Boys, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was lawlessness and high crime in Eastern Nigeria.

Organizational Structure

The leadership of the group is described by COAV (2005:255) as highly structured organization with a defined chain of command. The leader of the vigilante group is the national chairman. The state chapters are autonomous, yet “cooperate with one another...and make routine consultations with the national headquarters”(Journal of Democracy and Development, 2002,5). Membership of the Bakassi Boys is strictly for Igbo ethnicity – this makes their work easy as they are familiar with the terrain. They are generally “young, able-bodied men in their twenties or thirties” (HRW and CLEEN May, 2002,11), although there are reportedly some members under the age of eighteen (COAV 30 May 2005,251). New members receive two months of training on the rules of the Bakassi Boys prior to participating in the group’s operations (COAV, 249). According to Akwani (2006), the Bakassi are well aware of the inherent dangers of their situation and have therefore set themselves strict guidelines for personal conduct and action. For instance, they believe that no member of the group can be involved in criminal activity. They do not accept bribes and will deal mercilessly with any of their own who falls foul of these guidelines. Funding for the group was initially provided by the trader’s associations in the states in which the group operates. Following the expansion of their activities to include settlement of disputes in civil matters, and being used by politicians against their perceived political opponents, being used by businessmen to recover debts etc., state governments took over the funding.

Challenges of Vigilante System

The initial *raison d’être* of establishing Bakassi Boys is to help in curtailing rising crime waves. The group was to ensure peace and order in the areas of its operation. However, they have been reports of the group carrying out extra-judicial killings and torture of suspected criminals (Journal of Democracy and Development 2002, 3). According to Country Reports on Human Right Practices for 2004 observes that the Bakassi Boys “sometimes killed suspected criminals rather than turn them over to police” (28 February 2005, Section 1a).

It has been reported that, while the vigilante group may have the support of some members of the community, its ‘arbitrary’ and ‘brutal’ methods (HRW and CLEEN May 2002,15) have resulted in community members having feelings towards the group that are “characterized by fear and helplessness”(COAV 30 May 2005, 250). According to a Human Rights Watch and CLEEN report:

Bakassi Boys have dealt ruthlessly with individuals who have dared to criticize or denounce their methods, or refused to make financial contributions to them (May 2002, 33).

As a result of some of the negative reportage against the group, the public perception about it changed drastically. It is the case of absolute power corrupts absolutely.

The relationship between the Bakassi Boys and the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has been described as tense, given the conflict of interests and competition between the two groups (HRW and CLEEN May 2002, 36 – 37).

There were reports in 2005 and 2006 of members of the Bakassi Boys being arrested and tried for vigilante activities (This Day 3 February, 2006). In 2002, the Bakassi Boys were allegedly disbanded following a federal government move to prohibit vigilante group (CDCMS 2003, 43). Despite the maltreatment from the federal government and the Nigeria Police, the state governments of Imo, Abia and Anambra provided the Bakassi Boys with salaries as well as offices, uniforms and vehicles (HRW and CLEEN May 2012, 12). In January 2006, the Abia state governor signed into law a bill to legally recognize the operations of the Bakassi Boys, despite the earlier federal legislation prohibiting such vigilante groups (Vanguard 31 January, 2006).

It was reported by Vanguard online publication that “following the operation of the dreaded Bakassi, calm and normalcy returned to Aba. Suspected criminals who hitherto menaced the city fled toneighbouring

cities and villages. They were pursued and those apprehended were brought back to Aba to face ‘trial’ and upon ‘conviction’ had their legs, arms and heads chopped off with machetes before being set ablaze”. According to Akwani (2006), yes, they are ruthless with criminals. They have been known to cut off limbs and burn people. That is the method of the Bakassi Boys. But the group is not political. They have no agenda beyond ensuring peace and order in civil society. It is not their method to run rampage harassing motorists as some writers have tried to show. That goes against the very reason for their existence.

Having achieved some success in reducing crime in Aba, the Bakassi Boys became in high demand, and their activities spread to other cities in Eastern Nigeria. Following the successful expulsion of criminals from the commercial city of Aba, other governors from South East especially Anambra, quickly extended invitation to the crime bursting outfit. According to 2004 and 2005 COAV reports, the vigilante group is active in the southeastern states of Imo, Abia, and Anambra. The Bakassi Boys are officially called the Imo Vigilante Service (IVS), the Abia Vigilante Service (AVS), and Anambra Vigilante Service (AVS) in the three states in which they are most active.

Recommendations

1. The Nigeria Police should understudy community policing in other climes with a view to domesticating same in Nigeria. There are no two countries that have the same problems.
2. Police should be willing to support the community policing program and avoid questionable attitudes like corruption.
3. Media houses should enlighten Nigerians on the need and usefulness of community policing.
4. Community leaders should encourage their subjects to cooperate with the police and other law enforcement agencies.
5. There is need for community members to appreciate the coming of this model and be prepared to collaborate with the police in crime detection and prevention.

Conclusion

Peace is a political condition that ensures justice and social stability through formal and informal institutions, practices, and norms (Galtung, 1990:291). Given the plethora of violence and insecurity in the Southeastern Nigeria, it is imperative that warring communities should give peace a chance. However, most often it is observed that the individuals or groups fuelling the conflicts do not give up easily, hence the need to involve a third party.

This work therefore advocates the application of a refined method used by the Bakassi Boys to fight armed robbery and other crimes in the 1990s, and extend same to conflict resolutions. Fortunate enough, there is a newly formed community policing to be used in that aspect. It is obvious that the conventional police has other engagements and lack manpower to effectively tackle the menace of violent conflict.

Corollary, to achieve a lasting peace, all hands must be on deck. We must together condemn the violence that has led to loss of innocent lives in South East. The cycle of impunity that fuels crisis on all sides must be broken and perpetrators arrested and be made to face the law. And lastly, we must all seek for peace.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC, POVERTY AND INEQUALITY IN AFRICA

By

Clara C. Obi-Ochiabutor

Department of Private Law, Faculty of Law,
University of Nigeria,

&

Chukwunweike A. Ogbuabor

Department of International Law,
Faculty of Law, University of Nigeria,

&

Callistus Iyidiobi

Department of Commercial and Corporate Law,
Faculty of Law, University of Nigeria,

&

Ebube Akpamgbo, BL G. Elias & Co. Law Firm Lagos

&

B. I Ogbuabor

Department of Legal Studies,
Institute of Management & Technology (IMT)
Enugu, Enugu state, Nigeria,

Abstract

Africa has just hit an agonising milestone as the continent recently experienced multiple deaths from COVID-19. Yet, the pandemic threatens to scar the continent in other ways, such as deepening the divide between the rich and poor— hence exacerbating inequality. Before the pandemic, inequality between and within continents had been a key impediment to sustainable development and social justice; .Today, with the pandemic, African countries require huge financial help to cope with the attendant socioeconomic costs, in addition to emergency health spending. But with the corruption in Africa at its peak, the funds available scarcely reach those that are in dire need of them. This results in increased inequality because countries are left saddled with public debt for money lost to corruption. Using Nigeria as case study, this paper shall submit practical ways of mobilising Africans to disentangle from this chain of poverty and inequalities and the attendant socioeconomic servitude.

1.0 introduction

Africa is saddled with numerous socioeconomic setbacks, namely — corruption, unemployment, insecurity, deteriorating human capital indices, slow diversification of the economy, amongst others. As the continent with the largest oil exporting countries, she is doubtlessly endowed with natural resources¹. She is also endowed with brilliance of intellect. However, economic prosperity requires more than these. As Nelson Mandela had rightly said, ‘money will not create success but the freedom to make it will’². Apparently in Africa, Mandela’s concept of socioeconomic freedom has remained elusive. The authorities wield the economic and political resources exclusively yet arbitrarily. Consequently, public trust is abused. With the wealth of resources in African countries, the continent is still categorised as poor, such that Nigeria which is the giant of Africa has only a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about \$375.8 billion³. To solve the problems of Africa, it is indeed pertinent that a culture of trust, confidence and social capital is cultivated⁴. Hence, the question lies ‘how could the confidence for nation building be propagated in African countries?’ and ‘how could socioeconomic success and improved quality of life be

guaranteed for Africans, in the light of the present poverty and inequalities in the continent?’ To answer these questions, it would be ideal to identify and proffer solutions to the problems of poverty and inequality pertinent to Africa. Incidentally, there are also steep challenges for vaccination of Covid-19 in Africa as the Western world are of the opinion that the African nation lacks the facilities that will accommodate the vaccines. Rather than seek solution our government officials travel out to get the vaccine. It is such an appalling situation further emphasizing the dilemma of the poor and the existing inequality because they do not have the luxury of seeking medical attention in a foreign country. This paper, therefore is divided into six parts. Part 1 deals with the introduction. Part 2 discusses Poverty and socioeconomic Servitude in Africa- Nigeria being used as a case study while Part 3 deals with the analysis of the Inequalities in Africa using Nigeria as a case study. Part 4 discusses the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the African continent. This takes us to Part 5 which is on the recommendations for mobilizing Africans to disentangle from poverty and economic servitude. Part 6 further outlines recommendations for addressing the problem of poverty and inequality occasioned by the pandemic in Africa and the last part is the conclusion.

2.0 Poverty and Socioeconomic Servitude in Africa: Nigeria As Case Study

2.0 The Case of Mental Poverty in Africa

Africa is struck with such level of mental poverty that makes it incapable of recognition of talents and competencies within its domain. A typical African would prefer having a certain white foreigner to take charge of his investment deals and contracts, because to him, there is certain level of professionalism and competence that comes with being white and foreign. Similarly, the continent is endowed with numerous natural resources which are still tapped by Europe as a consequence of neo-colonialism. Most commodities used in the continent are imported, and there is little or no confidence in local or indigenous goods. As such, the continent has been reported by authors as suffering the Dutch Disease, that is, having a boom in her natural resources, but experiencing decreased price competitiveness and poor wealth management⁵. In fact, there has been situations where these foreign nations have collected in large quantities some of our natural products which they end up polishing and selling it to us. In such scenarios funny enough, the demand for such products is like scramble for Africa. As a result of resorting to importation of goods at the neglect of her economic resources, she incurs so much loss in income which could be channeled into sectors in need of alleviation from poverty and under-development.

2.1 The Case of Economic Devaluation

African currencies are in constant depreciation in worth when compared with world currencies like the dollars and pounds. In Nigeria for instance, Five Hundred Naira is worth as little as One Dollar. Huge amounts of natural resources —oil and natural gas—are exported on daily basis, yet the country’s currency continues to weaken against other international currencies. In addition, there is over-dependency on oil exportation, such that about 80% of the country’s income comes from that, and a meagre 20% comes from other sources⁶. Consequently, in the World Bank Report 2019-2020 on ‘Ease of Doing Business in Nigeria’, Nigeria was ranked 146 out of 190 countries, with report attesting that Nigerian businesses lacked access to credit. Nevertheless, politicians wield million-dollar assets and money in financial institutions abroad⁷.

2.2 The Case of Institutional Poverty and Vices

The first of the institutional problems in Africa is corruption. Corruption is thriving and the government, public servants and private enterprises perpetuate it. Indeed, the ‘war against corruption’ in the continent has been analogised as trying to contain the wind⁸. The process of recruitment and general working relations of a typical African industry is engulfed with bribery, mildly referred to as ‘public relations’. Ill-gotten wealth is celebrated and certain politicians remain relentless in perpetrating fraud.

Secondly, there is the problem of unemployment. Approximately 24% or more of the total African population is unemployed⁹, and this trend diminishes capacity building and government legitimacy.

Consequently, African youths are desperate to elope from the continent. Others engage in anti-social activities including kidnapping for ransom and armed robbery¹⁰. There is also the menace of poor infrastructure management, alongside inadequate policing, weak industrial base and deficient financial institutions¹¹. Power supply is erratic in most African countries, while road/rail networks are poorly administered. Research, for example, has shown that Nigeria is yet to harness 20% of her agro produce from farms due to the poor state of roads and non-existent storage facilities¹². There is also the problem of mismanagement of tax monies.

In addition, the African public educational system suffers poor funding and neglect. There is deficit of skills amongst teachers, poor conditions of educational institutions and outdated learning materials. There is also the problem of disparity between the attained knowledge and real-life demands¹³.

There are insecurity problems and the law enforcement mechanisms across the continent appear to fall short of expectations in combating terrorism and social vices. Crime combating machineries are obsolete. The Nigerian Police Force for instance has about 350,000 personnel for a country with a population of over 150 million people to be protected¹⁴.

There is poverty in the continent, escalated by consumptive cultures and weak institutions. In the Review of World Development 2018-2019, African nations were consistently ranked 157 and below, out of 189 economies in Human Development Index; and were among the 'least livable' nations in the world.

2.3 Analyses of the Inequalities in Africa Using Nigeria as Case Study

2.4 Wealth and Political Inequalities

All over the world, there is an apparent divide leading to class systems and a platitudinous confrontation of interests— and capitalism exacerbates this division even further. In this light, **Adams Smith**¹⁵ had tacitly recognized political inequalities as 'political masters always and everywhere, and there are servants and labourers and the poor masses'.

In the same vein, **Marx and Engels** in an ingenious analysis of the human society portrayed the society as splitting up more and more into two great hostile camps, namely; the bourgeoisies and the proletariats. The basis for this division being that the essential condition for the existence and sustenance of the proletariats is prejudiced by the bourgeoisies. The bourgeoisies capitalise on the competition between labourers to reduce their wages. They can afford advanced technologies and the best living standards, while the poor proletariats work for them while using the worse facilities, and dying from the commonest diseases.¹⁶ Regrettably, the Law aids them for in the Marxist conceptual schemes it is an instrument of oppression used by the capitalist to maintain the working class in a subordinated position. So for Marx and Marxists, the State, Law and other institutions, are economically motivated and determined¹⁷ This inequality which operates mostly from politics is predominant in Africa, where the masses are grossly denied the dividends of democracy. Elections are flawed and there is seldom evidence of political accountability

2.5 Institutional Inequalities

There is uneven distribution of wealth in Africa. A huge economic gap abounds between the wealthy and the poor. And economic reforms like the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) have not really brought succour to the masses¹⁸. Workers earn minimum wages bereft of credit (which is further rubbished by the implementation of Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS)), whereas politicians amass maximum wages. Tribal and social conflict remain a malaise in the continent, hampering socioeconomic growth. Owing to nepotism, meritocracy is sacrificed on the altar of mediocrity. Politicians in Africa capitalise on tribal sentiments to win elections, causing a divide in the social fabric of the African countries. Doubtlessly, this conduct undermines public trust and confidence essential for development in the continent.

In African countries, there is poor governance and the systems of government are poorly administered. Nigeria for instance, represents to the world that it practices federalism, but this is only in theory. In reality, she practices unitarianism. The central government in Nigeria exercises unfettered autonomous powers over the country's financial resources. She appropriates about 52% of the oil proceeds, while the 36 states share about 27% and the local governments get approximately 21%¹⁹. Consequently, resources are centralised at the centre and corruption concentrated therein. Generally, Africa is in fact replete with poor leadership and dysfunctional institutions²⁰.

3.3 Inequalities from Ethnic-Religious Divisions and Religious Bigotry

Africa is a religious continent²¹. While this is not a socioeconomic problem in itself, it has some implications in cases of ethnocentrism and religious bigotry. Hence, the inequalities arising from religion in Africa are two-fold. One deals with the problem of religious ethnic identity. The other deals with religious fanaticism and bigotry.

With respect to ethnic-religiousness, religion is undoubtedly a source of identity to many Africans. In Nigeria for example, religious identity pronounces ethnic identity and often stimulates ethnicity²². The Hausa-Fulani are mostly Moslems, while the Igbos are mostly Christians. The Yoruba are either Christians or Moslem. There is also the traditional religion. These religions have different values and observances which are sometimes laced with some obstinacies about unequal control of state power and unequal allocation of resources. Other issues resulting from clashes in these religions include state collapse, geopolitical zoning, economic decline among other ethnic-religious clashes²³.

With regards to religious bigotry, an average African is indeed religious²⁴. And owing to this phenomenon, Africa is perceived as the continent with the highest number of religious outlets²⁵. It is also the continent with the wealthiest religious leaders in the world, who own fleets of private jets and private universities and the most luxurious infrastructure, at home and abroad. While this may not be a problem to the average religious African, this has been submitted to be one of the root causes of inequality in the society, where such religious leaders automatically belong to the bourgeoisie class, with private institutions whose tuition fees becomes unaffordable by larger people in the church.

3.4 Health and Medicare Inequalities

African countries record the highest mortality rate across the world. This is occasioned by poor health facilities, the neglect of sick patients by medical practitioners who are poorly equipped to operate, the incessant strikes in public medical institutions, the poor pay rates of medical workers, and the brain drain phenomenon. However, the wealthy class in Africa do not fall into this increased mortality rate. This is because they can afford to travel to any country in the world to obtain the best medical treatment and drugs, either from public funds or from their numerous allowances. And herein lies the inequality.

3.5 Access to Justice and Human Rights Inequalities

African countries have not always been reputable in matters relating to access to justice and quick dispensation of cases. There have also been cases of infractions of fundamental rights which have gone unaddressed. There have been adjournments which have lasted months and probably years before hearing on the next adjourned date. The adjudicatory and law enforcement processes are unsatisfactory. The judicial processes are sluggish, distilling hopelessness on the common people. In Nigeria for instance, over 49,875 able-bodied and economically viable Nigerians are in pre-trial imprisonment, and this number massively consists of 68.1% of the prison population²⁶. Yet, the 'justice delayed is justice denied' assertion holds sway. And this percentage accounts for only the poor masses in custody. The politically influential and wealthy class would often times know the right person(s) to approach for the necessary discharge from custody, of either themselves or their relatives. In most cases, the Commissioner of Police would either be their old-time classmate, long-time friend or indeed their political acquaintance.

4 Impact of covid-19 Pandemic on the African Continent

The COVID-19 pandemic has indeed impacted the African continent adversely in all spheres of human endeavour. It has made inequalities more visible, exacerbating acute disparities in wealth ownership, with unprecedented effect on the functioning of legal/justice and health systems globally. For legal systems, the preventive measures in response to COVID-19 such as the social distancing policies are considered to have implications for access to justice, occasioning undesirable delay to law enforcement and justice delivery. Dispute resolution mechanisms are becoming increasingly inefficient, with heightened cases of human rights violations and counter-discrimination. Many families have been put out of jobs, hence criminality has become the order of the day. Access to legal services have become unaffordable for victims of crimes.

For health systems, the corona virus pandemic has indeed deepened and exposed the health injustice phenomena across the African continent. The prevailing poor living standards in the continent, namely — presence of urban slums, dense population in commercial cities, inadequate access to portable water supply and neglected healthcare systems — makes the implementation of public health measures and respect for medical rights ephemeral. There is denial of access to health facilities to sick persons, conscription into poorly attended and densely populated quarantine centres, without clinically diagnosed suspicions, occasioning breaches of medical rights, among other implications.

5.0 Recommendations for Mobilising Africans To Disentangle from Poverty and Economic Servitude

According to Albert Einstein, the significant problems we face today cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were when we created them.²⁷ Therefore, if African governments could conscientiously adopt the right measures at a higher level of thinking, Africa would stand a chance in disentangling from poverty, inequality and economic servitude. But first, African governments must reaffirm the trust of their citizens through human capital development and entrepreneurship. Public office holders and politicians must clean up their act, assume responsibility and invest in the society²⁸. The various tiers of government should imbibe good institutional stewardship and accountability of financial resources. Effective checks and balances should be instituted. Policies should not be hastily made, and equal economic opportunity should be availed to all. Politicians should respect the rule of law, and the principle of selective justice eschewed. The arms of government should strive at socio-economic restructuring and value inculcation²⁹. Principles like loyalty, submission to properly constituted authority and hard-work should be upheld. There should be a swift diversification of the economy, and over-reliance on imported products should be checked. The governments could invest in modern irrigation, animal husbandry, alternative sources of energy, and infrastructure development – for example good roads. A hospitable environment devoid of corruption should be created to entice investors into the continent.

In addition, there is need for a ‘paradigm shift’ in the manner the countries in the continent are governed, and citizens must be capable of exercising their election rights and instituting mechanisms like impeachment of corrupt or incompetent office holders and power of recall allowed to be fully exercised by the citizens against their so called representatives. It will enhance proper accountability. Primordial tribal sentiments predicated on religious affiliations must be jettisoned for good virtues built on trust and capacity³⁰.

In 2021, African countries must learn to invest in Research and Development (R&D) to enable them explore ideas like alternative sources of energy such as geothermal energy, among others.³¹ This would address the energy cum socioeconomic problems in the continent. There is also the exigency of institutional reforms. In Nigeria for example, anti-graft institutions such as the Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) should be freed of government interference and reformed to assuage public trust³². The Judiciary must strive at regaining public confidence in speedy justice. Law enforcement agents should be empowered to act. Immunity from prosecution enjoyed by elected officials should be expunged, with sanctions instilled for corruption.

There should be increment in the minimum wage to suit workers' costs of living in all the African countries. Labour experts and representatives should be consulted in the process. More so, there should be proper management of cost of governance to avoid eating into the allocation for wages. In fact, the true disentanglement from poverty and inequality starts with prompt and adequate payment of middle class workers, and from time to time, payment of their overtime allowances among other incentives.

6.0 Recommendations for Addressing the Problem Of Poverty and Inequality Occasioned by the Pandemic In Africa

In addressing the problems occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa, there is need for African governments in consonance with International Organisations to review how judicial and state institutions are functioning across the humanitarian-development nexus²³. Already weakened institutions are likely unable to respond effectively, further compounding mistrust in the state. The unchecked spread of misinformation can equally exacerbate conflict. Different parties may exploit the pandemic, stoking xenophobia and employing hate speech to foster divisions and increase tensions between countries³⁴. In contexts where unrest and social movements have been calling for governments to address inequality, injustice, poverty and corruption, the crisis may serve to reinforce disparities and magnify tensions, while vices like police violence and rape are perpetrated largely³⁵. As such, these Organisations alongside countries' governments could play joint role in proposing strategies for eliminating poverty and inequality, while strengthening access to restorative justice and effective health systems³⁶.

African governments should combine forces with the relevant stakeholders in fighting poverty and inequality. Judicial officers, the Police, legal aid providers, pro bono lawyers, community paralegals, civil society organisations (CSOs) and correctional services – need to work together to take on a holistic and people-centered approach to resolving unequal justice, corruption and health breach problems³⁷. To facilitate this, governments could reach agreement with International bodies like the United Nations (UN) or International Monetary Fund (IMF), to empower member states to enhance their capacities for fighting poverty and inequality.

7.0 Conclusion

Indeed, to eliminate poverty and inequality in Africa, and for competitive and sustainable development of the continent, middle and low class Africans must first be lifted from the yokes of poverty in the midst of plenty³⁸. And though the path for reviving trust and confidence in a continent that is nearly raided of efficacy may not be easy, the power to do so still lies in the hands of all Africans and specifically her leaders, who must strive to build confidence for the socioeconomic wellbeing and improved quality of life of Africans. And this also entails equal access to justice and health facilities— especially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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**EVALUATION OF AFRICAN TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITY TO HANDLE POST COVID-19
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES: A STUDY OF NIGERIA.**

By

Ogbu Obinna Samson

Department of Public Administration

Enugu State University of Science and Technology

&

Mbah Eusebius Chinedu

Department of Public Administration

Enugu State University of Science and Technology

Abstract

This study is focused on the Evaluation of African Technological Capacity to Handle Post Covid-19 Public Health Emergencies: A Study of Nigeria. In carrying out this study, one research question was formulated. Related literature relevant to the study were reviewed and the opinion of the researchers incorporated in each section of the review. Only secondary data sourced from WHO 2017 were used. Statistical tools such as table and charts were used for data presentation and analysis while a two-way analysis of variance was adopted for test of the hypothesis. The study revealed that the current Nigeria technological capacity cannot handle post covid-19 Public Health Emergencies. The study recommended that there is urgent need for more financial investment on advance technologies so as to enhance the country's capacity to detect, prevent and respond to post covid-19 Public Health Emergencies; there is also need to improve the work conditions of health workers so as to discourage brain drain; and Public Health Emergencies should be devoid of politics so as to gain public trust in following government directives during emergencies.

Key words: Technology, Health Technology, Public Health Emergency, Covid-19.

Introduction

The emergence of covid-19 as a global pandemic in the year 2020 as declared by WHO, ineluctably accentuated the need for government at all levels to embrace the use of advanced health technologies for the enhancement of their capacity to detect, prevent and respond to public health emergencies. The development of technology is the earliest achievement of man, in his attempt to solve life challenges.

According to Ezenwaji(2002) it is very easy to assess the improvement of man's technological development from the use of stone and wood implements, to bronze and to iron implements. However, suffice to say here that the gradual increase in variety and complexity in manufacturing of advance tools, instruments, equipment, implements and machines, is a clear evidence of technological development and improvement. According to WHO a health technology is the application of organized knowledge and skills in the form of devices, medicines, vaccines, procedures and systems developed to solve a health problem and improve quality of lives.

Public health emergencies on the other hand is a formal declaration by WHO of an extraordinary event which is determined to constitute a public health risk to other states through the international spread of disease and to potentially require a coordinated international response etc. Since 2009 there have been six public health Emergencies of international concern (PHEIC) declarations. These includes, the 2009 swine flue pandemic; the 2014 polio declaration; the 2014 outbreak of Ebola in West Africa; the 2015-16 Zika virus epidemic; the 2018 -20 Kivu Ebola epidemic; and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The covid-19 pandemic and its resultant effects slow down government operation across all nations of the world. Especially in Africa where non pharmaceutical measures such as lock down, social distancing and border closure drastically affected the continent's GDPs. This was so in Africa because, most operations in the world went digital which exposed the weakness inherent in African technological capacity. Furthermore, to buttress the above point further, on 6th of February 2021, a confirmed print media report (Nigeria Punch Newspaper) blatantly reported that out of the 13 African countries that applied for Pfizer-BioNtech covid-19 vaccines, only 4 African countries which include Cape Verde, Rwanda, South Africa and Tunisia that were approved for the allocation of Pfizer-BioNtech vaccines. Reason being that most of the African countries including Nigeria that applied for the vaccine did not meet the standard requirements of being able to store the vaccine at the required 70 degrees Celsius.

Therefore it is against this background that the need to carry out a study on the Evaluation of African Technological Capacity to Handle Post Covid-19 Public Health Emergencies: A study of Nigeria has arisen.

Statement of Problem

The emergence of Covid-19 and its resultant effects exposed the weakness inherent in African technological capacity to detect, prevent and respond to Public Health Emergencies. This is crystal clear from the recent disqualification of Nigeria and 8 other African countries that applied for the Pfizer-BioNtech covid-19 vaccine. According to print media report (Nigeria Punch Newspaper) 6th February 2021, only 4 out of 13 African countries that applied for Pfizer vaccine, that were shortlisted. Reason being that Nigeria and other African countries that were disqualified could not meet the standard requirements of being able to store the vaccine at the required 70 degree Celsius.

Furthermore the Director General of the Nigeria institute of medical research (prof. Babantunde Salako) confirmed further that there is inadequate space at the moment to store the Pfizer vaccines at the required 70 degree Celsius (Nigeria Punch Newspaper, 6th February 2021). The space referred above is in terms of lack of technological advancement in the Nigeria health sector that could generate the required temperature for the storage and distribution of the Pfizer-BioNtech vaccines within Nigeria.

Corollary to the above is the shortage of expertise who could have developed Nigeria indigenous covid-19 vaccines that would stand WHO test of scrutiny and approval. This was however occasioned by high level of brain drain in Africa which resulted from free visas offered by developed country like USA to interested African health workers who would like to continue their career overseas, all in a bid of containing the spread of Covid-19. This obvious weaknesses inherent in Nigeria Technological advancement aroused the curiosity of the researchers to carry out a research on Evaluation of African Technological Capacity to Handle Post Covid-19 Public Health Emergencies: a Study of Nigeria.

Research Objective

The general objective of this study is to Evaluate African Technological Capacity to Handle Post Covid-19 Public Health Emergencies. Specifically the study is designed to:

1. To evaluate Nigeria technological capacity to handle post covid-19 public health emergencies

Research Question

1. Can Nigeria technological capacity handle post covid-19 public health emergencies?

Research Hypothesis

Ho: Nigeria technological capacity cannot handle post covid-19 public health emergencies.

Literature Review

Concept of Technology and Health Technology

The development of technology is the earliest achievement of man. It is the basis for the classification of successive stages in man's development from the use of stone, wood, bronze and to iron implement (Ezenwaji 2002). Technology is undoubtedly the most concrete evidence of man's development and progress.

According to Eze and Ani (2016), the term technology can be defined as any tool or process created or used by humans to solve a need, it includes books, cloths, tools and language. Technology can also be seen as the application of scientific knowledge to the practical aims of improving human life or as it is sometimes phrased, to the change and manipulation of the human environment (Encyclopaedia, 2021). Furthermore, Eze and Ani (2016) summarized the meaning of technology as the use of scientific knowledge for practical purpose or applications whether in industry or in our everyday lives. This implies that whenever we use our scientific knowledge to achieve some specific purpose we are using technology.. Therefore technology can be used in this context as the use or application of scientific knowledge and inventions (tools, equipments instruments or machines) in solving human problems or meeting human needs.

On the other hand, the concept of health technology according to WHO is the application of organized knowledge and skills in the form of devices, medicines, vaccines, procedures and system developed to solve a health problems and improve quality of lives. This includes pharmaceuticals device, procedures and organizational systems used in the health care industry as well as computer supported information system. According to Segen's medical dictionary (2012), Health technology is a generic term for any intervention that can be used to promote health and prevent, diagnose or treat diseases for rehabilitation or long term care. Therefore, the term Health Technology can be defined as the use or application of scientific knowledge and inventions to solve health problems and to improve quality of lives.

The Need for Improved Technology in Nigeria Health Services

1. Greater Patient Care:- The complexity and dynamisms in human health challenges in recent times calls for the adoption of improved technologies that will help to diagnose and treat patients with utmost care and consideration. In Nigeria since the ratio of health workers to the persistent growing population is below global standard it then call for investment on improved health technologies so as to increase the rate of care given to patients in the country.
2. Ease of Work Flow:- The tedium and drudgery of many workplace tasks have been eliminated by a simple click of a mouse (Eze, 2010). To buttress this point further, technology has revolutionized work in unprecedented dimensions. The need for improve technology in our health sector can never be overemphasized, as it will help to reduce stress and improve the modes of operation of health workers
3. Improved PublicHealth:- Technology as we all know is a product of scientific discovery designed to solve human problem and to improve human lives. This implies that the adoption or use of improve technology in our health sector will invariable culminate into improved health care services.
4. Digitalization of Health Records:- The use of improve technology in our ever dynamic environment is imperative. The gradually replacement of out dated paper records with electronic health Records (EHRS) has become a massive game changer for everyone in the medical world. Technology has undoubtedly improve the digitalization of health records. Not only can patience access their record at the click of a button but its also ensure that mistake are easily dictated without boring oneself over unreadable physicians handwritings.
5. Lower Health Care Cost: The outdated rule of thumb method of attending to patients which involves trial and error often gulp up a lot of money from patients before their recuperation or untimely death. However, the use of improved technology has invariable helped to reduce the

cost of accessing health care services. This is because technology helps to diagnose and treat patients accurately without guess work or rule of thumb.

6. Management of Public Health Emergencies:- Improve technology helps to boost the country's capacity to detect, prevent and respond to public health emergencies such as Covid-19, SARS, Ebola etc..
7. Enhancement of the Country e-Government System. The term e-Government is the use of ICT to improve government activities, functions and services to its citizens. This invariably implies that the impact of government in meeting the health needs of its citizens can best be felt through the use of technology.

Public Health Emergency

According to IHR(2005), the term public health Emergency of international concern is defined as an extraordinary event which is determined, as provided in the regulations:

- (i) To constitute a public health risk to other states through the international spread of disease; and
- (ii) To potentially require a coordinated international responses.

The above definition depicts a situation that is serious and unexpected which carries implications for public health beyond affected state or national border, and may require immediate international actions.

Furthermore according to WIKPEDIA, a Public Health Emergency of international Concern (PHEIC) is a formal declaration by the World Health Organization (WHO) of an extraordinary event which is determined to constitute a public health risk to other states through the international spread of disease and to potentially require a coordinated international response. Suffice to state here that the responsibility of determining an event as a public health emergency lies solely with the Director general of WHO, who promulgates temporary recommendation made by committee of experts, that is the IHR emergency committee in order to prevent or reduce the international spread of disease.

Therefore based on the above review public health emergency can be defined as a formal declaration made by WHO in order to prevent or reduce the spread of contagious diseases across nations of the world.

Public Health Emergencies of International Concerns Declaration Since 2009

Since 2009, the WHO has successfully made six public health emergencies of international concern declarations. These include:

1. The 2009 H1N1 (or Swine flu) Pandemic:- This was an influenza pandemic that lasted about 19 months from January 2009 to August 2010 and was the second of two pandemics involving H1N1 influenza virus (The first being the 1918-1920 Spanish flu pandemic)
2. 2014 Polio Declaration:- In 2014 there were about 359 reported cases and 2 wild poliomyelitis spread over twelve countries. Therefore with this upsurge, the WHO on 27th March 2014 announced the eradication of poliomyelitis in the South East Asia region with about eleven countries included by WHO. On 25th September 2015 the WHO declared that Nigeria was no longer considered endemic for wild polio virus.
3. The 2014 outbreak of Ebola in Western Africa:- This was the most widespread outbreak of Ebola Virus disease (EVD) in history causing major loss of life and socioeconomic disruption in the region, mainly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The deadly virus found its way into Nigeria soil through a Liberian man infected by the virus who flew into Lagos from Monrovia on July 20, 2014. However in October 2014, Nigeria was officially declared Ebola free by WHO.
4. The 2015-16 Zika Virus Epidemic – The virus was caused by the Zika Virus in Brazil. It spread to other parts of South and North America. The virus also affected several islands in the Pacific and Southeast Asia. However on November 2016, the WHO announced the end of the epidemic
5. The 2018-2020 Kivu Ebola Epidemic -: This is the second largest Ebola outbreak in recorded history behind the 2014 outbreak of Ebola in West Africa. It began on August 2018 when four cases of Ebola virus diseases (EVD) were confirmed in the eastern region of Kivu, in Democratic

republic of Congo (DRC). However on 25th June 2020 the outbreak was declared ended by WHO.

6. The Covid-19 Pandemic:- This virus also known as Corona Virus Pandemic was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan China. According to Shawna (2020) corona virus take their name from the distinction spikes with rounded tips that decorate their surface, which reminded virologist of the appearance of the Sun's atmosphere, known as its corona. This ongoing pandemic of corona virus diseases 2019 (Covid-19) was cause by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-Cov-2). The virus causes typical cold symptoms such as a sore throat, cough and stuffy nose and they seemed to be very common Shawna (2020).

The federal ministry of Health confirmed the first case of the corona virus disease (Covid-19) in Lagos state Nigeria on the 27th day of February 2020. The case was an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria and returned from Milan, Italy, to Lagos Nigeria on the 25th of February 2020 Osagie (2020).

The world Health organization declared coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern and a pandemic in January and March 2020 respectively. It is however worthy to note that as at 19 February 2021, more than 110 million cases have been confirmed with more than 2.44 million deaths attributed to coronavirus pandemic globally. As at 19 February 2021 around 3:56pm Nigeria time the sample tested was about 1441,013, confirmed cases 150,246; Active cases 21,977; discharged cases 126,4666 and death was 1803 in Nigeria (NCDC, 2021).

Challenges of Public Health Emergency Response in Nigeria

1. Brain Drain:-According to UNESCO (2010) brain drain is a mass emigration of individuals with technical skills or knowledge generally due to lack of prospect, political instability, conflict or health issues and risk factors (Okafor and Chimereze, 2020). Brain drain is simply the movement of skilled personnel's or professionals from one country to another in search for a better living or working conditions. Since the declaration Covid-19 as a pandemic by WHO in march 2020, the rate of capital flight (brain drain) from Africa to developed world has increased immensely. This state of affair was invariable occasioned by developed nations such as USA, etc. Who granted free visas to interested health workers from Africa in order to help in curbing the spread and effect of Covid-19. Data indicates that Nigeria has one of the largest health workforce stocks in Africa, but still does not meet the health needs of it population. Therefore this trend if allowed to continue, will adversely affect the current and future capacity of Nigeria as a nation in addressing, managing and responding to Public Health Emergencies.
2. Poor Funding of Research Institutes in Nigeria:- Just as information is the life wire of every organization, so is money the life blood of every organization. Taking a cursory look at the tabular assessment of public and non profit funding for the research, development and production of leading vaccine candidates in Woutersetal(2021), you will notice the contribution of developed nations, in the funding of leading vaccines developers or research institutes. No African country is included in the effort to fund or support in the development and leading vaccines that will help in preventing the spread of coronavirus, this portrays the weakness in our capacity as a continent in addressing the current or future public health emergencies in the continent of Africa. In Nigeria our research institutes are known for testing already produced vaccines but not to initiate or produce a new one. (vanguard newspaper report, February 16,2021).
3. Lack of Technological Advancement/Weak e-Government System:-The emergence of Covid-19 pandemic invariably heightened the need for technological advancement and e-government adoption in meeting the welfare needs of the masses. For example the latest disqualification of Nigeria and other African countries from accessing the Pfizer vaccines was a clear indicator of the paucity of African technological advancement. This is because according to the Director – General of the Nigerian institute of medical research, Prof. BabatundeSalako, Nigeria and other African countries were disqualified due to lack of enough space to store the Pfizer vaccines at the required temperature of 70⁰celsius. (Punch newspaper report 6th Feb. 2021). Nigerian and African

government will also need to rethink their infrastructural drives, that is a shift to focus on promoting the digital economy that will support e-government initiatives (Omole, 2020). This will make access to welfare packages, palliatives and vaccines by the citizens easier during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Poor technological advancement truncates the growths of the nations' e-government system, which invariably affect her capacity to address post Covid-19 public Health emergency situations.

4. Lack of Big Data analytical Capacity for Decision Making: Lack of big data analytical tool has made the management of Covid-19 a nightmare for many government in Africa including Nigeria (Omole, 2020). This is in terms of ability to test for the disease, contract-trace people who are potentially infected and distribution of relief materials to the most valuable citizens. For instance in Nigeria, the government could not determine the number of poor Nigerians for the distribution of Covid-19 relief materials or palliatives. This led to a disastrous relief response during this pandemic, which eventually culminated into End-SARS protest with adverse effect on the nations' economy. Therefore, if this trend remains, the tendencies of Nigeria to handle post covid-19 public health emergency situation remains elusive.
5. Cost of Accessing or Producing Vaccines:- Public health emergency places serious demand on the production or accessing of drugs approved by WHO for the containment, control or prevention of it spread across nations of the world. However, it is worthy to note that the cost of accessing or producing a vaccine that meets WHO standard for global usage is usually costly. According to premium times report of January 11, 2021, the ex-executive Director of the National primary Health care Development Agency (NPHCDA) Faisal Shuaib, while speaking at the presidential task force (PTF) on Covid-19 briefing said, the process of producing a vaccine requires massive investment that has not been done for many decades. This portrays the huge resources required in producing Covid-19 vaccines in Nigeria.
6. Corruption/Politicization of Public Health Emergencies:- Corruption as always known, is the abuse of public office for private gain. In Nigeria situation, it is usually a common phenomenal for politicians to politicize every emergency situation for greedy gain or self aggrandizement. Covid-19 pandemic is undoubtedly a perfect opportunity for politicians to misappropriate public fund for private gain, in their disguised attempt to enforce policies or provide palliatives to cushion it adverse effect on the masses.

Theoretical Foundation of the Study

Scientific Management Theory

According to Nwizu (2010) scientific management owes its origin to Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1917) who developed a number of guidelines for managers to replace the hitherto prevalent rule of thumb methods even though he did not create a science of management. In the word of Bell (1972) as cited in (Eze, 2010) scientific management theory really means the systematic analyses and breakdown of work into its smallest mechanical elements, and then their arrangement into their most efficient combination.

In a nutshell, scientific management refers to that approach to problems of organization based on the work of Taylor. It stresses rationality, predictability, specialization and technical competence. It focus was on the design and operation production processes on the shop level of the organization (Nwizu as cited above).

This theory is seen as the first coherent theory of organization, which came into existence in the beginning of the twentieth century. At that time the condition in the factories were rather unplanned. Standardization of methods of work was not in place. Whether these methods were the efficient ones and whether the tools were the right kind, were none of the responsibilities of management. It is against this background that scientific management emerged as a new philosophy of management, with the following assumptions:

1. That improved practice will come from the application of the scientific method of analysis to organizational problems.

2. The relation of worker to his work
3. Each worker is assumed to be economic man

The major thrust of this theory is to replace the hitherto prevalent rule of thumb method through the systematic adoption of the methods of science to problems of management in the interest of higher industrial efficiency. Since improved practice will come from the application of the scientific method of analysis to organizational problems, therefore, this theory is germane to Nigeria health sector, as it encourages the use of scientific improved technologies in handling public health emergencies as it arises.

Methodology

This is a descriptive research purely based on trend study of secondary data, derived from WHO 2017 scores on Nigeria preparedness to tackle public health risks. The study areas is Nigeria with over 200 million population. Data analysis were carried out through the use of tables and charts, while a two way ANOVA was adopted for the test of research hypothesis.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Research Question:

Can Nigeria Technology capacity handle post covid-19 public health emergencies?

Figure 1. Nigeria's Average score on preparedness to tackle public health risks



Source: Authors, using data from *World Health Organization (2017)*, as cited by Dixit et al (2020)

Firstly on prevention, looking at the chart above you will discover that Nigeria's average score of 1.9 across the Joint external evaluation indicators, which represent 38% of the over all performance expected under the prevention category, suggested that the country has a limited capacity to prevent present and future public health Risks.

Secondly on Detection, Nigeria average score of 2.6 across the joint external evaluation (JEE) indicators, which represented 52% of the over all expected performance under the detection category, suggested that the country was better prepared to detect public health risks or diseases. In other words this score shows that the country has developed some capacity to detect new health risks through it advance technologies such as laboratory equipment and real-time surveillance to test new health risk or diseases. Nevertheless, there is still doubt in it sustainability.

Thirdly on Nigeria capacity to respond to public health risks or emergencies, the country performed badly with the average score of 1.5 across the joint external evaluation (JEE) indicators, which represent 30% of the over all expected performance expected under this category. This therefore suggest that Nigeria has a limited capacity to respond to a sudden health risk or public health emergencies.

The table below summaries the actual, unrealized and expected capacity of Nigeria from the bar chart above

Table1: The Actual, Unrealized, and Expected Capacity of Nigeria

Capacity	Capacity to prevent risk	Capacity to detect risk	Capacity to respond	Total	%
Autual capacity	1.9	2.6	1.5	6.0	40%
Unrealized capacity	3.1	2.4	3.5	9.0	60%
Expected capacity	5.0	5.0	5.0	15.0	100%

Source: Research data 2020

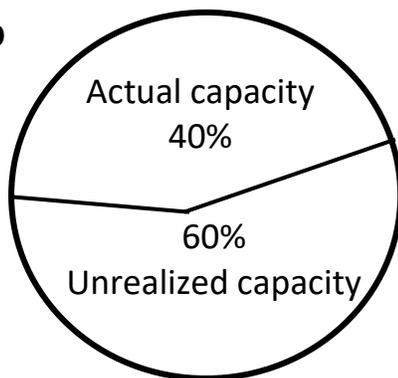


Fig. 2: Pie chart: Showing Nigeria actual capacity and unrealized capacity to handle public health emergencies or risks.

Therefore,, from the table and the pie chart above, you will discover that the current or actual capacity of Nigeria to handle public health emergency is just 40% of the total expected capacity. While the missing or unrealized capacity is exactly 60%. This invariable implies that Nigeria is still 60% behind the expected global capacity to handle public health emergencies or risks.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho: Nigeria technological capacity cannot handle post Covid-19 public health emergencies.

From Fig 1 the current or the actual capacity of Nigeria to handle public health emergencies are summarized in the table below.

Table 2: The Current or Actual Capacity of Nigeria

Capacity	N > X < L	L > X < D1	D1 > X < D2	D2 > X < S	Total
Capacity to prevent	1.9	0	0	0	1.9
Capacity to detect	0	2.6	0	0	2.6
Capacity to respond	1.5	0	0	0	1.5
Total	3.4	2.6	0	0	6.0

Sources: Research data 2021

- N.B N Represents No capacity
- L Represents Limited capacity
- D1 represents developed capacity
- D2. Represents demonstrated capacity
- S Represents sustainable capacity
- X Represents Nigeria

From table 2 above, the value of the hypotheses is computed below using two-way Anaysis of variance (ANOVA) therefore:

Row =3: Column =4: Grand total(T) = 6: Correction factor (C.F) = 3
 Crude sum of square (S) = 9.62: Total degree of freedom =11
 Between capacity sum of squares (SSC)= 3.107
 Between indicators sum of square(SSI) = 0.155
 Error sum of square (SSE) = 6.358

Table 3: Hypothesis Computation Table.

ANOVA TABLE

Sources of Variation	Degree of freedom (D.F)	Sum of square (SS)	Mean Square	F-ratio
Capacities	3	3.107	1.0357	0.9774
Indicators	2	0.155	0.0775	0.0731
Errors	6	6.358	1.0597	
Total	11	9.62		

Sources: Research data 2021

The critical value are $F_{.05}(3, 6) = 4.76$

$$F_{.05}(2, 6) = 5.14$$

Decision: Since the observed F values are lesser than the critical values at 5% level of significance we therefore accept the null hypothesis and concluded that Nigeria technological capacity cannot handle post covid-19 public health emergencies.

Discussion of Findings

The current capacity of Nigeria in relation to her ability to detect, prevent and to respond to public health emergencies is still below global standard. This could be easily gleaned from the result of both the data analysis and test of hypothesis.

A quick glance at the bar chart above revealed that out of the 3 major indicators of capacity, Nigeria is better prepared to detect public health emergencies than to prevent or respond to them. However the country capacity to detect public health emergencies at 52%(2.6) falls below global capacity sustainability ratio 100%(5). Further more table 1 and the pie chart above clearly indicated that the current or actual capacity of Nigeria which read(6.0) represent 40% of the globally expected capacity. This invariably implies that Nigeria is still 60% behind the global expected capacity to tackle or handle both present and future public health emergencies.

The above analysis also corroborated with the result of the hypothesis test, as the Two way ANOVA F-ratios on Capacity and indicators (0.9774 and 0.0731) were below the critical values (4.76 and 5.14) respectively at 5% level of significance. This therefore led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis which states that the current Nigeria technological capacity cannot handle post covid-19 public health emergencies.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

The result of both the data analysis and test of hypothesis clearly indicates that the current Nigeria technological capacity cannot handle or adequately tackle post covid-19 public health emergencies.

Recommendations

1. There is urgent need for more financial investment on advance technologies so as to enhance the country's capacity to detect, prevent and respond to post covid-19 Public Health Emergencies.
2. There is also need to improve the work conditions of health workers so as to discourage brain drain.
3. Public Health Emergencies should be devoid of politics so as to gain public trust in following government directives during emergencies.

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¹Finance Act 2019 (Act No. 1) which came into force on 13th January, 2020.

¹ Part 1, Sections 1-23 of the Act

¹ Part 4, Sections 33 to 47 of the Act

¹ Part 5, Section 48 of the Act

¹ Part 3, Sections 25 to 32 of the Act

¹ Part 6, Sections 49 to 51 of the Act

¹ Part 7, Sections 52 to 56 of the Act

¹ Part 2, Sections 24 of the Act

¹ Section 9 of the Act which amends section 23 of the CITA

¹ Section 9 (c) of the Finance Act

¹ See section 48 of the Act

¹ See section 45 of the Act which substitute section 42 of the Value Added Tax Act with a new section 42

¹Section 13 (f) of the National Minimum Wage Act

¹Central Bank of Nigeria, Consumer Protection, available at

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FEMINISM AND COVID-19 SURVIVAL STRATEGIES IN IGBO TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

By

Okafor, Emmanuel Ikenna

Department of Christian Religious Studies
Peaceland College of Education, Enugu

&

Amunnadi, Chukwudi Ani

Division of General Studies, Enugu State
University of Science and Technology, Enugu, Nigeria

&

Okolo, Rosemary, Ngozi

Department of Religion and Cultural Studies
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

The concept of Feminism has been an issue of contention in Africa generally and the Igbo nation in particular. At the unprecedented outburst and spread of COVID-19 in the world, survival strategies were adopted among the Igbo as a whole, and individual households particularly. This study observes that some of these survival strategies raise tension and arguments on the Igbo cultural perception of feminism as a concept among traditional religious people of Igboland. In order to thoroughly examine these problems and findings, the research adopts historical and phenomenological research method. The study among other things recommends that gender stratification should be carefully managed among the Igbo people of the South East, Nigeria. Data were gotten from primary and secondary sources. Data collected were analyzed using hermeneutical style of data analysis.

Keywords: Feminism, COVID-19, Survival Strategies, Igbo Traditional Religious Society.

Introduction:

The upsurge of COVID-19 persuaded the governmental of so many countries in the world to enforce rules and lockdown of social, economic, religious, political, academic and educational activities in order to control the spread of the pandemic diseases activities. In Nigeria, the same control rules and guidelines were given. The lockdown specifically was too harsh to the upkeep of numerous families. At a time the lockdown was waived out, social and physical distancing was insisted to be observed by all and Sunday. This skyrocketed the Fares payable for the individual's movement from one location to the other. Therefore, survival became a very difficult task for the majority of the citizenry.

In the Igbo traditional religious society, activities and human engagements are highly gender sensitive. The lockdown particularly posed a very strenuous challenge to the traditional religious society of the Igbo people in the struggle for survival during the lockdown. People in both rural ,semi-urban and urban settings in Igbo land had to strategize as breadwinners to at least put food on the table for their members has made them to think otherwise even though some of these jobs and engagements are not traditionally honored to be undertaken by the woman. The Igbo foremost observances became in assaulted in the face of COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. In consideration of the social religious and cultural dimensions of gender involvement in Igbo land worldview, the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and its rules might be potentials perceived as a sort of feminist liberation to an extent. It is a similar to

what happened in the favour of the woman in their interactions with Jesus as against the culture and expectations of the Jews. Jess and Boffey (2019:1) point thus:

On Saturday, they rested. But early Sunday morning, the woman leaped into action. Motivated by love, they gathered spices and perfumed to honour the body of Jesus. Little did they know that Sunday morning marked a new day in human history. God chose a small group of women to share the greatest news of all time. The information about the resurrection of Jesus Christ was first spread by a small group of women who were the first to witness the resurrection. For the Jews it was supposed to be the men or at least a man that should first witness the rising Jesus appearance.

The problem that bothers this research is the fact that COVID-19 outbreak and its survival strategies have increased the status of the responsibilities of women that displeases the majority of the men in Igbo traditional religious society to an extent that they find it difficult to involve themselves in domestic responsibilities for the family where the women are unviable. This is because; some women who likely turned to be breadwinners have refused to withdraw from those survival strategies and engagement or businesses. It is discovered that some men resist their involvement in domestic jobs because such strategies are in opposite to the feminist culture of the traditional religious settings of the Igbo people. More so, at the end of the lockdown men hope to vigorously face their business which would not accommodate attention to domestic duties, and finally most of them (men) are not used to household and kitchen works. The study aims at addressing the discrepancies created by the feminist interest and misconception among the Igbo people. The research adopts historical and phenomenological research method. The study recommends among other things that gender stratification should be carefully managed among the Igbo people of the south-east, Nigeria. Data were generated from primary and secondary sources. The data were analyzed with hermeneutical style of data analysis.

Clarification of Concepts

The terms that are defined in this research include: Feminism, COVID-19, strategy, and Igbo traditional religious society. Feminine according to Summers (2001:511) defines feminine as: "having qualities that are considered to be typical of women especially by being gentle, delicate and pretty." This definition associates the adjective feminine to female gender (especially the adult) that is "woman" women. Summers (2001) further defined Feminism as "the belief that unites as men". Summers (2001:512) also views Feminist as: "Someone who supports the idea that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men. Merriam-Webster (2021) points thus:

Feminism was among our most searched for words on March 8th, 2021 as a global interest in international Women's Day prompted the word to surge in lookups. Our 2017 word of the year, feminism is currently defined as "the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes" or "organized activity on behalf of women rights and interest. The word has not always carried a meaning related to the rights of women; our earliest citation comes from Noah Webster's 184 dictionary, in which he glossed the word as "the qualities of females.

This sense is not particularly common in modern use. The meaning of feminism which is common today began to gain currency at the end of 19th century. Presently, the concept has gone beyond the qualities of women to equitable distribution of political, economic and social rights and interest in the 19th century, but today it constitutes part of the courses taught in school and tertiary institution.

COVID-19 on the other side of the coin, has elaborated World Health Organization (2020) in been by Okaforetal (2020) in stating that:

COVID-19 is the name given by the World Health Organization (WHO) on February 11, 2020 for the disease caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. It started in Wuhan, China in late 2019. Historically, according to WHO, on December 31, 2019, a strange new pneumonia of unknown cause was reported to the Chinese WHO country office. A cluster of these cases originally appeared in Wuhan a city in the Hubei province in China. The infection were found to be caused by new coronavirus which assumed the name "2019 novel coronavirus" (2019-COVID). It was later given another name "severe" acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2" or SARS-CoV-2

by the International Committee on taxonomy of viruses on February 11, 2020. It was renamed SARS-COV2 because the virus is a genetic cousin of the corona virus which caused the SARS outbreak in the year 2002 (SARS-COV) ...

Covid-19 is a health challenge to the entire world, its effects extends to economic, political, social, religious and educational/academic activities of every human being in the global. Despite the health effects and deadly nature of the disease, the effects on economic and other affairs of the people with the African region generally and Nigeria in particular seriously influenced culture of gender responsibilities. It became feasible that survival of every family should not consider gender responsibility. More women became integrand of their family's survival with the approval of the men or husbands even though it is contrary to the culture, though, not an abomination. The Igbo traditional religious society is seriously affected by this survival decision and diversion.

Survival has been defined by Summers (2001:1455) as: "The state of continuing to live or exist" Summers (2001:1426) defines strategy as: "a well planned series of actions for achievement and aim ..." Therefore, one would be Keen to emphatically say that survival in the midst of COVID-19, with series of restrictions especially during the first wave was of utmost importance to the whole world. The Igbo traditional religious society also took the need for survival to a very high esteem that the women became seriously involved in economic activities to liberate their individual families. This thought became paramount as a dependable strategy to make the families survive.

The Igbo traditional religious society according to Mr. Nwannebike Udeh (Personal Communication 2 February, 2021) is the society in Africa where people observe a lot of religious and cultural rules and regulation. This explanation agrees with the view of Mbiti (1969:1) when he points that Africans are notoriously religious. The Igbo are not excluded in this act of belief system. The Igbo meant in this research are the settlers of the present South East geo-political zone in Nigeria. They live in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States.

Origin and Types of Feminism

Feminism has about three waves of its origin or history. Humm and Walker (2019:3) point thus:

The history of feminism can be divided into three waves. The first feminism wave was in the nineteenth and early twentieth century's, the second was in the 1960s and 1970s, and the third extends from the 1990s to the present. Feminist theory's emerged from a variety of disciplines such as feminist geography, feminist history and feminist literary criticism.

In another interaction, Simone de Beauvoir (2018:7) in Humm and Walker (2019:3) writes thus:

The first time we see women take up her pen in defense of her sex" was Christine de Pizan who wrote *Epitre au Dieu d'Amour* (Epistle to the God of love) in the 15th century ... First wave feminism refers to an extended period of feminist activity during the nineteenth century in the United Kingdom and the United States. Originally, focused on the promotion of equal contract and property right for women and the opposition to chattel marriage and ownership of married women (and their children) by their husbands. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, activism focused primarily on gaining political power, particularly the right of women's suffrage. Yet feminist such as Voltairine de Cleyre and Margaret Sanger were still active in campaigning for women's sexual, reproductive and economic right at this time. In 1854, Florence Nightingale established female nurses as adjuncts to the military. In Britain the Suffragettes and possibly more effectively, the Suffragists campaigned for the women's vote. In 1918 the representation of the people Act 1918 was passed granting the vote to women over the age of 30 who owned houses ... Second wave feminism refers to the period of activity in the early 1960s and lasting through the late 1980s. the scholar Imelda Whelehan suggest that the second wave was continuation of the earlier phase of feminism involving the suffragettes in the UK and U.S.A. the second feminism has continued to exist since that time and co-exists with what is termed third wave feminism... Third wave feminism began in the early 1990s, arising as a response

toperceived failures of the second wave and also as a response to the backlash against initiatives and movements created by the second wave.

Feminism as indicted above is a concept or movement that owes its origin from United Kingdom and United States of America. It was in the late 1990s and early 2000 that it began to receive viable attention in Nigeria. On the political scene, women began to assume competitive offices within the 4th Republic as Ministers and so on with the ratio of 70:30 percents.

In Igbo land, such opportunities were offered to women. But on the basis of traditional and cultural economy in Igbo land such opportunities are very slim on the part of the women. The implications of the women involvement in survival strategies during COVID-19 as it affects their traditional and cultural economy will be discussed in the subsequently section of the research.

Types of Feminism

In religious studies, four types of feminists are recognized, which include: liberal, cultural, socialist and religious feminists. Claudia (F) *et al* (2020:6) but listed liberal, radical, socialist and cultural feminism discussed three types of feminism thus:

Radical feminism is a movement that believes sexism is so deeply rooted in society that the only cure is to eliminate the concept of gender completely... the second type of feminism, called socialist feminism is slightly less extreme but still calls for major social change. Socialist feminism is a movement that calls for an end to capitalism through a socialist reformation of our economy ... Cultural feminism is a movement that points out how modern society is hurt by encouraging masculine behaviors but society would benefit by encouraging feminine behavior instead ...

Claudia, F *et al*, have three types of feminism, where two types of feminism recognized in religious studies are contained. For the religious scholars, liberal feminists/feminism is concerned with political and legal structure of women, sick's equal might's in socio-political context. The liberal feminists share similar idea with radical feminism. The suggested difference is that liberal Feminism concentrates total equality of all genders in the area of socio-political context, while radical transcends to every context. Religious feminist which solely belongs to the field of religion focuses on patriarchy in religious system.

Survival Strategies among Families in Igbo Traditional Religious Society During the Covid-19 Upsurge and the Implication

The emergence of Covid-19 pandemic threw so many families out from their normal state, for the Igbo in their traditional religious society, there is an added anxiety where the strategies attempts to survive the restrictions and rules promulgated as a result of the need to control the pandemic tampers with the religious culture that approves and disapproves women's involvement in activities traditional peculiar to men, Idyorough Kayode *et al* (2019:306) discusses gender as widely shared expectations and norms within a society about approximate male and female behavior, characteristics and role. It is a social and cultural construct that differentiate women and men interact with each other. Gender is a social construct that allocates functions, roles and expectations to males and female in any given society.

Furthermore, Idyorough (2005) stresses on gender main streaming as a process by which gender issues are integrated into the general developmental projects and programmes of a society. When gender mainstreaming calls to mind, there is always the need for the strategic and practical needs of men and women to be eliminated in order to meet up with those needs. The feminist concept in the words of Kayode *et al* does not leave traditional Igbo religious society untouched. It took many families, some sacrifices and understanding to manage this gender issue in adapting and accepting possible strategies for most families to survive.

First of all, on the economic survival during COVID-19 lockdown and other rules associated with it, it became imperative that some families ought to allow the women or wives to be actively involved in breadwinning their families. Of course, this women's involvement to a reasonable extent obstructs the traditional religious culture of the people during the lockdown, there was continuous postponement of the

14 days lockdown of businesses and inter-state movements. Some husbands invest their little savings in their palms in their wives' street and petty businesses for the up-keep of the family. Mr. Ejiofor Ezekiel (personal communication 14th January, 2021) explained that as a trader who goes to Lagos on weekly basis for his trade on fairly used motor parts found it difficult to let his family survive during the lockdown, but later strategized with his wife, that will sponsor a petty trade of her choice to enable them feed the family. Mr. Ejiofor said he gave his wife N180, 000.00 to embark on rice and beans trade. According to him, his wife buys them in bags and sells in cups and bowls. The most challenging experience he said he had was the fact that his wife could not carry the business alone, because at a time, there was need for them to begin to add moi-moi and fry Akara ball with the beans he himself became actively involved that in some occasions he will be the one doing the grinding of Moi-Moi and Akara beans and sometimes fries Akara and cooks the Moi-Moi and stayed in the same Kiosk with his wife virtually every day. As an Igbo man, Ejiofor was not comfortable with the development because his wife has tuned to appear as the major breadwinner of the family, while he perceives himself mere auxiliary partner, his household. For him and many other members of Igbo traditional religious society, it is abnormal for a man of such status to be overtaken by his wife in the discharged of family responsibilities and occupations.

More so, during COVID-19 lockdown and its rules, many people from Igbo land travelled to their villages. This influx created some economic tension. In Igbo traditional religious society, men own the high qualities species of yam, diocese app "Adaka," "Opoko" e.t.c which are always scarce while the women own the low quality species of yam popularly known as "Mbana/Mvuna/Abana" in Igbo language. The population drift now made it impossible for the scarce and high quality species of yam to serve many families. Many men had sold their high quality yam and went for the low quality species which are cheap and available in the hands of women. Mrs. Obiageli Anidiobi (personal communication, 2nd January 2021) asserts that during traditional religious worship in 2020 COVID-19 many men could not afford to offer the gods the required quality yam due to the economic situation on the ground. She said that men offered the same "mbana"- water yam women offer. This is understood as a high level of economic assault against men of such religious society against their gods. Mrs. Ojiakalfediegwu (personal communication, 4th January, 2021) avers that many women made a lot of money from large quantities of "mbana"- water yam that reasonable number of women bought high quality yam last year, 2020 and have their farm filled with both high quality and low quality species. In some Igbo communities, there are some economic activities women and girls prohibited from doing. For example, within Enugu and Anambra State, some communities prohibit the woman and girls from making heaps for yam or sowing yam of any species. Ozonwoye Anichebe (personal communication 29th December, 2020) points that title men from his neighbor communities of Obinofia, Umumba and AgbaUmana have started further negotiation for abolition of some of these traditional restriction against aided by unforeseen experiences in the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the socio- political sphere, men especially in the rural traditional settings are not used to steady meetings, markets etc with the rule of social and physical distance observation, the men feel at home with their farm works, blacksmithing, wine tapping, etc. some wine tappers hand over their daily product to their wives or female friends, some farmers also did sell their products at the mercy of their wives, etc. in his case, it is culturally abnormally in such traditional religious society of Igbo origin for a woman to serve the local palm wine in a public scene where customers demand to have the taste of the palm wine before buying. But it was condoned for the sake of the survival of individual families. The men became increasingly very scarce in the local market until recently in the year 2021 that men scantily started going to markets. During the sharing of the palliatives denoted by individuals, organizations and government advanced men were scarcely seen in such public arena. In one of the occasions according to Mr. Matthew Odogwu (personal communication 20th February, 2021) said that kola nut present the palliative, but there was no elderly man was available to say the traditional prayer and blessings, "Igo- ofo". They gathering devised an alternatively by letting a little boy held an elderly woman who just said a very brief prayer in form of the traditional prayer, "Igo ofo" for the people gathered.

The situation was similar to a conflict era to many families which has some adverse effects to the society even though the people are surviving on the basis of getting daily bread notwithstanding the quality and quantity consumed. Ejike and Okoye (2019:280) buttress thus: “The effects of war on nay, poverty, Hideouts in dangerous places and deaths. In this context, four implications are extracted from the effects of listed by Ejike and Okoye. The observable implications in the women involvement in the survival strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic in Igbo traditional religious society include: Sexual abuse, pregnancy, poverty and death.

Some women, who were interested in moving from one man to the other, now saw the opportunity to achieve their goals. Some young female teens/teenagers who joined their mothers to trade or other means of survival, became exposed sexual knowledge and abuse. In a short while unexpected pregnancies set in villages and families. Unexpected poverty came in some women who are actively involved in the household fund management could not appropriate funds or resources probably because they are inexperienced of the technical know-how needed. Some women died because they became exposed to a harsh and unusual life and high stress level.

On the other, some women became used to resources management because of their involvement, some continued with the businesses for the up keep of the family. Some found no reason to be submissive to their husbands, very few others now understand what their husbands and other male adults pass through for survival and became more humble relaxed over their responsibility because the women have come to their aid, while industrious ones saw it as an ample opportunity to expand the wealth in the family. Domestic responsibilities lost gender identity. Men and children jointly became active in domestic duties like cooking, washing clothes, sweeping the house, bathing the children etc. Amaefula (2016:135) points that “feminism entails a woman awakening to distortion on her social status ... “Women as part of COVID-19 survival strategists became more awoken to their social status. Ume (2020:83) concludes that: the socialization of men from a young age is what makes them perceive women as the subservient sex and enforce limitations to their roles and desire in society”. A look at the indiscriminate role acquisition during the COVID-19 pandemic calls for a re-adjustment to such socialization.

Recommendation

1. Feminism should be looked into from both religious and cultural points of view for proper adjustment.
2. Gender mainstreaming approach should be fairly applied considering the two sets of one environment that is the modern thought in a traditional society.
3. Gender role modification is needed right from the households.
4. Physiology of both sexes should also be held at esteem in allocation of roles.
5. The media publicity and public enlightenment through conferences, seminars should be intensified for better results.
6. Traditional education which promotes acquisition of all round skills and values for survival and leadership role should be encouraged for both sexes as a proactive coping technique from existential life hazards.
7. Government, schools and the religious community should build synergy in evolving institutions that ensure that no gender is put at disadvantage in their development pathway.
8. African women though highly vulnerable due to entrenched cultural barriers have high coping capacity during adverse conditions and therefore must be encouraged through increased advocacy for their increased involvement in leadership function both at domestic, economic and political levels.

Conclusion

Traditionally in Africa societies, the males are given a lot of opportunities more than the females. The orientation presents the females with limited opportunities in property ownership, marriage contracts,

political and other social inclusion, etc. Later within the United Kingdom and United States of America movements started developing for equal economic, social and political right for all genders.

Igbo traditional society finds it very difficult to totally succumb to these feminist views. The upsurge COVID-19 pandemic has made more women in the society to assume some roles the men do, for survival of their families with gender discrimination. Though some affected the religious and cultural practice of people, yet women were accommodated to such responsibilities while some men were also accommodated to women roles. The religion and culture would be systematical be reliable agent gender role adjustment among Igbo traditional religious people.

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Interview

1. Mr. Nwannebuike Udeh, Enugu State, Traditional Chief Priest, 52 years 2/2/2021.
2. Mr. Ejiofor Ezekiel, Anambra State, Trader, 54 years 14/1/2021.
3. Mrs. Obiageli Anidiobu, Enugu State, Farmer and a Female Priest of fecundity, 42 years, 2/1/2021.
4. Ozo Nwoye Anichebe, Enugu State, Farmer and Mason, 74 yrs, 29/12/2020.
5. Mr. Mathew Odogwu, Imo State, Trader, 38 yrs, 20/2/2021.
6. Mrs. Ojiakalfediegwu Enugu State, Farmer, 57 yrs 4/1/2021

THE IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

Okobia Faith Nkem

Department of Christian Religious Studies

College of Education, Agbor

Delta State, Nigeria

Abstract

Religious tourism involves faith based activities and travels to holy places. Most religious programs organized by some religious bodies in Nigeria attract tourists from all over the world which have contributed immensely to the economic development of the nation. Religious tourism improves the economy and general well being of the citizens, enrich the host community and provide employment for many people. It has become the highest earner of foreign exchange for the country. Therefore the religious bodies should upgrade their facilities and provide basic social amenities in tourism centres.

Keywords: Religion, Tourism, Religious tourism, economics, development and economic development.

Introduction

Religious tourism is considered as one of the largest industries in the world today which create employment, promotes and propagates the gospel and a country's tourism resources. Most of the religious programmes organized by different religious bodies in Nigeria constitute serious tourism attractions which have been contributing to socio – economic development in the country. The programs pull multitudes of national and international tourists who want to satisfy their spiritual yearning. As they come they get involve in many other cultural and recreational activities which may create avenues for establishing network that can be of use for economic activities such as trading relations with partners from other countries who belong to the same religious group which will stimulate economic growth.

The main reasons for travelling are leisure, business, conventions, seminars, meetings, study abroad, religious purposes as well as sports or games. In the recent years, religious tourism has been on the increase with a growing number of people visiting historic places in the developed countries. This is attributed to the fact that religious obligations has become fashionable trend to people all over the world as a means of expressing beliefs and faith in the ability of God to protect and guide mankind. The religious practices both under the auspices of Christianity. Islam and traditional practices have in no small way contributed to the development tourism in the world. It is a known fact that the Christian pilgrimages to Israel has formed an economic platform for the empowerment of the localities and contributed to the economic growth of the country. Also, in the Saudi Arabia, where many Islamic faithful converge twice every year for religious rituals, it has been a tremendous economic benefit to the country and her people. With these scenarios and many others around the world, it has become valid that religious tourism can become a source of economic revival to a country and her people.

Religious tourism is practiced not only in the developed countries, but also in developing countries (Vukonic, 2018). However, in Nigeria beyond allusions by government on the promotion of tourism, religion has continued to play a vital role in the development of tourism in the country. Many dignitaries have in recent times found Nigeria the essential balm to many of their spiritual problems, with many heads of government visiting Nigeria to seek solution. The growth of religious tourism in Nigeria has been enhanced by Christians, Islam and Traditional believers, through various festivals and programs that have become tourism attractions for many, both within and outside Nigeria (Umejei, 2019).

The method used in this study is historical method, which usually determines the past events of history to enable the interpretation of the events in the present and to predict the future. The historical method enables the researcher to trace the Genesis of religious tourism and its impact on economy development in Nigeria. Primary and secondary sources of data collection such as observation, books, journals, and internets will also be used in this study.

Conceptual Framework

Religion according to Eelke (2018) is a shared set of beliefs, activities and institutions promised upon faith in supernatural forces. Agunwa (2017) defines religion as the whole complex of attitudes, convictions, emotions, rituals, beliefs and institutions by which we came to terms with and express, our most fundamental relationship with God and man. Religion is God centered and aims at bringing the human element under the control of the sacred. Religion regulates the lives of individuals in the society for peaceful co-existence.

Tourism

Ele, (2017) defines tourism as the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. It is activities selected by choice and undertaken outside the home environment. Iheanacho (2018) defines tourism as the purposes and actions that are oriented towards leisure, recreation, business, religion and pilgrimage to another place with the intention to gather new information and experience to satisfy their needs. According to World Tourism Organization W.T.O. (2017), tourism industry is the world's largest and most diverse industry. In Nigeria religious tourism forms the main base of tourism industry. He also states that the dawn of history saw man as one who travels for the satisfaction of his desire, creation of opportunities, advancement of security and acquisition of knowledge in order to address the lacks which dominate his environment and improve his standard of living.

Religious Tourism

Religious tourism as a faith based tourism can be described as a unique type of tourism whereby people travel either individually or in groups to visit different places for pilgrimage, missionary work, convention and conference in order to satisfy their spiritual yearning. Also religious tourism is travelling for the purpose of viewing religious monuments, artifacts, worship of God, and to acquire more spiritual power.

Economics: According to Agunwa (2017) is the science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses. Economics is the material aspect of human endeavour, that looks into how to satisfy the needs of man out of the scarce resources of money, food and production. This shows the essence of market which is the only place where produced goods can be sold or exchanged either through trade by barter or with money.

Economic Development

Anozie (2018) states that economic development is the process by which there is a long period of sustained growth in the per capital fundamental changes in the structure of the economy and an overall sustained improvement in the material well-being of the people. They maintained that economic development occurs if the rate of growth of real per capital income in the country is higher than the rate of growth of population, over a long period of time. It means an expansion of health and educational services and more persons having access to them. Economic development is followed by an increase in life expectancy and standard of living. Similarly Oguji and Kene (2019) assert that "economic development is the process of growth in total and per capital income accompanied by fundamental changes in the economy.

Religious Tourism in Nigeria

Ejizu (2019) states that religion is man's experience of the holy and ultimate reality as well as the expression of that awareness in concrete life. Religion is humanity response to the divine. The response of man to the existence of being beyond him takes many forms hence the search for God and devotion to His cause through religious tourism. Ele (2017) states that Nigeria, has three dominant religions; namely: Christianity, African Traditional Religion and Islam. Nigeria as a country did not adopt any religion as a state religion. Hence, she is understood as a secular nation as entrenched in her constitution. There is freedom of religion affiliation on the platform of religious pluralism protected under her laws. Ele (2017) opines that one could easily identify two distinct dimensions of religious tourism in Nigeria, one is religious tourism in the domestic or local front within the country while the other is internationally oriented where Nigerians leave the country on religious tours to foreign countries. The other aspect of this international tourism is that Nigeria plays host to foreign pilgrims who come into the country for the fulfillment of their religious obligations or to find solace in the miracles of the many Catholic, protestant and Pentecostal adorations, apparitions, conference, crusade and programs. The great members who come into the country for the sake of her various religious activities such as *Eyofestival* in Lagos state, the *Mmanwu*, *OmabeandOdomasquerades* in Enugu State attest to tourism in African Traditional Religion. Others who visit shrines or groves believed to be inhabited by spirits are also many (Okonkwo and Nzeh 2019).

Some shrines that have tourism attractions in Nigeria for the practitioners of African Traditional Religion include *AdoroEro (Alor)*, *Ube* Uhunowerre and *Api, Opi*, all in Nsukka cultural zone of Enugu State. These shrines have tourists who travel to them for various religious reasons such as reconciliation, oath-taking, covenant making and sacrifices.

Umejei (2019) opines that the numerous festivals in our traditional societies have given huge boosts to tourism in Nigeria. These include the Osun Osogbo festival. The Osun river goddess is believed to hold power to wealth and fertility, which many have found potent. The Osun Oshogbo festival is regarded as one of the prime cultural fiesta that most expatriates look forward to. The Argurgu Fishing festival is one of Nigeria's greatest cultural festivals, attracting over one million participants and has existed since 1934. In the Niger-Delta, the UdjuIwhurie festival popularly known as Agbasa juju festival, is a colourful display of heritage celebrated by the Agbara people of Warri in Delta State. The god of war, reputed for war prowess. It has been celebrated since time immemorial, with a display of matchetes and regalia. The display of valour by the locals make Agbasa Juju festival a festival to watch. The Iriji Festival, celebrated by the Igbo people of Nigeria to certify the new yam for consumption has become a cultural heritage which enjoys international reputation that seven foreigners participated and corporate organizations struggle to endorse, in a bid to identify with the pride of *Ndi Igbo*.

Religious Tourism in the Bible

religious tourism according to Hirani (2018) is aimed at gaining spiritual satisfaction. It is the movement of people to sacred sites to witness or participate in one or more religious activities. The first religious tour in the bible was in 1 Samuel 1 verse 3 where Elkanah and his family travelled to Shiloh for yearly worship and sacrifice under the leadership of Eli the Priest. The Israelites from different places went to Jerusalem for the worship of God during the feast of Pentecost and Passover. In the New Testament, the three wise men or Magi from the East went to Bethlehem to worship Baby Jesus and give Him three different gifts such as gold, frankincense and myrrh (Matthew 2: 1 – 12). The Bible also states that the earthly parents of Jesus, Mary and Joseph who were with Jesus went to Jerusalem every year for the feast of Passover (Luke 2:41) Jesus himself went to Jerusalem with his parents (Luke 2:1 – 43) later as an adult he was going there on his own. Jesus Christ fed the 5,000 religious tourists with five loaves of bread and two fishes and 4,000 with seven loaves of bread and few small fishes who gathered around him to hear the word of God on several occasions (Matthew 14: 13 – 21 and Mark 8: 1 - 8). Until the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 AD, the Jews in diaspra travelled down to Jerusalem for different feasts and worship of God.

The Classification of Religious Tourism

Ashiegbu and Achunike (2014) opine that the classification of tourism are based on either geography or objective. The geography-type is subdivided into domestic, inbound or regional and outbound or international tourisms. While the tourisms based on objective, intention or purpose include cultural tourism, nature tourism, sport tourism, business/economic tourism, educational tourism, healthy/medical tourism, leisure relaxation and recreational tourism, ecological tourism, and religious tourism. Religious tourism can best be described as a unique type of tourism whereby people travel either individually or in groups to visit different places for the purposes of missionary work or pilgrimage and other religious activities. Religious tourism comprises of many facts which include: Pilgrimages, Marian shrine visits, Missionary travel, Leisure (fellowship), crusades, conventions and rallies, retreats, monastery visits, Faith-based camp and Religious tourist attractions. Ele (2017) avails that Religious Tourism also called “Faith Tourism” is a form of tourism whereby people of faith travel individually or in groups for reasons related to religion or spirituality in their quest for meaning. It could be under pilgrimage, missionary or leisure purposes. The pilgrimage has a mediation function between the natural and the cultural world and between the natural and the supernatural world. It is a vacation, but a transformational journey during which significant change takes place; new insights are given, deeper understanding is attained, new and old places in the heart are visited, blessings are received, healing takes place, and on return from pilgrimage, life is seen with different eyes and nothing will ever be quite the same again. While pilgrimage has ultimate spiritual goal, the search for ultimate truth and becoming one with God, it is a journey resulting from religious causes, externally to a holy site, and internationally for spiritual purposes and internal understanding. Sacred site that houses holy artifacts promotes ritual practice and attracts religious travelers or pilgrims, who often return with joy and spiritual strength.

Christian tourists include missionaries who travel for the sake of Church planting by taking the church to places where she has not yet taking roots, pastoral work, humanitarian services and charities. Recent developments in evangelization through the Pope’s travels to nations, international religious events like World Youth Day, the camps, crusades, conferences and retreats, adoration ministries and apparition centres constitute a large part of religious tourism.

African Traditional Religion (ATR) and Tourism

Ashiegbu and Achunike (2014) posit that the ATR is the oldest religion in Africa and it is the indigenous religion of Africans. This indigenous religion is what Nigerians have been practicing before the advent of Christianity and Islam in Nigeria. Like Christianity and Islam, ATR fosters tourism. This shows itself in the various religious and cultural festivals of the different parts of Nigeria which take place at different seasons of the year. Okpoko (2008) makes reference to the New Yam festivals in Igbo land, the Argungu fishing festival in Sokoto State. The Masquerade festival in different parts of the country, the Ofala festival in Onitsha, etc. Those festivals attract people from other parts of the country and in some cases, wealthy Nigerians invite their foreign friends to witness those festivals when they are celebrated. This encourages international tourism.

Another cultural festival in Nigeria that attracts visitors from near and far is the masquerade (*mmonwuormmuo*). The mask is carried by a human being but within it there is the belief that it is the spirit (*mmuo*) of the land. Masquerades are very popular in Anambra and Enugu States of Nigeria. Many parts of Nigeria exhibit the masquerade festival at different seasons. In some places like Nsukka, particular masquerades appear once in every three years. Different peoples in Nigeria have different socio-religious festivals they celebrate and at given times. But the cultural festival in Nigeria as Okpoko and Okpoko (2019) also confirmed, which attracts tourists from many parts of the world is the early celebrated Argungu fishing festival, celebrated in Sokoto State. This is only surpassed by the festival of art, the Carnival Calabar, which is organized by Cross River State every year. In ATR there is the belief in a supreme being. This is variously named according to the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. For instance, the Yoruba call it Oluwa or Olorun; the Hausa call it Ugbangiji, while the Igbo call it Chukwu

or Chineke. Traditional religion also acknowledges the existence of priesthood, oracles, divination, spirits (gods), ancestors, medicine, medicine-persons, magic or sorcery. In Igbo traditional religion, the supreme being does not communicate. He communicates through deities or oracles.

Okon (2018) states that, Nigeria festivals owe their origin to the traditional religions of Nigeria. The various festivals of Nigeria are celebrated throughout the year and are practice of the major religions in Nigeria. Masquerades and dance play an important role in the festivals of Nigeria. Some of the eminent Nigeria festivals are the Eyo, the Shadi, Durbar, Shango and so on.

The Eyo festival is celebrated only by the Lagos people. It is also said to be the precursor of the present day Brazil carnival. All the main roadways are blocked on the Eyo day to allow the procession pass freely. The masquerade starts from Idumota to Igaldunganran. Those who take part in this festival, pay homage to the Oba of Lagos. Eyo festival is mainly held on the last burial rites of an eminent chief, but is also held when time demands it.

The Sharo or the Shadi festival is derived from the Fulani culture. The word Sharo means flogging. The festival features unmarried men accompanied by beautiful girls to the center ring. Now a challenger starts to whip the opponent and this continues. The mob bursts out in joy and drumming and singing starts accordingly to cheer the fighters. The one wreathing in pain is considered to be the loser and coward.

Okon (2018) states that the Arugungu fishing festival is the annual festival and is the most vibrant compared to the other festivals. The festival is celebrated in the Arugungu town of Kebbi State, one of the tourist attractions. The festival was celebrated as a tribute to Sultan Dan Mu'azu,k when he visited the area in 1934. Since then it is celebrated every year around February and March. In this festival local people, armed with fishnets get in the water. They are then accompanied by drummers who with loud beating of their drums drive the fishes to shallow waters. Canoe racing, fishing bare handedly, diving competitions are also part of this festival.

The Antilogwu dance is a remarkable art form. The dance is done with the help of foot stomping steps. Great training is needed to perform this dance and is performed in Igbos in Anambra State. The Osun festival is celebrated in the Yorubaland and mainly worships Sango, god of thunder. Then the Benin festival is the harvest festival and is celebrated at the end of the monsoon season, when the harvests are gathered. The Durbar festival showcases the horsemanship of the people. Durbar means military parade. The Emir used to invite the nationals to exhibit their horsemanship and valor. Since then it has become a respectable festival. Today the Katsina Durbar is the most remarkable and glorious. The Nigeria festivals have become the tradition of Nigeria, worth seeing. Besides, there are several other local festivals celebrated with gaiety and fun.

Islam and Tourism

In Nigeria, Islam is known for promoting religious tourism in the way of pilgrimages. Every year a good number of Muslims go on pilgrimage to Mecca. This is religious tourism at the international level. At the domestic and regional levels, religious tourism is observed in Nigeria mostly during the major Islamic festival, Id el Fitr. According to Okafor (2019), it was King Muhammed Rimfa of Kano who introduced the feast of Id el-Fitr for the first time in Northern Nigeria. During this feast, Muslims do a lot of movement from one part of the country to the other, both for prayer and for social celebrations to mark the feast. During the feast, a lot of rams are exported from other African countries to Nigeria to facilitate the celebration of the feast. Another way in which one observe faith activities within the circle of the Islamic religion in Nigeria is in the area of conferences from time to time of Muslim youths, Muslim women and other Islamic groups for religious reasons.

Christianity and Tourism

Okon (2018) avails that in Nigeria, every year good number of Christians embark on religious tours to Israel and to other major Christian holy sites. This is also religious tourism at the international level. At the regional and domestic fronts, Christians devote much time to faith-based travels. Various

Christian denominations have their various programmes and places for faith-based activities. One cannot easily forget Prophet T.B. Joshua and his church's activities. The Redemption Camp close to Lagos is also another place that attracts great attention. In the Catholic Church the adoration grounds of Fr. *Oku na – ere ere*, Fr. Mbaka, Fr. Edeh at Elele and the Awsumb Monastery at Udi are places to reckon with. The cave and waterfall at Awsumb a natural wonder and it is said to be potent for healing. Many other Christian groups and individuals have uncountable programmes that foster faith travels from one part of the country to the other. It has been noticed that many people come from outside Nigeria to attend those religious activities especially Pastor Dr. Oluka D.K. Church, Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries where millions of people come from Nigeria and outside Nigeria for healing, deliverance, power must change hands, convention and annual anointing service. Also Dynamics Church Pastored by Dr. Enenchie Paul where thousands of people come from all over the world for healing, deliverance and spiritual strength in the convention and ministers conference.

Umejei (2019) posits that the Pentecostal Christians are taking the lead in contributing tourism development in Nigeria, through many evangelical activities. The many Christian crusades, seminars and festivals that are held in every nook and cranny of Nigeria have become an avenue for the development of tourism, especially with the crowd that normally throng these venues. Umejei, (2019) states that various Christian programs have made Nigeria to be preferred destination for religious tourism. Living Faith Chapel, a.k.a. Winners Chapel through its annual convention, tagged Shiloh brought Nigerians from home and abroad and foreigners alike, to Otta, Ogun State headquarters of the church to seek the face of God and divine turnaround with many high profile preachers of the gospel coming from all over the world to add colour to the event.

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), one of the leading Pentecostal churches in Nigeria has contributed to the phenomenal growth of religious tourism through its monthly "Holy Ghost" and yearly "Holy Ghost Congress". The number of people, both Nigerians, and foreigners that throng these festivals is said to be in excess of five hundred thousand, a boast for tourism. House on the Rock, another Pentecostal group hold its yearly festival tagged "The Experience" in Lagos, with high profile international gospel artistes in attendance, thus boasting the confidence of foreigners that Nigeria is not a haven for kidnapping and scam. The Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) also holds yearly Christian festival tagged "Retreat", which is also known to attract Nigerians from home and abroad, including foreigners who throng the venue of the retreat seeking one form of spiritual restoration or the other.

The Economic Benefit

According to Ele (2017) the religiousman in search of God must travel to the shrine or holy site, he must eat while on this religious tour, he must clothe himself, take shelter and enjoy guaranteed safety and security, among others. These necessary ventures connected to religious tours are not intrinsically faith-based activities but economic. In John 6 verse 9 the little child with five loaves and two fish did some supplies, whether as a hawker or a generous and benevolent pilgrim, his action speaks volume about the economic affairs associated with faith-based travels and venues. Host communities and countries of destinations do not hinge all of their reasons for accepting the crowds on pilgrimage nor protecting the holy sites on religious reasons only. There are reasons from the viewpoint of the economy.

The holy communities and nations experience some positive and robust economic impacts on their lives and environment from the material facts associated with religious tourism. They expect that the expenditures of the pilgrims would be translated into their incomes. Ordinarily, a lot of business grows around pilgrimage centers and these activities have tremendous effect on economy. Religious tourism has the core value of religious faith but as a human activity, it has economic characteristics and implications. This paper argues that religious tourism has the huge capabilities to prompt opportunities that will enhance economic advancements and human development. Today religious tourism represents a vital and viable sector of the world economy. It is a major player in the economy of many nations whose foreign exchange earnings, economic growth and empowerments come from faith-based travels.

The experience we have in Nigeria is that once a place becomes a destination for religious tourism, it automatically attracts some public utility infrastructure and services from religious organizations, good-spirited individuals and sometimes by the government. Such areas acquire a new environmental outlook and commercial activities begin to grow around them. Markets for shopping, banks for financial transactions, hospitality industries, hotels, hostels, restaurants, and even security outfits such as police posts are in place as necessary consequences of these centres. These have economic implications for the tourists, host religion and communities. Every naira and kobo spent by the tourist translates automatically into income for the business men and women found along the chains of economic activities which religious tourism stirs, stimulates and sustains.

The improvement of transportation facilities is one of the primary economic effects of religious tourism. The access roads to the tourism destinations are built almost immediately and this infrastructure impacts positively on the rural and remote villages that host them. Transportation activities increase due to the huge human traffic and agricultural product around the healing ministries, adoration or apparition grounds, electricity, bore holes, education and health care facilities, communication network, housing estates and filling stations are put in place as well. Another economic dimension of religious tourism is job creation. Employment it offers have results in vast proportions. Some workers are directly connected with the systems and structures of the religious sites. The religious clergy and personnel who are gainfully employed to serve in those areas, the cooks, the guards, cleaners and producers of religious items like the stickers, books, cassettes. There is also the increase of the sale of animals and food items.

The economic benefit according to Okon (2018) is the rapid growth of religious tourism which led to a growth of household incomes and government revenues directly and indirectly by means of multiplier effects. The inflow of foreign exchange into the country at this period is very high and a lot of employment is generated for the inhabitants of the area new hotels are been built which provide employment and residential quarters are been erected by private individuals who want to take advantage of the growing development in the area. The economic activities that take place during this period is very enormous boosting the economic growth of not only the inhabitants living in the axis but also increasing the economic growth of other sectors of the economy that are direct or indirectly involved in these conventions. As a result, the development of religious tourism can generally be considered a positive contribution to the tourism sector.

Tourism Contribution to Employment

The economic benefit according to Okonkwo (2014) is tourism is the number one employment of labor in the world and jobs created by tourism spreads across the economy in areas of construction, telecommunications, retail and manufacturing, thus, creating jobs in large number for young people, women, and men (Akpan and Obang, 2018). It has been estimated that tourism is the sector with the biggest employer of labor in Nigeria as it is generating employment for millions of people and its effect rubs on every aspect of people from taxi drivers to Bank managers (Ezenagu, 2018)

Tourism Contribution to Foreign Exchange Earnings

Tourism is a potential source of income generation especially through foreign exchange as it further transcends with a multiplier effect to the rest of the whole economy. Obeta and Onah (2018) posit that tourism is the main source of foreign exchange for at least 38% countries in the world, and it is among the top five main source of foreign exchange for as many as 83% of countries. The government of Nigeria in view of tourism's contribution put in place machineries to upgrade the tourism sector and to enhance it as a major revenue earner. This came particularly at a time of economic depression and to diversify her economic base from petroleum.

Investment and Regional Impact of Tourism

Euromonitor International (2018) states that Nigeria in recent years is experiencing an expansion in her travel and tourism industry with its hospitality industry attracting huge and potential Direct Foreign

Investment. The country is having an influx of international holiday lodging, such as Sheraton, Hilton, Best Western and Marriot. Again, the invasion of these is as a result of a search for a high – growth market.

Conclusion

Religious tourism is faith-based travels which generate activities that satisfy one's spiritual yearning and create opportunities that enhance economic development of the host communities and the country at large. Religious tourism has become the highest earner of foreign exchange for the Nigeria's tourism industry because the springing up of different churches in the country and the various conventions being held annually and quarterly by these churches have increase the numbers of delegates from overseas who visit the country for different religious programs. Therefore religious tourism is a powerful force for economic growth, human and national development, job creation, cultural preservation and peace.

Recommendations

This paper recommends that:

1. Religious bodies should upgrade the infrastructure around the sites and the sites should be respected and visited for sacred purposes.
2. Religious bodies should build hotels that are of international standard around the holy sites.
3. Religious bodies should provide basic social amenities such as electricity, good water and effective communication systems in tourism centres.
4. The hospitality industry should upgrade existing facilities to meet international standards.
5. The moral virtues and positive cultural values of the people of Nigeria should be enthroned to permeate every aspect of individuals in the society in order to expunge robbing or kidnapping of tourists.
6. Adherents of various religions should be encouraged to be of good behaviour.

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MANAGING GENDER ISSUES IN COVID-19 PANDEMIC ERA

By

Ejiroghene A. Oghuvbu

Department Of Political Science and International Relations,
College Of Leadership Development Studies,
Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

&

Ugo Chuks Okolie

Department of Political Science, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

&

Daniel Mevayerore Igbin

Department of Political Science, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

Abstracts

A gender issues are interdisciplinary and cross national in scope, focusing on gender and gender equality. Women are the major victims of inequality in West Africa and Nigeria specifically. Hence, this paper x-rayed the insecurities that women faced during the Covid-19 pandemic such as exposure to the virus as wives, nurses and caregivers, increase in molestation and domestic violence during the lockdown, reduction in feminine manpower leading to loss of jobs especially for single mothers, lesser opportunities for women empowerment, development and scholarship. The paper also explored ways to manage gender issues during the pandemic such as extreme health measures for women, an end to gender based violence, community engagement with and for women and girls, and gender responsive programming. It was recommended among others that the security of our mothers, wives, sisters and daughter should be made a priority by Nigerian government as long as the Covid-19 pandemic persists in our society.

Keyword: Gender, gender issues, management, Covid-19, pandemic

Introduction

Gender issues are interdisciplinary and cross national Scope focusing on gender issues and gender equity. This has been a major issue or piece of interest for writing among scholars from various disciplines such as the arts and humanities, education, social sciences, and even the sciences (Isah, 2005). The COVID-19 outbreak is impacting societies around the world in an unprecedented manner. However, not everyone, in every place, will be affected in the same way. Considering how the pandemic affects particular groups will help raise the effectiveness of containment efforts and minimize the potential negative impacts. This note focuses on one of such groups: Women and girls. Experiences from previous pandemics show that they can be especially active actors for change, while they can also experience the effects of the crisis in different (and often more negative) ways. Given that the COVID-19 is not gender-blind, the response to it should not be either (Wui, 2020).

Evidence from infectious disease outbreaks similar to COVID-19 indicates that women and girls can be affected in particular ways, and in some areas, face more negative impacts than men. Gender gaps in outcomes across endowments, agency and economic opportunity persist across countries (Wui, 2020). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be amplified by those pre-existing gender differences. For the most part, the negative impacts can be expected to exacerbate (i.e. more individuals are affected) and deepen (i.e. the conditions/disadvantages of some individuals worsen). Gender gaps will be affected

differently depending on the context and specific characteristics of different groups of women. In addition, those same differences may call for differential roles in the efforts to fight the crisis, especially in the first phase of prevention and containment, but also in the follow up (Isah, 2005). As an example, the role of women as caregivers in the households and communities, places them at a privileged position in communication and prevention efforts. Keeping the gender implications of COVID-19 in sight can therefore allow for a more effective response and action (Aljazeera, 2020).

However, Gender issues are always mistaken to be the promotion of women only but it embodies relationship between men and women (Brravo& Bauman, 2000). Managing gender issues implies controlling, organising problem that emanate from relationships and interactions between men and women in the society. Managing the problem of difference between the male and female gender especially in regard to the unequal treatments and less attention being paid to a particular gender in a given society is importance. The female gender suffers inequality the most in African countries and Nigeria specifically. The women are giving less significance and participation in their right to choose, make decisions, be educated, be in politics, for career freedom and opportunities, etc. (Isah,2005: 208 - 212) in his research found out that women did 60% of the world's work but receive one tenth of its income, they earn less than 1% of land and they had limited access to resources, e.t.c. Women are also major victims of neglect, abuse, rape, discrimination, exclusion and violence. Managing gender issues helps to control, organise and redirect the mishap happening to women in our society and especially during the covid-19 pandemic.

Conceptual Framework

Gender and Gender Differences

Gender refers to “the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis (Wong, Chow, & Leung, 2004). Gender is relational gender roles and characteristics do not exist in isolation, but are defined in relation to one another and through the relationships between women and men, girls and boys”. Simply put, sex refers to biological differences, whereas gender refers to social differences (RCCE, 2020).

According to the United Nations concept on Gender Mainstreaming by the Economic and Social Council (1997/2) cited in Guzura (2017:3) the United Nations states that:Gender is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated (Guzura, 2017). On the other handHaralambos&Holborn (2004) refers to gender as the social relations between men and women. It refers to the relationship between men and women, boys and girls, and how this is socially constructed. Gender refers to human traits linked by culture to each sex. Gender refers to the economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being women and men (Qiao, 2020). The social definitions of what it means to be a woman or a man vary among cultures and change over time. Gender is a sociocultural expression of particular characteristics and roles that are associated with certain groups of people with reference to their sex and sexuality. Within a society; males are socialized to be masculine as females are taught to be feminine. Thus, gender is the difference that sex makes within a society, guiding how we are to think of ourselves, how we interact with others, the social opportunities, occupations, family roles and prestige allowed to males and females (Seymour, 2016).

Gender analysis is a critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situation or contexts. It examines the relationships between females and males and their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses to ensure that gender based injustices and inequalities are not

exacerbated, and that where possible, greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted (Smith, 2016).

As the Covid-19 pandemic spreads, poverty, conflict, social norms and gender discrimination make women and girls more vulnerable to contracting the virus and are less likely to access critical services including general healthcare when compared to men. Women also face economic disruption and increases in gender based violence. Crises and times of unrest have been linked to increased interpersonal violence, including incidence of violence against women and children (VAW/C) (Fraser, 2020; Palermo and Peterman, 2011). Pandemics are no exception. In fact, the regional or global nature and associated fear and uncertainty of pandemics provide an enabling environment that may exacerbate or spark diverse forms of VAW/C. While rigorous studies estimating increases in reporting of VAW/C during or post-pandemic are scarce, media reports and anecdotal evidence are widespread. For example, when the Ebola outbreak hit West Africa, an “epidemic” of “rape, sexual assault and violence against women and girls” was reported to have been largely undocumented as collateral damage (Yasmin, 2016). Women and girls are the most vulnerable not just during conflict but also during pandemics. During the Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria for example, there were cases of rape and sexual assault after the Federal government of Nigeria declared a total lockdown in the country.

In the current novel coronavirus outbreak, as of mid-March 2020, there are already reports from Australia, Brazil, China and the United States suggesting an increase in violence against women and children. In China’s Jianli County (central Hubei province), the police station reported receiving 162 reports of intimate partner violence (IPV) in February which was three times the number reported in February 2019 (Wanqing, 2020). According to Wan Fei, the founder of an IPV non-profit, “90 percent of the cases of violence are related to the COVID-19 epidemic.” In the United States, the National Domestic Violence hotline issued a statement in early March 2020 on “Staying Safe” during COVID-19, including anecdotal evidence of how perpetrators were using the virus as a scare tactic to threaten or isolate victims, and urging those at risk to make a safety plan, practice self-care and reach out for help (National Domestic Violence Hotline, 2020). In Australia, a survey of 400 frontline workers indicated that 40 percent reported an increase in “pleas for help” and 70 percent indicated an increase in complexity of cases (Lattouf, 2020). While all pandemics are unique in their level of transmission and breadth of impact, the severity and recent policy attention to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected nearly every country globally, offers an opportunity to revisit the literature linking pandemics to VAW/C. While VAW/C comprises a wide range of distinct violence typologies (RCCE, 2020).

Social norms such as expectations that women and girls are responsible for doing domestic chores and nursing sick family members can also expose women and girls to greater health risks. The 2010 cholera epidemic in Haiti and 2014–16 EVD outbreak in West Africa demonstrate how this places a three-fold caregiver burden on women and girls: they are responsible for household-level disease prevention and response efforts; at greater risk of infection, and subject to emotional, physical, and socioeconomic harm (Wong, Chow & Leung, 2004). Although men, the elderly, and persons with compromised immune systems may at be greatest risk of fatality from COVID-19, the greater caregiving role that women and girls are expected to perform may expose them to other consequences. The expectation that women should act as caregivers follows them outside of the home. Women comprise more than 75 percent of the health care workforce in many countries, which increases the likelihood that they will be exposed to infectious diseases (Qiao, 2020: 134).

Evidence suggests that during past public health emergencies, resources have been diverted from routine health care services toward containing and responding to the outbreak. These reallocations constrain already limited access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, such as clean and safe deliveries, contraceptives, and pre- and post-natal health care (Seymour, 2016). Adolescent girls, who have unique SRH needs, may be particularly affected. In addition to the caregiving burden, social norms in some contexts dictate that women and girls are the last to receive medical attention when they become ill, which could hinder their ability to receive timely care for COVID-19 (Seymour, 2016). This could have serious implications for older women or those with chronic conditions or weakened immune systems—

such as women infected with HIV, malaria, or tuberculosis who appear to be at greater risk of contracting COVID-19, or for women and girls experiencing malnutrition.

During the 2014–16 West Africa EVD outbreak, fear of contracting the disease resulted in fewer women attending health clinics. Coupled with resource diversion from primary health care services and prevailing social norms, this led to a decrease in vaccination coverage and a 75 percent increase in maternal mortality in three of the affected countries. A similar combination of factors during COVID-19 outbreaks could exacerbate women's and girls' other health conditions or delay treatment for undiagnosed COVID-19. Outbreaks could also result in disruptions to mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS), putting the individuals participating in them at risk (Ityokura, 2020). Psychosocial wellbeing is a major issue for adolescents exposed to conflict, displacement, or violence, which is not uncommon in humanitarian settings. Moreover, MHPSS caseloads will likely increase during COVID-19 outbreaks, as frontline health workers, women and girls with caregiving burdens, and community members fearful of becoming infected or infecting others may all experience stress and trauma relating to the outbreak (Ebenso&Otu, 2020).

During the 2014–16 EVD outbreak in West Africa, relief actors found that girls whose mothers were infected with EVD were forced to take over their caregiving responsibilities. Even when their schools were not closed, girls found it increasingly difficult to balance their caregiving burdens with education, which led to increased absenteeism or to them leaving school completely. This had long-term impacts on the girls' educational, economic, and health outcomes.

Covid-19 Pandemic

The origin of the current COVID 19 pandemic can be traced back to Wuhan, China where numerous cases of the virus were recorded. The epidemic in December 2019, brought Wuhan to the world's attention with numerous cases of the infection recorded. The epidemic was traced to the Huanan seafood market, where live animals were sold. In its early stages in Wuhan, a total of 41 cases were recorded with many experiencing symptoms such as Malaise, dry cough, shortness of breath, etc (Chen et al, 2020; Hui et al, 2020). China and by extension, the world, witnessed the first death from the Virus on the 7th of January 2020. This was a 61 year old man who had contracted the virus after he purchased commodities from the market. The Chinese government through health authorities began investigations to identify the underlying causes of infections. Results of these efforts were communicated to the World Health Organisation which subsequently named the virus as the COVID-19 (Hui et al, 2020). In Thailand, an index case was recorded on the 13th of January after an infected patient returned from China. Subsequently, it spread to the United States, Nepal, France, Malaysia, Singapore, etc. (Aljazeera, 2020). The contagious nature of the disease granted it speed in infecting a number of people within a short space of time. In February, a total of 81,109 cases were recorded all over the world with China at the time having 78,191 of those cases. Outside the Asian giant, 2918 cases were recorded in 37 countries (World Health Organisation, 2020). The increasing number of cases forced the World Health Organization to declare the COVID-19 a pandemic. As at April 2020, more than 1,000,000 cases had been reported worldwide, with a total of 62,784 deaths (World Health Organisation, 2020).With the absence of vaccines and the little availability of other means of cure, countries have embraced preventive approaches to limit the spread of the virus. The first step in the responses of states to the pandemic is to limit social contact. Some of the measures to achieve this include partial or total lockdown, restrictions on travel, leisure, work and religious gatherings (Warren, 2020). Italy with a death toll of more than a thousand deaths due to the virus has promulgated lockdown procedures to limit social contact which in turn will reduce the spread of the virus (Warren, 2020). The United States with more than 65,000 cases of Corona virus instituted its lockdown as a measure to confront the spread of the virus (Burgess& Levine, 2020). The lockdowns in various countries were enforced into the Easter season, a period of celebration for Christians all over the world.

COVID-19 pandemic has taken its toll in African Countries. Some of the countries affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in Africa so far are: South Africa, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Senegal, among others. The disease

was first noticed in Nigeria in February 2020 when an Italian citizen came in from Italy. There was panic and unrest when the individual was found to be sick. The index case was promptly isolated and medication given for mild symptoms of the disease (Ebenso&Otu 2020). By March 29, the index case had increased to 132 recorded cases with 1 death, and instances of governors and other political office holders testing positive for the virus (Toromade, 2020). Among the public holders who tested positive to the virus in Nigeria are the Chief of Staff to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Abba Kyari; Governor of Bauchi State, Bala Mohammed; Governor of Oyo State, SeyiMakinde among others. The Nigerian Centre of Disease Control (NCDC) commissioned numerous testing centres to test and diagnose the Corona virus. Despite the measures put in place to contain the spread of the virus, current figures indicate a significant increase in the infection rate. A total of 493 cases of the virus has been recorded with 159 having recovered and 17 deaths (Worldometer, 2020). Due to the increasing numbers of the virus, the Federal government instituted lockdown measures in Lagos, Abuja and Ogun states which have recorded increased numbers of the virus (Ityokura, 2020). So many other states in Nigeria took various measures such as border closures, social distancing, ban on social and religious gathering and other forms of restrictions to contain the virus.

Emerging Gender Issues in Covid-19 Pandemic Era

The rise of Covid-19 pandemic in 2019 in China which later spread to other parts of the world in 2020 has affected gender issues in various ways which will be discussed here. In a research conducted in Spain in the year 2020, it showed that employment rates were higher for men before the lockdown, with only 13% of our male respondents been out of job when compared to almost 29% of women. Around 7% of both men and women became unemployed during the lockdown, while 17% of men and 18% of women were furloughed. As a result, at the time of the survey, 63.5% of men were working, compared with 46% of women (Farre, Fawaz, Gonzalez & Graves, 2020: 12). Emerging evidence on the impact of COVID-19 suggests that women's economic and productive lives will be affected disproportionately and differently from men. Across the globe, women earn less, save less, hold less secure jobs, and are more likely to be employed in the informal sector. They have less access to social protections and are the majority of single-parent households (WHO, 2020). Their capacity to absorb economic shocks is therefore less than that of men. As women take on greater care demands at home, their jobs will also be disproportionately affected by cuts and lay-offs (WHO, 2020). Such impacts risk rolling back the already fragile gains made in female labour force participation, limiting women's ability to support themselves and their families, especially for female-headed households. In many countries, the first round of layoffs has been particularly acute in the services sector, including retail, hospitality and tourism, where women are overrepresented (Toromade, 2020).

The situation is worse in developing economies where the vast majority of women's employment 70percent is in the informal economy with few protections against dismissal or for paid sick leave and limited access to social protection. To earn a living these workers often depend on public space and social interactions, which are now being restricted to contain the spread of the pandemic. The Ebola virus showed that quarantines can significantly reduce women's economic and livelihood activities, increasing poverty rates, and exacerbating food insecurity (Yaker&Erskire, 2020). In Liberia where approximately 85 per cent of daily market traders are women, Ebola prevention measures (which included travel restrictions) severely impacted women's livelihoods and economic security. Moreover, while men's economic activity returned to pre-crisis levels shortly after preventative measures subsided, the impacts on women's economic security and livelihoods lasted much longer (Zou, 2020). From past experience and emerging data, it is possible to project that the impacts of the COVID19 global recession will result in a prolonged dip in women's incomes and labour force participation, with compounded impacts for women already living in poverty. For those who, as a result of recent economic growth managed to escape from extreme poverty, they are likely to fall back into this most vulnerable of situations once again (Zou, 2020).

The provision of sexual and reproductive health services, including maternal health care and gender-based violence related services, are central to health, rights and well-being of women and girls. The diversion of attention and critical resources away from these provisions may result in exacerbated maternal mortality and morbidity, increased rates of adolescent pregnancies, HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. In Latin America and the Caribbean it is estimated that an additional 18 million women will lose regular access to modern contraceptives, given the current context of COVID-19 pandemics (Willmer, Smith & Morgan, 2020).

Recent data from China, Spain and Italy regarding the COVID-19 outbreak indicate that the share of men that are dying due to the infection is much higher than that of women. The majority of the fatalities across countries appear to be men (Wanging, 2020:163). A study from China, for instance, found that the fatality rate among men with the virus was roughly 65 percent higher than it was among women (Wanging, 2020: 165). Although the reasons for this trend yet remain unclear, initial research points to the higher incidence of chronic diseases (i.e. hypertension), risky and or health-seeking behaviours (i.e. smoking) among men, as well as to immunological differences. Among SARS patients, males also appeared to be more severely affected by the disease than females, which may partly reflect gender differences in tobacco use (Zou, 2020). Likewise, gender differences in physical activity, eating habits, occupational exposure to smoke and dust, etc. and associated comorbidities could play a role. Animal studies (in mice) also show that males generate less robust immune responses than females to infections with SARS-CoV and perhaps other coronaviruses (Yaker&Erskire, 2020).

Age can operate as a mechanism for differential impacts. Due to longer average life-expectancy, more of the elderly are women. Women constitute 55 percent of the +65 population and 62 percent of the 80+ years old, globally, an age group for whom the effects of COVID-19 seem to be more severe (Reynolds, 2020: 56). Many live alone and are widowed. In some countries (such as South Africa) many elderly women look after the children. Such women will be very vulnerable to dying if infected, which will also impact those they care for. However, they will also be more vulnerable to crime and theft, and not just if their husbands died from COVID-19, in the context of an economic shock (Reynolds, 2020: 56). In addition, many who relied on remittances or private transfers from relatives will likely lose such sources of income with more restricted conditions for work and other economic impacts of the crisis. Women make up large parts of the health workforce, but they may have less decision-making capacity within the sector and less access to protective equipment in times of crisis compared to male health workers (Murphy, 2020). Globally, between 65 percent (Africa) and 86 percent (Americas) of nurses are female, while physicians are disproportionately male (except for some countries in Europe). In addition, the hierarchical relationship between nurses and doctors may undermine the perspective of (female) nurses. Nurses participating in focus group discussions conducted in Canada after the SARS epidemic argued that physicians' non-compliance with infection control protocols jeopardized their health and safety (Murphy, 2020: 43). During the 2014 Ebola outbreak in Nigeria, nurses, traditional birth attendants, and cleaners/laundry workers in health facilities (most of whom were female) were not provided with the same amount of protective gear given to (male) doctors and other high-ranking hospital officials. Women are also vulnerable in more informal parts of the health workforce, such as home health care, aids or community health workers. Indeed, and as part of the response to the COVID-19 crisis, some countries are mobilizing large unpaid community health care forces (NDVH, 2020).

From the above emerging issues it is observed that between both gender that is men and women, the women are more affected in society when pandemics occurs and the Covid-19 pandemic is not an exception.

Manging Gender issues in the Covid-19 Era

There should be extreme health measures for women: they are nurses, midwives. Local health workers ignored those roles and did not pay attention. Women care for most of their sick relatives, housework and child care. Women and children as migrants, especially women's homes Or fundraising activities, are also vulnerable (HRM, 2020). Together, we must provide full support, including child care, medical services

and other social services support and protection for important future responses. Money transfer program for women and girls Priority needs to be given to reducing the impact of future disease outbreaks, restoring and strengthening resilience shock. Policies protect workers that are women, reduce stress, and help improve the lives of children and their families (HRM, 2020).

2. Prepare for increased gender bias (GBV) in COVID-19 inhibitors GBV increases during the COVID-19 response and can be prepared for with initial training Respondents on how to manage GBV data (Pocket Guide, including applications, Help), including specific approaches to and with young girls. It also prepares all steps especially for puskesmas and health workers at the community level Changes in body weight are related to the case weight of GBV victims. GBV data available Telephone lines and other methods of support must be provided in all settings (Wui, 2020).

3. Maintain basic health and educational services Data on past diseases such as Ebola and Zika show efforts to control these outbreaks. Interrupt educational activities and divert resources from daily medical services Maternal and child health services and rape hospital care. Young girls and and boys living with HIV / AIDS are as vulnerable as continuing care endangered life, life-threatening illness, death, HIV epidemic. Together, we must ensure sustainable development and quality education and health care. Including alternative messaging systems, while long-term strength continues to be supported education and health system to meet the needs of young women, girls and boys around the world (Chen, 2020).

4. Link existing women's and youth rights networks to support partnerships important information flow as schools progress in distance learning, social support systems become important with peers Counselor-should be seen for young girls. Through personal and digital platforms, that is large public and private networks must also be involved to ensure effective access to girls and women at all levels of decision-making and exchange of conventional media GBV phone book and other support services. Our digital platform system, such as U-report, it can be a versatile tool for creating discussions about collaborative approaches (Hui, 2020).

5. Ensure there is gender information, research and prospects. What we do is not neutral. Gender, age, disability Random data, as well as other leading indicators, should be a priority when collecting data. Review and report. This includes studies examining the efficacy of COVID-19 Results of public health, social and economic development. 1 This is a worksheet. Designed for easy replacement (Lemmon, 2020).

Conclusion

COVID-19 has infected and affected men, women and non-binary groups differentially. This study has summarised the key areas in which women have been disproportionately affected by the outbreak. This is an important distinction to highlight: it is not the virus itself that causes socio-economic impacts on women, but rather the mechanisms introduced by administrations to mitigate against disease transmission which cause the downstream effects which have disproportionately affected women.

These ripple effects are wide-reaching. Most acutely, women have faced risks to their physical safety with domestic violence soaring globally. It was well established prior to COVID-19 that most domestic violence occurs at home, so it was perhaps unsurprising that when people are mandated to stay at home, with the additional stressors of job insecurity, concern of infection, and potentially additional domestic workloads that this increased. Governments across the EU have taken strides to mitigate some of this risk to women, and should be commended, but we are yet to have conclusive data as to the scale of the problem, and how effective different intervention measures have been. Women's health has also been affected by disruption and changes to health systems. Most acutely have been the changes to maternity and sexual and reproductive health services. Many of these services were either cancelled, reduced or moved to online / phone provision. This has meant that women have not had full access to reproductive health services, the effects of which can be long-lasting. Finally, we must consider how each of these impacts are amplified when considering additional drivers of vulnerability. Women are not a homogenous group, and nor will they all experience these impacts in the same way. Race, location, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic group (and beyond) will further affect women's experience of

COVID-19. When considering policy development and scrutiny, the downstream effects of policy must recognise the real-world of those experiencing the outbreak and seek to mitigate against further harms amongst the most vulnerable.

Recommendations

- 1) Governments must actively seek to reduce risks to women in their own homes through increased mechanisms to report domestic violence, creation of subsidised safe spaces for women who wish to leave their homes and increased vigilance and intervention for those reporting to hotlines.
- 2) Ensure governments focus stimulus and/or bailout packages on those sectors which have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 shutdown.
- 3) Put cash in women's hands if a country has an existing program in place that can directly place money in the hands of women, such as conditional cash transfer programs using mobile banking, those programs should be expanded.
- 4) Introduce measures that can either be implemented with low transaction costs (such as temporarily eliminating electricity bills for poor consumers).
- 5) Use pre-existing national social protection programs and adapt targeting methodologies to ensure income for groups affected by COVID-19 and especially where women are heavily represented (tourism, teaching, retail, restaurants, hospitality, etc).
- 6) Introduce measures to alleviate the tax burden on women owned businesses.
- 7) Integrate a gender assessment in all country assessments to understand the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, including economic impact, and how to address it effectively.

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ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND INNOVATION: SOME POLICY LESSONS FOR POST COVID AFRICA

By

Washington N. Opara

Methodist Theological Institute Umuahia, Abia State

Abstract

Covid-19 came into the world and brought changes that affected every Dick and Harry. It affected the economy of the whole world. Its entrance brought death, lock down, hunger, loss of jobs and economic retardation. In looking at this topic, Historical and phenomenological methods were used. The study found out that Africans were adversely affected because of their lack of industrialization, dependence on foreign goods and mono-economy. It is the recommendation of this paper that efforts should be made by the Continent to embrace e-commerce, diversify her economy and embrace industrialization.

Keys Words-Diversification, Innovation, Policy

Introduction: Economic activities are the `tonic` that make a nation survive. A nation is great, more or less is based on her economic potentials. This is so because, no nation is self-sufficient. The reliance on other nations and on her nationals, makes the survival imperative. Africa as a Continent is not exempted from the above fact. She is one of the Continents tagged to be `backward` in development especially in technology. She depends heavenly on Western Countries for this in order to stand among the nations. Most of her developmental programmes are being financed through foreign loans. Most of her products for export are mainly refined crude oil (Petroleum), Gold, Palm oil.

Recently the world was hit by a pandemic known as Covid-19. This pandemic affected Africa adversely. This was because there was restriction of movement across nations to avoid the contamination of the disease. The world was in total lockdown. The pandemic has no respect for any person, colour, tribe, sex, religion, or nation. From what happened, it was the advanced nations that were mostly affected. In the midst of this turmoil, Africa was affected because she had no access outside herself, and within herself, there was no movement. This quagmire affected the Continent adversely in her economic ventures.

The problem this paper tried to solve is the problem of mono-economy of Africa, which made some of her nations rely on one product each. This made them suffer during the pandemic because these their products could not be exported in order to gain foreign exchange. This had adverse effect on her economy. Historical and phenomenological methods were used.

Since we learn from history, Africa should learn from what she suffered during this time, and change her economic system. This is so because he who will not learn from history, lives to relive it.

COVID-19

This was the `catalyst`, the `trigger` of the whole gamut of the topic. Without Covid-19, economic diversification and innovation, and their attendant policy will not be invoked. According to Chinwendu Obienyi, "The year 2020 will long be remembered as the year of the COVID-19 pandemic in which the rapid spread of the virus had devastating impact on global economies [especially African]." (2020.p.22). "It all began in China in 2019, and subsequently, spread across the world, including Africa." (Okereocha, 2020.p.22.)

Except recently that Vaccine has been found, the best remedy for it are preventive measures. These include the washing of the hand in running water, application of Hand-sanitizer (alcoholic based), social distancing, wearing of face mask, good health hygiene, discouragement of large gathering, lockdown, quarantining of victims.

The Effects Of Covid-19

The results of this pandemic are myriad, and circular in nature. These range from “...unstable food prices, less access to nutritious food, lower incomes, and less long-term profitability.”(Sevier, Retrieved from <https://www.andeglobal>)

Not only on food, but also on industries and households especially in Africa. This can be seen in this eye-opener:

Industrial firms will [would] simultaneously experience a drop in domestic sales and exports (due to lower demand, reduced prices for commodities and decreased production), shortages in supplies (because suppliers located in other countries are [were]affected by COVID-19 containment measures at home), investments (due to higher risk aversion of foreign investors) and labour (people not allowed to work and move during the lockdown period). at the same time, households are [were] restricted in their economic activity; they provide [provided] less labour and hence receive [received] less income from labour, businesses and remittances, and consequently consume [consumed] less due to their decreasing purchasing power.” (Hartwich Frank, Massoud Hedeshi. Retrieved from <https://www.unido.org/news/covid>).

In another dimension, the pandemic “Shuttered factories, deserted workplaces, furloughed staff, massive job cuts and losses, a lock down leisure industry, a grounded aviation sector and crash in global oil prices, defined the world economy...It crippled many economies, including the economies of advanced nations.”(Ughechie. 2021.p.17)Entertainment Centres were affected. Most of them closed. Here in Nigeria, “No fewer than 12 night clubs and recreation centres have [had] been sealed by the Lagos State Government for breaching COVID-19 protocol.”(Fred Itua, Lukman Olabiyi, 2020.p.8.) According to Chinwendu Obienyi, these African countries were prominent where Covid-19 dealt heavy blow on their economy-Capital markets. They were South Africa, Mauritius, Egypt, Morocco, Kenya, Ghana, Malawi and Nigeria.(Obienyi. 2020.p.17). Even Post Offices {NIPOST} in Nigeria were affected, including other African countries. This was because customers were nowhere to be found. “This has [had] resulted in low volumes of inbound and outbound items, declining customer traffic at post offices, dwindling sales and revenues, downsized volumes...”(Younouss Djibrine. 2021.p.10). From the above, every facet of the economy was affected by the pandemic. Such effects call for the serious diversification of African economy in order to be on the safe side for such occurrence in future. This will not go without strong articulate innovations and policies.

The Treatment

This pandemic made both the Federal, State and Local Government Areas build Isolation Centres in order to curtail the spread of the virus, and at the same time, cure the inmates. This had and is still taking money from them. However, the treatment so far, especially in Nigeria, is done by the Federal and State Governments free of charge. The patient, more or less, does not belong to his or her family until after treatment.

Diversification

When one door closes, the likelihood of other doors opening for good is there. Man is a rational being. Countries are made of leaders who can come to rescue in situation of like magnitude. It is only a tree that cannot adjust. That adjustment in our context is Economic Diversification.

Ajifowoke Michael Gbenga gives a vivid picture of Africa and her nature of economic activities before and during Covid-19. He says:

The low levels of economic diversification in Africa largely contribute to economic fragility across the continent, making it extremely vulnerable to negative shocks such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic....Several countries across the region are endowed with minerals and natural resources, which constitute a major source of Africa's income. But an over-dependence on exports for foreign exchange earnings makes its economies susceptible to external shocks and price volatility. For instance, the unprecedented crash in oil demand and prices this year has made a huge impact on Africa's oil and gas exporters, with oil sales accounting for a significant portion of government income in their economies. Many have been forced to cut spending or source additional finance to make up for the fall in revenue, exacerbating existing fiscal and monetary challenges....Economic experts under the auspices of the African Economic Research Consortium are the latest to call for economic diversification on the continent in a digital press conference themed 'Covid-19 Crisis Amplifies the Urgency for Economic Diversification in Africa' held September 16. Conversations were focused on the consequences of African countries having low levels of economic diversification, vulnerabilities to shocks such as the COVID 19 crisis as well as economic diversity as a driving force to reducing pre-existing fragility factors across the continent.(Gbenga, 2020 Retrieved from <https://Southerntimesafrica.com/site/news/africas-diversification-wake-up-call>).

The above gives the picture of Africa and her economic situation.

Diversification-what it means.

This meaning is given by Igor An off in his book An off's Matrix. He writes that diversification means "...developing new products or services, for new markets." (David Parrish. 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.davidparrish.com/Covid-19-diversification-strategies-how-to-diversify-in-a-crisis/>)

The threat the pandemic gave to Africa in which all areas of her life were adversely affected- Agriculture, commerce, industry, medical, transportation, etc, shows the importance of economic diversification .Admassu Tadesse says that "It is another wake-up call. It is giving a new boost to the imperative of industrialisation and diversification across sectors and value chains." (Tadesse. 2020. Retrieved from <https://african.business/2020/10/finance-services/african-economies-must-redouble-efforts-to-diversify-in-wake-of-covid-19/>.)

Areas of diversification

Mono- Economy

Most of African countries depend on one product as their only means of survival. The implication is that, when this product could not lay the 'golden eggs', either because it is now an old layer, or is sick, the economy of such countries is jeopardized. It is like putting one's eggs in a basket. Nigeria for example, depends on oil {Petroleum} to sustain herself. So if anything happens, either locally or globally as she experienced that during this pandemic, the nation is crumbled. National development and sustenance will be a comatose situation. This assertion is corroborated by Segun David. He is of the opinion that Africa should make "...efforts ... geared towards changing from mono economy to a multi facet economy which embraces and encourages diversification...that is, thinking outside the box.(Bimbola Oyesola. 2020.p.19).

Reduction of Prices Of Goods: Africa depends heavily on international trade. Her exports to gain foreign reserve were affected by the lock down. She could not export again. This caused a very downward trend on her economy. "The region is strongly affected by the contraction of world trade, causing a sharp fall in the process of several export products such as oil, minerals and some agricultural products. In 2020, although still subject to strong uncertainty, forecasts predict a sharp deterioration in the current account deficit..."(WFP 2020. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/report/Burkina-faso/>). Since the main stay of some African countries are uncertain in times like Covid-19, the need to diversify has arisen.

Dependence on Imports. Africans have the mentality of preferring foreign goods to their own. This lack of patriotism has made them depend heavily on foreign products. During this pandemic where there was total lock down, nobody was allowed to go out not to talk of importation, the citizens suffered. Such a

situation will definitely make for a change of attitude. A way out is to diversify the economy for the rainy day. "...the persistence structural weaknesses of the continent overexpose African countries to the economic consequences of COVID-19. These include high dependency on imports in areas such as food, drugs, machinery and equipment..." (OECD 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org>). In his own opinion, Segun David says that

"...government should as a matter of urgency consider paradigm shift in her quest for social and economic emancipation, suffice to say, our system belief of superiority in foreign products and goods should be discouraged and emphasis should be placed on home grown products for the survival and maintenance of our local industries; if we truly desire to whittle down the effect of this pandemic [Covid-19] on our socio-economic life... Bimbola Oyesola.p.19.

This situation calls for inward turning. Africans should look inwardly to harness their own natural resources in order to sustain themselves.

Weak Local Production: This is a follow up of the above. Because African countries depend on foreign goods, this aspect has been neglected. Many have not found it necessary to develop Local Industries in order to facilitate the production of food and other products to sustain the economy. Local manufacturers of machineries are not seriously encouraged. This has left the continent with low level of production of essential commodities. This "...weak local production systems, limited ...connectivity..." (OECD 2020.) is a bane to Africa. Africa should wake up and find ways to assist local production of materials to her own advantage.

Industrialization: Diversification will be possible when Africa is industrialized. If the means of diversification is not there, it is still a dream that may not come true. It is one of the driving forces of diversification. Industrialization brings diversification, so that many goods and products will be manufactured to suit different occasions and seasons. Issa Aremu says that

...industry is the key driver for sustainable ...development for national economies and the foundation of good living standards, Africa is still exporting raw cotton, crude oil, mineral resources, gold and diamond only to be importing finished manufactured goods from China, Europe and America....He, therefore, called for appropriate industrial policies to re-industrialize Africa....`Africa must copy China`s industrialization drive and diversification, which within 20 years , moved over 250 million people out of poverty through manufacturing and industrialization. (Bimbolaoyesola. 2020.p.19).

Industrialization is necessary so that we can diversify our economy. It is the fulcrum upon which the wheel of diversification turns.

Food Security: Any nation that cannot feed its citizens, is a failed one. Most African countries have abandoned farming because of importation of foreign agricultural products. Some prefer foreign to local products, thereby discouraging the rural farmers. Covid-19 has shown that Africa should be mindful of her taste for foreign food to the detriment of local one. The importation of foreign agricultural products should be discouraged to enable citizens diversify the production of local products so that the experience of Covid-19 will not repeat. Having food security, the nations will be sustained. During Covid-19, there was virtually no importation of food due to the lockdown. A country that depended on importation of her food, the citizens would be involved in compulsory `fasting`. So there should be "...increased local manufacturing, particularly agro-industries, to counter-act the impact of import/export disruptions caused by an over-reliance of food ...sources from out of the continent. (AERC 2020.Retrieved from <https://earafrica.org/latest-news>). Africa has to diversify on her local food in order to sustain the populace.

Other Sources of Energy: Petrol is not the only source of energy. Coal, Gas, Wind, Solar ,etc, can equally supply energy. Instead of concentrating on petrol, government and individuals can develop these sectors. These areas are neglected because of oil which Africans had seen the consequence on relying on it

during the pandemic. If oil fails, then internally the continent will not be affected too much because these areas can sustain the continent. This is the view of Raed Kombargi, Georges Chehade, Jorge Camarate, and Jad Moussalli. To them, government and individuals should develop other “...energy sectors such as green hydrogen, energy storage, and power generation through renewable sources like wind and solar. These industries create jobs and guarantee successful economic diversification. In this way, they can supplement oil and gas, and make the region more resilient to external shocks.” (Raed,etal.2020 Retrieved from <https://www.strategyand.pwc.com>)

Manufacturing of Local Products: During this pandemic, there were certain things needed to prevent its spread. These were Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Face Masks, Hand sanitizers. These could be produced locally. Allied industries could divert their manufacturing to these areas instead of being idle during this time. The world’s leading manufacturer of PPE is China. According to her government, production of masks at the end of February 2020 stood at 116 million a day. Several countries had rushed to get supplies from her. The price of masks for state procurement rose to USD 0.6-0.8, almost 10 times its usual cost in the United States. (OECD POLICY RESPONSES). Africa could diversify to local production, not only to save money, but also to make them available to citizens during such a pandemic. Ghana had decided to do this. Her “...government worked with regional health directorates to distribute PPE across the country. The government is also fostering domestic production of PPE. Domestic production of face masks, head covers, surgical scrubs and gowns started in April. Ghana estimates that a total of 3,600 will be produced domestically, with an output of 150 per day.(OECD POLICY RESPONSES).

Here in Nigeria, most Tailoring factories, companies and individuals, resorted to the local manufacturing of Face masks. Local industries resorted also to the production of Hand Sanitizers. This is the case with Sudan where “...community resilience committees are [were] making their own hand sanitizers and distributing to residents for free.”(EDE IJJASZ-VASQUEZJUDY BAKERDEAN CIRA,2020. Retrieved from <https://blogs.worldbank.org/nasikilliza/>).

Another area of local manufacturing is on side of car. Two things are involved in this. One is independence of oil and the saving of the economy especially during the lock down. Most of the cars and lorries used in Africa use either diesel or petrol. With the fall of the price of oil and the lock down experience, one sees the need to look inwards. So Nigeria took the lead in the manufacture of car that does not use petrol. According to Tajudeen Adebajo,

Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu last November [2020] unveiled the N24 million Hyundai Kona, Nigeria’s first Electric Car assembled by Stallion Group at the VON Assembly Plant in Ojo, Lagos....Battery –electric engines have fewer moving parts that can break compared with gas-powered engines and they don’t require oil changes. Electric vehicles also use regenerative braking, which reduces wear and tear. (Tajudeen Adebajo,2021. P.24).

Those who had taste for foreign seats were disappointed during the pandemic. They resorted to locally made ones that could serve as alternative to foreign ones. Locally made goods were boosted at this time because there was no importation. Foreign exchange was saved.

Door to Door Services: During this pandemic, Hotels, Restaurants and other Eateries were closed to reduce the spread of the virus. What happened to these businesses? The alternative would be to send food to those who needed it to their houses with all the prevent measures being applied. This would make the businesses stay on course.

To Tolulope Baiyewu, he was `overtaken` by the pandemic even though he had a new location. He was busy during that time, using Social Media to sensitize his clients about his new location. Immediately the easy-of was declared, the business of Photographing kicked off. He was planning and busy during that time. He used the social media to inform his clients about his new location since there was lock down. (Omolola Afolabi, et al, 2020. p.15.).

Air Business: It was a difficult situation for Airlines. There was virtually no flight because of the lock down. Many airlines were out of business. But it was not so with Ethiopian Airlines. It diversified its operation. This time, instead of waiting for passengers who may not come, it started using its Planes as freighters. This helped the business to thrive. This was revealed by Jimoh Babatunde. According to him,

While other airlines were just trying to figure out what to do, Ethiopian Airlines was aggressively pressing ahead finding solution, creating solution, converting their passenger aircraft to freighters. Ethiopian Airlines is the first one to do it on Airbus A350 and continued to fly and create even new business. This is something unique all over the world. Today, Ethiopian Airlines is able to maintain the operation of all fleet where others are at 10 percent of their capability, and many airlines have just simply gone bankrupt and people have lost their jobs....Ethiopian Airlines today is showing the example to the whole world in resilience and visionary thinking of the leadership. (Babatunde, 2021.p.28.).

Production of Local Foods: Agriculture not only provides employment, it also serves for food security. The population of the continent is growing by leaps and bounds. African countries who depending on foreign food importation, should see the need for local food production. One may not travel out, but he must eat; people must eat, whether pandemic or no. Individuals and governments should take agriculture serious, invest more in it so as to save the continent. This is in line of this proclamation given to Nigeria: "...the country must continue to invest in agriculture [government and individuals] which has been the main stay of the Nigerian economy. Our local rice production has not been able to bring down the price to what it was during the Goodluck Jonathan administration..." (2021: A new beginning. DAILYSUN. Vol.17. No.4615. Jan. 1, 2021.p.11).

Agriculture not only provides food for the populace, it also provides raw materials for industries. Raw materials like cocoa, cotton, oil palm, wool, yarn, hides and skin. When all these are available locally, the continent and individuals who use them, will not be stranded because of non availability of them even during pandemic.

Production of Local Drugs and Medicines: Traditional medicines should be brought to limelight. During the pandemic, many people died due to ill-health. One of the reasons was because foreign drugs were expensive that an average man was not in position to afford them. There was no serious trade as to get money to get the drugs. The implication was that such a person was left to his or her fate. Most times, the ultimate happened. Africans who are gifted in this area should step up their business and also in research in order to save the continent in a time like that. Those drug manufacturers should equally liaise with the Traditional medicine men especially those whose potency are not in doubt, sell them in their stores so as not to be out of business when a situation of such matter happens. In Nigeria we have Tooth paste known as Agnes Nwanma`s Tooth Paste. It does not require importation of any kind. Such has retained its price even during and after the pandemic. It was in business during the pandemic. Such needs support and patronage from the government and individuals to save us from `longing` of foreign Tooth paste. In addition to the above, one who sells Tooth paste, or manufactures it, could divert, either to selling the local chewing sticks, or starts the manufacturing.

The wonder of Madagascar will not be easily been forgotten. She has developed drug for Covid-19. Even though its potency is in doubt, but there are indications that it cures Covid-19. The herbal tonic is known as COVID-Organics. It contains Artemisia annua (Sweet wormwood) plant, used for malaria. It has been ordered by Tanzania, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Congo-Brazzaville.(Ekonde.2020. Retrieved from <https://qz.com/africa/1852069/>).

British Broadcasting corporation reported that the herbal tonic cures. "Madagascar claims that the drink is able to cure patients of the coronavirus within 10 days, with President Andry Rajoelina claiming that two people have already been cured through the drink, the BBC reported." (Amlot,2020. Retrieved from <https://English.alarabiya.net/en/amp>).

Another example of herbal medicine that was discovered in the pandemic period was the “Essential Oils”. This was discovered in Cameroon by a Catholic Archbishop Samuel Kleda, who attested that in the course of his research in herbal medicines for about 30 years, he discovered this. The Country had despatched a team to study the treatment.(Ekonde).

Innovation

“A cursory glance at history will reveal that the rise of tough, critical situations usually forces innovation, hence the phrase ‘Necessity is the mother of invention’. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the world, innovations to fight it have gone up a notch.”(Paul, 2020. Retrieved from <https://techpoint.africa/2020/04/23/african-innovations-covid-19/>). It is only God who does not change. With the experience people had during the pandemic, the call for change is inevitable. Innovation is “...something new that is introduced...”(Hornby. et, al.1974. p.447). VocaptureOnline Dictionary says that it is “...the introduction of something new....a change in customs....Something new, and contrary to established customs, manners, or rites.”So innovation is the change that comes and the status quo is changed; it is no more business as usual; something different has come and has taken place. It is doing something complete new. With this in mind, innovations must come because of the situation the world has seen itself in order for it to survive the situation. The followings are some of the innovations exhibited in order to survive the pandemic.

E-Commerce.What is Ecommerce?

Ecommerce, also known as electronic commerce or internet commerce, refers to the buying and selling of goods or services using the internet, and the transfer of money and data to execute these transactions. Ecommerce is often used to refer to the sale of physical products online, but it can also describe any kind of commercial transaction that is facilitated through the internet. Whereas e-commerce refers to all aspects of operating an online business, commerce refers specifically to the transaction of goods and services. (Business encyclopedia.2020. Retrieved from <https://www.shopify.com/>).

It could also mean the transaction of money, funds, and data through internet. It is the meeting of buyers and sellers on the internet. They do not meet physically, but could transact business online electronically. This Ecommerce could be done in four ways- “Business to Business (C2B), Business to Customer (B2C), Customer to Customer (C2C), Customer to Business (C2B).” (toppr. 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.toppr.com/guides/business-environment/emerging-trends-in-business/electronic-commerce/>).

The Beginning Of E-Commerce: This began in August in 1994. Since then it has become fashionable because of its advantages. This is buttressed here: “The history of ecommerce begins {sic} with the first ever online sale: on the August 11, 1994 a man sold a CD by the band Sting to his friend through his website NetMarket, an American retail platform. This is the first example of a customer purchasing a product from a business through the World Wide Web-or ‘ecommerce’ as we commonly know it today.”(Business encyclopedia.)

The Need: Covid-19 made it extremely impossible for people to meet face to face especially business people. The alternative to this should be a business whereby people should not meet face to face to avoid the spread of the virus. E-commerce was the answer. For example, “In Bangladesh, the RDC Activity is [was] working with the second largest mobile network operator in the country, Robi Axia Ltd., to provide ...rural businesses with access to low-cost smartphones.” (Sevier, 2020) In order to queue in line of ecommerce. Not only in Bangladesh, also in Honduras, “...the TMS Activity is helping enterprises diversify their distribution channels and move toward e-commerce.” (Sevier, 2020).

Advantages Of E-Commerce: The followings are culled from Ajeet Khurana. E-COMMERCE BASICS. <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/advantages-of-ecommerce-114610>.

Overcomes Geographical Limitations: One of the advantages of e-commerce is lack of contact between buyer and seller. This enables them to avoid the spread of Covid-19 virus. With this, business could

continue despite the pandemic. Coupled with the above is that one is not limited by space. The whole world is for the person to do business. No limitation. It is a global venture.

Gains New Customers with Search Engine Visibility: Physical retail is driven by branding and relationships. Yes. These are also seen in e-commerce. But in addition, e-commerce has search engines for customers to follow a link in search. This search could land a customer to an e-commerce website which he has never heard before. From here, his desires can be met.

Lowers Costs: In the physical transactions, there are needs to be met- Payment for the store attendants, the physical things like prams, maintenance of bricks and mortar. These are added to the costs of goods. But it is not so with e-commerce. Such are virtually eliminated, and as such, reduce the prices of goods.

Locates the Products Quicker: In a physical store, one needs to walk up and down to locate what he wants to buy. This most of the times, wastes time of the buyer. But in e-commerce, the buyer will click the website of the store, and search what he wants immediately. Some websites can even help the customer remember his recent shopping lists to facilitate the purchase.

Eliminates Travel Time and Cost: No need to travel long distances in order to do shopping. One only needs to click the mouse and purchase is done virtually. This is one of the best advantages of e-commerce during the pandemic where travel was banned.

Provides Comparison Shopping: With e-commerce, one can compare several shops' prices of goods. This is because, some shops have online services that allow customers to browse and find the best prices.

Quick Delivery of Goods: E-commerce provides quick delivery of goods to the customer with little effort. This is because the goods are delivered to him in his place, or at his place of choice. Complaints also are handled with ease. (Toppr 2020).

Purchase of Goods at all Times: E-commerce has no closing hour. It is available twenty four a day. No disruption. It is convenient. (Toppr 2020).

Examples Of E-Commerce: Africa is not devoid of this innovation. The one that comes first is Jumia which has its Headquarters in Nigeria. It, through its network donated face masks to some countries in Africa. "Jumia, the pan-African e-commerce giant, donated face masks to Nigeria's health ministry and replicated the gesture in Kenya, Ivory Coast, Uganda and Morocco. Jumia partnered with local authorities to share its logistics network to distribute health products to local communities..."(OECD Policy Responses). Other examples include Amazon, Flipkart, Shopify, Jabong, eBay, Fiverr, Olx, Quikr.(OECD Policy Responses)

In summary, "...ecommerce has evolved to make products easier to discover and purchase through online retailers and market places. Independent freelancers, small businesses, and large corporations have all benefited from ecommerce, which enables them to sell their goods and services at a scale that was not possible with traditional retail." (Business encyclopedia)

SOME INNOVATIONS DURING COVID-19

Handwashing Stations, Cellphone Messages, Local Songs: In order to survive the pandemic, the above innovations were made. Local handwashing installations were developed and stationed at public places; campaigns, local songs, cellphone messages were created to make people to be aware of the pandemic.

Local governments and communities are [were] innovating in the middle of the crisis....Some examples of quick response include the installation of handwashing stations in high traffic spaces such as bus stations and markets stations in cities in Kenya, Rwanda...Public awareness campaigns have [had] been launched in countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Sudan including the use of free cellphone messages, neighbourhood broadcasts, and songs created by popular musicians. Technology is being used to facilitate access to health information in Nigeria through a tool created to self-assess risk based on symptoms and exposure history. In South Africa, WhatsApp chat runs [ran] an interactive bot to answer common health questions.££ Innovations in the time of COVID-19: Rising to the pandemic's challenges in Africa's informal settlements. (EDE IJASZ-VASQUEZJUDY BAKERDEAN CIRA/)

In Accra, the government was not relenting in her bid to keep the citizens out of the scourge of the pandemic. She was involved in giving the citizens water tanks for sanitation, soap and hand sanitizer. She did not stop there. She had developed programmes to help her people to have body and soul together. The following is evidence of the fact:

In the Greater Resilient and Integrated Development Project, the local governments are [were] expanding services with water tanks and sanitation blocks, and distributing soap and hand sanitizers. For the economy recovery, the project will [would] accelerate implementation of low-income informal settlements upgrading activities focusing on labour-intensive activities that will [would] create about 60,000 workdays. (EDE IJASZ-VASQUEZJUDY BAKERDEAN CIRA/)

Ventilators: For the first time in Nigeria, ventilators were produced. This was during the Covid-19 era. This was an innovation to combat the virus. They were produced by “The National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure {NASeni}... [for] the first time in Nigeria.” (OECD Policy Responses).

Online Businesses: At the break of the pandemic, there was lock down which restricted movement. Businesses resorted to go online. The government was not left out in this novelty in order to save resources. Meetings were held virtual. These innovations were made possible because of Covid-19. This view is supported by Funmilola Gboteku. He said that “...the government has achieved a far cheaper way of holding meeting via virtual means, a new way to economise resources and moving forward. The outbreak has encouraged many people to start small businesses online as a means of survival. (Gboteku, 2021.p.15).

We think also of PAN automobile. It went into online business to display her wares. Instead of waiting for people to come to her show room, she decided to go virtual in order to attract customers. Of course, if there was no advertisement, there would be no sale even though online. This idea was made known by the Acting Manager of the Company, Taiwo Oluleye. He said that “...the platform will [would] provide an opportunity for customers to discover the unique features of the Higer bus range while remaining in their homes in these COVID-19 times...the virtual showroom can [could] be accessed by simply visiting www.pannigeria.com through smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktop computers...” (Samson, 2021.p.26).

Not only the government holding meeting virtually, Organisations, Groups have joined the race. ECOWAS Court is one of them. She now conducts her business through virtual. This will save money because there will no need of travelling, no hotel bills. This was made known by the President, Justice Edward Asante. To him, the introduction of virtual business due to Covid-19, “...had proved to be the solution to the high cost of pursuing court cases...with the new virtual sessions, parties and their lawyers do not need to come to Abuja as hitherto required, but can file all processes and pursue their cases to the end from their home countries.” (Virtual sessions stay after COVID-19, says ECOWAS Court. THENATIONNEWSPAPER. Vol.13.No.5200. Oct.26. 2020.p.37). This is because it is cheaper and accessible to all.

The small businesses who deal on online business (telecommunication), thrived this time because people talked more than travelling. Many changed to the sale of Recharged Cards (Air time) in order to stay on course.

E-line Mining: Mining is one of the things that was affected during the pandemic. But because of the virtual innovation, this sector was not out of business during this time in Nigeria. This was because the Ministry of Mining “...and its agencies migrated most of their programmes to online systems and platforms; e-recording and archiving had also been perfected...[with these] the agency was able to generate about N2.6 billion last year[2020]...[because of] several zoom meetings with foreign investors and compelling them to come into the mining sector.” (Okereocha, 2020.p.22).

ONLINE EQUIPMENT AGAINST COVID-19

Africans in the quagmire they found themselves, did not fold their hands. They started to look inwards to develop their own equipment to remedy the situation. These had reduced the level of importation of these and helped to increase her foreign reserve. The followings are some of them:

Covid-19 Triage: This was developed in Nigeria by Wale Adeosun and his team at Wellvis health, which is a health tech startup. “The COVID-19 Triage is a free online tool to help users self-assess their coronavirus risk category based on their symptoms and their exposure history. Depending on their answers, users will be offered remote medical advice or redirected to a nearby healthcare facility.” (Paul).

COVID-19 tracker: Infodemics, a technological healthcare company developed this. When used, the user can report to Isolation centre or requests for testing after answering few questions about the symptoms they noticed. (Paul).

Real-time tracker: This is also another Covid-19 tracker. Akogo with a team of 20 persons developed this in Ghana. This tracker is comprehensive. It “...will provide policy makers and relevant parties with real-time information to track the spread of the virus and help them plan efficient interventions like drug and medical supply distribution, as well as social distancing measures.” (Paul).

WhatsAPP interactive chatbot: This came from South Africa. Its duty is to answer common queries on COVID-19. These include the symptoms and treatment. According to Emmanuel Paul, “Since its launch in March [2020], it has reportedly reached over 3.5 million users in five different languages.” (Paul).

Medical Masks: Still in South Africa, Natalie Raphil has done wonderfully well in providing Medical Masks to hospitals in order to make them accessible to them. This has reduced the money for their importation. She did this “With the aid of members of the Robots Can Think platform and Women in AI community, she is using about five 3D printers to design and produce 100 masks a day for distribution to some major hospitals in Johannesburg.” (Paul).

Lung X-ray Platform: Tunisia is not left out in this innovative process. Some of her engineers have built an accessible web-based platform that can scan lung x-ray. With this, it can evaluate whether a patient is likely to be suffering from coronavirus. “With just an x-ray and internet connection, once an image is uploaded on the platform, the AI generates a recognition score for the tested person.” (Paul).

Mobile Testing Booths: To know a Covid-19 patient, the person needs to be tested. The equipment for this almost come abroad. However, there is an innovation to help reduce the dependency on the foreign ones. To lead on this is Dr Ola Brown of Nigeria, the founder of Flying Doctors Investment Group. He launched what he called Mobile Testing Booths. These have the capacity to cut down the use of single-use Personal Protective Equipment {PPE} which of course were in short supply because of the pandemic. “With these booths, healthcare workers put their hands into gloves and take samples, never coming in contact with the patient.”(Paul).

Diagnostic Test for COVID: This Diagnostic Test was unveiled in Senegal through the effort of DiaTropix and UK-based Mologic. The result for Covid-19 test comes within 10 minutes. (Oguwale, 2020.Retrieved from <https://www.theafricareport.com/51089/>).

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana has also got a rapid test that can detect COVID-19 antibodies within 15 to 20 minutes. (Oguwale).

Mobile Machine Test: Here in Nigeria, The Nigerian Institute of Medical Research {NIMR} is responsible for this. The result can be obtained in less than 40 minutes with the Mobile Machine. This can also be operated by low-skilled personnel with minimal training. (Oguwale).

INNOVATION-INDIVIDUALS

Igor Ansoff gave the names of some individuals who made innovations during the pandemic: Restaurants who started to sell through takeaway meals for the first time to their existing customers; an author who had his book with paperback, changed to digital edition {eBooks and Audiobooks} to sell to the current creative industries, markets; his own business adapting training workshops and materials for online zoom webinars to current and new markets; G. WillisBrothers, a fruit and vegetable stall on Bury market, now sells her products online, to existing and new customers; And manufacturers who now switched over production to healthcare products like- ventilators, hand sanitizer- for healthcare market they did not

serve before. (Parris.,2020. Retrieved from <https://www.davidparrish.com/Covid-19-diversification-strategies-how-to-diversify-in-a-crisi/>).

REMEDIES / POLICIES/ RECOMMENDATIONS

The followings will try to showcase the remedies, policies and recommendations that may offer help if we find ourselves in such situation.

Deferral of Debts-Banks: Not only Banks, individuals who are owed will be patient enough to defer the debts of their clients to enable them recover. If possible, reduce or remove interests. It has been done and could be done in the future. “Many banks have stepped up and done their part by adopting forbearance measures and giving clients some six months or so of deferrals, and also rescheduling. TDB [Trade and Development Bank of Africa] has done this for several clients that it knows have been badly affected.”(Tadesse).

Local Manufacturing: Africa should endeavour to increase the manufacturing of her products instead of relying on foreign ones. This will help her stand on her feet in a situation like the lock down. She will not be adversely affected.

Diversification of Economy: There is no gain saying the fact that the dependence on one product like oil, would not longer be sustainable. There must be diversification if she wants to survive in similar situation in the future. Not only the governments, the same applies to individual manufacturers and sellers.

Encouragement of Local Industries/ Industrialization: The pandemic exposed the Continent to see the need to revamp and encourage the Local Industries in order the fill the gap if pandemic of such magnitude should occur. The need for industrialization cannot be overemphasized. The Continent is over ripped for it. This will also save our socio-economic life as a continent.

Back to Agriculture: The continent should go back to agriculture which is our main stay as a continent. The mentality of being import-dependent continent should be set aside. When we produce our own food and other agricultural products, we will be food-sufficient and save our economy. New technologies for agriculture should be used to boost outcome. This should be sustained with a long term planning, having cheaper and environmentally conditions. Local research should be stepped up to make sure the local products are of international standard. This will involve experts in various fields. The sources of the products should be encouraged and the online services.

Rescue by Government/Individuals: The governments and citizens of the continent should lend helping hands to our agriculturists, industries and factories to survive because of the adverse effects of the pandemic on them. They should be `rescued` in the form of financial help, either as interest-free loan, subsidy, debt- relief, guarantee funds and credit, writing off of debts, tax and duty exceptions, cost-cutting initiatives (rents, utilities), direct cash transfer, or financial donations. This will help them rise again and make the continent come alive again.

South Africa did it. “The South African Industrial Development Corporation has put a package together with the Department of Trade and Industry of more than ZAR 3 billion for industrial funding to address the situation of vulnerable firms and to fast-track financing for firms` critical efforts to fight COVID-19 and its economic impact.” (OECDPolicy).

Nigeria also did the same. She gave out huge financial support to moribund industries because of Covid-19. “At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in April [2020], the Nigerian government, in its efforts to lower the temperature and de-deescalate socio-economic tensions, rolled out a N2.3 trillion war-chest of monetary and fiscal policies to bolster lending to the real sector and reactivate other moribund arms of the economy affected by the plague.” (Uche, et al.2020.p.19). In support of the above, she had what she called “The Anchor Borrowers` Programme”. This programme gave birth to the Rice Revolution. It came through the Central Bank. According to Jackson Ugbechie, this was made to “...recovery from recession to prosperity...possible.” (Ugbechi, p.17).

Small Businesses to Grow: The saying that the young shall grow is apt here. Multi-national industries have their impact in the growth of the economy.The small businesses have their own also. If they are ignored, the economy is affected. They are the main stay of the economy. They should be allowed to

grow side by side with the multi-national ones. The multi-national ones, more or less depend on imports. So a situation where the small businesses that are part and parcel of us are neglected, things must fall apart in pandemic situation as we found ourselves recently. "...we should ensure that small businesses are allowed to grow. The Chinese and US economies are 70 percent run by small businesses, not those big names...[we] know." Uche, et al. 2020.p.20).

In addition, if it is possible, importation of foreign goods should be banned especially where there are local alternatives.

Ecommerce: This has been said before. When things change, the manner of approach should also change. What is constant in life is change. Ecommerce should be invoked to keep the economy going in pandemic period.

Investment Economy: Africa and her citizens should devise means of moving from consumption economy, to investment economy. They should invest more in her economy than being interested only on consumption. The investment will make for self-reliant because she has `savings` to rely on. Production of local machineries should be encouraged to sustain the idea. Let them learn how to save and invest.

Reduction of Urban-Drift: If Africans can invest and encourage local industrialization, many people will not be rushing to the urban centres. Today, all the cities are over-crowded. This is an official invitation for Covid-19 because the idea of social distancing will be thrown to the wind because of congestion. Let the government and individual industrialists, establish their companies in the rural areas to help decongest the urban centres, and thereby reduce the contracting of Covid-19.

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COVID -19 PANDEMIC POVERTY AND CRIME IN NIGERIA: A BIBLICAL RESPONSE

By

Osajie, Justina Nwazuni

Department of Religion and Cultural Studies, University of Nigeria Nsukka
Enugu State

Abstract

The outburst of Covid-19 pandemic has added to the chronicles of deadly diseases in world history. The outbreak with curtailment measures has increased the chasm of inequality giving birth to pocket crimes. The untold hardship has resulted in youth restive activities and increased poverty. The paper adopts historical, phenomenological and expository approaches. It discovers among other things that the history of pandemic in biblical records were best managed without growing crime and poverty as we have in Nigeria. It concludes by recommending same as a panacea for the containment and aggressive development drive as a nation.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic, Poverty, Crime, Biblical Response

Introduction

The novel corona virus COVID-19 was first presented to the world in the embers of December 2020 (Wang et al. 2020) amidst the shock of economic recession, poverty and hunger. After spreading through East Asia, Europe, and North America in early 2020, the COVID-19 global pandemic started affecting countries in Africa and Latin America. With the largest population in Sub-Saharan Africa, and long-standing travel and trade links within Africa and to the rest of the world, it seemed inevitable that the pandemic would eventually reach Nigeria. In late February, Nigeria recorded the subcontinent's first confirmed case, after which it began to spread throughout Lagos, Ogun State, and the Federal Capital Authority (FCT) area of Abuja.

According to Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC, 2020), The first confirmed case of COVID-19 case in Nigeria was attributed to a foreigner who arrived at Lagos from Europe on February 27, 2020, the phenomenon geared up the government in bracing up to the challenge through effect budgeting and funding for the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to strengthen laboratory testing and isolation capacity Onyekwena and Amara (2020) note that the arrival of the pandemic set off a chain of policy actions, including public health and education campaigns, fiscal and monetary measures, restrictions on large sections of the economy, and compensating measures in the form of social protection for poor and vulnerable people. This phenomenon did not only produce ripple effects globally but was a juggernaut to medical institutions as there was no known vaccine from global south medical services, which caused drowning, a significant lack of ventilators, new hospitals and vast re-organisation of services required, such as cancelling elective operations and outpatient clinics for the virus. The outbreak in the global space left the world puzzled.

The manifestation of the virus has been traced to mammals, earliest form to bats causing mild respiratory illness in the form of common cold in humans. This particular strain however, can prove lethal. In humans it was first described as a highly contagious airborne and droplet-spread pathogen causing fever, dry cough and pneumonia in some, but not all, afflicted individuals.

COVID-19 originally was said to present with a cough and fever, and potentially GI upset, leading towards pneumonia. Now we are further into the outbreak (3-4 months), we are aware of presentations such as rashes (Recalcati 2020), ophthalmic complications (Wu et al. 2020), anosmia (Iacobucci 2020), neurological complications (Mao et al. 2020) and peri/myocarditis (Fried et al. 2020). Critically ill patients appear to have a high rate of mortality [50% of ICU admissions in ICNARC data (2020)],

Recurring incidence of pandemics in Global history

There have always been outbreaks of pandemics in human society; the outbreak of anyone has not failed to produce its ripple effects. Hence, we often find ourselves sandwiched between the pains, travails and treatments while experts try to proffer solutions if any. Common in human history are the following pandemics that were widespread, we have witnessed Ebola, Influenza, Cholera, Typhus, Syphilis, Malaria, Dengue, HIV and the list is replete with antecedent death record and scares of sorrow.

Helplessly, the world watches those afflicted with such pains who are victims and now patients, ravaged with some form of the same disease. The challenges before the medical experts is that of some have chosen to assist, head on, others have chosen to direct from the rear. We can all sympathise with everything the ghosts of history experienced, and wonder how they coped, acted, and died. In many ways, infectious disease was a more familiar creature to the medics of the past and perhaps more bearable. In biblical-theological perspective, pandemics are traceable to the violation of Yahweh's rule. Plagues are therefore construed as punishments for being disobedient to his laws (2Chr. 7:14). Hence, the consequences is seen to have affected the socioeconomic, political and personal lives; the chasm led to dissolution of order that was only partly bridged by the moral conscience of individuals, the book of Chronicles is replete with rationing and neighbourly kinship in the narratives of plague history.

Covid-19, Poverty and Increase Crime Rates

Andam et. al (2021) note that the arrival of the pandemic set off a chain of policy actions, including public health and education campaigns, fiscal and monetary measures, restrictions on large sections of the economy, and compensating measures in the form of social protection for poor and vulnerable people. The sudden onset of the pandemic and the scale of policy responses imposed significant economic costs on Nigeria's population.

The hardship experienced by Nigerians based on research findings by Andam et. al (2021) reveal that it produced a strong ripple effects with two major impact: external shocks (e.g., weakening global demand for oil and a global economic recession) as well as domestic policies adopted to reduce viral transmission. The nation felt dazed because her main source of income was oil and the demand within the period dropped significantly, thereby resulting in poor foreign exchange and earning through shortfall in government revenue. Internally, the Economic impacts are assessed in terms of their effects on national gross domestic product (GDP), agri-food system GDP, and the number of people living below the international US\$1.90-a-day poverty line. Given these adverse outcomes, a pressing economic policy concern is to find ways to reduce the negative consequences of lower household income, higher poverty, and the greater likelihood of associated long-term impacts, such as deeper rates of malnutrition and proliferation of crimes.

With particular reference to The World Bank projection, more Nigerians are bound to face hard times with poverty; taking a serious look at the negative performances of virtually all socio-economic indices presently in the country. The Editor (2021) notes that the potential impact of COVID-19 on poverty in Nigeria is glaring and it is unfortunate that while COVID-19 is spiking, poverty is equally dealing a blow on Nigerians. The scenario poses serious challenge to government which nevertheless has a duty to confront poverty, and also to stem criminality and other potential dislocations that may ensue.

Considering the rising number of small and medium enterprises closing down due to poor economic environment, the World Bank has projected that the number of poor Nigerians will increase from the current 90 million to about 100 million by 2022 due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's economy. This, the multilateral agency attributed to vulnerable employment, reduction in the in-bound remittances and being close to the poverty line.

Owing to the current rate of inflation, the market prices of goods and services are on the increase with some States not being able to pay the wage bill due civil servants. This situation has direct bearing on the ability of the families to purchase goods and services. The situation did not only breed hardship but crime proliferation across the nation. Idamarhare (2021) once attributes the phenomenon to the

insatiable appetite of our leaders that has bred poverty in the country, hence it is man-made, occasioned by mindless corruption and high cost of governance, which has impoverished citizens.

In addition, Nigeria, being a developing country currently facing costly debt crises with far-reaching consequences; the window to mitigate the disastrous long-term consequences of COVID-19 on poverty in the country is also closing rapidly. Include (a) drop in government revenue largely because there was no work (b) low international remittances (c) 5-week lockdown with no movement of goods and people first declared on FCT Abuja, Kano, Lagos and Ogun and by the 8th week, Akwa Ibom, Borno, Borno, Ekiti, Kwara, Osun, Rivers and Taraba states (d) the indirect impact on the other states in Nigeria (Kuhlcke, K and Bester).

From the International Monetary Fund (IMF 2020), the number of Nigerians adversely affected grew so high in terms of national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The bottom-line burners are the poor masses considered to be living below US \$1.90 per day.

Locally, the imposed restriction on movement also gave rise to pocket crimes and violence within some states. Akpoviri (2020) notes that due to restricted movement of people, daily hustlers, some of them resort to area hunters, combing poultry, farms and general produce just to make ends meet. The number of persons whose farms and animals were stolen actually rose up. Akporhwarho (2021) attributed the incidence to failure in government policy implementation.

Nnabuike (2020) decried the poor implementation of Government strategies premised on lack of vision and pro-active-mindedness on the part of those who implement such policies. The witnessed youth upheaval and resurgence were manifestation of failed system. Different state governments also did not remedy the situation. The supposed palliatives that were stored up without even distribution caused pandemonium in the society.

Emore (2021) notes that CACOVID that was distributed through the Church could largely reach greater audience because the Church leadership is seen to be closer to the people. The reverse was the case with different state governments' stored goods. They largely ended up in private homes, partly statesmen and other party faithful who are loyalists.

Though the Federal Government had proposed the distribution of 70,000 metric tons of food items to the populace. This venture has been perceived differently by different states. Abokede (2021) notes that the appellation only exists in theory as the distribution is simply reserved for those in presidency; Katsina and any other state with strong ministerial influence. In Oyo state, the few palliatives were stored up in unknown warehouses, if not for the youths who were desperate, no one would have known that such quantity of food had been stored up.

The estimated poverty impacts due to COVID-19 are mainly based on restrictions in employment income. Hence, attempts at minimizing these poverty impacts calls for policy and factual radical reversal in policy in order to protect small, medium and large scale business. There is no need to stem the tide because once unemployment is not curbed, there will be greater hunger impact on the family. The perpetuation of poverty circle will remain imminent unless a greater measure is taken to check the tide by the government. This urgently calls for re-strategizing.

The table below shows the rapid impact of the virus and how quickly it took its toll on Nigeria, wrecking its havoc wantonly.

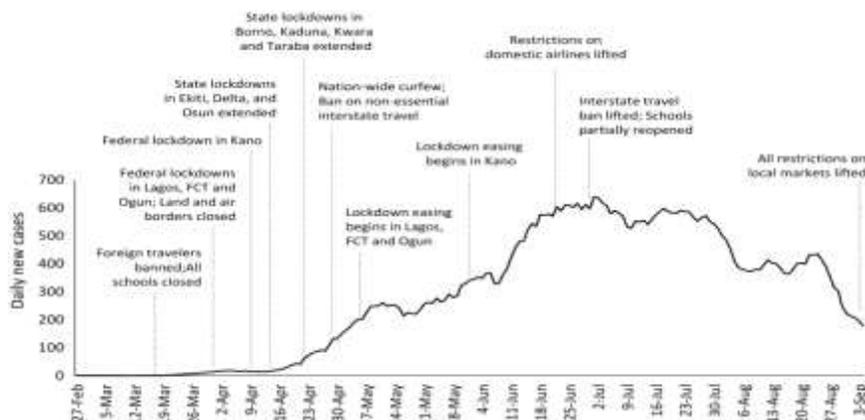


Fig. 1 shows average daily increases in confirmed COVID-19 infections in Nigeria, and provides a timeline of major policy responses, especially at the federal level of government as adapted from Andam et. al (2021).

Proliferation of Pocket Crimes amidst hardship

Odita (2020) notes that following the crippling of businesses by the lockdown over the coronavirus outbreak, the crime rate may soar across the country after the pandemic. This is further affirmed by Dennis Amachree, the former DSS boss arguing that the fallouts of the lockdown in its first two weeks, especially in Lagos, were indications that there would be a spike in criminal activities during and immediately after the COVID-19 lockdown.

According to Dennis Amachree, “criminals will take advantage of the inadequate number of law enforcement resources to perpetrate property and violent crimes in the commercial corridors. The criminals will stay away from housing and residential areas because everyone is at home, but let us not lose sight of cases of domestic violence that have already started to be a cause for concern.”

United Nations (2020) on its assessment of the impact of the pandemic, notes that terrorism,* violent crime: murder, Kidnapping, armed robbery, burglary and theft, Fraud and corruption as well as State’s capacity to uphold the rule of law

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Nigeria was detected in a traveller who arrived in Lagos from Europe on February 27, 2020. In response, the government invested in preparedness measures, including a US\$27 million increase in funding for the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to strengthen laboratory testing and isolation capacity.

We are quite touched by the global impact of Covid-19 pandemic. We thank God for thus far He kept us all, there were no records of its impact on any member of the community. Though there are records of deaths all around the globe but it pleased the Lord to keep us safe and alive, may His name forever be praised in Jesus name.

Insecurity:

Today more than ever, we have witnessed increasing rates of crime, violence and wanton destruction of lives and properties. Our society has witnessed some forms of it or the other, however let us not give up in prayers. Let’s build more on the communal aspect of our living through effective brotherhood, love and support. Let us not harbour criminalities rather we should report same to the enforcement agents for necessary actions. Also, let us discourage cultism and other vices. Fulani herders are on it again, our farmlands are being destroyed by these herders, we pray that God will fight your battles in Jesus name.

#ENDSARS

The nations witnessed the first of its kind, a protest organised by youths across the nation. The event marks a new epoch in our history. It calls for sober reflection on our lifestyle as leaders and the kind of future that we wish to handover as legacies for the youths. We are her to pray for the land, may God give us the very best of leaders with listening ears, heart of love and development oriented. We pray that the blood of the heroes of #GOODGOVERNANCE yield good results.

Early Christian Response to Pandemics

Sunshine (2020) note that the first major epidemic faced by the early Church was the Antonine Plague (AD 166–189), brought to Rome by troops returning from campaigning against the Persians. The disease, most likely smallpox, killed 7–10% of the population of the Empire as a whole, with mortality in cities probably 13–15%. According to Dio Cassio, it killed 2,000 people per day in Rome during a particularly bleak period in AD 189. People understood that the disease was contagious, so in fear of their lives they would throw the sick out of their homes to die in the streets. Galen, the most prominent physician of the age, fled Rome when the plague arrived to stay at his country estate. He knew he could do nothing to heal its victims or to protect himself from contracting the disease. Christians on the other hand, ran into the plague. They recognized that all persons were made in the image of God, that Jesus died to redeem us body and soul, and thus that the sick deserved care. As a result, Christians began tending the sick at risk (and often at the cost) of their lives.

The early Christian demonstrated hospitality, they recognized that even basic nursing care can make a significant difference in survival rates in epidemics, Christian actions during the plague saved lives. Erhirhie (2021) acknowledged the role of the church, their undoubted courage and self-sacrifice in coming to the aid of their neighbors contributed to the rapid growth of Christianity. For example, when Irenaeus arrived in Lyons from Asia Minor, there were few Christians in the city. When the plague broke out, Christians tended and prayed for the sick, and by the time the plague ended, there were 200,000 believers in Lyons.

Mark (2020) Cyprian's fellow bishop, Dionysius of Alexandria, described the reaction of the pagans: "At the first onset of the disease, they pushed the sufferers away and fled from their dearest, throwing them into the roads before they were dead and treating unburied corpses as dirt, hoping thereby to avert the spread and but do what they might, they found it difficult to escape." But not everyone abandoned the sick. Dionysius explains:

Most of our brother Christians showed unbounded love and loyalty, never sparing themselves and thinking only of one another. Heedless of danger, they took charge of the sick, attending to their every need and ministering to them in Christ, and with them departed this life serenely happy; for they were infected by others with the disease, drawing on themselves the sickness of their neighbors and cheerfully accepting their pains. Many, in nursing and curing others, transferred their death to themselves and died in their stead.

Lee (2020) from a comparative study of the early church response to plagues, pandemics and diseases observed that If the non-Christian response to the plague was characterized by self-protection, self-preservation, and avoiding the sick at all costs, the Christian response was the opposite. According to Dionysius, the plague served as a "schooling and testing" for Christians. In a [detailed description](#) of how Christians responded to the plague in Alexandria, he writes of how "the best" among them honorably served the sick until they themselves caught the disease and died:

Most of our brother-Christians showed unbounded love and loyalty, never sparing themselves and thinking only of one another. Heedless of the danger, they took charge of the sick, attending to their every need and ministering to them in Christ, and with them departed this life serenely happy; for they were infected by others with the disease, drawing on themselves the sickness of their neighbours and cheerfully accepting their pains.

Similarly, in [Pontius's biography](#) of Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, he writes of how the bishop reminded believers to serve not only fellow Christians but also non-Christians during the plague:

There is nothing remarkable in cherishing merely our own people with the due attentions of love, but that one might become perfect who should do something more than heathen men or publicans, one who, overcoming evil with good, and practicing a merciful kindness like that of God, should love his enemies as well. . . . Thus the good was done to all men, not merely to the household of faith.

The impact of this service was twofold: (1) Christian sacrifice for their fellow believers stunned the unbelieving world as they witnessed communal love like they'd never seen ([John 13:35](#)), and (2) Christian sacrifice for non-Christians resulted in the early church experiencing exponential growth as non-Christian survivors, who benefited from the care of their Christian neighbors, converted to the faith *en masse*.

Christian Response to Coronavirus

As we continue to wrestle with how to respond to the coronavirus, notice how non-Christians in the Roman Empire emphasized self-preservation, breeding criminality, greed and loss of passion. This ought to be the attitude of the Government towards her citizenry, a virtue demonstrated by the early church that emphasized fearless, sacrificial service. Whereas non-Christians fled from epidemics and abandoned their sick loved ones as they feared the unknown, Christians marched into epidemics and served both Christians and also non-Christians, seeing their own suffering as an opportunity to spread the gospel and model Christlike love.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper concludes by recommending based on the findings of the early church response that victims of pandemics such as the recent outbreak of the covid-19 should be adequately cared for. The government can achieve this through equitable distribution of palliatives which was already hijacked and confiscated by privileged few. The provision of health services should be prioritized by calling out for volunteers especially those with such calling and equipment. The government should adopt this strategy of love paradigm demonstrated to accommodate all without sentiments and prejudice. The expected result aggressive national development especially in the areas of SMEs and personal income.

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S/n	Name	Age	Occupation	Location
1	Akpoviri Wisdom	46	Clergy	Ughelli
2	Akporhwarho M	48	Health Worker	Sapele
3	Erhirhie Mary	54	Medical Practitioner	Mosogar
4	Emore, A.	52	Priest	Agbor
5	Abokede, J.	52	Academic	Asaba
6	Idamarhare,, A. O	67	Academic	Warri

RELIGION AND SOCIOECONOMIC SELF-RELIANCE IN AFRICA

Ude, M. S.

Department of Arts Education,
Faculty of Education,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

In a bid to formulate an appropriate development strategy to curb the quagmire of the underdevelopment crisis of the continent, African leaders adopt various policy options to extricate her economies from socioeconomic slavery. This paper examines the place of religion as a link toward the actualization of socioeconomic self-reliance. A critical review of literature using content analysis approach was applied in the study to establish the relationship between religion and socioeconomic self-reliance. This was done with a view to unravel the practical ways citizens could engage to achieve socioeconomic self-reliance.

Keywords: Religion; Socioeconomic; Self-reliance; Africa

Introduction

Several administrations in Africa, whether military or civilian, have tried to create policies and programmes that promote socioeconomic self-reliance and determination. Over the years however, these policies have failed to deliver the anticipated dividends due to systemic contradictions and the African factor. The recent COVID-19 pandemic revealed clearly how underdeveloped and vulnerable the African economy is. In spite of the efforts of successive administrations' efforts to pursue the objectives of socioeconomic self-reliance, the African economy still remains a mono-product. According to Aluko (2008) more than 50% of industrial raw materials and significant amount of consumer goods are still imported into the continent annually. Consequently, the African economy continues to be vulnerable to developments in the global economy, hence the severe impact of the recent COVID-19 pandemic on every facet of the economy in the last few months. Areas impacted have included government revenues, foreign reserves, banking sector, industries, capital market, insurance, education and the mortgage sector (Imhonopi and Urim, 2009). The question of economic self-reliance for Africa remains a pipe dream. Patriotic citizens wonder at the gross inadequacies in the continent's social and economic life, in spite of the abundant resources the continent is blessed with. This paper seeks to examine the question of religion and socioeconomic self-reliance in Africa and how religion can be used as a tool to promote socioeconomic self-reliance in the continent of Africa. The major religious focus of this paper is Christian Religious Studies.

Religion

Religion is a system of social unity commonly understood as a group of beliefs or attitudes concerning an object, person, unseen or imaginary being, or system of thought considered to be supernatural, sacred, divine or highest truth, and the moral codes, practices, values, institutions, and rituals associated with such belief or system of thought. It is a structure within which specific theological doctrines and practices are advocated and pursued; usually among a community of like-minded believers. Religion can be found in all known human societies. Looking at the record of earliest societies on record, they show strong suggestions of religious signs and observances. During the course of history, religion has continued to be

a significant part of societies and human experience, shaping how individuals react to the environments in which they live (Fagbamila, David and Issa 2014).

As a continent, Africa is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious state. Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion (ATR) are the three major religions practised in the continent. However, Christianity is the most popular and most advertised religion in the continent today (Grim, Johnson, Skirbekk, & Zurlo, 2017). Before the advent of the modern religions (Christianity and Islam), ATR is the indigenous religious beliefs and practices of the Africans. It is the religion which resulted from the sustaining faith held by the forebears of the present Africans, and which is being practised today in various forms and various shades and intensities by a very large number of Africans.

Christianity serves as a bridge between Islamic Religion and African Traditional Religion. Lending credence to this fact, Olulana (2015) states that in Africa, Christian Religion has had significant impact on culture, education, politics and many other facets of social life. In the field of education, Christian Religious Studies is one of the earliest subjects in African school curriculum. It has made positive impact in the nation's education system at all levels. The Christian Religious Studies has emerged as a subject of prime importance in African schools. Its value in the school curriculum is unique among other subjects. In recognition of the value attached to the subject, the subject is not only offered in the primary schools alone but also in all levels of institutions in Nigeria (Onovughe & Mordi, 2017). The objectives of studying Christian Religion Studies, according to Kwasau (2013) and Oluwawunsi, Titus and Abimbola cited in Oluwawunsi, Bongotons and Salubuyi (2015), are moral, social, civic, religious, spiritual/personal and academic objectives which align with the justifications for its inclusion among school subjects.

The value of Christian Religious Studies in the school curriculum is unique among other subjects. According to Uchem (2013) the National Christian Religious Studies (CRS) Curriculum illustrates the objective of teaching Christian Religious Studies as to produce citizens who have attained an all-round personal development; educationally, morally, socially and spiritually; citizens who are capable of carrying out the expected leadership assignments that would be entrusted to them in the future. Christian Religious Studies, therefore, is aimed at producing students who will be fit or equipped for religious and social responsibility. It is also aimed at inculcating morality, ethics and self preparation for life.

Socioeconomic Self-reliance

Socioeconomics is the social science that studies how economic activity affects and is shaped by social processes. In general it analyzes how modern societies progress, stagnate, or regress because of their local or regional economy, or the global economy. Societies are divided into three groups: social, cultural and economic. It also refers to the ways that social and economic factors influence the environment.

Self-reliance is synonymous with self-sufficiency. It means doing things for ourselves rather than having things done for us. Self-reliance is the personal initiative in the ability and effort to identify, harness and manage effectively and efficiently the personal and collective resources, human or natural in the immediate surroundings in order to uplift one's or a people's life quality, standard and condition of existence (Olayiwola, 2012). He noted that self-reliance cautions against dependency-syndrome on the government as the monopoly of development. Self-reliance and its kin-terms accentuates people's primary role as principal agents of development and self-determination both on the individual and collective levels.

Self-reliance is the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet essential needs (including protection, food, water, shelter, personal safety, health and education) in a sustainable manner and with dignity (<https://www.unhcr.org/44bf3e252.pdf>). Self-reliance, as a programme approach, refers to developing and strengthening livelihoods of persons of concern, and reducing their vulnerability and long-term reliance on humanitarian/external assistance. Self-reliance will build upon strong social structures and increasing levels of economic activity, and social and economic links with local communities

Self-Reliance refers to one taking a decision and held responsible and accountable for such decision. In order word it refers to self decision and accountability for the results of the decision taken. In the context of this study, self-reliance denotes the act of exploiting a business opportunities in existence and taking the initiatives to embark on the business with the aim of making a profit, develop the business, mature it to the level of using it for self-sustenance or livelihood. The present unemployment environment where graduates of institutions of learning are found roaming about the street without job calls for selfengaged activities as a means of survival and sustainability for national development in Nigeria. Iwele and Ogoegbunam (2015) observed that self-reliance implies being economically independent and self-satisfying, in other words it means the act of fending for oneself without necessary relying on someone else. Although no individual a nation can claim to be self-sufficient and self-sustaining but the level of development is highly limited. Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003) opined that self-reliance can be defined as self-help, self-sustainability, self-sufficiency and self-support. The concept of selfreliance lay much emphasis on individual role as principal or key agent of development and self determination to be initiative, creative, innovative and productive by utilizing any existing opportunity to make something new. This therefore means that wealth creation is a product of imaginative and creative ability of individuals who utilize the available material resources to maximize gain and social life satisfaction which cannot be achieved without economic stability (Iwele and Ogoegbunam 2015). It can therefore be postulated that self-reliance and reduction of unemployment in the society are closely related, that is, self-reliance is a major factor in unemployment reduction in a society and a key means of lessoning the financial and social burdens on the nation's government.

The Relationship between Religion and Socioeconomic Self-reliance in Africa

Religion has played a lot of roles in socioeconomic emancipation in Africa. This role was clearly seen educational sectors. Many religious groups have been involved in the educational sector of Africa through the provision of Nursery, Primary, Secondary, Adult education and Sunday School Classes, mass illiteracy, program planning and training courses. Religiousbodies in Africa have been working hard to make sure that Africa has quality education in this country. This was made clear when some countries returned many schools to the missions that owned them. Before now, our educational sector in Africa has experienced incessant strikes because of non-implementation of their agreement or nonpayment of salary. Agha (2003) opined that strike is like a cankerworm to economic development of any nation. According to Ikechi-Ekpendu, Audu and Ekpendu (2016), religious groups took it as a challenge to invest on educational sector by providing schools even up to University level. Consequently today, the state government and the religious bodies pay regular salaries to their teachers.

Role of Education in Socioeconomic Self-reliance in Africa through Religion

Education has been considered as a key for socio-economic development and stability of any nation that invest realistically on it. Education has the capacity through its production such as scholars, researchers, scientist, entrepreneurs, teachers, librarians, students to the explore and explain the various human and natural resources in the country for the nation's economic, social, cultural and political advantages. Religious groups has a crucial roles to play in this process of socioeconomic self-reliance through effective curriculum implementation that is tailored to education along the various skill acquisition, provision of financial support and providing peaceful and comfortable environment for teaching, learning and research in their schools, especially institution of higher learning among other factors.

The religious bodies can establish more institutions of learning, especially the Universities, their funding, provision of resources and services, provision of employment and trainings and retraining and the management and supervision of all activities in the institutions. The academic institution, especially play a crucial role in the process of socioeconomic self-reliance using education such areas and their components as follows: Vocational and Technical Education, Science, Technology, Religious Education, Agricultural Education, Business Education, Education Technology among others. For instance, United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2001) defined, Vocational and

Technical Education as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the education process involving in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of the economic and social life. This UNESCO's document on "Revised Recommendation Concerning Technical and Vocational Education" sees this Technical and Vocational Education as a subject that is:

- a. An integral part of general education.
- b. A mean of preparing for occupational fields and for effective preparation in world of work;
- c. An aspect of lifelong learning and preparation for a responsible citizenship;
- d. An instrument for promoting environmentally sound sustainable development;
- e. A method of facilitating poverty.

Bahar (2015) observed that vocational education is a type of education that prepare people for specific trade and careers at various levels from a trade, a craft, technician, or a professional position in Engineering, Medicine, Nursing, Architecture, Pharmacy, Law among others. Vocational education can be at the primary, secondary, post-secondary levels cutting across all subject disciplines. Udu, Oguegbulu and Okoye (2016) asserted that business education as part component of vocational education has component such as computer education, moral education and entrepreneurship education. Okorie (2001) in Ekele and Mba (2014) identified and observed five major areas of VTE to include: Agric Education, Business Education, Home-economics Education, Industrial and Technical Education and Computer Education. Business Education invariably, occupies an essential position in vocational education comprising computer education, moral education, entrepreneurship, home economics, tourism and hospitality education, agricultural education.

In fact, Science, Technology education and Vocational and Technical education cut across all school subjects more especially in the areas of skills acquisition and entrepreneurship experience, knowledge, competencies and skills. Entrepreneurship education has become one of the key areas of emphasis for all areas of subject discipline because of its cross multi-disciplinary nature. Entrepreneurship skills acquisitions is applicable alongside with business opportunities, potential talents, land, labour and capital in every type of education that when adequately explored and exploited individuals, organizations into functional productive saleable, sustainable and self-reliance entity. These Religious groups can lay serious emphasis on science and technology education as well as vocational and technical education. This is because these widespread type of education across all subject disciplines will not only create all round skills among the learners but as well be used as instrument for the socioeconomic self-reliance in Africa. This is because the education acquired by students' learners and the quality of teachings/ training from various departments in schools will enable students to self employed. While those that can fit into public jobs can be gainfully self-employed for sustainable development, hence bringing about socioeconomic self-reliance.

According to Ogar&Ayanlola (2019) the key areas where education can be used as a tool for socioeconomic self-reliance in the institutions of learning include the following areas with their components:

1. Science and Technology Education with the following components:-Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics. In area of education, the components require the area of technology include: Education Technology, Technology Education.
2. Social Science:- Economics, Political Science, Law, Sociology, Psychology, Education etc.
3. Arts:- Fine and Applied Arts:- These include Music, Sports, Theatre Arts, Drama, Metal Work, Wood work, Carpentry, Fashion Designing, graphic design, Delorature Arts, Photography, Architecture, Painting, Craft, Sculpture etc.
4. Technical and Vocational Education:- Agriculture, Home Economic, ICT, Entrepreneurship etc. Technical and Vocational education encompass all subjects including their sub division that provide trainings and education to provide skills with potentials to create job and reduce unemployment.

Combining Technical education with entrepreneurship education provide the opportunities for people of all works of life to be gainfully engaged in one vocation or the other to earn a living.

It is in realization of above relevance of technical/vocational education and science and technology education that the Federal Government of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education stressed the need to place priority of science education with 60% to 40% ratio on admission to the arts and social sciences respectively. Therefore, the Religious groups, through their educational sectors, can place more emphasis in the above subject areas for enhanced socioeconomic self-reliance

Conclusion

Christian Religion as a group has the necessary manpower to turn the fortune of the Africa towards socioeconomic self-reliance using education. Education has great roles to play towards the socioeconomic self-reliance of the continent. The Religion education planners needs to tailor the goals towards the socioeconomic self-reliance of the continent through emphasis on science and technology education in alliance with other subject disciplines such as religious education, entrepreneurship education, Agriculture, technical and vocational education to produce the needed manpower to enhance the processes of socioeconomic self-reliance of the continent. Education and training through workshops, seminars, Sunday school classes, moral instructions among other should be encouraged as to promote the development of knowledge; skills, expertise or competences for enhance socioeconomic self-reliance in Africa

Recommendation

Religious groups who run schools should review their goal to encourage socioeconomic self-reliance in the continent. Education should tailor more on Science/Technology education. Also, emphasis should be given to entrepreneurship education, technical education, and vocational education. They should provide enough funds towards the funding of schools at all level.

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EVOLVING A VIABLE THEOLOGY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION IN NIGERIA

Ugwa James Kalu

Department of Religious and Cultural Studies
University of Port Harcourt

Abstract

The issue of righteousness in the transformation of African society is a concern to the modern theologians, and it is to this effect that this work, “Evolving a Viable Theology of Righteousness for Societal Transformation in Nigeria” is timely. The work evaluates the theology of righteousness over the years which have helped in the transformation of Nigerian society. Data were sourced from primary and secondary sources through phenomenological research method. The findings of this work among others prove that the pattern of theology of righteousness practiced in Nigeria (Africa) can no longer bring and sustains the desired transformation. That necessitates a paradigm shift from the globalization trend in religious, cultural and theological environment. Therefore, the researcher recommends that an evolving viable theology of righteousness desirous of a reliable transformation that will sustain and preserve the Nigerian society and by extension the African society be put in place.

Key words: Righteousness, Society, Theology and Transformation.

Introduction

The controversial social morality issues of norms and values that governs the activities of humanity in horizontal analytical comradelier is a sociological concern. One may of a truth fathom in its ramification what righteousness may imply in the sense of relationship among different people in the same society, especially, in the society with diverse cultures, understanding, philosophy, and ideology. Christianity and Islam may understand righteousness from different perspectives, yet the struggle to live together as one indivisible entity. The traditionalists as well hang their hat on the norms and values of the traditional society to uphold the sanctity of what their ancestors handed over to them that will aid them preserve a healthy society to the generations unborn.¹ The society at times appears to be chaotic, as when a mob riots, or when there is a hysterical rush from an impending crisis: but soon order is restored and the society gets going. Indeed order rather than disorder is the rule of the world. Social order as it is called is obtained through regulation of human behaviour according to certain standards.²

All societies provide for these standards specifying appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. The standards which regulate behaviour have been termed social norms. Social values are cultural standards that indicate the general good deemed desirable for organized social life. These are assumptions of what is right and important for society. They provide the ultimate meaning and legitimacy for social arrangements and social behaviour. They are the abstract sentiments or ideals. It is impossible to imagine a norm-less society, because without norms behaviour would be unpredictable.³ The standards of behaviour contained in the norms give order to social relation which makes interaction goes smoothly if the individuals follow the group norms. The normative order makes the factual order of human society possible. If there were no normative order there could be no human society. Man needs a normative order to live in society because human organism is not sufficiently comprehensive or integrated to give automatic responses that are functionally adequate for society. **The violators of norms suffer the following kinds of sanctions;** 1. Loss of prestige; 2 subjected to ridicule, 3 fines, and 4 imprisonment. By

contrast, those who conform to norms enjoy the expected co-operation from others, maintain good prestige in the group and receive positive rewards such as praise, bonuses and promotions.⁴

This norms and violation of norms is righteousness and sin in the biblical terminology. Biblically righteousness is the bedrock of the Christian faith because the God of the Old Testament and the New Testament is a Holy (Righteous) God. The society is a basis or platform where religion plays its role and humanity are the co-actors with God in this field of play. However, how humanity can relate to this Righteous God is sacrosanct to this work, which gears towards bridging the wide gap sin has created between humanity and the Righteous God who is interested in humanity, because it is only through Him shall the nations of the earth be blessed, live and have their being. Sin or Unrighteousness has aroused more thoughts or calls for clearer scriptural definition. Many doctrines had come up with several teachings concerning sin. There are many theories that were propounded by different schools of thought. Doctrine of the Pantheistic east said that sin is inherent in matter, and it is co-eternal with good while that of pre-determine purpose of God theory is that sin was a predetermined purpose of God, that it should exist and that it is a thought co-eternal with him as a means of unfolding the scheme of redemption. These two theories as they were, gave us a concern. If sin is necessary to develop a scheme, it may be an indirect good as an agency in the hands of God for such a glorious purpose. This theory is identifying God as evil and limiting his resources. Can God be evil – the answer remains No.

The second theory of predetermination is also somehow unacceptable because if sin has always existed, there can be no responsibility for its existence. It means it is a necessity and to build a foundation of moral responsibility on a necessity would be impossible. If sin has not existed eternally, some cause must have originated it. Williston G.W. said that “to charge God as the author of sin, and then punish man (creature) for its manifestations would be subversive to a righteous government”. God’s holiness does not include the possibility of sin and or to originate it.⁵

However, the bible gives at least five clear definitions of sin: “All unrighteousness is sin” – 1 John 17, He that committed sin is of the devil. 1 John 3; 8, Sin is a transgression of the law. 1 John 3:4, “To him, therefore, that knows to do Good, and does not do it, to him it is sin. James 4:17; in sin did my mother conceive me. Ps. 51:5.

Sin or unrighteousness is the opposite of righteousness. And righteousness as it were is a theological issue that is believed from the Old Testament biblical time that brings blessings both to individuals and to the nation; Righteousness exalts any nation, but sin is a reproach to any people Prov.14:34 NKJV. It is a theological issue for the transformation of a society. Righteousness as a phenomenon of religion, which according to John Mbiti that religion permeates all aspect of the individual lives in Africa⁶ be it political, economics, education, cultural and so on. Religion controls every aspect of individual’s lives from birth to death. It is noticeable that at the face of multi-religious activities of different religious groups there is a decline of righteousness in many parts of the world probably due to the religious groups have lost the faith to the agents of secularism. It is unfortunate to observe that religious enterprise appear to be striving very much in Africa, especially in Nigeria. A scenario where many company warehouses and some private buildings are converted to prayer houses, stadia all over the country are being used more for crusades than sporting activities⁷

Similarly, the traditionalists as well are making use of available means to maintain their religious input and impact. Many have left grooves, caves, and shrines and transformed their practices into prayers houses in disguise, yet holding fast what they worship to achieve the same effect. Islam in the same vein is waxing stronger in Africa struggling by all means to penetrate every street if not every home. It is observed by Ehusani that within the religious firmaments, bishops, Pastors, Evangelists, faith healers, Prophets and missionaries, as well as Sheikhs, Imams and gurus of all sorts are swelling in numbers and having a field day.⁸ Astonished as it appears the reason our society cannot be transformed, why moral decadence was at its height at the face of religious boom in our society and the implication this abnormal is smearing at our national transformation.

Theology of Righteousness

Righteousness denotes what is right or what is agreeable and pleasing to God. A righteous person is one who committed to God and living justly and honestly among the people. One who follows such a path and performs such deeds is called “upright” (Job1:1)⁹ The standard of the New Testament is that the righteous shall live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4) and it is through faith we are granted God’s righteousness. Subsequently, no one is naturally righteous (Rom.3:10, Ps. 51:5), and in Christ one becomes all that God requires him to be. Uduigwomen said that:

We are living in an age that is devoid of God’s righteousness and His standards as enunciated in His word. While rejecting God’s righteousness, many choose to act on their opinion of what is right and wrong. This has obviously produced horrendous results, chief among which is a Hobessian state of nature, a state of “war of all against all”. When people seek to satisfy their personal desires at all costs, everyone pays the price. The only hope of redemption of the already battered situation lies squarely with the church, but it seems the church is slumbering, sleeping, groping, and barking, not biting.¹⁰

The word theology is a compound word which means a study or knowledge (logia) of God (Theos). In short, it is a study of the divine things and is limited, not to experience, but to the Scripture. The “logia” is the “utterances, sayings” or “oracles” as in this case, the study of the Scripture and of God Who is the Author of Scripture (2nd Tim 3:16). Righteousness as well means *dikaiosune*, “the character or quality of being right or just”; it was formerly spelled “right-wise-ness,” which clearly expresses the meaning. It is the concept that depicts an attribute of God; “the righteousness of God” means essentially the same as His faithfulness, or truthfulness, that which is consistent with His own nature and promises.¹¹ Righteousness in this way depicts being right or just the way God wants it in the world he created. This act of righteousness is ordained by God and determined by God as he stipulates it in the scriptures. However the theology of righteousness is doing what is just and right the way God wants it and says it should be. Therefore, every religion has already had the theology of what is right, just or wrong according to their faith.

Righteousness in Judeo-Christian Perspective

Similarly, Righteousness should be understood in line of theology as it relates to the relationship of the people in the community of faith and in the diverse communities of different faith and belief system. The Theologians of ages had conflict on the ground of righteousness. This conflict is on whether righteousness can be imputed or imparted. Imputed righteousness is the righteousness judicially relating us by faith and imparted righteousness is the righteousness wrought in us by the Spiritual renewal. Theologians hold that there must be an imputed righteousness before an imparted righteousness. Imputed righteousness is the possibility of continued adjustment or settling our past to the demand of a holy law, requiring perfection in every part. The difficulty here has been according to what Ugwasaid “that some scholars derided imparted righteousness because it lacks evidence. They said it is an inner Spiritual rectitude,”¹²

Research shows that most of the suffering in the world is caused directly or indirectly by violating the known law. The law is made to prevent, and not to inflict or lead to suffering: if obedience or disobedience produces the same results of what use will the law be? If the offender is not punished and loyalist rewarded, where would our estimate right and its reward, and wrong and its punishment be formed? A world without suffering can never be a world of discipline. A sense of wrong without any suffering for the wrong doing will not be a sufficient motive to arouse dominates soul to the real consequences of wrong doing. Pain and misery accompany wrong doing, and they express themselves in every manifestation of the wrong done. That is why the whole creation groans because the constitution of the race protests against wrong doing Roman 8:22. Any present suffering may not have been the full

consequences of any immediate wrong-doing, but may be the consciousness of having done wrong shades all environments with its spirit contaminating the environment with the spirit of wrong-doing. Environment can determine what people living around there can be, vice versa. Psalm 107: 32-43 says that;

He turns rivers into a desert, springs of water into thirsty ground, a fruitful land into a salty waste, because of the wickedness of its inhabitants. He turns a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water. And there he lets the hungry dwell, and they establish a city to live in; they sow fields, and plant vineyards, and get a fruitful yield. By his blessing they multiply greatly; and he does not let their cattle decrease. When they are diminished and brought low through oppression, trouble, and sorrow, he pours contempt upon princes and makes them wander in trackless wastes; but he raises up the needy out of affliction, and makes their families like flocks. The upright see it and are glad; and all wickedness stops its mouth. Whoever is wise, let him give heed to these things; let men consider the steadfast love of the LORD.

This simply suggests that the blessing and woe of a given people is in a given society is determinant to the behaviour of the people living there over the years. Whatever they sow that they will reap also Gal. 6:7. The righteousness of the people in a land attracts blessing to the land while the wickedness of the people also attracts hardship, trouble, and disaster.

Biblical Righteousness and a (Healthy) Transformed Society

Righteousness, *dikaosune*, as discussed earlier is “the character or quality of being right or just”; It is used to denote an attribute of God, e.g., Rom. 3:5, which shows that “the righteousness of God” (His faithfulness, or truthfulness), is consistent with His own nature and promises; Rom. 3:25, 26 speaks of His “righteousness” as exhibited in the death of Christ, which is sufficient to show men that God is neither indifferent to sin nor regards it lightly. On the contrary, it demonstrates that quality of holiness in Him which must find expression in His condemnation of sin.¹³ The word is found in the sayings of the Lord Jesus,

- (a) of whatever is right or just in itself, whatever conforms to the revealed will of God (Matt. 5:6, 10, 20; John 16:8, 10);
- (b) Whatever has been appointed by God to be acknowledged and obeyed by man (Matt. 3:15; 21:32);
- (c) The sum total of the requirements of God (Matt. 6:33);
- (d) religious duties (Matt. 6:1) (distinguished as almsgiving, man’s duty to his neighbor, vv. 2-4, prayer, his duty to God, vv. 5-15, fasting, the duty of self-control, vv. 16-18).

This meaning of *dikaosune*, right action, is frequent also in Paul’s writings, as in all five of its occurrences in Rom. 6; Eph. 6:14, etc. But for the most part he uses it of that gracious gift of God to men whereby all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are brought into right relationship with God. This righteousness is unattainable by obedience to any law, or by any merit of man’s own, or any other condition than that of faith in Christ....¹⁴

The man who trusts in Christ becomes ‘the righteousness of God in Him’ (2 Cor. 5:21), i.e., becomes in Christ all that God requires a man to be, all that he could never be in himself. Because Abraham accepted the Word of God, making it his own by that act of the mind and spirit which is called faith, and, as the sequel showed, submitting himself to its control, therefore God accepted him as one who fulfilled the whole of His requirements (Rom. 4:3).

However, righteousness is one of the most prominent attributes of God in the scriptures, and it is also the most elusive. Is God’s righteousness the same thing as his holiness or goodness? Virtually, God’s righteousness is synonymous with his justice.

A Healthy (Transformed) Society

A healthy or transformed society is one in which its members live together at peace with one another and the eco system, are free to express themselves within the provision of the norms of such a society, and have equal opportunity to create wealth and fulfill their noble dreams and aspiration. With such a definition in mind, biblical righteousness can enhance such a society in the following ways:

1. Science has not been able to disprove the existence of a creator of the universe. If there is a creator, then righteousness, which has to do with the aligning of human actions with His purpose in creation in order to maintain the existing order, helps in shaping the world and maintaining such order.
2. With righteousness defined as “whatever has been appointed by God to be acknowledged and obeyed by man”, this biblical concept helps in social control in the sense that it ensures obedience to civil authorities.
3. The teachings of Jesus on righteousness approved religious duties as acts of righteousness. Under these, almsgiving, man’s duty to his neighbor, ensures that the weaker ones in the society are helped by the stronger, thereby maintaining a healthy society devoid of poverty-related menaces such as armed robbery, forgery, prostitution, kidnapping, etc.
4. Prayer and fasting, part of Jesus’ approved indices to righteousness, help in building a healthy society in a variety of ways. One of such is that they keep the body disciplined and under control. These are virtues that contribute immensely to healthy inter-personal relationship in the society.
5. Right living, as taught by Paul, does not lead to a right relationship with God; rather, a right relationship with God *is* righteousness. The implication of this is not that people can be in right standing with God and live in unrighteous ways; rather, it means that it is in coming to God through the One He has approved (Jesus), that one is enabled to live righteously (Eph. 2:10). Here lies a unique motif of biblical righteousness! Thus, the man who trusts in Christ becomes ‘the righteousness of God in Him’ (2 Cor. 5:21), i.e., becomes in Christ all that God requires a man to be, all that he could never be in himself.

Righteousness in African Tradition for Transformation of society

Human existence is always existence in the human community. Morality is therefore not a selfish action directed at one's own benefit, even though there are scholars who hold that traditional religions are focused on humanity's selfish needs.¹⁵ All humanity's societal behaviour carries religious significance. Religion functions as a moral and ethical foundation.¹⁶ Turaki identifies moral principles in the traditional worldview as the pursuit of cosmic harmony, the pursuit of spiritual meaning, the pursuit of mystical powers and the pursuit of kinship community. These moral principles fit into the framework of an African understanding of religion.

In understanding reality and maintaining a relationship with reality, human beings express the experience of the transcendental in the form of norms. However Mbiti agreed that morals indeed assist human beings in maintaining harmony with their entire environment.¹⁷ He posited that religious morals and values provide identity. In the religious way of life, people discover who they are and where they come from. Morals and values provide security for a harmonious existence. Religious values and morals give direction and provide answers to life's questions. In this sense, religion becomes the roadmap for human existence. Righteousness maybe the same as norms and values or social ethics uphold by the African traditional societies which deviation is a punishable offence. Social responsibility is an ethical theory, in which individuals are accountable for fulfilling their civic duty; the actions of an individual must benefit the whole of society. In this way, there must be a balance between economic growth and the welfare of society and the environment. If this equilibrium is maintained, then social responsibility is accomplished. Similarly, the abominations and taboo which the traditional society abhors because they defile the land and spells doom to humanity. Therefore a viable theology of righteousness in its entire ramification must attest for a transformed society, where justice, equity, fair play and love will be domicile. Morality (Righteousness) which Okere sees as the quality of human life by which it can be

described as good and bad, good in the sense that it must be done, or bad or evil in the sense that it must be avoided.¹⁸ Morality is a spiritual dimension of human action¹⁹ and they opined that morality (righteousness) is the “conventionally approved rules of human behaviour in the society and by implication leads to success and progress.

Righteousness in Islam for transformation of Society: Righteousness may mean many things to many religious groups whose essence in all is to produce among members the morality that will sustain the cordiality, synergy, harmony, and relationship among the people of the society. The religious rightness that promotes good relationship among the people of the same society which abhors every wrong doings and injustice is righteousness. Though a religious and theological language, but in every guise it is meant to produce a just society. In Islam righteousness is embedded in observing the five pillars or articles of faith without which it is impossible to fulfill the will of Allah. This observance brings a healthy society among the people that professed Islam.

Alphonso W. Haynes offers a model for Islamic social transformation. This model regards Islam as offering a comprehensive order which is designed to meet the needs of human life.²⁰ He said that this order comprises a person’s religion, spirituality, and worldly affairs. In this sense, it consolidates religious doctrines and morality, and legislate worldly doctrines in a comprehensive, established and equitable way for every human action.²¹ Islam views the human conscience as a path to reform and righteousness, and believes it is the best route to a constant, harmonious, and happy human life. However, Aphonso quoting Bayoumi agrees that Islamic religious values and principles encourage the righteous to perform good deeds, to help the needy, and to tend the weaker persons in the society. This according to him plays major roles in the development of the social work. In any case, Osman in Aphonso agrees that these principles and values are professed by Christian, Islamic, and Jewish religions which lead to societal transformation. It is an unfortunate situation as scholars observe that despite the religiosity of the people, moral decadence which they term as the corruption of moral conscience has been on the increase leading to public outcry against bribery and corruption, embezzlement of public funds, moral vices like sexual perversion, nudity and loss of family values etc; hence the call for a viable theology of righteousness for societal transformation in Nigeria.

Sociological Benefit of Righteousness: The theology of righteousness is worth revisiting in this dispensation of moral turpitude where people commit atrocities with reckless abandon not minding the repercussions of such acts. It is no longer news where it was told of how some men go into their daughters, some women in a quest for riches can commit anything to get money. What is tagged taboo and abomination becomes a reigning concept among the modern generation. Jer. 6:16-19 has this to say

Thus says the LORD: "Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.' I set watchmen over you, saying, and 'Give heed to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not give heed. 'Therefore hear, O nations, and know, O congregation, what will happen to them. Hear, O earth; behold, I am bringing evil upon this people, the fruit of their devices, because they have not given heed to my words; and as for my law, they have rejected it.

However, from the biblical narratives of the passages above it dawns on people the sociological benefits of the theology of righteousness in relation to a healthy society or transformation of society. Whether it is called morality, observance of religious rights and rituals or righteousness, it is one and the same thing to sociologists because they produce one result – a healthy and transformed society. The blessing comes to the land due to the life of people dwelling in it and at the same time curse and suffering may overtake any community due to the wickedness of the inhabitants of the land. It behooves on them to ask for the good road, the ancient path which leads to life. Living righteously in all religions of the world is rewarding while wickedness does not pay. Whether in Islam that emphasizes on keeping the religious duties to foster good relationship vertically and horizontally or Christianity that views righteousness as something one

cannot do away with for a social and spiritual well being of individual and community at large or African traditional religion as it were which talks about morality, justice and fair play which is the yarning of other religions of the world. These religions seek to point at one thing- achieving a healthy, transformation and smooth running of the society. Morality, social justice, equity and fair play, and righteousness produce a healthy environment and respect among people of different ranks and files.

Consequently, the opposite of which is (Sin) wickedness, injustice, abomination, and taboo. Sin brings curse, disaster and annihilation of a group of people. Evolving the Theology of righteousness in this society of corruption is a clarion call. Proverbs 14: 34 say “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people”. By implication this means that propounding a viable theology of righteousness in every society no matter the religious affiliation of that society will promote blessing and a healthy environment against a society where wickedness is the order of the day. In the same development 2 Chronicles 7:14 opines

If my people who are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

The point of discussion here is the danger of wickedness (Sin) which causes the land to be sick but if the people can humble themselves to recognizing the danger of their sins and turn away from their sins in repentance and remorse of mind the land will be healed. Neglecting the benefit of righteousness is a great danger to a nation like ours. Therefore, there is a great need to evolve the theology of righteousness that will be productive to transform our society now the world is mixed with different pools of opinion gearing towards confusing a just society. This confusion has produced hybridization of cultures that has almost capsized the ship of righteousness in our modern society. One can however suggest that theologians and world leaders should go back to the tenets of religious societies that produced healthy societies.

One cannot ignore the major arguments in support of globalization concept of religion when allowed to function properly which will lead to increase in theology that enhance a unified theology of righteousness that will be a transformation factor for greater a society. Globalization that is seen as potential force that catalyzes, in greater economic, political, socio-cultural²² and religions’ interdependence in the world should be a factor as well to bringing different religions under one umbrella of understanding. Although we are living in a world with gross inequality among nations, as it is common to see the globe polarized. It is unfortunate that the same ugly situation is noticed in the field of religion. Islam poised themselves as the best religion that received direct instructions from God, Christianity in the other hand claims the best. These two missionary religions see African traditional religion as fetish and paganism. The critical question is what has Nigeria as a nation stand to gain from the diversities and intolerance these religions exhibit? The advent of these religions supposedly was perhaps meant to promote love, unity and progress, but the adverse is the case where religious intolerance has caused more damages to Nigerian society than the peace, synergy and love they were purported to achieve. Globalization with its sociological transformation agenda should be positively employed for a transformed and healthy society to emerge. This called for the coming together of different religious groups in Nigeria to critically examine what should form the theology of righteousness in this dispensation for a healthy Nigerian society.

However, the researcher nurses fear whether evolving the theology of righteousness for the transformation of a healthy society can be possible because of superiority complex among the religious groups in Nigeria. Since every religious body is claiming to be better and superior to each other, how possible can they come together? This needs to be resolved at the floor of Inter-faith and enculturation committees as part of globalization agenda.

Sociological Consequences of Paucity of Righteousness

Obedience as human phenomenon has been the bedrock of righteousness, though many scholars argue that righteousness is relative depending on what different societies and religious groups regard as good

and evil or bad. It is also ascertaining in the natural laws what is good and what is bad and every religious group builds her theology of righteousness on those natural laws which each religion calls “the golden rule”. “Treat others as you would like them treat you” or do not treat others in ways that you would not like others treat you,” Obedience to this law as it were is righteousness. Apart from this golden law, different religious groups have diverse belief of righteousness. Odozor Paulinus in line with Mbiti strongly agreed that God has ordained a moral order for human beings, through which they came to understand what is good and what is evil, so that they might live in harmony with one another and safeguard the life of the people.²³ It is not gainsaying that the idea of righteousness is determined in the first instance by the customs of social groups and the fear of punishment that follows the violation of this order and the joy of the reward of keeping the order helps in checking disobedience to the laws. A diverse opinion of righteousness in a country of diverse religious cultures and intolerance imposes a problem. Christianity and Islam coming together for instance to have an open talk of what is supposed to be the social norms or conduct that will bring the two or more religions together seems difficult in the face of religious fanaticism and bigotry. Ugwaquips that all religions aim at overcoming the moral evil life and there are certain principles on which certain things have to be rejected.²⁴ “Therefore the moral minds are religious without which the world would have no conscience. The world today seems not to have conscience hence this clarion call for a viable theology of righteousness in the world of chaos. For instance, Islam and Christianity both have the concept of one God but Islam’s God is very remote who acts impersonally. The Muslims believe that both good and evil come from Allah. This is not acceptable to the Christians. The Muslims’ teaching about predestination is also different from Christians’ teaching about God. The Christian’s God is described as righteous. Christian’s relationship with God is filial –Child-father while the Muslims see this as blasphemy. Muslims deny God the attributes of love, Holiness and grace. The two religions for instance differ in doctrine; the Muslim believes he would gain salvation by his efforts-Praying, fasting and going on pilgrimage while the Christian believes that his works or efforts are in vain if he has not the grace of God through Christ. The Christians therefore believe in salvation through faith by the grace of God. On the concept of sin, The Muslim believes that man commits sin and not sinful by nature while Christianity teaches that man is naturally sinful and needs reconciliation when he has repented. Christianity teaches love with all men while Islam teaches that anyone who is not a Muslim does not share brotherhood.²⁵ This confusion leads to the unhealthy situations and occurrences in Africa and Nigeria in particular. However, the theological minds believe that this chaos would be nipped on the board should a viable theology of righteousness be evolved from the major religions to enhance transformation desirable of contemporary developing Nigerian society. Many scholars strongly believe that different religions have what it takes for a just and healthy society but politics has shattered and battered Nigeria. What impasses Nigeria is passing today is a product of political mismanagement of our political elements. Whether Nigeria can come together again is inconsequential because Yakubu Mohammed the DG of NTA posted his narrative and lamentation captioned “Give me back my plateau State” on July 28th 2018 on his social media wall the good days in Nigeria. He lamented over the intolerance among the religious groups in Nigeria. He recollected when in Nigeria as a Muslim boy attended catholic School in Jos and how in catholic school he was made a class prefect and a football captain among 10 Christian players including the famous Segun Odegbami. How all Muslim children and parents would earnestly be expecting Christmas and Sallah every year because (with the same expectation of craving) it produced pleasure and merriment for both Christians and the Muslims and wondered where Nigeria has got it wrong in the field of religion and called for the old time Jos to be restored and by implication Nigeria. The Nigeria where perfect and unconditional love, understanding, respect for one another, and righteous living should govern. The consequences of the paucity of righteousness in Nigeria cannot be neglected. Because of corruption or unrighteousness and all that it represents has made Nigeria sick. Over the years, Nigeria has become a country where only evil triumphs. Nigeria however, is a nation whose development has continued to be hampered by bad leadership, moral decadence, poverty, hunger and insecurity. What more, dilapidation of public infrastructure: the un-amendable roads, interruptible power supply, moribund health sector, poor management of education sector, lack of trust, transparency,

honesty, and accountability which have been thrown to the gutter. Suffice it to say that violence, vandalism, armed robbery, political and economic related assassinations, extra-judicial killings, Book Haram Insurgence, Herd's men terrorism, ethnic cleansing have become the consequences of unrighteousness in Nigeria. Nigeria has become a nation where one cannot sleep with eyes closed. It is now a miracle for one to sleep and wake up the next morning, but do not know what will happen before the night fall or the next moment. Uduihwomen opined that Nigeria is a failed state, a decrepit land of despair, tears, malnourishment, wants, misery, insecurity, and ennui, where the survival of the fittest holds sway.²⁶

Conclusion

The over shooting of religious activities and its patronage in Nigeria is evident that Nigeria if not Africa is religiously poised. Irrespective of these religious astronomic rises, the moral standard of the society is in the decrease. Whether religion is good in itself or whether religion is the only solution to moral decay becomes apparent. Having seen from our discussion so far that African society and Nigeria in particular is very religious in all its theological formations and there is clear evidence that irrespective of the influence of Christianity and Islam, Nigerians are very chronic religious people in their traditional originality. Though it is very difficult and challenging too to see that despite the show of religiosity and outward display of piety, one would have expected to see high level of righteousness (social morality), but the reverse is the case where there is an embarrassing contradiction between the high ethical demands of Christianity and Islam, even our traditional religion Africans (Nigerians) profess and issue of corruption, greed, graft, religious killings, ethnic cleansing and other moral depravity that have eaten deep into the fabrics of our dear society. This moral lapse (Unrighteousness or sin) has affected and retarded the velocity of the national growth and development. Unrighteousness is a flight from good moral choice, while righteousness is the good habits which incline and allows their possessors to make good moral choices. Without moral virtues (righteousness) men and women are almost good for nothing in the society, which imposes a public danger. No wonder 'Righteousness is a phenomenon of faith "And without faith it is impossible to please God" Heb. 11:6. When people accept the Word of God, by making it their own by that act of the mind and spirit which is called faith, and, as the sequel-Abraham showed, submitting himself to its control, therefore God will accept them as one who fulfilled the whole of His requirements as He did to Abraham Rom. 4:3).

Nevertheless, one might have discovered how the erroneous theology of the contemporary church have gone a long way to put African churches in bad shape especially that of hyper grace theology which is mixing truth with error. This hyper grace message of total freedom in Christ is very appealing but one should understand that there is repercussion of every action done under the sun. The theology that does not see anything as sin and the Holy Spirit cannot convict Christians of sin because God has provided all round grace through Christ that theology must be thought about again. The Theology that does not hold again the sanctity of human life but allow killing in the name of religion is erroneous. This among others is the theology that forms the mindset behind the atrocities committed by some people in Nigeria.

Consequently, the social, moral, political, religious, economical and mix-cultural psychological deficiency of globalization in this dispensation is evident of inefficiency of theology of righteousness of the modern society. No sanctity of human lives, inordinate behaviours among the youth, gay marriage, homosexuality, promiscuity, early child marriage, abortion, lesbianism, ritual killings, bribery, corruption, greed, budget padding, pornography, political corruption and all worth not are clear evident, therefore the work recommends evolving a viable theology of righteousness should we desire a societal transformation in Nigeria that will bring a new dawn of development, love, harmony, and progressive society of our dreams. This could be achievable through Government support and the power of Inter-faith committee where (enculturation), religious tolerance, and unity of purpose as people created to effect positively to their society can without religious bias propound or define in a clearer term the theology of righteousness

that should be imbibed by all religions in Nigeria with human conscience of morals, but where this fails, the transformation of Nigerian society is a mirage.

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OVERCOMING THE IMPACT OF COVID -19 ON POVERTY AMONG NIGERIAN FAMILIES

By
Charity Ngozi Uzuegbu
Department of Social Work,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
&
Obasi-Igwe Inyomoma
Department of Social Work,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
&
Sunday, Obike Emmanuel
Department of Social Work,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

This paper discussed the impact of COVID-19, on poverty in Nigeria, and ways of helping families cope with the situation. The objective is to identify how families can come out of poverty. Data for the study was collected using primary and secondary sources. The study found out that COVID-19 affected families ; there is increased poverty, increase in prices of goods, and households are unable to buy needed items. It was recommended that Auxiliary Social Workers should help government generate family data for future planning, and communities should have resilient livelihoods.

Keywords-: Covid-19. Families, Nigeria, Poverty, and Social Work.

Introduction

Nigeria has been described as the poverty capital of the world. This is a result of the fact that the poverty rate of the country has grown over that of India. The country is characterized by such features as high rate of unemployment , hunger, crime , high mortality rate, high rate of illiteracy among others. These features have been worsened by the recent Covid -19 pandemic resulting in loss of employment, hike in prices of good services , increased hunger in the country, and more people being thrown into absolute poverty. This paper discusses the impact of Covid-19 on poverty in Nigeria , and strategies that can be adopted to enable vulnerable families cope with the situation. The major objective of the study is to identify and discuss strategies that can be used to enable families develop resilient coping strategies that can be used sustain themselves in the face of the poverty, Covid -19 pandemic and future shocks that may be experienced in the country. Data for the study was collected using both primary and secondary sources. The primary source used were observation, interview and the secondary data are documents from government ,Non governmental organizations, and other researchers. The paper is divided into four sections- introduction, literature review , results and recommendations.

Literature Review

Poverty has been defined by various authors. The United Nations (1988) defined poverty as ‘ a denial of choices, and opportunity , a violation of human dignity,... lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society , ...not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land to grow one’s food , or a job to earn one’s living, not having access to credit. ...insecurity ,powerlessness, and exclusions of individuals, families and communities,... susceptibility to violence and living on marginal or fragile environment, without access to clean water or sanitation.’ The

World Bank (1990) defined poverty on absolute terms as living on less than US 190 dollars a day for extreme poverty and less than US 3.10 dollars a day for moderate poverty. Okalow (2020) defined poverty as lacking enough resources to provide the necessities of life - food, clean water, shelter and clothing, lack of access to health care, education, and transportation, and Iheonu&Urama (2019) described poverty to be a situation when people are deprived of income and other resources needed to obtain the conditions of life –the diets, material goods, amenities, standards and services- that enable them to play their roles, meet the obligations, and participate in the relationships, and customs of their society. From these definitions, poverty can therefore be seen as a state of lack and inability of one to provide for his and the family's needs and the basic necessities of life. A person living in poverty cannot meet his needs which include food, clothing, shelter, health, adequate housing, education and cannot effectively participate in the communities or nations decision making. The causes of poverty include lack of education, joblessness, inability to manage resources, low economic growth performance, (Ola, Mohammed & Audi 2014, Iheonu&Urama 2019, Oluwa 2012, Thomas &Canagarajar 2002,) The features of poverty in a nation include lack of the basic necessities of life-food, clothing, shelter, joblessness, poor health, illiteracy, and unavailability of social services.

Poverty Situation In Nigeria

Nigeria is regarded as the poverty capital of the world having taken over from India in 2018. (Obiukwu 2019). According to (NBS 2020), people are said to be poor in Nigeria when they live at 137.4 thousand Nigerian Naira or (roughly 361US \$) a year. Currently, Nigeria has a poverty rate of 40.1% with a about 82.9million of her population living under poverty. This implies that 4 out of every ten Nigerian live in poverty. Nigeria currently has an estimated population of about 201 million people. This means that almost half of the population are living in poverty. According to the (World Data Lab 2019), extreme poverty in Nigeria increases by six persons per minute. Majority of the poor people in Nigeria, live in the rural areas.

Causes of Poverty in Nigeria

The causes of poverty in Nigeria are many. According to (Omoniyi 2018) the causes of poverty in Nigeria include inadequate education, environmental degradation, high rate of unemployment, bad governance, migration, corruption, political instability and overdependence on oil. Ngbea&Achunike(2014), Buba, Abdu, Adamu, &Jibir (2018), identified some other causes to include, ethnic conflict / ethnic unrest, neglect of rural infrastructure and social forces, Oluwa (2012) further identified other causes as macro –economic shocks and policy failures, crime and violence. A summary of the causes and contributing factors of poverty are low level of education, high rate of unemployment, corruption, overdependence on oil, neglect of rural infrastructure, poor economic infrastructure, and crime and violence. A description of some major causes and contributing factors to poverty is presented below.

Lack of Education-Lack of Education has been noted as a main cause of poverty in Nigeria. At the national level, education leads to acquisition, the spread of scientific knowledge, and manufacturing of scientific equipments / technological tools which are used in production in various area of life. This helps nations to generate income and enhance their GDP. On the individual level, education enables one to acquire knowledge and skills which can enhance employment and enable him to earn income and take care of himself. Nigeria has a high rate of illiteracy of about 40%(Macrotrends 2020). This makes it difficult for her citizens to develop technological tools, enhance her production and tools and improve her GDP. This eventually makes her to depend a lot on imported commodities and lower her GDP. The few that technological tools that are developed are hindered by politics in the country.

Corruption - The World Bank (1997) defined corruption as “the use of public office for private gain”. It is situation where resources meant for public use is diverted into personal gain by public office holders.

When the resources are diverted, the nation is unable to carry out projects meant for the citizens. In Nigeria, corruption manifests itself in the following ways, some of which include—“abuse of office and privileges, low levels of transparency and accountability, inflation of contracts, bribery/kickbacks, misappropriation or diversion of funds, under and over-invoicing, false declarations, collection of illegal tools, Ola et al (2014) According to Transparency International (2020) Nigeria ranks 140 out of 180 countries on its list of corruption index, with a corruption index of 25 which is low and making it one of the highly corrupt countries of the world. Many public holders embezzle public funds which are meant for the development of the nation, thereby making it difficult for the nation to provide for and meet the needs of the people amid throwing the country into poverty. Examples of stolen funds in Nigeria, are the cases looted 12 billion Naira from Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (MINASA) and pension funds, (Ebuzor 2016). Corruption leads to underdevelopment and poverty in a nation. (Okenna 2020). In Nigeria, it has led to poor infrastructural development, inability to pay wages to workers, inadequate provision of social services, and non or poor implementation of national policies thereby throwing back the nation into perpetual poverty. (Abba Emma, Nwugbaga, D & Nwuzor, 2017).

Poor Economic Infrastructure—Agbonile (2017) described economic infrastructure as those things that support economic growth at all levels. Examples are micro-credits to entrepreneurs, and farmers. These supports help the entrepreneurs to engage in production and make profits which benefit them and the nation. Agbonile (2017) further noted that there is poor economic infrastructural development in Nigeria. Those greatly affected are entrepreneurs in the rural areas, farmers and women who do not have enough capital to invest in their business and farms. It makes it difficult for them to engage in large scale production which yields higher economic gains. With poor conditions in the rural areas and cultural disadvantaged position of the women, they end only in producing only what is barely enough for the family. This situation coupled with the fact that a larger percentage of the Nigerian live in the rural areas, increases poverty in the country.

Conflict and Violence—Crime and violence have also contributed to poverty in Nigeria. A major and current one is terrorism in the country involving Boko-haram and herdsmen attacks. Terrorism creates a state of fear and anxiety making it difficult for people to move about their normal businesses, it creates unfavorable investment climate discouraging foreign investment, and loss of resources to the nation as government divert much of the little resources available to the nation to security issues. (Abba Emma et al 2017). Currently in Nigeria, These attacks have made many people in the affected areas of Borno and Benue states to flee their communities and settle in the Internally Displaced Peoples (IDP) camps. Most of these people are farmers and thus had to abandon their farms which serve as source of revenue to the families and country. Further, the government spend huge sums of money on the IDP camps, security, and conflict resolution, thus depleting the national economy.

Effects of Poverty in Nigeria

Poverty has serious effects in the country. These effects include high mortality rate, low standard of living, poor social services, poor educational attainment, low standard of living crime, inability to participate in political life of the country, and, political instability.

High Mortality Rate - High Mortality rate is one of the effects of poverty in Nigeria. Speaking on the effects of poverty on health of a people, the WHO (2003) said, the poor suffer worse health and die young, they have higher than average child and maternal, high level of diseases, more limited access to health care and social protection and gender inequality disadvantages and more inequality disadvantages. Nigeria has a mortality rate. This is because the health institutions in the country are not adequately maintained; the current ratio of nurses, midwives and doctors to patients is 1.95 to 1,000, also less than 2% of the population have health insurance policy (Agbonlie 2017, Population Reference Bureau 2020), hence people do not get quality health care. The group mostly affected are the women and children. The country has the second highest rate of maternal mortality in the world with a mortality rate of 917 per 1,000 births; MacroTrends (2020) and a high infant mortality death of 59.701 per 1,000

live births (Macrotrends 2020) and poverty has been identified as a major cause of the high mortality rate as there are not enough health facilities to provide health care to the citizens. (Akawu & Charles 2018).

Low standard of living- Due to poverty, a large proportion of Nigerians live at low standard especially in the aspect of food consumption. They cannot afford to have adequate meal three times a day. Ayoade & Adeola (2012) in their study on effects of poverty on rural household welfare in Oyo state noted that the major effect of poverty on household is low standard of living. About 98.3% reported it as a major effect of poverty in their lives. This situation is not peculiar to Oyo State as it cuts across the country. The overall effect is poor nutrition, and inability of the body to fight off diseases.

Poor social services- Poverty has also led to the inability to provide good and adequate social services in the country. Some of these social services are recreation, and housing in the country. Adequate housing is required for survival, health, and productivity of every individual. Adequate housing includes both good accommodation, safety and aesthetic environment. This contributes to healthy living. Majority of Nigerians live under poor housing conditions characterized by filthy conditions, insecure environment, and dilapidated environments. This affects their production.

Poor educational attainment - Poverty leads to poor educational attainment among the citizens. Data (Macrotrends 2020) shows that there is high illiteracy level (40%) in the country and majority of these people are from poor homes. Agbonile (2017) noted that about 10.5 million children are out of school in Nigeria. This number represents about half of the Nigerian children. This high rate of poverty exists because poor families cannot afford to pay their required fees for their children in the schools.

COVID-19

COVID-19 pandemic started in China the year 2019 and spread to other parts of the world in 2020. It is a viral disease that affects the body and can kill within a short time if not treated. Currently in the world it has affected 128,303,612 persons and killed 2,805,880. (Worldometer 2021). Nigeria has a total of 162,641 cases, and 2,049 deaths. Covid-19 has negatively affected the world economy to a large extent and it is projected that it will throw about 49 million people into extreme poverty in 2020 world wide (World Bank 2020). This implies that the gains which had previously been made worldwide in the reduction of world poverty to meet up with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of eradication of poverty by 2030, has been lost and the chances of attaining the SDG 1 of zero poverty by the year 2030 in the world may no longer be feasible.

Findings

Impact of Covid-19 on Poverty in Nigeria

Nigeria as a nation is not spared of this. Even though Nigeria did not experience the large outbreak of the pandemic as expected, the country's economy was largely affected and more number of people thrown into poverty. Amare, Abay, Tiberti, & Chamberline (2020) quoting the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2020) noted that about 5 million Nigerians have been thrown into absolute poverty. Nigeria is a country that depends on crude oil for its income generation. At the hit of the COVID pandemic, the sale of crude oil dropped all over the world as nations diverted their resources to fight against COVID-19. Ayoade (2020) noted that due to this, the price of crude oil fell from \$50 per barrel to \$30 per barrel resulting in loss of income to the Nigerian government. Further he reported that it led to the closure of "factories, airlines, and restrictions of movement of goods and people within the country, and also between the country and the outside world led to decline in resources. There was massive lay off of staff by most private companies, who were not able to pay their staff and in some cases the salaries were slashed down by some percentages and this led families into poverty. He further noted that Nigeria's Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) account for 96% of businesses and 84% of employment, thus the layoff of staff and reduction in salaries greatly affected many families in the country. Among petty traders, the lockdown gravely affected them as most of them were unable to sell their products, and in some cases, the commodities that they had in their stores expired within the lockdown period impoverishing the traders the more and some closed their shops. An example is the case of Mrs Mary

Udeh , an outdoor restaurant dealer in Northern part of Nigeria, who trimmed down her business and laid off 15 out of her 25 workers as a result of the pandemic and lockdown experienced in Nigeria.(NTA 2021)

Ozili (2020) , noted that COVID-19 pandemic, adversely affected the stock market, .He said that the ,major market indices in the stock market, plunged when investors pulled out their investments into the safe heavens like the US treasury Bonds. Stock market investors lost over NGN 2.3 trillion naira(US\$ 5.9bn) barley three weeks after the first case was confirmed and announced in Nigeria on January 28, 2020. The market capitalization of listed equities which was valued at NGN 13.657 trillion (US\$35.2 billion) on Friday , February 28, 2020 depreciated by NGN 2,349 trillion to NGN 11.308 trillion (29.1 US \$ billion) on Monday , March ,23 2020. Even though , this happened at the stocks market, it affected the Nigerian families, as importation of desire goods were reduced and prices of commodities in the markets increased.

Food insecurity-The pandemic further increased food insecurity in the country (Saakuma 2020), showed that COVID -19 adversely affected the people and led them more into poverty. The study carried out in Benue State of Nigeria, showed that the impact of COVID-19 on the people, included loss of business capital, reduction in income generation, difficulty to pay bills, reduce standard of living, loss of income and low productivity.

The findings of (Ibukun& Adebayo NPOV 5 PDF) among 1,950 Nigerian households using secondary data from the Nigeria COVID-19 National Longitudinal Phone Survey (COVID-19 NLPS) showed food insecurity in the country. The study showed that 58% of the households experienced server food security. Balana, Oyeyemi, Ogunniyi,Fasoranti, Edeh, Aiki, &Adam 2020 in their study on effects of Covid – 19 policies on food security on smallholder farm households in Nigeria, found out that 88 percent of the households lost about 50 percent of their income due to the pandemic and about 66 percent of respondents reported they reduced food consumption. GAIN (2020) in it's report on Impact of Covid-19 on Nigeria's food system noted that Nigeria is facing severe food security and malnutrition problems with 32.1 million food and nutrition deficient people and an estimated 3.65 million people deficient as a direct result of COVID-19. Finally, The NBS (2020) reported that almost all households in the country have experienced the shock of the increase in food prices and revealed the disturbing rate of severe food insecurity experienced by households since the pandemic started. It noted that 86.3% , and 89.8% of the households in Nigeria experienced the shock between Mid-March to Aril 2020, and April to July 2020 respectively. Currently, the situation in the country's market has not changed as market prices of food items are still high further impoverishing the families and making it difficult for the average Nigerian family to purchase these items. For example , 5 liters of red oil rose from 1,700 naira to 5,000.00 naira , a loaf of bread which is for the common man, formerly sold between naira 400-450 naira, now sells between between 500 to 600 naira and a basin of 'garri' formerly sold for #7,000.00-#8,000.00 now sells for #13,000.00-#15,000.00 naira. All these have greatly affected the different aspects life of the Nigerian family – nutrition, education , and health . The International Committee of Red Gross (ICRC - Abuja 2020), reporting on the impacts of COVI-19 on nutrition among Nigerian families, noted that there was increase in malnutrition rates among centers it supports. It reported that the number of children treated by the outpatient nutrition program grew by 20%, while the number of severe malnutrition cases rose by 10%, compared to the same period last year.

Manufacturing

In the manufacturing sector, Adam, Edeh, Oboh,Pauw, Thurlow 2020), reported that data from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on PMI- (which is a criteria used to measure the economic trend in manufacturing in a country,) for six months (from January 2020- June 2020), showed a decrease in productivity in manufacturing in Nigeria within that period. The largest loses were experienced in the industrial sector (-24.9%) and services sector (-27.5%) as a result of the lockdown experienced in the country within that period , unwillingness of banks to lend to manufactures , and inability of customers to

buy. All these cumulated to inflation currently experienced in the country making it difficult for the average Nigeria family to but needed items.

Health – Covid-19 pandemic, had tremendous ill effects on health and health system in Nigeria. Though the disease did not directly affect the people, it indirectly affected the, through reduction in importation of drugs. As a result of reduced income and spending ability, Nigerians were not able to take care of their health. Nwoke, Ofomata, Amadi, Jibuaku, Akahome, & Nwagbo (2020) in their study on impact of Covid 19 on consumers' access to essential health care in Nigeria, noted that many people living with chronic health condition did not have access to essential medicines. This condition was not only peculiar to people living to chronic conditions, as the entire populace was affected because of shortage of drugs in the stores as Nigeria depends on foreign countries for supply of drugs.

Education- Due to the Covid -19 pandemic, the government closed down schools and face to face learning stopped, Some schools especially, private schools started on-line learning for the students. This had implications for the students and families, Data (2021), showed that many students from poor homes could not effectively participate in the on line learning because of poverty as they could not afford airtime and buy the accessories- lap top, smart phones needed for e-learning. Mostly affected are the girls. (Ettang 2020). Other challenges experienced by the online learning included power shortage and network failure. This is more found in the rural areas where majority of Nigerians live. With the opening up of the system, schools have resumed and some schools especially higher institutions have embarked on online learning. However, Nigerian students are still facing the challenges of the online learning as their parents (those from the poor families), cannot cope and afford the cost of required to purchase the materials needed for on line lessons.

In summary, the findings showed that COVID-19 pandemic increased poverty in Nigeria as it touched essential aspect of the economy and reduced the value of money in the country. Specifically, it led to increase in unemployment as most organizations laid off some of their workers in order to survive, increase in prices goods and services (inflation in the country), increase in food insecurity among the Nigerian families, inability to get required health care due to poor health system and difficulty to access educational services specially in institutions that have started on line education.

Government Actions

To mitigate the impact of COVID 19 among families in the country, the government has carried out certain actions to help families out of poverty. Some of these programs are Conditional Cash Transfer to Most Vulnerable families through National Social Register of Poor and Vulnerable Households (NSPR), Food rations to vulnerable households (both through the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development) and Free Registration of NGOS with Cooperate affairs.

A major challenge that have bedeviled these programmes and prevented families from benefitting from these programmes is lack of data. This has made it impossible for the government to have accurate data of vulnerable families in the country for effective planning. The country has about 90million people living in poverty, but the NSPR has only about 11,045,537 persons people from 2,644,495 households registered (Sobowale 2021). With this figure, the government cannot plan and carry out any effective programmes for vulnerable families in the country.

Recommendations

To effectively assist vulnerable families, there is need for accurate data of families in the country, To this end, the researchers recommend the use of Auxiliary Social Workers (ASWs) to work with communities/families and address the problem of poverty. Basically, the following recommendations are made.

1) Collation of data. Community care givers known as Auxiliary Social Workers (ASWs) can be used to generate data on families in the country. Auxiliary Social Workers (ASWs) are available in the country. The ASWs are social workers trained to operate at the community level, the trainings are usually short

term training (6-9 months) . They are posted to their communities of residence and work in partnership with the social welfare departments at the local government level. The ASWs collect information on the families in the community ,and their level of vulnerability; and supply the information to the social welfare departments (SWD) at the Local Government Areas.(LGA) . The SWDs collate and forward the information, to the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs through the state. This will give the government an accurate data on the Nigerian families and their levels of vulnerability which they can use for planning.

2) Community Resilient Programmes- The ASWs can also work with communities and develop resilient poverty coping programmes. The ASW work with the community leaders to look inward and develop resilient income generation programmes based on the local resources available in the community. Various communities in Nigeria are blessed with different resources such as rivers, farm lands, arts, animals , sands, stones. Community members can plan and develop income generation activities based on the resources available in their communities and use it to use to sustain their families,.

3)Families/Individuals,- ASWs can also work with families/individuals to plan and develop resilient income generating programs based on talents and skills. This will help the families and individuals to develop business that will enable them cope with/ end present economic hardship and the future.

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JOHN 4:19–24 AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ECUMENICAL UNITY AMONG CHURCHES IN NIGERIA

By

Jones Otisi Kalu

Hugh Goldie Theological Institution, Arochukwu

Abstract

There have been various attempts and efforts at ecumenical unity among different Christian denominations in the Nigerian religious landscape. This has given rise to various ecumenical bodies such as Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN), Tarrayar Ekklesiyoyin a Kristi a Nigeria (TEKAN; that is, Fellowship of the Churches of Christ in Nigeria), Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), and Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC). It seems that while efforts of the ecumenical bodies have been commendable on some fronts, they still leave to be desired in concrete terms about really uniting Christians and denominations in mind and spirit; it seems that church in Nigeria still remains largely divided than united. This paper, therefore, seeks to explore how the thoughts of Jesus Christ in the dialogue with the Samaritan woman in John 4:19–24 can challenge and stimulate concrete unity amongst the churches in Nigeria. It adopts a historical-critical method of exegetical study. It discovers that egocentricism is the bane of denominational disunity in Nigeria. Real unity can be achieved only if the churches would downplay their physical paraphernalia and focus more on the spiritual side of worship God. It, therefore, recommends that churches in Nigeria should begin to see other denominations as being part of the one family of God, the body of Christ. Denominations must make God, and not their physical achievements, the defining descriptor of their existence and ministry.

Keywords: Ecumenism, Unity, Body of Christ, Denomination.

Introduction

Religious dichotomy has been noticeable since the time of the Jews and the Samaritans. It also played out in the early church and continued up until the Medieval period when the unity of the early Catholic Church was lost as early as 16th July 1054 AD when Michael Cerularius, the prelate and the patriarch of Constantinople, rejected the supreme authority of Pope Leo IX and broke the final bond that linked the Eastern and the Western Churches together (Orji 17). Thus, the Orthodox Church thus separated from Rome, went on splitting further into national churches and sects. On 31st October 1517 AD, Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses on the door of the Castle at Wittenberg and the division of the Western Christendom was dawn (17). Here in Nigeria, the story is not different, as the churches inherited the aforementioned schism as normal Christianity (Orji 18). The church of Jesus Christ is split into Mainline and Pentecostalism. The Orji notes that much division that exists among these churches lies on their doctrines and problem of pattern of worship (21).

A study of the state of the things in Christendom today especially here in Nigeria reveals that all is not well with the church of Jesus Christ. The unity and love of brethren, which has been the remarkable identity of the early church has been replaced by persistent schisms, divisions and breakages (Flannery 452). This led to form the first ecumenical movement in Nigeria in 1911 when the Presbyterians initiated a missionary conference on more practical issues concerning the unity of the church (Boyer 669). Consequently, churches in Nigeria formed ecumenical bodies such as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN), the Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC),

the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (Lee 135). Each of these bodies is a community of interdenominational congregations and ministries.

However, In Nigeria, as opined by Ferguson, “ecumenism means unity in individuality and diversity, uniformity is visible only in essential doctrines especially the evangelical tradition as each confession retains its uniqueness, loyalty and solidarity (399). Thus, ecumenical unity in Nigeria becomes almost unrealisable. This has almost crippled all the ecumenical moves made in this country. In fact, it is on record that the first ecumenical move made in Nigeria (i.e. by the protestant missionaries) failed because of interdenominational prejudice and rivalry (Ekpunobi 22). It then becomes regrettable that despite the renewed effort to re-focus the ecumenical unity in Nigeria, there is nothing yet to show for it.

It is against this backdrop that this research is based on using John 4:19–24 to promote ecumenical unity in Nigeria. Although the narrative of Jesus and the Samaritan woman has intrigued many commentators, the missional perspective of this narrative which can promote ecumenical unity is given less attention. Such commentators speak less of the woman’s marginalisation and the socio-religious exclusion that she and her country’s people faced but only describe the woman as a notorious sinner who avoids the company of other women. (Nelaval 177). Also, a serious neglect is given to the fact that Jesus transcended all barriers to reach out to her and through her got to other Samaritans in the town. All this is because some scholars have argued that John’s Gospel was not a missional book (Erdmann 209). This view is problematic considering the purpose, which the author of John stipulates in chapter 20:31. Hence, this research takes cognisance of such unwholesome interpretations and applies a different approach that bears in mind the purpose of John’s Gospel and as such explores how to use the narrative to promote ecumenical unity in Nigeria.

Historical and Literary Contexts of the Text

The Samaritans are linked with the account in 2 Kings 17:24-41 about how the Assyrians conquered the Northern kingdom and settled it with people from a number of Mesopotamian towns. These settlers mingled and intermarried with the Jewish remnants and adopted the Israelite faith alongside their own religion (1 Kings 17:41). Their descendants became the Samaritans of later times. The hostilities between Judah and her northern neighbour recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah demonstrate the antiquity of the division between the two groups (Evans and Porter, Ed. 1091). After the return from the captivity, the Jews in Jerusalem refused to allow them to take part with them in rebuilding the temple, and hence sprang up an open enmity between them. The Samaritans erected a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, which was, however, destroyed by a Jewish king (B.C. 130). They then built another at Shechem. Some Jews regarded the Samaritans with contempt, considering them fools and idolaters (Gen 35:4), who were killed with divine approval. Later traditions in rabbinic literature regard Samaritans as apostate, wholly unclean and destined for Gehenna (Evans and Porter, Ed. 1094-1095). The bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans continued up until the time of Jesus Christ (Eastern Bible Dictionary, n.p).

Jesus’ ministry enters a new stage when He leaves the confines of traditional Judaism in Judea and turns to the Samaritans whom His Jewish contemporaries reckoned as outcasts and rivals (O’Day 565). The encounter with the Samaritan woman is problematic for the following reasons: firstly, as a woman, she belongs only to the private space. Her appearance at the well at midday when there are no other females around is not gender appropriate (Neyrey 155). Secondly, as a Samaritan, she would be considered by many Jews of her time to be ritually impure and not to be associated with (Nissen 90). This is implied by the woman’s response to Jesus, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” and the narrator’s comment that Jews do not *συγγρῶνται* with the Samaritans (4:9). Given such conventions, Jesus as a Jew risks the danger of being contaminated when He intends to have a drink from the water pot that belongs to a Samaritan woman.

As Talbert notes, Jews did not only warn against Jewish contact with the Samaritans they also expressed divine displeasure with the Samaritans because they accepted only the five books of Moses and worshipped God on Mount Gerizim rejecting Jerusalem as the right place of worship (154). The Jews on the other hand, maintained Jerusalem as their sacred place and therefore regarded the Samaritans who

rejected it as a damned people, who were detached from the presence of God in the Jerusalem temple (Kok and Niemandt 6). The location of the cultic centre as the heart of the antagonism (Horst 144-145) is also raised by the Samaritan woman in the narrative (4:20). Therefore, when Jesus meets with the Samaritan woman and her country's people, He meets with the people of an enemy state who would normally have nothing to do with Him as a Jew and His Jewish contemporaries (4:9; cf. Lk9:53).

Detail Analysis of the Text

The rightful place to worship is a crucial denominator in the Jewish-Samaritan discourse, such that it would take the centre stage of the dialogue between the woman and Jesus. According to Carson, "If there cannot be another prophet between the first Moses and the second Moses, then to call Jesus 'prophet' is virtually to call him 'the prophet'" (221). With this image of a prophet the woman seizes the opportunity of all that Jesus has told her to ask him about the correct place for worship, an issue which has been the source of contention between Jews and Samaritans for years (Moloney 149; Ridderbos 161).

Her inquiry about the right place of worship is an "act of deepening engagement with Jesus, because she anticipates that the prophet Jesus will be able to speak an authoritative word on the subject" (O'Day 567). It may be worth noting that it is the first time that the woman initiates a topic of the conversation although her topic reflects the same polarity of thought with which she began: οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν versus ὑμεῖς (4:20) "parallels you, a Jew versus me, a Samaritan woman" (O'Day 68). In any case, there is a progression in her understanding of Jesus: from a Jew who needs a drink from her to someone from whom she needs a drink, and to a prophet who could settle an old controversy that separates Jews and Samaritans (Hakola 101).

Jews held that Jerusalem was the only place where the temple of God could rightly be built, the Samaritans by contrast considered Mount Gerizim as the right place for worship, since in their scriptures, most notably the five books of Moses, Abraham and Jacob had built an altar for Yahweh in this vicinity (Morris 139). Mount Gerizim was also a place where people were to be blessed according to Deuteronomy 11:29, 27:12 (Ridderbos 161). According to Edwards, "The shrine at Gerizim is said to have been founded by one Manasseh, whom the Jews had expelled because he married the daughter of the Samaritan governor in Palestine" (cf. Nehemiah 13:27ff) (56). Ridderbos notes that John Hyrcanus, a Jewish king, later destroyed the Samaritan temple in 128 BC but even after that the Samaritans did not give up and they refused to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem (161). All these different religious views, together with purity concerns resulted in extreme hatred, discrimination, marginalization and even a "socio-religious exclusion of one another" (Kok 32).

The woman, as a Samaritan, knows this fact and therefore takes the opportunity to ask Jesus (the prophet) what He thinks about this issue (Moloney 149). As Olsson notes, she wants to know "where is the true Temple of God on earth?" In essence, she brings a classic Johannine question, "Where, and with whom, is God" (188)? Is He to be found with the Jews in Jerusalem or with the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim? (Kok 32) Here the woman is suggesting two alternatives – either the Jews are right in their claim or the Samaritan fathers are right. But the one possibility must exclude the other, according to her; the right place for worship must be either Jerusalem or Gerizim (Botha 144). However, Jesus negates both, "it is neither on this mountain nor is it in Jerusalem" (4:21).

While the woman uses past (προσεκύνησαν) and present (προσκυνεῖν) tenses to express the act of worship, Jesus directs her attention to the future (προσκυνησετε), namely the time of eschatological fulfilment (O'Day 567). He predicts to her that when this time comes (ῥῶρα) "the divisions between Jews and Samaritans over the proper place for worship will be transcended" (Lincoln 177). According to Carson the word hour "always points in John's Gospel to the hour of Jesus' cross, resurrection and exaltation, or to events related to Jesus' passion and exaltation as in 16:32" (223). Jesus tells the woman that when this hour comes, the worship of the Father will not be restricted to Jerusalem nor to Mount Gerizim (Rev 21:22) or as Carson writes, "true worshippers will not be identified by their attachment to particular shrines, but by their worship of the Father in spirit and truth" (245).

Although, Jesus emphatically states that, “salvation is from the Jews” (4:22) He does not regard it as an “exclusive commodity for the Jews” and as such, individual Jews cannot simply presume upon their ethnic heritage as though it were sufficient for a right standing before God (Erdmann 219). The fact is that they have not ceased to be God’s covenant people, but their privileged position does not guarantee them salvation. For them as for everyone else, “the way of salvation is through believing in Jesus (14:6)” (Erdmann 219-220). What Jesus is telling the woman is that the Jew who asked her for a drink (4:7), who she desires his water (4:15), he who revealed her past is not only a prophet (4:19), he is also the bringer of salvation (4:22). In this context, salvation is from the Jews because Jesus who brings salvation is from the Jews. However, in John’s Gospel, though salvation springs from the Jews, it is the non-Jews who accept it: “He came to that which was his own, but His own did not receive Him” (1:11) (O’Day 568). For example, Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish society did not accept Jesus’ teaching (3:1-15) but the Samaritans will (4:42). Also, after the Samaritan episode, another non-Jew, the royal official in Galilee and his entire household will accept Jesus, in contrast to Jesus’ own people (4:46ff).

The fact that the Samaritan woman (and her people), who is an outsider by race and religion, accepts that Jesus is the bringer of salvation is an implicit criticism of the Jewish people who have failed to receive Him as the Messiah (Hakola 103-104). Also, however much the Jews may have been right in their arguments against the Samaritans, now Jesus draws a line between the past and the present age by making use of a ἀλλὰ (4:23), indicating to the woman that the dispute she has referred to in 4:20 and that what He has described in 4:22 belong to the past (Hakola 107). In fact, the time/hour, which he said would come (4:21), has now come when the worship of the old age will be supplanted by the worship in the new age (Bruner 258).

Jesus’ utterance that the worship in the new age will not be tied to specific mountains (4:21) implies that the worship will be open to all people including the old worshippers (both Jews and Samaritans), if they are ready to abandon their former modes of worship (Hakola 108). In 4:23, Jesus explains to the woman that, worship in the new age or the eschatological age is firstly characterized by “spirit and truth” and secondly, it is characterized by the fact that God Himself is in search for people who will worship Him in this way. The reason for this is stated in verse 24, “God is spirit” and as such, people must worship Him in “spirit and truth.” The statement, “God is spirit” as Ridderbos notes is not intended to “emphasize God’s inaccessibility to earthly, material beings (so that they would have to draw near to God by way of interiorization and spiritual self-emptying)” (164). It is rather a description of God being present in His own realm to which human beings as such have no access (Bruner 258). Because God belongs to the realm of the Spirit, which like the wind blows wherever it pleases (3:8), his presence cannot be confined to specific mountains as the woman assumes (Lincoln 177- 178).

Therefore, if human beings desire access to this realm, God himself must intervene with his “transformative power” of the Spirit to enable human beings to access Him (Schnackenburg 439). In other words, only those who know where the “locus of the Spirit” is (Talbert 115), that is, those who are ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος γεγεννημένοι (Bultmann 191) and who have been made capable of it by God’s grace can truly worship God (Talbert 115). It is important to note that it is God himself who has taken up the mission of seeking people and enabling them through spiritual birth to worship Him in “spirit and truth” (4:23b). Just as one cannot come to Jesus unless he or she is drawn by the Father (6:44), even so, one cannot naturally seek to worship the Father unless the Father takes the initiative (Thettayil 122). The fact that it is the Father, who is actively seeking worshippers, adds a new perspective to the story and calls for an alternative understanding of Jesus’ encounter with the woman.

The whole point is that a new age has come when God’s presence will no longer be localized to specific mountains because God is now to be found in the person of Jesus who is the new dwelling (1:14), the new Bethel (1:51), and the new temple of God (2:19-22) (Coloe 112). In the words of Kok, “God has moved from the localized materialistic to the ‘glocal’ (Global and local) spiritualistic” (46). With ‘glocal’ it is meant that God will be localized wherever Jesus is, but ‘globalistic’ in the sense that Jesus is to be found not only with the Jews but also with the Samaritans (4:1-42) and even the Gentiles (4:43-54).” However, as Thettayil notes, this does not mean that, at the coming of Jesus, locality has ceased to be relevant for

worship (165). Rather, it means that locality confined in space and time, is now redefined in the person of Jesus. This means that wherever worship is conducted, it must be done in and through Jesus and wherever worship is not explicitly through Jesus, it falls under the description: “you worship what you do not know” (4:22) because only through Jesus, who alone is at the Father’s side (1:18), can the Father be truly worshipped (Milne 90), is for the first time spoken here in this Gospel through the lips of Jesus Himself (Kok 39).

Implication of John 4:19–24 For Promoting Ecumenical Unity in Nigeria

From the exploration of the dialogue between Jesus Christ and the Samaritan woman a number of things stand out clear and deserve attention by the church in Nigeria towards fostering ecumenical unity.

Jesus’ Saving Mission has No Religious or Ecclesiastical Boundary

John’s Gospel makes it clear that God will be localised wherever Jesus is, and Jesus is to be found not only with the Jews but also with the Samaritans (4:1-42) and even the Gentiles (4:43-54). Thus, Kok is correct when he says that, “God has moved from the localized materialistic to the spiritualistic” (46). It, therefore, implies that the concern of all the churches in Nigeria should not be their congregational doctrines and building style (Jerusalem or Gerizim), but should be on Jesus Christ, the owner and head of all churches.

When all the churches in Nigeria put the above into considerations, it will make them to request like the Samaritan Woman for Jesus to abide in our churches. The infinitive verb μένειν used by the Samaritan Woman which means to stay/abide/remain, as is often used in John to designate “the intimate union that expresses itself in a way of life lived in love” (Nissen 22) should be the buzz word in the mouth of all Christians so that Jesus should be pleased in their worship not Jerusalem of Gerizim that is their congregations or denominations.

Jesus explains to the woman that, worship in the new age or the eschatological age is firstly characterized by “spirit and truth” and secondly, it is characterized by the fact that God Himself is in search for people who will worship Him in this way. The reason for this is stated in verse 24, “God is spirit” and as such, people must worship Him in “spirit and truth.” This as Ridderbos notes is not intended to “emphasize God’s inaccessibility to earthly, material beings (so that they would have to draw near to God by way of interiorization and spiritual self-emptying)” (164). It is rather a description of God being present in His own realm to which human beings as such have no access (Bruner 258). Because God belongs to the realm of the Spirit, which like the wind blows wherever it pleases (3:8), His presence cannot be confined to specific mountains as the woman assumes (Lincoln 177- 178).

Different churches today assume like the Samaritan Woman that Jesus is confined to their own congregation alone. This research therefore calls all congregations to know that Jesus is a spirit and it is available to as many as those who will seek Him in Spirit and in truth. When this is our concerns in our congregations, there must be an ecumenical unity because the truth referred to here is found in the bible not in our denominations. If we can read the bible like John Chapter 4 and apply it as it is described in this research, it there is no how churches can still be without seeking Jesus, the owner of the church.

Towards Breaking our Social and Religious Barriers

To be ecumenical implies to be related or involved in ecumenism (Boyer 669). In common understanding, ecumenism may be described as the linking of all Protestant Churches, the linking of all Protestant Churches and Roman Catholic Church, as well as the linking of the above plus other faiths (Ekpunobi 22).

Jews held that Jerusalem was the only place where the temple of God could rightly be built; the Samaritans by contrast considered Mount Gerizim as the right place for worship, since in their scriptures, most notably the five books of Moses, Abraham and Jacob had built an altar for Yahweh in this vicinity (Morris 139). Today, the same stories are heard in Nigeria among different denominations. Great barrier and dichotomy exist between different denominations. While the Mainline churches claims that they maintain religious doctrine that stress trinity, social justice and the love of neighbour, the Pentecostals

emphasise revivalistic worship, Spirit Baptism, glossolalia, faith, healing and premillennial teachings (Orji 11, 19).

Considering John 4:1-24, 39-42, one should learn that the aforementioned dichotomy that exists among different congregations in Nigeria is of no use. Jesus' utterance that the worship in the new age will not be tied to specific mountains (4:21) implies that the worship will be open to all people including the old worshippers (both Jews and Samaritans), if they are ready to abandon their former modes of worship (Hakola 108). This research therefore calls on all churches in Nigeria to abandon our mode of worship that is engulfed by division and break the barrier that exists among them.

The Prospects John 4:19–24 In Fostering Ecumenism In Nigeria

If the above implications are taken serious in the ecumenical engagement in Nigeria, the church in Nigeria will become better off in a number of ways.

The Weaklings in Faith will be Encouraged

It is important to note that the story has twodimensions, namely, social and religious. As regards to the social dimension, the Samaritan woman and her country's people are examples of those who are marginalized and rejected in this world (Nissen 90). The woman because of her gender was an inferior person in her culture and her race and moral history in the eyes of the Jews in Jesus' time would make her a social outcast and as such, as somebody not to be associated with. Religiously, she and hercountry's people were disconnected from the temple in Jerusalem and on the Jewish concentric maps of persons and places (Morris 126).

It is noteworthy that the Samaritans erected a rival temple at Mount Gerizim rejecting Jerusalem as the rightplace of worship because of how the Jews treated them after their return from exile (Talbert 154). Orji has noted with dismay that one of the causes of proliferation of churches in Nigeria is arrogance or pride. When the fundamentalist begins to find their leaders wanting in one way or the other, the person will begin his own ministry (28-30). Some of the wanting that the fundamentalists found in the lives of their main church leaders according to the researchers finding includes marginalization and maltreatment. Most churches marginalized some groups or tribes in the churches with one or other allegation.

Jesus makes his relationship even more profound in the sense that Jesus entrusts Himself to the Samaritans whom His "Jewish contemporaries reckoned as outsiders, inferiors and enemies" (O'Day 563). In the same vein, there are people in our churches today that other churches have given disdainful considerations as the Jews gave to the Samaritans. Those weaklings are considered as inferior persons in their culture and race and moral history. To maintain ecumenical unity in Nigeria, Christians whose faith is higher should give the same consideration that Jesus gave to the Samaritans by remaining with them which Stibbe maintains that Jesus' stay in Samaria was not just an extended visit but "a lasting master-pupil relationship" (67-68). Such a relationship must exist among all churches in Nigeria so as to maintain ecumenical unity.

Christ's Kingdom will be Propagated

In John 4:39-42, important details are added that many from that town believed because of the woman's word (O'Day 87). The story that started with one woman now ends with the entire town (Culpepper 143) and the Samaritans who had come from Sychar to the well of Jacob now invite Jesus, a Jew without hard feeling. Theologically, as Schnackenburg notes, "This means that faith overcomes any scandal that may be given by the external circumstances of the revealer's origin and listens to Jesus as the eschatological envoy of God" ((455). Carson added that for the Samaritans to urge Jesus, "a Jewish rabbi to stay with them attests not only the degree of confidence he had earned, but their conviction that he was none less than the promised Taheb, the Messiah" and because of this, many more believed (4:41) (231).

It is important to state that despite many churches in Nigeria today, the rate of unbelief is still high. Abomination, corruption and social injustice are still on the increase (Orji 73). So the researcher through

this John 4 discovers that the problem is because of the dichotomy among different churches. If the barrier is broken, and ecumenical unity exists, different churches will form synergy and reach the unreached in Nigeria, thereby propagating the kingdom of God. The unreached are eagerly waiting for the manifestation of the churches with a rightful message like that Jesus gave to the Samaritan woman, they will accept Jesus as the promised *Tahib*, the Messiah of the whole world and many more will believe (4:41).

Conclusion

This research has shown that Jesus' saving mission has no religious or ecclesiastical boundary. This should be the heartbeat of all the churches in Nigeria, if we must foster ecumenical unity among different denominations in Nigeria. It is only by this that all the social and religious barriers that have existed for years among Christians in Nigeria should be broken. And when such barriers are broken, certainly, the weaklings in faith shall be encouraged while the kingdom of God will be propagated as accepting Jesus as the messiah of the whole world will be the propelling Gospel across all churches.

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DOES FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT ENHANCE GROWTH IN AFRICA'S LARGEST ECONOMY? FURTHER EVIDENCE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Anthony Orji

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria
&

Godson Umunna Nwagu

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria
&

Jonathan E. Ogbuabor

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria
&

Emmanuel Nwosu

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka
&

Onyinye I. Anthony-Orji

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Abstract

The study investigated the effect of foreign direct investment on economic growth in Nigeria, which is Africa's largest economy, and also determined the long-run relationship between FDI and economic growth in Nigeria from 1981 to 2017. The study adopted the Autoregressive Distributed Lag Modelling approach and OLS in the analysis. The empirical results revealed that foreign direct investment has a positive and significant relationship with economic growth in Nigeria within the period under review. The study concluded and recommended that Nigeria government should formulate policies that will attract more FDI in all sectors of the economy especially in the service and manufacturing sectors, so as to improve the infrastructural facilities and production of goods in the country and also expand its labour force. Finally, there is need to improve the educational policy of the country in order to raise the stock of human capital in the country that will make useful policies for the attraction for productive FDIs in the country.

Keywords: Foreign Direct Investment, Economic growth, Auto-regressive Distributed Lag, OLS, Nigeria

JEL Classification: E22; F21; F23; F43

1 Introduction

Foreign direct investment is viewed as an investment in the form of a controlling ownership in a business in a specific nation by an individual or organization situated in another nation. FDI involves mergers and acquisitions, building new facilities, reinvesting benefits earned from abroad tasks, and intercompany loans (Orji, et al., 2019). Foreign direct investments are usually made in open economies that offer a talented workforce and development possibilities of the

financial specialists that are better than expected, as opposed to tightly regulated economies. It continually includes something other than a capital venture however incorporates provisions of management or technology as well. From the perspective of International Monetary Fund (IMF, 1993) and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (1996), direct investment uncovers the points of getting an enduring enthusiasm by an inhabitant substance of one economy (a direct investor) in an endeavor that is an occupant in another economy (the direct enterprise). The investment is direct when the investor, which could be a foreign individual, organization or group of entities, needs to control, oversee, or have a critical impact over the foreign enterprise. For as long as two decades, FDI has gotten progressively significant in the developing world with a growing number of developing nations prevailing with regards to pulling in considerable and rising measures of inward FDI inflow. Most economic theories on foreign direct investment have distinguished various channels through which FDI inflows might be helpful to the economy (Anthony-Orji, et al, 2018)

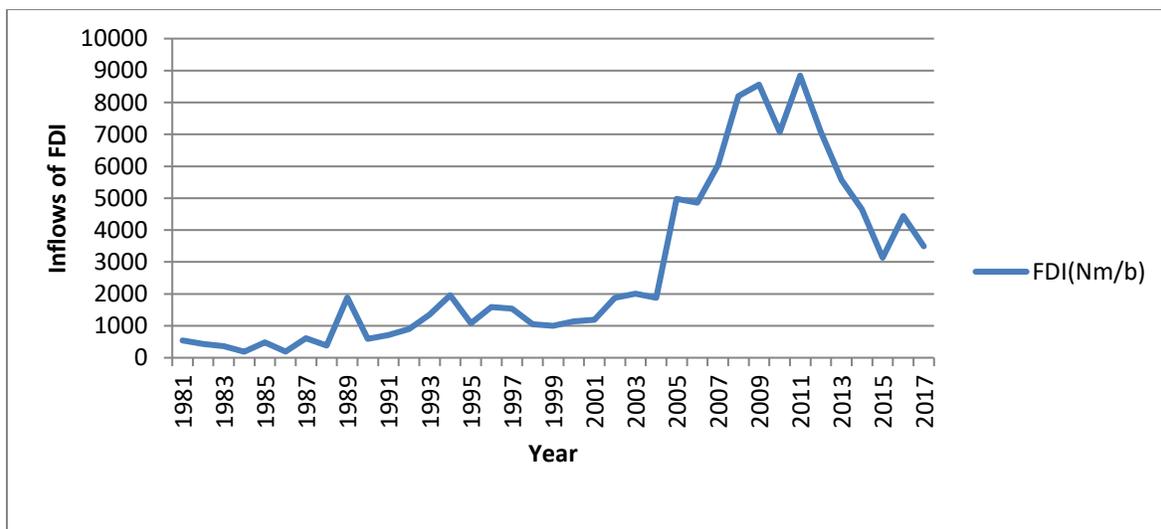
Policymakers around the globe accept that foreign direct investment helps the efficiency of host nations and promote economic growth and development. The reality about the confidence in FDI is that it doesn't just give capital financing yet, in addition, realizes positive externalities through the appropriation of foreign technology and technical know-how (Alfaro, Chanda, Kalemli-Ozcan, Sayek, 2006). Asian Development Outlook (ADB, 2004) uncover it as of late that FDI has altogether expanded because of numerous components, for example, rapid technological progress, emergence of globally integrated production and marketing networks, existence of bilateral investment treaties, recommendations from multilateral development banks, and positive evidence from developing countries that have opened their doors to FDI.

Since the end of Bretton Woods's system, researchers in their different studies have investigated the contribution of inward FDI to the development of the developing countries such as West African countries or the Sub-Saharan African countries, where FDI now serves as an important means of private external finance (Anthony-Orji, et al, 2018b). For a developing country like Nigeria, foreign direct investment is considered as a way of transforming technology and capital from other developed and even developing countries to the domestic economy. Melnyk, Kubatko, and Pysarenko (2014) believe that when foreign direct investment comes to a domestic country (in specific business), that firm receives a competitive advantage due to the usage of new technology, experience, ways of production and management. Melnyk, Kubatko, and Pysarenko (2014) also opined that foreign direct investment contributes significantly to human resources development, capital formation, and organization and management skills of the people in an economy.

According to Umah (2007), the reforms resulted in the adoption of liberal and market-oriented economic policies, the stimulation of increased private sector participation and elimination of bureaucratic obstacles which hinders private sector investment and long-term profitable business operations in Nigeria. This, for instance, is to encourage the existence of foreign Multinational and other private investors in some strategic sectors of the Nigerian economy like the oil industry, banking industry, communication industry, and others. Furthermore, the Nigerian government has enacted various policies, laws even institutions aimed at encouraging foreign direct investment, e.g., in 1995, the Nigeria Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), was established through Decree No 16 of 1995. To ensure proper protection, the NIPC Decree repealed the Industrial Development Coordination Committee (IDCC) Degree No. 36 of 1998 and the Nigeria Enterprise Promotion Decree (NEPD) of 1972. Dunning (1994), however, noted

that FDI is attracted to serve as a means of augmenting Nigeria's domestic resources to effectively carry out her development programs and raise the standard of living of her people. In the 1970s and 1980s, several countries in sub-Saharan Africa, especially Nigeria imposed trade restrictions and capital controls as part of a policy of import-substitution industrialization aimed at protecting domestic industries and conserving foreign exchange reserves. Therefore, improvements in economic policies are needed to enhance macroeconomic performance and attain the minimum growth rate required to meet the Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations (Akanegbu and Chizea, 2017). The diagram below shows the Foreign Direct Investment in Nigeria from 1981 to 2017.

Fig 1. Inflow of Foreign Direct Investment in Nigeria (Million/Billion Naira)



Source: Authors' computation from CBN 2018

From fig 1 above, it can be seen that the inflows of foreign direct investment in Nigeria has been rising and falling over time. For example, from 1981 to 2004, the inflows of FDI increase from 542 million naira to 1,847 billion naira. From 2005 to 2011 the inflows also increased from 4,982 billion naira to 8,841 billion naira. In 2012, the FDI started experiencing a fall, as it declined from 7, 069 billion naira in 2012 to 3, 137 billion naira in 2015 and later raised to 4, 445 billion naira in 2016, and reduced again in 2017 to 3,497 billion naira

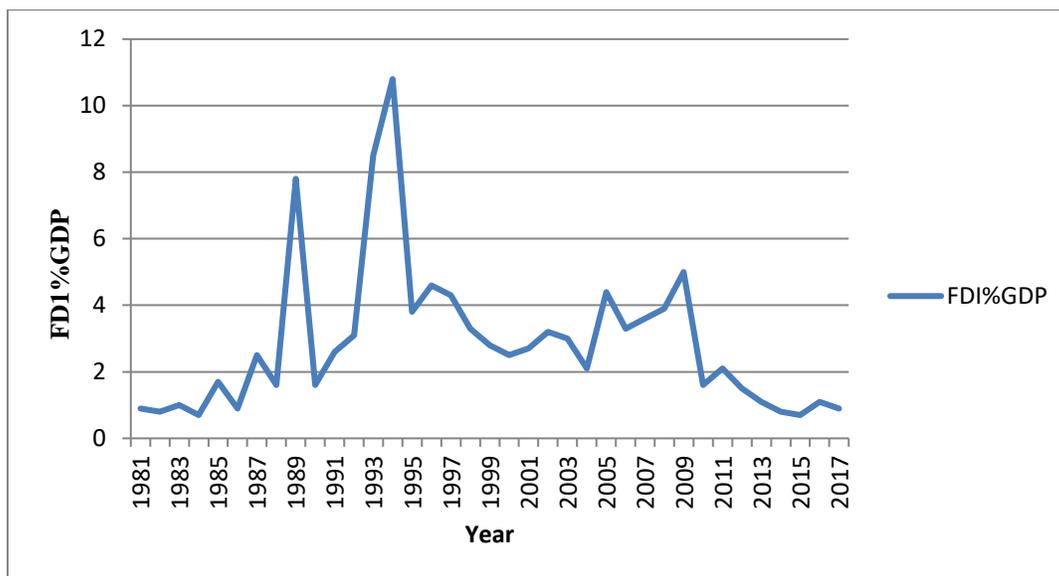
Fig 2. Foreign direct investment as a percentage to GDP in Nigeria**Source: Authors computation from WDI 2018**

Fig 2 above shows foreign direct investment as a percentage of GDP in Nigeria. From the figure above, the percentage has been fluctuating. From 1981 to 1989, it increased from 0.9% to 7.8% and later fell to 3.2% in 1992. From 1993 to 1994, there was a tremendous increase to 10.8%. In 1995, the percentage of FDI to GDP started experiencing a fall. From 1995 to 2004, it fell from 3.4% to 2.1% and latter increased to 4.4% in 2005. In 2009, the percentage rose again to 5%, and then declined again to 0.9% in 2017.

It is often argued that FDI is an important source of capital; that it complements domestic investment, creates new jobs opportunities and is in most cases, related to the enhancement of technology transfer, which of course boosts economic growth. While the positive FDI-growth linkage is still a subject of debate, macroeconomic studies nevertheless support a positive role for FDI especially in a particular environment (Egbo, 2010 and Anthony-Orji, 2018c). Empirical research studies also support the assertion that Foreign Direct Investment positively contributes to the enhancement of the economies of host countries. According to Mansfield and Romeo (1980), the technology that comes with FDI is newer compared to that sold through licensing. Other studies also found contradictory results. In some instances, it has been found that it is economic growth or its prospect that leads to an increase in Foreign Direct Investment and not vice versa.

The economy of Nigeria suffers from different types of deficiency which brought so many limitations for growth sustainability and poverty reduction. One of the problems is partial diversification of production, exports and budget revenue. Infrastructure deficit is also prevalent in the country. Bad roads in Nigeria increase the cost of transport and doing business, and also impede trade in the region (World Bank 2020). Another problem faced by Nigeria is the issue of poor governance and dysfunctional political institutions. These deficiencies lower the efficiency of any development strategy and bear at least partial responsibility for the bad economic performance of West Africa in the past five decades. The huge debt and financial crises faced by

Nigeria have constituted much burden to the economy, making it difficult to improve domestic savings. And for a country to be able to have an increased level of investment, it must be able to increase its savings rate (Akanegbu and Chizea, 2017 and Orji, et al, 2015).

Political instability is a problem facing the economy of Nigeria in terms of inflow of foreign direct investment. The region is politically unstable because of the high incidence of wars, frequent military interventions in politics, and religious conflicts. Nigeria also faces the problem of macroeconomic instability, high incidence of currency crashes, double-digit inflation, and excessive budget deficits. Countries with high inflation tend to attract less FDI (Onyeiwu and Shrestha, 2004). Lack of policy transparency and problem of economic policy inconsistency also of great concern because they increase transaction costs thereby reducing the incentives for foreign investment.

Other problems of inflow of FDI in Nigeria are the frequent electricity shortages, the high cost of transportation, and lack of financing. In Africa, and mostly in Nigeria, companies lose about 13% of their working time because of electricity power cuts compared to companies in other regions that suffer only one percent. Transport cost is more in Nigeria than in other regions like East Asia. Labour cost is also higher than the other regions at the same GDP level. Regardless of Nigeria's huge investment potential, its integration into the global economy is low.

The linkage between FDI and economic growth has been the subject of controversy and considerable research for many decades. Interest in the area has been revived in recent years largely due to the globalisation of the world economy and to the recognition that multinational corporations play an increasingly important role in trade, capital accumulation and economic growth in developing countries (Orji, Uche and Ilori, 2014, Nwosu et al, 2013 and Orji & Mba, 2011). This study will contribute to literature by looking at large the effect of foreign direct investment on economic growth in Nigeria with the recent changes and adding of data's in recent time. Apart from the introduction, the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 review the related literature. Section 3 presents the methodology. Section 4 provides the results and section 5 Findings and discussion. 6 Policy recommendations.

2 Literature review

2.1 Theoretical Literature

The theory of the big push emphasizes that underdeveloped countries require large amounts of investments to break the shackles of backwardness and launch upon economic development. This theory proposes that a programme of bit by bit investment will fail to have much of an impact on the process of growth and will merely lead to a dissipation of resources. Paul Rosenstein-Rodan, approvingly quotes a Massachusetts Institute of Technology study in this regard, there is a minimum level of resources that must be devoted to a development programme if it is to have any chance of success. The two-gap model is an extension of the Harrod-Domar growth model. The second "gap" (in addition to the savings gap) is found by introducing foreign trade and rephrasing the model such as savings gap in which domestic savings are inadequate to support the level of growth which could be permitted given the import purchasing power of the economy and the level of other resources and foreign exchange gap which import purchasing power conferred by the value for exports plus capital transfers may be inadequate to support the level of growth permitted by the level of domestic saving. The two-gap theory purports that investment and development are restricted by level of either domestic saving or import purchase capacity.

Neoclassical theory of economic growth developed by Robert Solow and J.E. Meade considered two factor creation capacities with capital and labour or work as determinant of yield and included the exogenously decided factor, innovation, to the generation work (Solow and Swan, 1957). The essential improvement of endogenous development theory over the past models is that it expressly attempts to display innovation (that is, investigates the determinants of innovation) instead of expecting it to be exogenous. For the most part, financial development originates from innovative advancement, which is basically the capacity of a monetary association to use its profitable assets all the more successfully after some time. Quite a bit of this capacity originates from the way toward figuring out how to work recently made creation offices in a progressively beneficial manner (Verbeck: 2000).

2.2 Empirical Literature

With the use of Panel data for 84 countries, Li and Liu (2005) used both single equation and simultaneous equation system techniques to investigate FDI on economic growth. The result shows that FDI has a positive effect on economic growth through its interaction with human capital in developing countries. Nwankwo et al (2013) found that foreign direct investment has been of great benefit to Nigeria in the area of employment, transfer of technology, and encouragement of local enterprises. The work of Alejandro (2010) and Ewe-Ghee Lim (2011) reveals that FDI plays a very significant role in the economy and also provide firms with a new market and marketing channels, new technologies and other positive externalities and spillover that can provide a strong motivation to economic growth. Ndambendia and Njoupougnigni (2010) examined FDI on economic growth in 36 sub-Saharan Africa countries while Seetanah and Khadaroo (2007) also examined FDI on economic growth in 39 sub-Saharan Africa countries. Both studies use the panel data method and found that FDI has a positive and significant effect on the level of economic growth.

Almfraji and Almsafir (2014) revealed different findings on FDI and Economic growth form 1994-2012. They came to the conclusion that most of the findings of foreign direct investment to economic growth relation are significantly positive, but negative in some cases or even null. With the use of a panel data set that covers 61 provinces of Vietnam, Anwar, and Nguyen (2010) examined the link between foreign direct investment and economic growth. Their findings based on simultaneous equation model reveals that a mutually reinforcing two-way linkage between FDI and economic growth exists in Vietnam. A similar study by Azman-Saini, Bagarumshah and Law (2010) in a panel of 85 countries, investigate the link between economic freedom, foreign direct investment (FDI) and economic growth. Based on GMM, the study came to the conclusion that FDI by itself has no direct (positive) effect on growth. Ocaya, Ruranga, and Kaberuka (2013) with the use of Granger causality tests, analysed the relationship between inflows of FDI into the growth of Rwanda. The study revealed that they are independent of each other.

The gap here is that deeper policy insight can be gained from the investigation as proposed in the study. This study will also add to literature by investigating foreign direct investment (FDI) on economic growth in Nigeria with different variables, with the recent changes and adding of data's in recent time from 1981 to 2017. The use of Autoregressive Distributed Model (ARDL) is also a point of departure from many studies in this area.

3 Methodology

Neo-classical growth model considered two factor production functions with capital and labour as determinants of output and the addition of exogenous determinant factor, technology. The

neoclassical growth theory has a conviction that the collection of capital inside an economy and how the general population utilize the capital is imperative for the economic development. In this manner, the postulation of neoclassical theory is utilized to quantify the development and harmony of an economy and is written as

$$Y = AF(K, L) \dots \dots \dots (3.1)$$

Where Y denotes an economy's gross domestic production (GDP), k represents its share of capital, L describes the amount of labour in an economy and A denotes the level of technology. Because of the relationship between labour and technology, the production function of an economy will be written as

$$Y = F(K, AL) \dots \dots \dots (3.2)$$

3.1ARDL MODEL

The Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) approach is a co-integration technique for determining long-run and short-run relationships among variables under study. The ARDL approach is used regardless of the order of integration, whether the variables in the study are purely $I(0)$ or $I(1)$

The basic form of an ARDL (Bound test) regression model is as follows

$$y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 y_{t-1} + \dots + \beta_p y_{t-p} + \alpha_0 x_t + \alpha_1 x_{t-1} + \alpha_2 x_{t-2} + \dots + \alpha_q x_{t-q} + \varepsilon_t \dots \dots \dots (3.3)$$

Where ε_t is a random disturbance term, and p and q are the lag lengths

The error correction form of equation (3.5) is as follows

$$\Delta y_t = \alpha_0 + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_i \Delta y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^q \beta_j \Delta x_{1t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^q \gamma_k \Delta x_{2t-i} + \phi_0 y_{t-1} + \phi_1 x_{1t-1} + \phi_2 x_{2t-1} + \varepsilon_t \dots \dots \dots (3.4)$$

3.2 Model Specification

To investigate the effect of foreign direct investment on economic growth in Nigeria, we specify the empirical model thus;

$$Growth = f(FDI, TOP, REXR, INF, EDU) \dots \dots \dots (3.5)$$

Where Growth = Real Gross Domestic Product or RGDP

- FDI = Foreign Direct Investment
- REXR = Real Exchange Rate
- TOP = Trade Openness (EXP+IMP/GDP)
- INF = Inflation
- EDU = Education (proxy for Human Capital)

The Autoregressive Distributed Lag Model is specified as equation (3.6) below:

$$RGDP_t = \alpha_0 + \sum_{t=i}^p \alpha_{1i} \Delta RGDP_{t-1} + \sum_{t=i}^p \alpha_{2i} FDI_{t-1} + \sum_{t=i}^p \alpha_{3i} \Delta REXR_{t-1} + \sum_{t=i}^p \alpha_{4i} \Delta TOP_{t-1} + \sum_{t=i}^p \alpha_{5i} \Delta INF_{t-1} + \sum_{t=i}^p \alpha_{5i} \Delta EDU_{t-1} + \beta_1 RGDP_{t-1} + \beta_2 FDI_{t-1} + \beta_3 REXR_{t-1} + \beta_4 TOP_{t-1} + \beta_5 INF_{t-1} + \beta_6 EDU_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t \dots (3.6)$$

3.3 Diagnostic Tests

Test of Unit Root

Dickey Fuller (1979) propose the accompanying regression condition that can be utilized for testing for the nearness of the unit root.

$$\Delta y_{t-1} = \alpha_0 + \lambda y_{t-1} + \mu_t \dots \dots \dots (3.7)$$

Dicky and Fuller extended their test procedure suggesting an augmented version of the test which includes extra lagged terms of the dependent variable in order to eliminate autocorrelation. The possible form of the ADF is given by the following equation.

$$\Delta y_t = a_0 + \lambda y_{t-1} + a_{2t} + \sum_{i=1}^p \beta_i \Delta y_{t-1} + \mu_t \dots \dots \dots (3.8)$$

From the stationary test if the variables are significant, the variable series is stationary and with no unit root. As a result of the significant test, the null hypothesis will be accepted. The hypothesis for this study is as follows:

H0: =0 (Present of unit root/non-stationary exist)

H0: ≠0 (no present unit root/stationary exist)

Co-integration Test (Bounds Testing Approach of Pesaran et al, 2001)

The ARDL Bounds tests for co-integration has three merits when compared with other preceding and traditional co-integration methods. The number one is that it does not need all variables under study to be integrated of the same order and can be applied when the variables of interest are integrated of I(0), I(1) or fractionally integrated. The number two is that ARDL test is efficient relatively in the case of small or finite sample data size, and the last is that by the application of ARDL technique we get unbiased estimates of the long-run (Harris and Sollis, 2003).

Stability Test

To test for parameter stability, we use the Pesaran and Pesaran (1997) test. According to Pesaran and Pesaran (1997), the short run dynamics are essential in testing for stability of the long run coefficient. Pesaran and Pesaran (1997) suggest applying the cumulative sum of recursive residuals (CUSUM) and the CUSUM square (CUSUMSQ) test proposed by Broen et al (1975)

4 Presentation of Result

Unit Root Test

The below table will shows the Augmented Dickey Fuller unit root test and will carried by 5%.

Table 4.2

Variables	ADF t-Stat	1% level	5% level	10% level	Prob	Order of Integrati on
RGDP	-6.583372	-4.252879	-3.548490	-3.207094	0.0000	I(1)
FDI	-3.640912	-4.273277	-3.557759	3.212361	0.0419	I(0)
TOP	-6.141645	-4.243644	-3.544284	-3.204699	0.0001	I(1)
INF	-3.836192	-4.252879	-3.548490	-3.207094	0.0266	(0)
EXR	-3.806026	-4.243644	-3.544284	-3.204699	0.0281	I(1)
EDU	-5.584465	-4.243644	-3.544284	-3.204699	0.0003	I(1)

From the unit root test above, it can be seen that the order of integration conforms to that of the requirement of the Auto-regressive distributed lag model (ARDL). Real gross domestic product (RGDP), Trade Openness (TOP), Exchange rate (EXR) and Education (EDU) are integrated of order one, it means that this variables are stationary at first difference. While Foreign direct investment (FDI) and Inflation (FDI) are integrated of order zero, I(0), it means that this variables are stationary at level difference. As a result of these we proceed to test for co-integration test (ARDL Bound test).

4.3: To investigate the effect of foreign direct investment on economic growth in Nigeria.

Dependent Variable: RGDP

Variable	Coefficient	Std.Error	t-Statistic	Prob
C	1232.364	397.8237	3.177639	0.0037
FDI	0.310368	0.069634	4.457133	0.0001
TOP	-583.1475	968.4056	-0.602173	0.5521
INF	-15.90979	10.40745	-1.528693	0.1380
EXR	-37.06095	11.86113	-3.124571	0.0042
EDU	59.91764	29.58435	2.025316	0.0528
R-squared	0.648881			
Durbin-Watson	1.767609			

From the above regression result, it can be seen that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Education (EDU) (Human capital) have positive and significant effect on Economic growth in Nigeria. Exchange rate has a negative and significant effect to the Economic growth of Nigeria, while Trade Openness and Inflation are negative and insignificant to Economic growth of Nigeria. Therefore, a percentage change in foreign direct investment will bring about 0.31% increase in real gross domestic product (Economic growth) and a percentage change in Human capital (Education) will bring about 59% increase in Economic growth of Nigeria. Also a percentage change in Exchange rate will bring a 37% reduction to the growth of the economy in Nigeria. After testing for the Error Correction model, it was found to be significant. The R-Square also has a 64% goodness of fit of all variables.

4.4 Co-integration Test- ARDL Bounds Test

Table 4.4: Testing the existence of long-run relationship

Model	F-statistics
RGDP=f(FDI, TOP, INF, EXR, EDU)	5.191249

Critical Value	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1%	3.725	5.163
5%	2.787	4.015
10%	2.458	3.647

From the above tables, the F-Statistical > Critical upper bound in both 10%, 5% and 1% significant level, therefore there exist a long run co-integration relationship among the variables and economic growth.

4.4.1 Normality Test

Component	Jarque-Bera	df	Prob
1	0.930929	2	0.6278
2	0.279978	2	0.8694
3	2.461679	2	0.2920
4	10.59819	2	0.0050
5	9.921327	2	0.0070
6	4.208681	2	0.1219
Joint	28.40078	12	0.0048

From the above normality test, it can be seen that the JB from the table is 28.40078 and the probability is 0.0048 which is less than 5% (0.05). It can be confirmed that the variables are normal to continue the test for long –run relationship (co-integration test) with the use of wald test

4.5 Serial residual test

Lags	LM-Stat	Prob
1	39.34570	0.3225
2	36.92857	0.4258
3	50.05289	0.0599
4	44.68688	0.1518
5	50.70218	0.0529
6	58.48876	0.0103

The serial independent result looks more satisfactory

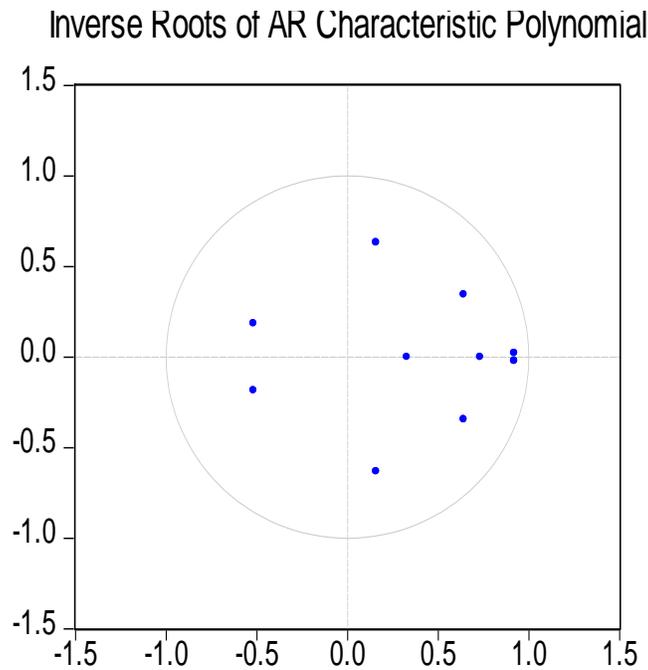
4.6 Heteroskedasticity Test

Heteroskedasticity Test: Breusch-Pagan Godfrey

F-statistic	0.794981	Prob.F(12,22)	0.6516
Obs*R-squared	10.58638	Prob.Chi-Square(12)	0.5647
Scaled explained	4.850130	Prob.Chi-Square(12)	0.9628

From the above result, the Prob.Chi-Square of the Obs*R-Square is seen to be 0.5647 which is above or higher than 0.05(5%). It means there is no presence of heteroskedasticity.

4.7 Stability Test



These roots are all inside the unit circle. It means that the variables are stable.

4.8 Wald Test

Test Statistic	Value	df	Probability
F-statistic	5.191249	(5,22)	(0.0027)
Chi-Square	25.95625	5	0.0001

5 Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

ARDL and OLS were used to determine the effect of foreign direct investment (FDI) on economic growth of Nigeria. Based on the result, it was found that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Education (EDU) (Human capital) have positive and significant effect on Economic growth in Nigeria. Exchange rate has a negative and significant effect to the Economic growth of Nigeria, while Trade Openness and Inflation are negative and insignificant to Economic growth of Nigeria. The result also shows that foreign direct investment (FDI) has a positive and significant effect on the economic growth of Nigeria.

Furthermore, the Autoregressive distributed lag model with the use of bounds test and wald test was used to confirm the long-run relationship among the variables and most especially to know the long run relationship between economic growth and foreign direct investment. Based on the result, it shows that there exists a long run relationship among the variables understudy and most especially between foreign direct investment and economic growth in Nigeria.

Base on the findings, the study recommends that, first, Nigerian government should expand its labour force and improve educational policy to raise the stock of human capital in the country. Second, trade openness should be encouraged so as to signal commitment to outward-looking, market-oriented policies and enhance trading opportunities thereby attracting foreign investors intent on taking advantage of the new trading opportunities. Third, Nigerian government should formulate policies that will attract FDI in all sectors of the economy mostly in the service and

manufacturing sector, so as to improve the infrastructural facilities and production of goods in the country. Fourth, Nigerian government and the various policies makers should provide enabling environment and suitable policies towards attracting FDI both in oil and non-oil sector of the economy. Fifth, programs and policies that promote FDI and reduce inflation and unemployment should be encouraged.

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ANALYSIS OF THE MACROECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF SAVINGS IN AFRICA'S LARGEST EMERGING ECONOMY

By

Onyinye I. Anthony-Orji

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

&

Anthony Orji

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

&

Jonathan E. Ogbuabor

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

&

Emmanuel Nwosu

Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

&

Samuel Izuchukwu Ezugwu

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

This study investigated the determinants of savings in Nigeria, which is the largest emerging economy in Africa. The study which spans from 1980 to 2017 employed the Classical Linear Regression Model in its analysis. The results showed that the core positive determinants of savings include per capita income, gross fixed capital formation, financial deepening and exchange rate. Interest rate and inflation rate showed negative relationship with savings. The study recommended that proper policy control of the core variables should be adopted by government of Nigeria to ensure higher savings rate. Again, the government should direct her spending at economic activities that encourage the creation of more jobs and investments. This will enable individuals, firms and governments to have more money to save. Finally, the monetary authorities should pursue financial deepening policies and implement strategies that will enhance financial development and increase savings in Nigeria.

Keywords: Macroeconomic, Determinants, Savings, Empirical, Evidence

JEL Classification: E02; E21; E44; O16;

1. Introduction

The issue of savings and what motivates it in different economies of the world has continued to generate a long-standing argument among researchers and policy makers (Nagawa, Wasswa & Bbaale, 2020; and Orji, Ogbuabor & Anthony-Orji 2015). The significant downward movement of savings and investment in many developing economies have even become the major concern. There is no doubt that the concern is not unconnected to the fact that savings continue to play a

very vital role in bringing about a sustainable growth and development of an economy (Ndirangu and Muturi 2015). It is plausible to point out that increase in savings increases the quantity of capital available for investment although it does not imply that increase in savings is a sufficient condition for increase in investment. It is notable that in economic growth parlance savings is the core.

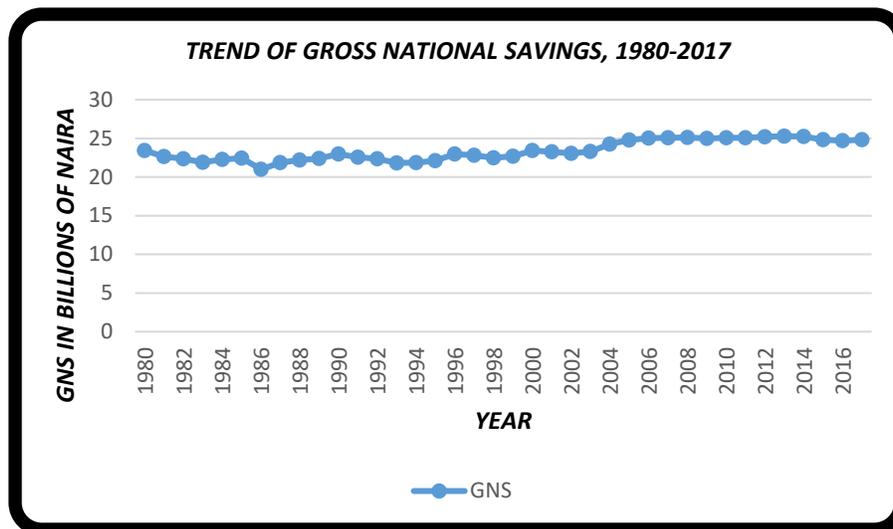
Classical economic theories have always maintained emphases on the relevance of savings to growth. Economists have also argued that savings which is generated through substantial income flow are core to the growth of the world economies more especially the growth of the developing economies. In fact, savings are the bedrock of capital formation and undoubtedly growth. Interestingly there has been a noticeable increase in savings accumulation of some economies such as the economies in the East Asia for more than three and half decades now but disappointingly a significant stagnation or rather a decline in savings was noticed for countries in the Sub Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean (Loayza, Schmidt-Hebbel and Serven, 2000). These discrepancies have been a major concern, however notable is the choice to save which could be a function of host of externalities, failures of the markets and probably other policy related disequilibrium which discourages savings. There has been a growing concern over time especially among development economists on the vital position of savings in funds mobilization through domestic savings. In line with this argument Chete (1999) stressed that the inadequate savings has ultimately led to a significant drop in investment and growth. It has been reasoned also that further deteriorations in investment which leads to more growth deceleration and reduction in savings stem from a supposed efforts by the less developed economies to fix some external disequilibrium through reduction in public spending and thereby reducing aggregate demand.

In Nigeria, there exists a wide discrepancy between the economy's income level and savings rate owing to the difficulties in assessing the revenue which emanates from sales of the economies resources such as the crude oil and other primary products that the country exports to the rest of the world leading to reduction in investment and then short fall in savings and capital accumulation. As one of the leading economies in Africa and aiming to be among the twenty-five leading economies of the world by the year 2025, it is unarguably true that Nigeria must be on the path of fast and sustainable increase in savings for greater investment to take place and hence growth. There is a clear evidence that savings in Nigeria is at the downward side; and savings mobilization from the rural areas are a far cry due to the poor saving culture of residents. Significantly to the poor mobilization of savings is the nature and structure of the economy. The Nigeria economy is heavily dependent on revenue generated from sales of agricultural products and hence it is needless to argue that income flow is quite irregular, unpredictable and seasonal which discourages savings or leads to inadequate response to savings. Savings gives the less developed countries the opportunity to invest which improves economic growth. Increase in savings leads to increase in capital formation and production activities that will lead to employment creation and reduce external borrowing of government. Low domestic saving rates may maintain low-growth levels as stated by Harrod Domar model which suggests that savings is a crucial component to be considered for economic growth. Sourcing for fund externally has its own tradeoff which might be detrimental to growth. In line with this argument Malunond (2007) opined that depending on foreign sources to financed investment makes the country highly sensitive to external shocks. Based on this, accumulation of savings remains a priority for investment financing so as to reduce the adverse effect associated with external economic fluctuations.

The trend of savings in Nigeria has shown that private and public savings have not had a robust upward movement overtime this could be largely due to the saving culture of the country's residents, poor saving orientation, attitude of the financial institutions which do not encourage savings like situations where most banks target big customers and government deposits paying little or no attention to the small savers not knowing that the funds from household savings are relatively cheaper and more stable than government deposits which is mostly volatile and expensive; and fiscal indiscipline among the public office holders. In line with this view Nnanna, Englama and Odoko (2004) stated that the level of funds mobilisation by banks is quite low because of poor banking habit of the people. According to them, there is no incentive to funds mobilisation which is unconnected to the attitude of banks to small savers. According to World Bank (2018), the trend of savings reveals an unsteady movement from 1980 to 1985 mostly characterized by downward movements. Within this period gross national savings which comprises of public savings and savings from citizen within the country and abroad was about 0.06% of the country's income. From 1985 to 1989, savings showed a little increase of about 0.4%, and between 1990 and 1994 the gross national savings reduced significantly to 0.3%, and within the period 1995 to 1999 it rose again to 1.6%, during the period 2000-2004 national savings moved up to 7.6%, between 2005 and 2009 savings declined dramatically to 7.2%, during the period 2010-2014 domestic private savings increased to 32.7%. From 2014 to 2016 the national savings declined significantly by 15.1% from 32.7%. Between 2016 and 2017 it deteriorated further to 11.6%. These showed that there has not been a record of the desired growth in savings. Unfortunately, in the face of these persistence decline in savings the national income has maintained a better upward movement. For instance between 1980 and 1985 the national income was about 17.3 trillion and during the period of 1985-1989 it increased to 17.5 trillion and in 1990-1994 it also increased to 20.2 trillion, from 1995-1999 it rose to 22.5 trillion, while from 2000-2004 it moved up to 37.9 trillion. In 2005-2009 the income increased to 51.4 trillion, between 2010 and 2014 the income rose to 68 trillion. From 2014 to 2017 the income increase to 70.12 trillion.

From the foregoing there still exist significant gap between the level of income and the national savings.

Figure 1 below shows the trend of Gross National Savings from 1980 to 2017 in Nigeria. The figure reveals that series of continuous deterioration in the savings rate especially from 1980 to 2002. This is not commensurate to the upward growth witnessed in the national income. The windfall income of the early 70s and 80s could not translate to increased savings. Comparing both trends, we notice from World Bank (2018) that as per capita income increased from 12.4 % from 1980 to 1983, savings declined within this period decreased by about 4.2%. Although, the year 2003 through 2008 witnessed an upward rise in savings rate from 21.8% to 23.8%. From 2008 through 2014 there was much clear increase in savings as growth only maintained a horizontal movement. However, a downward growth of about 2.8% occurred between 2015 and 2017. The trend shown below is a clear indication that it is necessary to encourage the residents towards imbibing the right attitude for savings. It is also the duty of those institutions and regulatory agents who influence households, firms and governments decisions to come up with proper policies that encourage savings. The need for government to step in with appropriate economic policy such as more job creation, poverty alleviation and infrastructural development which is capable of providing the much needed enabling environment for savings accumulation.

Figure 1: The trend of Gross National Savings from 1980 to 2017

Source: The researchers' computation employing data from World Development Index

From the foregoing the question remains what exactly motivates savings in Nigeria given such incommensurate growth in savings vis-à-vis income. Although attempts have been made by some empirical works to unearth some aspects of savings behavior (Davis, 2013; Orji, Ogbuabor, and Anthony-Orji, 2015; Orji, Ogbuabor, and Okolomike, 2015; Orji, 2012 and Uremadu, 2007), there are still relevant puzzles regarding some observed policies and issues related to savings that have not yet been addressed. In view of this, this current study aims at using more recent data to unveil and unravel more determinants of savings in Nigeria, while considering the role of financial development and other variables. This is the objective and value addition of this paper. The rest of the paper is structured as follows: section two reviews the literature, while section three provides the methodology. The results are presented and discussed in section four and section five concludes the paper.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Theoretical Literature

2.1.1. Life Cycle Hypothesis

The Life-cycle hypothesis was developed by Franco Modigliani in 1957. The theory states that individuals desire to even out consumption throughout their lifetime. These individuals borrow when their income is inadequate and then save as their income rises. The LCH model sees savings to depend on the desire to have wealth to pass on and be better off during times of little or no income (which can be termed difficult times). It assumes that Younger individuals tend to save nothing and in the worst case borrow which could be termed negative saving. This can be linked to relatively low income coupled with debt incurred to fund education, purchase of homes amongst other expenses. However, in the mid of the life cycle, it is expected that savings of the individual as he offsets debt and saves for retirement to become positive. The theory suggests that wealth in form of savings accumulates at working age owing to a continuous flow of

income, however the accumulated savings gets depleted during retirement. Hence the theory points out that the accumulation of savings for retirement is the motivation for foregoing present consumption.

2.1.2 Financial Liberalization Theory

In 1973, Ronald McKinnon and Edward Shaw came up with the argument that savings is a function interest rate thereby challenging the then renowned theoretical position. McKinnon and Shaw viewed developing economies as being financially repressed. Their central argument is that financial repression is a form of indiscriminate distortions of financial prices including interest rates and foreign-exchange rates according to Kraemer and Fry (1995). In other words, financial repression is a combination of heavy taxation, interest rate controls and government participation in the credit allocation process will most likely lead to both a decrease in the depth of the financial system and a loss of efficiency, with which savings are intermediated (Sen and Vaidya, 1997). However they argued that financial liberalization tends to raise ratios of domestic private savings to income (Shaw, 1973). Therefore, financial liberalization will lead to significant economic benefits through a more effective domestic saving mobilization, financial deepening and efficient resource allocation. The core argument of the McKinnon-Shaw thesis where savings are assumed to be positively related to the real rate of interest.

2.1.3 Keynes Savings Function

John Maynard Keynes came up with the argument of consumption being dependent upon income in his work, general theory of employment, interest and money in 1936. The saving function is the starting point of the Keynesian economics analysis of equilibrium output determination using the injections-leakages model. It captures the relation between saving by the household sector and income. Because income is used for either consumption or saving, the saving function is a complement of the consumption function. Both reflect the fundamental psychological law put forth by John Maynard Keynes that consumption expenditures (and saving) by the household sector depend on income and then only a portion of additional income is used for consumption, with the rest used for saving. The saving function makes it easy to divide saving into two basic types. Autonomous saving is the intercept term. Induced saving is the slope. Of no small importance, the slope of the saving function is also the marginal propensity to save (MPS). The saving function can be represented in a general form as:

$$S = f(Y)$$

Where: S is saving, Y is income (national or disposable). However, it is often useful to state the saving function using parameters for the consumption function.

$$C = a + bY$$

Where: C is consumption expenditures, Y again is income, 'a' is the intercept, and b is the slope. In this case, the saving function can be specified as:

$$S = -A + (1-b)Y$$

Where: S is saving and Y is income. However, now the intercept is -a rather than c and the slope is (1-b) rather than d. This alternative specification shows the connection between the saving function and the consumption function. The intercept of the saving function (-a) is the negative of the intercept of the consumption function (a). The slope of the saving function (1-b) is one minus the slope of the consumption function (b), meaning that the sum of the marginal

propensity to consume (b) and the marginal propensity to save (1-b) is equal to one, which is just another way of saying that a portion of additional income is consumed and the rest is saved.

2.1.4 Permanent Income Hypothesis

Milton Friedman developed the permanent income hypothesis in his 1957 book *A Theory of the Consumption Function*. As classical Keynesian consumption theory was unable to explain the constancy of savings rate in the face of rising real income. It supposes that a person's consumption at a point in time is determined not just by their current income but also by their expected income in future years, their "permanent income". In its simplest form, the hypothesis states that changes in permanent income, rather than changes in temporary income, are what drive the changes in a consumer's consumption patterns. Its predictions of consumption smoothing, where people spread out transitory changes in income over time, departs from the traditional Keynesian emphasis on the marginal propensity to consume. It has had a profound effect on the study of consumer behavior, and provides an explanation for some of the failures of Keynesian demand management techniques. Income consists of a permanent (anticipated and planned) component and a transitory (windfall gain/unexpected) component. In the permanent income hypothesis model, the key determinant of consumption is an individual's lifetime income, not his current income. Permanent income is defined as expected long-term average income.

2.2 Empirical Literature

Empirical works exist which have investigated the influence of different macroeconomic indicators on savings (Modigliani, 1970; Bosworth, 1993; Carroll and Lawrence, 1994). However, some arguments have trailed the outcomes of these works due to how the interpretations were coined. Some of the interpretations on one hand viewed growth to be responsible for savings (Modigliani, 1970; Carroll and Lawrence, 1994) and on other hand viewed savings as main driver of growth through the interlink between savings and investment (Levine and Renelt, 1992; Mankiw, Romer and Weil, 1992). Nevertheless this study explores further other related works on the subject matter.

In Kenya, Tiriongo (2005) studied the determinants of aggregate domestic private savings over the period 1980 to 2003 using Ordinary Least Square procedure. The study was motivated by the existence of substantial fluctuations in the ratio of aggregate domestic private savings to GDP. The study found that aggregate private savings in Kenya were significantly determined by the current account deficit, the ratio of M2 money to GDP, real gross per capita income growth, deposit rate and the old age dependency ratio. To examine the key determinants of domestic savings in South Africa, Odhiambo (2007) employed the cointegration based error-correction model. The study was motivated by the current low and declining saving rate in South Africa. The empirical results of this study, which cover the period 1968-2004, indicate that savings in South Africa are largely determined by the growth rate of real GDP, foreign savings, real deposit rate, government expenditure and terms of trade.

Kudaisi (2013) studied the determinants of domestic savings in West Africa during 1980-2006 anchored on Hall hypothesis of consumption and found that the dependency ratio and interest rate had negative and insignificant effects on domestic savings, the GDP growth rate had positive and statistically insignificant effect, while the government budget surplus and inflation rate were statistically significant determinants of savings. Epaphra (2014) examined the factors affecting savings in Tanzania over the 1970-2010 period using time series data and Granger Causality test and found that real GDP growth rate, as well as the disposable income, life expectancy and

population growth had positive impact on savings in Tanzania while inflation had a negative impact.

Domestically, Olusoji (2003) found that savings in Nigeria was being affected by income, growth rate, government deficit and inflation rate and that exchange rate seemed to be the most significant determinant while interest rate had no effect. On the other hand, Uremadu (2007) used ordinary least square (OLS) regression technique to study the determinants of financial saving in Nigeria and found that per capita income, broad money supply, debt service ratio, GDP, and interest rate spread, were the major factors that affected financial saving in Nigeria. In the study to ascertain the determinants of private savings in Nigeria between 1970 and 2007. Gobna and Nurudeen (2009) employed error correction analysis to ascertain the long run determinants of savings in Nigeria during the period 1981 to 2007. The findings showed that financial deepening, bank density, real interest rate inflation and real income per capital are the major determinants of savings in Nigeria. Others that have also investigated this similar matter in Nigeria include; Orji (2012); Olayemi and Jolaosho (2013); Orji et al (2015); Elom-Obed, Odo, Udude, & Alfred, (2016), among others

In summary, savings and its determinants in the sub-Saharan especially Nigeria has been long standing discourse among scholars which has received different attentions and approaches accompanied by various results. Studies by Loayza, Schmidt-Hebbel, and Servén (2000), Loayza and Shankar (2000), Ahmad and Mahmood (2013), Kudaisi (2013), Gilles and Denise (2000), Elbadawi and Mwega (2000), Ozcan (2000) etc. found mainly that income measured either by GDP or GDPPC, interest rate, financial development, exchange rate amongst other variables jointly influence savings. Some other works such as works by Loayza, Schmidt-Hebbel, and Servén (2000) found a negative relationship between the ratio of private credit flows to income and savings while Epaphra (2014) found a negative relationship between inflation and savings. Results from Bandiera, Barankay and Rufus (2000) showed an inconclusive outcome as results cannot offer support for the hypothesis that financial liberalization will increase saving. In the case of Nigeria, works by Olusoji (2003) found that savings was being affected by income, growth rate, government deficit and inflation rate and that exchange rate seemed to be the most significant determinant while interest rate had no effect; Uremadu (2007) found that per capita income, broad money supply, debt service ratio, GDP, and interest rate spread are some major determinants of savings; Gobna and Nurudeen (2009); Nwachukwu and Odigie (2009) found similar result but differed at point where studies found that financial deepening negatively influence savings. A separate work by Nwachukwu (2012) confirmed the same outcome of a negative relationship between financial deepening and savings in Nigeria. Orji (2012) obtained an empirical results showing a positive influence of GDP per capita, Financial Deepening and Interest Rate Spread on savings but negative influence of Real Interest Rate and Inflation Rate on savings. To ascertain and arrive at a consensus on the determinants of savings has remained a debate among scholars as various results continued to emerge from different studies. Some studies argued for the contentious issue while others argued against. Therefore it is obvious that there still exist diverse and somewhat conflicting views about the determinants of savings. This study is also unique from most existing studies as it approaches the contentious issue by using aggregated savings (Gross Savings) as opposed to the disaggregated approach to savings adopted by most works. The merit of this approach is that it enables the study to capture all the possible sources and suppliers of savings which include both the public and private sources. Further gap also lies on the scope or period under investigation.

increased posing challenges for macro management. Kiptui (2008), states that there is need to monitor exchange rate fluctuations and to adopt appropriate monetary and fiscal policies to ensure stability in exchange rates and thereby stability in export earnings. **Inflation Rate:** Lipumba et al. (1999); Aryeetey (1995); Olusoji (2003); Özcan et al. (2003) and Kudaisi (2013) employed this variable as one of the determinants of savings in their studies. The result showed that inflation rate is one of determinants of savings.

3.2 Estimation Technique

The study employs the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) technique. This technique helps the study to ascertain the relationship amongst the variables. From the parameter estimates, one can tell the magnitude of change in the regressand as a result of a unit change in any of the regressors holding constant. This estimation technique is chosen because it meets the basic assumption of the OLS technique which is linearity in parameter. Importantly, the OLS technique is adopted because the estimators satisfy the BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimators) properties of the OLS i.e. the estimators are linear, unbiased and efficient (possess the minimum variance in the group of linear and unbiased estimators) as noted in Gujarati et al (2012).

4.1. Results and Discussion

4.1.1 Test for unit roots

Table 4.1. ADF Unit Roots Test

Variables	ADF Statistics	5% Critical values	Order of Integration	Decision
LogGS	-4.845493	-3.544284	I(1)	Stationary
LogPCGDP	-3.805541	-3.540328	I(1)	Stationary
LogFinDEP	-4.613392	-3.595026	I(2)	Stationary
LogGFCF	-4.530186	-3.540328	I(1)	Stationary
INTR	-5.4955	-3.544284	I(0)	Stationary
INF	-5.898871	-3.536601	I(1)	Stationary
EXCH	-5.414376	-3.540328	I(1)	Stationary

Source: Researchers' Estimation using Eviews

Table 4.1 above shows that all the variables are stationary after first difference, except INTR and LogFinDEP which are stationary at level and second difference respectively

4.1.2 Cointegration Test

Granger (1969) stated that a test for cointegration can be thought of as a pre-test to avoid spurious regression situations. Cointegration according to Dickey (1986) can also be a test of the stability of the parameters included in the model.

Table 4.2: The Engel & Granger Cointegration Test Result

Residual/Error term (ψ_t)	-4.45239	-1.950117	I(0)	Stationary
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Source: Researchers' estimation using Eviews

From the above table, the result shows that the error term is stationary at 5% in absolute term and at level. The study therefore concludes that since the ADF statistics is greater than the ADF critical value, we reject H_0 . thus there exists a long run relationship between the variables.

4.2 OLS Regression Results

Presenting empirical results on the determinants of savings in Nigeria

Table 4.3: Regression Results of The long run model

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	T-statistic	P-value
C	-6.83259	7.14469	-0.956317	0.3463
LogPCGDP	1.680025	0.760701	2.208521	0.0347
LogGFCF	0.394412	0.147563	2.672836	0.0119
FINDEP	0.011268	0.008374	1.345512	0.1876
EXCH	0.012757	0.004350	2.932553	0.0061
INTR	-0.023962	0.02327	-1.029735	0.3111
INF	-0.004221	0.00277	-1.523691	0.1377
$R^2 = 0.91$		Adjusted $\bar{R}^2 = 0.895$		
DW statistic = 1.348553				

Source: Researchers' estimation using Eviews

4.2.1 Evaluation of Results

Here, the underpinning theoretical assumptions would help to evaluate the above regression result to verify if results conform to a priori expectations both in signs and magnitude.

The coefficient of per capital GDP is 1.680025 and statistically significant, implying that on average a percentage increase in the per capita GDP will increase savings by approximately 1.7% holding other variables constant. This conforms to a priori expectation. This result is consistent with the study of Loayza, Schmidt-Hebbel, and Servén (2000) who investigated the determinants of savings in Developing Countries and found that per capita GDP positively influences saving in those developing countries. The coefficient of gross fixed capita formation is 0.394412 and statistically significant. This implies that on average as other variables are held fixed a percentage increase in gross fixed capital formation will increase savings by approximately 0.39%. This result conforms to a priori expectation. The result obtained is supported by that of Agrawal (2010) and Sandri, D., Ashoka, M. And Ohnsorge, F. (2012) who found similar result in India and advanced economies respectively. Financial deepening

(M2/GDP) has a coefficient of 0.011268 but it is not statistically significant. The implication of this outcome is that a percentage increase in financial deepening on average will increase savings by 0.01% holding other variables constant. This also shows that the level of financial deepening in Nigeria is still below expectation. This result conforms to a priori expectation. This result is supported by that of Odhiambo (2008) and Ndanshau (2012) for Tanzania and Orji (2012) for Nigeria. However, the result is not consistent with the result obtained in Nwachukwu and Odigie (2009) for Nigeria. The coefficient of Exchange rate is 0.012757 and statistically significant. This suggests that if other variables are fixed a percentage increase in exchange rate on average increases savings approximately by 0.01%. This conforms to a priori expectation. This result conforms to the result obtained in Olusoji (2003) who maintained that among other variables exchange rate appeared to be one of the most significant determinant of savings in Nigeria. Interest rate has a coefficient of -0.023962 but it's statistically insignificant. However, the negative sign implies that on average a percentage increase in interest rate reduces savings by approximately 0.02% holding other variables constant. This is mostly obtainable with lending rate because when there increase in lending rate it reduces the ability of businesses to save due to high loan repayment rates. This partly conforms to a priori expectation. This result agrees with Orji (2012) and it is also at par with Ozcan (2000) who carried out a study on the determinants of savings for a sample of 15 Middle East and North African countries (MENA) over the period under review and Olusoji (2003) for Nigeria. However, the result is inconsistent with Odhiambo (2007) in South Africa who examined the key determinants of domestic savings in South Africa and found that interest rate influences deposit rate. The coefficient of inflation rate variable is -0.004221 but statistically insignificant. But the negative sign follows the expected a priori, suggesting that on average a percentage increase in inflation reduces savings by approximately 0.004% holding other variables constant. The adjusted R^2 measures the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable explained by the explanatory variables as well as goodness of fit of the estimated model. The adjusted R^2 for this estimation is 0.895147. This implies that the explanatory variables accounted for about 89.5% of the total variations in the dependent variable. It also suggests that the model is a good fit.

4.2.2 The Error Correction Model result is as given in the table below:

Table 4.4 Error Correction Test Result

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	T-Statistics	P-Value
ECM(-1)	-0.862794	0.168508	-5.120193	0.0000

Source: Researchers' estimation using EViews

Table 4.2 above shows the error correction test result. The result shows that the coefficient of the ECM is negative and significant. The coefficient is -0.862794 implying that the speed with which the explanatory variables adjust from short-run disequilibrium in order to attain long-run equilibrium is 86% annually. That is to say in one (1) year approximately 86% disequilibrium in the explanatory variables is corrected.

5.1 Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The study investigated the determinants of savings in Nigeria for the period 1980-2017. The classical linear regression analysis was carried out to ascertain the determinants of savings in

Nigeria. The result showed that per capita income, gross fixed capital formation, and exchange rate significantly impact savings. On the other hand, financial deepening, Interest rate and inflation rate were not significant. Based on the findings the study reveals some important actions needed to be taken in order to ensure enhanced growth in savings rate.

5.2 Policy Recommendations

Based on the foregoing, the study recommends the following: First, since growth in income is found to impact savings positively, the government should direct her spending on economic activities that encourage the creation of more jobs and investments. This will enable individuals, firms and governments to have more money to save. Again, the government should also channel most of the economy's resources on acquisition of physical capital and investment on human capital development. Such investments cannot be regarded as unproductive because as more capitals accumulate and right and precise investment decisions are made, income will grow and more savings will be accumulated in that order. Second, efforts should be made to identify more sources/channels of generating income internally and externally, and diversify the economy from depending solely on oil revenue. As a follow up to this, government can have several national savings scheme where excess proceeds from different sources are saved. This will contribute significantly to the already existing sovereign wealth fund derived from excess crude oil proceeds. Third, the Central bank should ensure that lending rate and general interest rate spread is minimized to support the saving desires of households and firms. The financial institution should put forward policies that not only favour big savers but also encourage small savers in the economy. In addition to this both government and financial agencies should identify approaches that boost the savings culture of household. One of the ways by which this can be achieved is by enforcing the cashless economy policy introduced by the Central Bank of Nigeria which helps to reduce the quantity of physical cash held by households. Finally, the monetary authorities should pursue financial deepening policies and implement strategies that will enhance financial development and savings in Nigeria.

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VISUAL ARTS AND THE CHALLENGES IN THE WAY OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Azuka, Abigail Nzoiwu

Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State

ABSTRACT

The visual art have lost its grip on the essence of Art. The reason for these is that Nigeria Art works are still abhorred and viewed as fetish, the worst hit being sculpture and painting as these were the most visible artworks found in shrines. Even in the religious sector, visual art is still experiencing Iconoclasm. Parents also misguide their children about enrolling in higher institutions to study visual Arts. It seems from the fact that Nigerian institutions of higher learning are experiencing dwindling enrolment of students into Visual Arts. It is therefore, the objective of this paper is to examine critically the challenges facing the learning of visual Arts as a course in our institutions. And proper solutions on how this can be solved. It will also look at reasons why students enrolment is dwelling in Nigerian Institutions of higher learning. Problem of funding have always been the bane of some. Visual Art happens to be one of them. Lack of equipment is also one of the problems because visual Arts is a practically oriented course.

Introduction

Art has been described by different writers in several ways, Filani (1999) believes that, “Art is life and life is Art”. Art means different things to different people. According to Oloidi (2011) “Art is a deliberate or conscious employment of skill and “creativity” to produce visually aesthetic and other functional art images”. Talabi (1979) sees Art as a reflecting people’s way of life, a tool subject, the core of other subjects and aid to technological advancement. He notes that art reveals cultural traits and that it is one of the principal cannons for judging a nation. It reflects the past, the present and the future. Art, according to him is a lingua franca through which thoughts are made clearer. To him: “Art he says provides the mirror through which other disciplines of life are seen clearly. It is an aid to learning’.

He further stated that: “Fine and Applied Arts is a functional course that comprises subjects such as_ sculpture, painting drawing, graphics, ceramics, textile designing, metal fabrication, Arts is divided into two parts; Fine Arts and Applied Arts. Fine Arts is known as visual arts, they are sculpture and painting they are used to beautify our environment. Applied arts are Ceramics, Textile, Graphics, printmaking and photography.

According to Annang (2011). “Visual arts is limited to painting, sculpture, ceramics, textile and graphics’.

Decline of the study of Fine and Applied Arts has become a source of worry to practitioners and other stake holders.

Lack of Infrastructures

Alasa (2013) sees lack of infrastructure as a major factor challenging the development of visual arts in higher institutions when he opined that Lack of infrastructure facilities like classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, studios and workshops are the major hinderances to students

enrolment, effective, efficient teaching and learning in schools at all levels of education in Nigeria". The structures in our higher institutions are grossly inadequate. In some cases, classrooms that are meant to accommodate 30 students are used for 60 students. In some severe cases up to 70 or 80 students squeezed into such classrooms.

There are also lack studios and equipments, it is un usual in some cases to find students receiving lectures from outside the classrooms, by the doors and windows. The lack of spacious studios, exhibition hall, gallery in our institutions makes it difficult for studio practice because no space to keep your works.

To give credence to this inadequacy of facilities, Alasa (2013) observed that: The absence of relevant materials, tools and equipment for effective instruction, demonstration and practice for meaningful and functional skill acquisition constitute barriers in art schools.

The place of Art as mentioned by Alasa (2013) quoting the National policy on Education (2004) is well stated in the document under reference, the subject is grouped as one of the vocational subjects and courses. It is designed to prepare individuals to acquire skills, basic scientific knowledge and attitude required as craft man and technicians at sub professional level.

The above mentioned subjects will seek to build a truly great economically prosperous nation by equipping students with the skills and ability to be productive, self-employed and self-reliant. The stand of the Federal Government as reflected in the National policy on Education, it is highly expected that the status Art in our institutions of higher learning should be enhanced. Also, Government and other stakeholders in Art and education will ensure that all the impediments militating against the study of Fine and Applied Arts are removed.

The study seeks to find out the status of Art as a subject in our institutions of learning. Taking recognizance of the social values of Art causes of decline in Art such as shortage of Art teachers, High cost of materials and equipment, uncertainty about market value and prospects. Other factors are also considered.

Social Values of Arts.

Feldman 1967 in Agberia (2000) analyses the positive roles of Art and artistic functions. Agberia (2000) states that Feldman's concern focuses on how the Artists such as Akintola Lasekan, Obe Ess, Dotun Gboyega, Obiora Udechukwu, Dele Jegede, J.O and Josy Ajiboye who are reputable Cartoonist in Nigeria could utilize available factors of political and ideological creative potential in re-awakening the Social consciousness of the society by exposing Societal ills. This could be informative designs. The roles of Art in Nigeria society cannot be under estimated in its Socio-functional capacities as evidenced in all spheres of life.

According to Egonwa, (1994) In many instances religion has contributed to the African's aesthetic evaluation of the Art objects. Nigerians traditionally believed that inanimate objects have a vital or life force that makes them suitable for certain functions. It is this life force that is harnessed to achieve a particular purpose.

Art objects like sculptural pieces such as masks, ancestral figures are used in shrines and most often serve as intermediaries' semi gods deities through which the traditional Nigerian worshippers approach the supreme God. Traditional religion festivities are often and music where Art objects are used or displayed.

Mention can be made of traditional stools, thrones, scepters, staves of office of traditional rulers that are Art products. Artists produce the woven fabrics for chiefs, rulers and crowds for social functions. In modern times, it is the artists and industrial designers who design with the aid of modern technologies. Domestic and industrial products such as textiles, ceramic wares,

automobiles and many more. Promotion and protection of our cultural heritage has long been vested in Visual Art which also symbolizes our civilization.

The Challenges

Many factors have been identified as the challenges confronting the development of the visual arts, these challenges include, Societal and Parental Attitudes, Lack of Art Teachers in school, Cost of materials and Equipment, Peer group influence, Importation of art, Uncertainty about market and Prospects.

Societal and Parental Attitudes

Most parents and the society generally are not favourably disposed to their children studying Art in Schools. Wangboje, (1988) relates this perception to his personal experience at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria then Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology, Zaria in 1955. According to him, he met a friend who was in Zaria to study Engineering. They were happy to see each other and out of curiosity the friend inquired about his (Wangboje's) course of study, his eyes almost popped out of the sockets when he learnt that he was in the University to study Fine Art. And he asked, according to Wangboje: "you mean u came to Nigeria College of Arts Science and Technology just to draw?"

Similarly, Students' choice of subjects have often been traced to their parents mainly because most parents have ideas and aspirations of what they think their children should do when they grow up. Oshinowo, (1996) recounts his experience. He recalls that his happiness on being offered admission to be read art was shortlived because his father, on receiving the news that he was going to read Fine Art, became enraged. He said that his father felt so disappointed that he refused to have anything to do with his education for the four years he spent in the University. Apart from Oshinowo's experience, some parents would not buy Art materials needed by their children for their study.

Lack of Art Teachers In Schools

Naturally the choice of careers or courses of study is made or interest developed following the students' exposure to, and familiarization with different subjects available for study in schools. But in a situation in which Art is not taught in many schools due to lack of teachers at the secondary school level denies the students. The opportunity to be so exposed or familiarized with these courses.

Cost of Materials and Equipment.

The study of Visual Art have tended to cost intensive because most of art materials are imported from overseas. Some do not have suitable locally made alternatives. The effect of this is that most students shy away from studying Visual Art, even when they are talented and desire to pursue the course.

Peer Group Influence.

Some students who would have liked to study visual art have had to change their minds because of the influence of their close friends. Negative statements from these friends have caused many to change their minds. In situations like this have had their negative effects too.

i. Impartation of Art as a Subject

The nature of the teaching in our Public Schools some have gone on to get stuck with disciplines or courses endangered the knowledge of Art. Art in the Nigerian School Curriculum, according to Jari (2004) is a compromised subject. To him, they have no flair for. They usually slated for the last period of the day when the students are already tired from performing other intellectual tasks during earlier periods of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry or English. Hence students grow up looking down on Art and Artist. Talabi (1979) stated that in some Schools there are no rooms allocated for the teaching of Art, with furniture designed for his purpose. He notes that; Teaching is carried out in makeshift, classrooms a situation that makes art teaching and learning uninspiring and boring.

Talabi (1979) and Aladenike (2005) have also identified other challenges confronting visual art in our society. These are poor funding by government, lack of committed well trained teachers and lack of proper orientation in Art among others. The resultant effect of all these Talabi (1979) believes if very few students are able to pass the course at Secondary School level while fewer still qualify for entrance examination in Art to tertiary institutions.

Market Value and Prospects.

The needs for art cut across different spheres of human existence. There is no object or thing that was made without artistic input. “most students even the Society are unaware of the marketability of Art “Filani (1999). Art is present in our homes, on our bodies (as clothing, jewelry) in the community, religion, industry, unawareness of this is another factor that contributed greatly to the decline in the study of Arts.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria government should create enlightenment programme towards self-employment. This will encourage lot of objectivity in the choice of visual Art as it has immense capacity for self-reliance. Vocational Guidance and counselors should be provided in all schools at all levels of educational so that students should be made to go through regular counseling on choosing their careers and courses of study Counselors should be employed to get students informed about the prospects of courses as visual art. Art professional associations have a role to play to encourage the study of this course. For the benefit to technological advancement Government should rise up to its responsibility of funding Art at all levels of study by providing infrastructure, equipment and by making grants and scholarship available for students in Fine Art.

Art should be made a compulsory elective course in the University. This is because Art is Mother of all disciplines. In the time table of primary and secondary schools Fine Art should be fixed for morning period not afternoon or last period. The same time allocated for other subjects should also be allocated for it.

At all educational level, Art studio should be made available for teaching of the subject. Efforts made today will no doubt go a long way. The many challenges facing visual arts in our society have been identified. These range from Society, Parent, and Government. Ifeagwu (2002) believes that no single factor can be held responsible, but rather, a combination of factors and these he says apply in varying degrees to most vocational courses. For a nation to grow technologically, the visual Art be given its pride of place.

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LAW AS AN INSTRUMENT OF MENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EMANCIPATION

By

C. A. Ogbuabor & Clara C. Obi-Ochiabutor & C. N. Iyidobi

Faculty of Law, University of Nigeria Enugu Campus

&

Perpetua E. Ogbuabor

Registry Department, University of Nigeria Enugu Campus

&

B. L. Ogbuabor

Department of Legal Studies, Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Enugu

&

Joseph Onugwu

High Court, Enugu

Abstract

This paper asserts that law can and should be an instrument of mental, social and economic emancipation. It is law that orders society. The development of societies across the world has been largely the product of progressive laws which in turn has unlocked the potentials in human beings. Ideas rule the world. There is hardly anything which the human mind can conceive that it cannot achieve. Therefore, our laws should be geared towards the social, mental and economic emancipation of the people rather than their emasculation.

Keywords: Law and mental emancipation, social emancipation, economic emancipation, social engineering in Nigeria, law as instrument of social engineering, Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

This conference calls attention to the role of law in society and societal development. Can law influence the development of society in particular directions more especially in the socio-economic, scientific and technological spheres of life? This paper asserts that law has the capability or capacity of influencing social, economic, scientific and technological development of the country and mental emancipation of the citizenry for the greater good of the country. The paper is therefore located in the theory of law as instrument of social engineering. One of our commonest experiences is that once people acquire economic power, the tendency to go after political power becomes higher and the motive or impetus to go after political power is largely to also hold the reins of legal power in the society. This is because a single stroke of the law or policy can destroy the economic base and all acquisitions of a citizen made over several decades. Law is usually an expression of policy. Any law worth its salt is an expression of policy. So, law in the sense in which it is used here includes all policy decisions meant or geared towards the achievement of specific objectives.

Law is one factor that governs the life of a human being from birth to death and even after death. Therefore, law can and is usually directed towards the achievement of particular purposes. In this wise, we can reflect on the role, purpose or functions of law in society.

Law facilitates social interaction. It regulates conflicts and disputes, attempts to restore equilibrium in the social system where it becomes unbalanced, gives some degree of predictability and certainty to voluntary transactions and arrangements, guides social actions by rationality and efficiency, teaches people what is right and wrong according to the prevailing normative standards, and helps to maintain historical

continuity (Berman & Greimer, 1966: 16-37; Meagher & Silverstein, 1988: 5). From the above exposition, the functions or role of law in a society can be said to include the following:

- Facilitative – promotes cooperative living and helps in settlement of disputes.
- Preservative – preserves relationships and status
- Prescriptive – constitutes the organs of government and stipulates the rights, duties and obligations of state organs and citizens.
- Protective – protects lives and property.
- Restorative – ensures justice in society through distributive and corrective justice.
- Regulatory – defines relationships and roles so as to avoid friction.
- Maintains social order.
- Communicates and reinforces social values and order.

The role of law in communicating and reinforcing social values and order can go a long way in dictating social and economic development of a society. The law can be an instrument of altering social behaviour and also influencing the patterns of thought of the people. The system of education we pursue is the product of law and policy. If the law and policy of our educational system is redirected towards emancipation of the intellectual faculty of the citizenry, and economic independence through scientific and technological independence, then, the likelihood of technological breakthroughs, of independence of thought that is Afrocentric and not Eurocentric nor Americentric, becomes greater.

The instrumentality of law has always served to protect the freedom of all members of the human family and as wedge against the unavoidable natural tendencies of men; from the enactment of the Code of Hammurabi in ancient Mesopotamia down to our various laws in Nigeria today. According to World Bank Report on the Role of the Law, (2017) “In modern states, law serves three critical governance roles. First, it is through law and legal institutions that states seek to order the behavior of individuals and organizations so economic and social policies are converted into outcomes. Second, law defines the structure of government by ordering power—that is, establishing and distributing authority and power among government actors and between the state and citizens. And third, law also serves to order contestation by providing the substantive and procedural tools needed to promote accountability, resolve disputes peacefully, and change the rules. It has long been established that the rule of law—which at its core requires that government officials and citizens be bound by and act consistently with the law—is the very basis of the good governance needed to realize full social and economic potential.

By its nature, law is a device that provides a particular language, structure, and formality for ordering things, and this characteristic gives it the potential to become a force independent of the initial powers and intentions behind it, even beyond the existence of independent and effective legal institutions. Law is thus simultaneously a product of social and power relations and a tool for challenging and reshaping those relations. Law can change incentives by establishing different payoffs; it can serve as a focal point for coordinating preferences and beliefs; and it can establish procedures and norms that increase the contestability of the policy arena (World Bank, 2017).

2. Law as instrument of social emancipation: the case of U.S and South Africa

Instances of the United States and South Africa offer great example of the role of law as instrument of social emancipation from adverse and reprehensive policies, through well organized Civil Rights Movements, recourse to the Courts of law, and sustained pressures both internally and externally.

In the United States, in what would become the most famous case in black history, known as *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954)* Oliver Brown filed a class-action suit against the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, in 1951, after his daughter, Linda Brown, was denied entrance to Topeka’s all-white elementary schools. In his lawsuit, Brown claimed

that schools for black children were not equal to the white schools, and that segregation violated the so-called “equal protection clause” of the 14th Amendment, which holds that no state can “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

The case went before the U.S. District Court in Kansas, which agreed that public school segregation had a “detrimental effect upon the colored children” and contributed to “a sense of inferiority,” but still upheld the “separate but equal” doctrine. When Brown’s case and four other cases related to school segregation first came before the Supreme Court in 1952, the Court combined them into a single case under the name *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. In the decision, issued on May 17, 1954, the Chief Justice of the United States wrote that “in the field of public education the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place,” as segregated schools are “inherently unequal.” As a result, the Court ruled that the plaintiffs were being “deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the 14th Amendment.” In May 1955, the Court issued a second opinion in the case (known as *Brown v. Board of Education II*), which remanded future desegregation cases to lower federal courts and directed district courts and school boards to proceed with desegregation “with all deliberate speed.”

Prior to this landmark judgment of 1954, most states across the United States generally dwelled under legally sanctioned oppressive society marked by violence and segregation against blacks fueled by the *Jim Crow laws* above- a collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation and targeted marginalization of African Americans by denying them the right to vote, hold jobs, get an education or other opportunities (Little, 2015). *Black codes* existed across most states in the United States that detailed when, where and how formerly enslaved people could work, and for how much compensation. The codes appeared throughout the South as a legal way to put Black citizens into indentured servitude, to take voting rights away, to control where they lived and how they traveled and to seize children for labor purposes.

These codes worked in conjunction with labor camps for the incarcerated, where prisoners were treated as enslaved people. Black offenders typically received longer sentences than their white equals, and because of the grueling work, often did not live out their entire sentence. Laws forbade African Americans from living in white neighborhoods. Segregation was enforced for public pools, phone booths, hospitals, asylums, jails and residential homes for the elderly and handicapped. Some states required separate textbooks for Black and white students.

In Atlanta, African Americans in court were given a different Bible from white people to swear on. Marriage and cohabitation between white and Black people was strictly forbidden in most Southern states. It was not uncommon to see signs posted at town and city limits warning African Americans that they were not welcome there. The North however was not fully immune to Jim Crow-like laws. Some states required Black people to own property before they could vote, schools and neighborhoods were segregated, and businesses displayed “Whites Only” signs.

The judgment of the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* accordingly changed to this state of affairs. Other successes that followed included passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by President Lyndon B. Johnson, that legally ended the segregation which had been institutionalized by Jim Crow laws, backed by enforcement by the Justice Department, beginning the process of desegregation in earnest. This landmark

piece of civil rights legislation was followed by the **Voting Rights Act of 1965** which halted efforts to keep minorities from voting and the **Fair Housing Act of 1968**, which ended discrimination in renting and selling homes; and another landmark supreme court decision in *Runyon v. McCrary* delivered in 1976, ruling that even private, nonsectarian schools that denied admission to students on the basis of race violated federal civil rights laws.

In South Africa also through sustained resistance to the regime which heightened in 1976 with series of multiple pressures internally and externally including The United Nations General Assembly open condemnation of apartheid in 1973, and imposition of mandatory embargo on the sale of arms to South Africa by the UN Security Council in 1976; with multiple economic sanctions in 1985 by the United Kingdom and United States on the country; saw the end of the most reprehensible regimes in human history.

Under apartheid, nonwhite South Africans (a majority of the population) would be forced to live in separate areas from whites and use separate public facilities. Contact between the two groups would be limited. Despite strong and consistent opposition to apartheid within and outside of South Africa, its laws remained in effect for the better part of 50 years in what began from the controversial 1913 Land Act, passed three years after South Africa gained its independence, marking the beginning of territorial segregation by forcing black Africans to live in reserves and making it illegal for them to work as sharecroppers. Opponents of the Land Act formed the South African National Native Congress, which would become the African National Congress (ANC). By 1950, the government had banned marriages between whites and people of other races, and prohibited sexual relations between black and white South Africans. The Population Registration Act of 1950 provided the basic framework for apartheid by classifying all South Africans by race, including Bantu (black Africans), Coloured (mixed race) and white. A fourth category, Asian (meaning Indian and Pakistani) was later added. In some cases, the legislation split families; parents could be classified as white, while their children were classified as colored.

In one of the most devastating aspects of apartheid, the government forcibly removed black South Africans from rural areas designated as “white” to the homelands and sold their land at low prices to white farmers. From 1961 to 1994, more than 3.5 million people were forcibly removed from their homes and deposited in the Bantustans, where they were plunged into poverty and hopelessness.

Under intense pressure from the international community therefore, the National Party government of Pieter Botha sought to institute some reforms, including abolition of the pass laws and the ban on interracial sex and marriage. The reforms fell short of any substantive change, however, and by 1989 Botha was pressured to step aside in favor of F.W. de Klerk. De Klerk’s government subsequently repealed the Population Registration Act, as well as most of the other legislation that formed the legal basis for apartheid. De Klerk freed Nelson Mandela on February 11, 1990. A new constitution, which enfranchised blacks and other racial groups, took effect in 1994, and elections that year led to a coalition government with a nonwhite majority, marking the official end of the apartheid system.

3. Law as an Instrument of Social Emancipation in Nigeria

The progress and status of Nigeria today as independent democratic nation can best be described as a progressive search for social freedoms. The social engineering towards the achievement of social equality can traced back to the independence constitution, the Republican constitution, the 1979 and 1999 constitutions of Nigeria, all of which laid the foundation for fundamental human rights and equality of status under the law. One of the cardinal precepts of the rule of law enunciated by A. V. Dicey is equality before the law. This has been entrenched in Nigeria’s various constitutions and other statutory and

subsidiary instruments. During early colonial rule, not all men had right to vote. Progressively, every human being, man and woman of voting age can vote today. This was achieved by law. Similarly, at some point, women could not own real property. In fact, they were looked upon as articles of ownership themselves. Today, every woman can own property, real and personal, like every other man on the street. This is the handiwork of law. The progress of our society has been the progressive realization of civil and political rights as enshrined in various international instruments and charters and these have been achieved through our laws.

However, notwithstanding these, the implementation of laws and policies in the state is far from approximating theories to realities. Social inequalities still exist especially as it relates to gender affairs and roles and social relationships. For instance, the Osu caste system was abolished in Igbo land about 1956 but the practice still persists till date. Corruption and nepotism still play significant roles in access to state facilities, jobs, and largesse.

4. The role of law as instrument for economic emancipation in Nigeria

Law has a critical role to play in the economic fortunes of a country. Whether a country's economic policy is described as capitalist, socialist, market-driven, regulated or deregulated or protectionist are all functions of law and each has great economic implications for the people. The Indigenization policies of the mid-1970s and the liberalization policies of the 1990s as could be seen in the FEMAMP Act and NIPC Act are all instruments geared towards economic emancipation of the people. Whether the laws achieved the goal of economic emancipation is a totally different question but it cannot be argued that the laws were all well-intentioned by their fashioners for the good of the people essentially geared towards economic emancipation of the people. Recently, we have witnessed a new avalanche of new laws in the economic sector of the country. These include the new Finance Actⁱ; the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020; and the National Minimum Wage Act 2019; as well as other policies made to boast the ease of doing business in Nigeria and creating more favorable environment for all citizens.

The Finance Act which was enacted to amend, repeal or consolidate some provisions of extant tax laws including the, The Companies Income Tax Act, Cap. C21ⁱⁱ, Value Added Tax Act, Cap VIⁱⁱⁱ; Customs and Excise Tariffs (Consolidation Act) Cap.C49^{iv}; Personal Income Tax Act, Cap P8^v; Capital Gains Tax Act, Cap.C1^{vi}; Stamp Duties Act, Cap.S8^{vii}; Petroleum Income Tax Act, Cap. P13^{viii}; The Companies Income Tax Act (CITA) is geared inter alia towards reviewing the tax provisions, making them more responsive to prevailing economic circumstances, creating better incentives to sustain small businesses across the nation through tax concession^{ix} and easing the rigors of doing business. Citizens who start new business therefore benefit immensely especially those related to primary agricultural production who would be entitled to an initial tax free period of five years which may be subject to satisfactory performance of agricultural production, be renewed for an additional maximum period of three years.^x

Other relevant reforms included amendment of Part III, section 21 of the Customs and Excise Tariffs Etc (Consolidation Act) by substituting subsection (1) with a new subsection (1) which creates exception for payment of duties for (a) goods that are not locally produced in Nigeria; and (b) raw materials that are not locally available in Nigeria^{xi}. Granting of tax exception by the new Act for the sell or transfer of businesses for the purpose of better organization or management to the extent that one company has control over the other or both are controlled by some person or are members of a recognized group of companies, and must have been so for a consecutive period of at least 365 days prior to the date of reorganization^{xiii} and introduction of tax incentives for investment in infrastructure across Nigeria and capital markets.

The National Minimum Wage Act, 2019 which prescribes the national minimum wage, also provides the legal skeleton for the review of the national wage of every worker employed throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Section 2 of the Act provides for the sum of N30, 000.00 Per Month as national minimum wage to be paid by every employer to the minimum paid worker/employee under his establishment; except under the following circumstances provided under the Act:

- a) Establishments in which workers are employed on part-time basis.
- b) Establishments in which workers are paid on commission or on piece-rate;
- c) Establishments employing less than 25 persons;
- d) Workers in seasonal employment such as agriculture;
- e) Any person employed in a vessel or aircraft to which the laws regulating merchant shipping or civil aviation applies.

Section 9 of the Act went further by prescribing punishment for any employer who fails to comply with the provisions of the Act as being liable

(i) Pay a fine not more than 5% of the offenders' monthly wage, (ii) pay outstanding arrears of the workers' wages and (iii) pay an additional penalty at the prevailing Central Bank of Nigeria's lending rates on the wages owed for each month of continuing violation.

Pursuant to Section 10 of the Act, an employer is required to keep the records of wages or conditions of employment to evidence compliance with provisions of the Act and to retain such records for a minimum of three years. Failure to keep the mandatory records amounts to a crime and is punishable on conviction by a fine not exceeding N75,000.00 and an additional sum of N10,000.00 for each day the offence continues.

The Act vests the duty to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Act on the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment together with the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission who are expected to join forces in line with the Labour Act and the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission Act. The Minister upon receipt of a report of non-compliance from an authorized officer is required to activate the machinery for enforcing compliance within 30 working days.

Section 13 of the Act provides great opportunity for an aggrieved worker by himself directly, through Trade Unions or the Minister of Labour and Employment to enforce the National Minimum Wage as a right. An aggrieved worker may take out an action at the National Industrial Court or file a formal complaint with the Minister or with associated Trade Unions who shall make demand for compliance with the Act on behalf of their members provided that they shall upon receipt of the workers' complaint take the claim to the National Industrial Court not later than 30 days of receiving such complaint. Such demand can be made by an authorized officer to the employer on behalf of an aggrieved worker within 30 days of reception of complaint; where the employer fails in whole or in part, the matter shall then be referred to the National Industrial Court on behalf of the aggrieved worker^{xiii}

Furthermore, **The Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020 ("CAMA 2020")**, which repealed and replaced the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990 is intended to provide a better legal framework for reforming cumbersome legal, regulatory and administrative bottlenecks which have made doing business in Nigeria extremely difficult especially for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)), by introducing some groundbreaking reforms some of which included:

- a) **Minimum Directors:** Section 271 of CAMA 2020 excludes small companies from the requirement of having a minimum of two (2) directors. To this end, a small company is permitted to have one (1) director.
- b) **Exemption from audit requirement :** Section 402 of CAMA 2020 **exempts small companies and companies that have not carried out business since incorporation** (other than an insurance company or a bank or any other company as may be prescribed by the CAC) from the requirements of the law relating to the audit of accounts in respect of a financial year.
- c) **Appointment of Company Secretary:** Under the Repealed Act, every company was mandatorily required to have a secretary. However, by virtue of Section 330 of CAMA 2020, the appointment

of a company secretary is not mandatory but optional for small companies. Whilst helps to reduce cost and boost the ease of doing business in Nigeria.

- d) **Register of Secretaries:** Whilst the Repealed Act required all companies to have a register of secretaries, CAMA 2020 in Section 336 requires **only public companies** to maintain a register of secretaries and Sections 337 & 338 provides for the required particulars. This is expected to reduce the operational requirements for private companies in furtherance of the ease of doing business.
- e) **Common Seal:** By virtue of Section 98 of CAMA 2020, it is no longer mandatory for a company to have a company seal and companies now have the sole discretion to choose whether or not to have one.
- f) **Authentication via Electronic Signature:** In compliance with modern technological capabilities and developments, as well as the provisions of the Evidence Act, 2011, CAMA 2020 now provides that **an electronic signature is deemed to satisfy the requirement for signing and** that the register of transfers shall include electronic registers. Additionally, a document or proceeding requiring authentication by a company may be signed by a director, secretary, or other authorised officer of the company, and *need not be signed as a deed* unless otherwise specifically required by CAMA 2020.
- g) **Validity of Improperly Issued Shares:** Section 148 of CAMA 2020 unlike the repealed Act now authorizes the company itself and not the court to validate the issuance/allotment of shares not properly issued or allotted by way of a special resolution. Only in circumstances where the company refuses to do the above, will the affected party need to apply to court.

Note must be taken however that the new CAMA has come under severe criticism especially from religious circles that it is intended to be used as an instrument of social domination of other religions by the Muslim North through bureaucratic forces. The allegations are well founded and must be properly addressed if the Act is not to become counter-productive.

The Nigerian Constitution as the supreme and grundmorm of all laws; defines the structure and powers of government in Nigeria, by establishing the different components of government as wells as regulating the relationship between citizens and the government. Once the powers, rights and limitations under the constitution are identified as created, their existence cannot be disputed by any authority or person. However the extent and implications may be sought to be interpreted and explained by the courts.

Moreover, the Constitution 1999 (sections 14 and 24) made ample provisions for the socio-economic and personal rights of all its citizens; including the powers, duties, and fundamental rights of every citizen; covering the Rights to life, Dignity of the human person, Personal liberty; Fair hearing; Private and family life; Freedom of thoughts, Conscience and Religion; Freedom of expression and the press; Peaceful Assembly and Association; Freedom of movement; Freedom from discrimination; and to acquire and own immovable property. The Constitution went further by placing exceptional grounds under the law upon which these fundamental rights can be derogated (sections 33 – 44).

The above is to properly enthrone law ensuring that the law serves as reliable instrument of emancipation and recourse for all citizens and that equal protection is accorded to all. Private Citizens as well as public entities accordingly have the full liberty of seeking redress against repressive and unlawful conducts against their person for in class actions on behalf of group of affected persons through appropriate means authorized or constituted by law. A demonstration of this is the case of *Director of State Security Service & Anor v. OlisaAgbakoba (1995)*, wherein the Respondent upon the forceful seizure of his passport at the

Murtala Mohammed Airport brought an application pursuant to the provisions of Order 1 rule 2(3) of the Fundamental Rights (Enforcement Procedure) Rules, Cap. 62 seeking the following reliefs:

1. A declaration that the forceful seizure of the applicant's passport No. A654141 by agents of the State Security Services (sic) (1st respondent herein) on April 21, 1992 is a gross violation of the applicant's right to personal liberty, freedom of thought, freedom of expression and freedom of movement respectively guaranteed under **Sections 32, 35, 36 and 38 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979 (as amended)** and is accordingly unconstitutional and illegal.
2. An order of mandatory injunction directing the respondents to release applicant's passport No. A 654141 to him forthwith.
3. An order of perpetual injunction restraining the respondents from seizing the applicant's passport without cause, or in any other way violating the applicant's rights to personal liberty, freedom of thought, expression and freedom of movement as guaranteed by the provisions of the 1979 Constitution aforementioned.

The Supreme Court in upholding the ruling of the Court of Appeal found that no legal right in the officials of the State Security Service was established to justify their seizure of the respondent's passport at the MurtalaMuhammed Airport, Lagos on the 21st day of April, 1992. The court also found that the powers conferred on the State Security Service under the National Security Agencies Act, Cap. 278, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria do not include the seizure or withdrawal of passports. Similarly, they do not cover the impounding of passports by officials of the SSS without due authorization by the appropriate Minister as prescribed by law. The action of the SSS was therefore found unlawful and an order of N10, 000.00 awarded in favor of the respondent as costs.

Similarly In *OlisaAgbakoba vs. FG, the NJC & National Assembly (2013)*: the applicant as a concerned citizen brought an action challenging the present appropriation practice of the Defendants, whereby the Judicial Arm of Government is dependent on the 1st Defendant for judicial estimates and funding which as a matter of fact violate Sections 81 and 84 of the Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 and therefore unconstitutional; based on the underlying concept of the doctrine of separation of powers is to ensure the independence of each branch of government and in relation to the judicial arm of government, an independent judiciary is crucial to upholding the rule of law in a democratic society. The rationale for an independent Judiciary is to enable the Courts to freely decide cases without external influence and to provide enough funds to maintain and sustain judicial business.

In line with **Section 81(2) and Section 84(i), (2), (3), (4), and (7) CFRN 1999** by virtue of which the remuneration, salaries and allowances of judicial officers and the recurrent expenditures of the Judiciary should be charged on the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation and paid directly to the 2nd Defendant. Rather than implement these Constitutional provisions that guarantee judicial independence, the Defendants are in joint continuing breach of same. As a result of this, the judiciary is continually dependent on the 1st Defendant for its Budgeting and Funds.

The above act of the applicant demonstrate the fact that private citizens have the freedom to demand that due process of the law is followed by those in authority and that government is held accountable for its activities in line with the provisions of the law.

Furthermore, outside the inherent judicial powers vested on the courts by the constitution, other regulatory and public agencies also perform quasi-adjudicatory functions through their respective remedial mechanisms.

The Central Bank of Nigeria for instance performs this role through their Consumer Protection Office^{xiv}; other public platforms include the Nigerian Police Force Public Complaint Rapid Response Unit (2016); Public Complaint Commission/Ombudsman; the National Human Rights Commission, and through various Committees of the Legislative Houses in the exercise of their oversight functions under the Constitution, the National Salaries, Income and Wages Commission, and the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission. By Section 105 of the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection ("FCCP") Act of 2018, Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission ("FCCPC") takes precedence over and above such relevant government agency in matters of mergers/business combination.

In addition to this, any regulation by the CAC on mergers will also be subject to Guidelines jointly issued by the FCCPC and the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") on the subject.

5. Law as an Instrument of Mental Emancipation

While the effect of law on social and economic relations are easily noticeable and seen, almost in a ubiquitous manner, the same cannot be said for law as an instrument of mental emancipation. This is so because the sphere of mental activity appears to be entirely subjective depending on each individual's mental capacity and predilections than upon forced activity. Mental emancipation has to do with the thought processes of the individuals who make up a society. Can law influence these thought processes? Our answer is in the affirmative though in a limited sense but even in the limited sense can still go a long way in charting the course and destiny of the society. Why do we say so? We say so because even from the little experience of teaching and grooming lawyers, the nature of their education and training makes them already mentally emancipated by the time they leave law school and are admitted to practice law. They are by training trained to be independent minded and daring to be different. They are by their grooming prepared to have dissenting opinion no matter whose ox is gored. We believe that it is this kind of training that needed to be transplanted into our sciences and technological fields to propel development.

The truth is that sometimes, people need to be saved from themselves and it may take the intervention of law to achieve. When a society has become accustomed to be dependent on the thoughts of other people, then there is a problem. No society rises above the thought-processes of its own people. Our own society needs to rise up and chart its course especially scientifically and technologically by encouraging research and development and self dependence rather than dependence on the West. In this wise, I will quickly refer to a policy in a Nigerian University, specifically, the University of Nigeria's impact factor policy. The policy is a display of leadership totally emasculated and in mental slavery of over-dependence on the West; of a leadership that needed to be saved from itself. The curricula of all the strata of our educational tiers are the products of law and policy. The funding of education is the product of law and policy – the Appropriation Act in the first instance and then, subsidiary legislation here and there. The curricula and funding of education can be designed in such a way that the interest of children in science and technology and technological development is sustained; and that breakthroughs result in economic output for the country, well designed and well packaged for export. The curricula and funding of education can be designed and packaged in such a way that children are thought to believe in themselves, in their country and with the ability to question anything, not taught to believe that everything western is good; and most importantly, to believe in their inventive ability.

6. Conclusion

There is no doubt that Law has a critical role to play as an effective instrument for socio-economic emancipation as can be seen from the plethora of laws and judicial precedents highlighted above. It is also correct to say that the law to some extent has been practically utilized in the socio-economic liberation of Nigeria. However much more needs to be done in the face of endemic corruption that has emasculated the social and economic development of the country Nigeria. It follows that the law should be used more aggressively in the social and economic emancipation of Nigeria. The law is certainly the answer to the current state of social and economic decay and dilapidation in Nigeria. The current situation where Nigeria is run like a canteen from which the owner does not eat because the food is bad can only be arrested by the instrumentality of the law. When the law for instance ensures that the children of those responsible for fixing our schools are enrolled in the messed up schools, the schools will be fixed in a jiffy. In the same way, once the law ensures that those responsible for the degradation of our hospitals are treated in those hospitals they have left to rot, our hospitals will become world class in a little moment. There is also no doubt that if the instrumentality of the law is applied in seeing that those in in positions of authority at all levels are compelled to depend also on the poor public utilities like water, electricity, roads etc, the story will change for the better. It is also observed that, when it comes to mental emancipation and liberating the minds and thought processes of the people so as to be truly independent of the West, Law takes on a limited role. We think that it is high time law takes on a more proactive role

in guiding the people towards not only economic and social emancipation but also mental emancipation. This is best reflected in the nature of the laws guiding our educational system, substantively and procedurally.

Endnotes

ⁱFinance Act 2019 (Act No. 1) which came into force on 13th January, 2020.

ⁱⁱ Part 1, Sections 1-23 of the Act

ⁱⁱⁱ Part 4, Sections 33 to 47 of the Act

^{iv} Part 5, Section 48 of the Act

^v Part 3, Sections 25 to 32 of the Act

^{vi} Part 6, Sections 49 to 51 of the Act

^{vii} Part 7, Sections 52 to 56 of the Act

^{viii} Part 2, Sections 24 of the Act

^{ix} Section 9 of the Act which amends section 23 of the CITA

^x Section 9 (c) of the Finance Act

^{xi} See section 48 of the Act

^{xii} See section 45 of the Act which substitute section 42 of the Value Added Tax Act with a new section 42

^{xiii}Section 13 (f) of the National Minimum Wage Act

^{xiv}Central Bank of Nigeria, Consumer Protection, available at <https://www.cbn.gov.ng/Supervision/cpdcomgt.asp> last accessed on 19 February, 2021.

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