

FARMERS/ HERDSMEN CONFLICT AND FOOD SECURITY IN OBANLIKU, UPPER CROSS RIVER REGION OF NIGERIA, SINCE 1997

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Abstract

The paper examined and analyzed the factors responsible for the clashes between farmers and herdsmen in Obanliku and its impacts on food security system in the area. It is argued that the early 1990s heralded an upsurge of violent conflicts between farmers and herdsmen in the Upper Cross River region of Nigeria. The attendant loss of human lives and destruction of farm lands has adversely affected agricultural activities resulting in hunger and food shortage in the area. The multidisciplinary approach to historical studies was adopted in resolving research questions by integrating documentary and oral in the content analysis. The paper indicates that the major cause of the conflict is struggle for acquisition and control of arable lands for farming and grazing, especially in the dry season. Other triggers of the conflict were: crop destructions, cattle rustling, pollution of water bodies and extortion of herders by traditional rulers. Efforts to resolve the conflict by Government and stakeholders so far have been unsuccessful. The paper concludes that as a result of the long established residence of the herders based on mutual understanding, traditional approaches to conflict resolution anchored on traditional norms and values should be adopted to resolve the incessant conflict to engender food security.

Keywords: Conflict; Farmers; Herdsmen; Food security, Conflict resolution

Introduction

Conflicts between farmers and herdsmen have existed since the beginning of Agriculture in West Africa but the prevalence of tsetse and low settlement densities kept the incidence of clashes at a low frequency until the 20th century (Blench 4). But with the coming of colonial regimes and the collapse of indigenous states, conflict between farmers and herdsmen took a different dimension becoming more associated with competition for natural resources (Awogbade 162). In Nigeria, though the clashes are still historically rooted in competition for access to land, it has been reconfigured in recent times in new and striking ways. Today's conflicts are violent and protracted, involving very sophisticated weapons, the use of mercenary elements and methods that border on terrorism (Bala 10). Global terrorism index ranked the Nigerian Fulani pastoralists who are masterminds of these conflicts and operate extensively in West and Central Africa as the fourth deadliest terror group in the world after ISIS, Boko Haram and Al-Shabab. These Pastoralists group operating mostly in the middle belt region of Nigeria have according to report, killed over 1,229 people by 2014, with each attack claiming on average not less than ten lives (Idyorough 129).

In February 2016 over 300 people, including children and women were killed in Agatu Local Government Area in Benue State by Fulani herdsmen (Ojo 28). Similarly, over 40 persons were massacred in Southern Enugu in April 2016 (Bagudu 27). Thousands of crop farmers have been displaced from their ancestral homes and forced to live in impoverished internally displaced camps having lost their farmlands and homesteads. Women have been raped and properties and farm produce worth billions of Naira destroyed. These conflicts no doubt are direct threats to the country's food security system because both crop farmers and livestock breeders are the primary sources of food in Nigeria, particularly for the urban areas of most states that depend largely on food supplied from rural communities to feed her teeming population.

In the period before 1904, the problem was mainly restricted to the savanna belt of West Africa where cattle rearing were more prevalent and crop production was carried out only during the short rainy season for subsistence. This gave the Fulani pastoralists access to a vast area to graze their cattle. However, the combination of factors such as the expansion of both human and herds population putting pressure on grazing resources in the Fulani traditional abode in the semi-arid zone of the north, improvement in modern veterinary support measures which reduced the threat from trypanosomiasis (a deadly cattle disease) in the south, market and supply-side economics, as well as improved security, forced most of the herdsmen to begin a southward migration to the coastal zone (Blench 175). For the first time Fulani pastoralist penetrated Igbo land when they entered Anambra State in 1975 (Awogbade 23). The southward migration continued until they reached Kaiama in Rivers State in 1990 (Ishaku 36). With this development, the occasional farmers and herdsmen clashes were no longer a northern problem but have spread to communities in the south.

The rationale for Situating Obanliku, Upper Cross River Region, for the Study

With its headquarters at Sankwala, Obanliku is one of the eighteen Local Government Areas in Cross River State of Nigeria. It was carved out of Obudu Local Government on the 27th of August, 1991 by the General Ibrahim Babangida led military administration. Obanliku over the years has witnessed unprecedented migration and settlement of Fulani herdsmen in almost all the communities. There are two reasons for this development. First, the area around Utanga/Becheve Mountains provides a suitable and ideal environment for livestock breeding. Thus, Fulani herdsmen took advantage of such suitable climatic conditions to make incursion into this area earlier beginning from the colonial era. Second, Obanliku Local Government shares boundary with the Republic of Cameroon and Benue State which has witnessed persistent conflicts between crop farmers and Fulani herdsmen leading to the migration of many Fulani herdsmen to the area. In March 2012, over 3,000 Fulani herdsmen fled from Katsina-Ala in Benue State to Obanliku Local Government Area, following conflicts

between them and the local people. They arrived Obanliku in truck loads along with their women and children as well as thousands of their livestock.

Although some of the herdsmen were repatriated by the state government following public outcry and protest by the local communities, many escaped being repatriated and have continued to swell the ranks of Fulani herdsmen in the area. The influx of herdsmen from neighbouring Benue and the Republic of Cameroon since the 1990s put pressure on the already dwindling land and water resources. Violence became common and widespread between the newly arrived herdsmen and their host farmers leading to loss of human lives and destruction of farmlands. Bala Takaya rightly observed that:

Any migration, agrarian or urban, that involves a sizeable population shift from one cultural locale into another would invariably generate conflicts over space, land or water resources, or may even generate a problem of socio-political adjustment in its wake (9).

Furthermore, the wanton killings and destruction of farmlands, orchestrated by Fulani herdsmen across the country, particularly in Benue that shares a common boundary with Obanliku have led to growing anti-Fulani sentiments across Obanliku and the entire Cross River State. This has further exacerbated tension in the area. The situation in Obanliku is generally similar to what happens elsewhere in the country.

Theoretical and Analytical Framework

This paper is anchored on the combination of Human needs and an Eco-Violence theory of conflict. Both theories are mutually exclusive in explaining the subject matter of farmers/herdsmen conflict and food security in Nigeria. Human needs theory of conflict was propounded by John Galtung and expanded by John Burton, Edwar Azar, Max Neef, Rossati and others (Faleti 52). The theory holds that all humans have basic

needs which they seek to and that the denial and frustration of these needs by other groups or individuals could affect them immediately or later by leading to conflict (Rossati 43). Needs Theorists over time have identified some of these basic needs of which their deprivation may lead to conflict. Maslow identified physiological needs, safety needs, sense of belonging and love, esteem and self-actualization (96).

Edward Azar identified some basic needs like security, identity, social recognition of identity and effective participation in the processes that shape such identities (23). Nevertheless, John Burton's contributions to the development of Needs Theory stand him out as one of the greatest proponents of the theory. Burton identified some needs as basic needs such as food, shelter, sex, reproduction and identity, the deprivation of which will cause violent conflict (72). Burton further identified a link between frustration which forces humans into acts of aggression and the desire on the part of such individuals or groups to satisfy their basic needs.

Proponents of the human needs theory have agreed that the immediate cause of the conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in the study area is often tied to the destruction of crops of local farmers by herds. Response from farmers to protect their crops often results in conflict leading to widespread destruction. Similarly, the Fulani herdsmen often complained about the encroachment on grazing land by farmers and the stealing of their cattle (cattle rustling) by the locals. This often leads to frustration and tension for the herdsmen and eventually violent conflict with the locals to protect their herds. It is pertinent to note that the livelihood of Fulani pastoralists revolves around cattle rearing. A Fulani herdsman Ahmed Saidu was quoted to have said:

Our herd is our life because to every Nomad life is worthless without his cattle. What do you expect from us when our source of existence is threatened? The encroachment of grazing field and routes by farmers is a call to war (Ishaku 30).

From the analysis above, it is clear that conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen is a struggle for livelihood and survival which is tied to land-based resources for farming and grazing to meet farmers and herders basic needs (Otor 693). The frustration of these needs hampers the actualization of the potentials of group and individual farmers and herdsmen leading to conflict. To resolve this type of conflict or even prevent a recurrence, the needs have to be meeting with appropriate satisfiers, those things that were denied the conflict parties (Faleti 53) in the first instance.

Eco-violence theory, on the other hand, is an emerging theoretical proposition by Thomas Homer Dixon in the late 1990s which seek to explain the relationship between population growth, environmental scarcity and violent conflict in Africa. Eco-violence theory is inextricably linked to the Malthusian demographic construction in his famous book, *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798). According to Malthus, the population will grow exponentially, and if unchecked, there would be more pressure on scarce resources which will lead to violence or war. He further argues that food insecurity will be high as food production cannot match the rapid population growth in the world (Malthus in Atwi 34).

Paul Enrich also expressed a similar argument in his book *Population Bomb* published in 1970. However, research on the relationship between the environment, population explosion, scarcity of natural resources and conflict nexus has been progressive and categorized into three generations. The first generation emerged in the early 1980s and argued that environmental issues must be considered or included in any security analysis or the concept of security. At the beginning of the 1990s, the second generation led by Homer-Dixon emerged as a critique of the work of the first generation (Samuel Atwi 45).

Their primary objective was to shift environmental-security researchers from focusing on “conceptual polemic and to base research on firm empirical ground” (Ronfeldt 79). Their works are more empirical as compared to the first-generation because it was based on case studies to

establish the causal links between environmental scarcity and conflict. Lastly, in the mid-1990s, the third generation emerged as a critique of the approach adopted by the second generation, their research including methodology (Atwi 46) They also argued that several dependent variables should be included, if not, problems such as cases of cooperation in environmental-security investigations and inter-state conflict can erupt because of environmental issues (Ronfeldt 80).

Despite these criticisms, the key influential group in the environmental scarcity debate was the second generation under the leadership of Homer-Dixon. Their findings championed the Environmental scarcity-conflict argument. They found out that, decreased quality and quantity of renewable resources, population growth and resource access combine in various ways to produce scarcity of arable land, water supplies, forests, grazing lands and fish stock. Influential people in the community may, therefore, capture and control the scarce resources, resulting in unequal access for the poor and least powerful groups. They argue that this can reduce the economic productivity of the affected weaker or poorer group, who may, therefore, be forced to move in search of new arable lands for farming/pastures. Those who migrate to new lands may face opposition from the indigenes, which can result in ethnic conflict since they are seen as aliens (Homer-Dixon 3).

For this paper, eco-violence theory offers an insight into the nature and dynamics of herdsmen/farmers conflict in Obanliku. The conflicts have often been driven by the desperation of farmers/herdsmen to protect and advance their livelihood interest in the context of an ever-shrinking ecological space, characterized by resource scarcity, population expulsion, and resource competition (Atelhe and Okoli 80). The continued migration of Fulani herdsmen from Cameroon and neighbouring states in Nigeria in search of grazing field has increased the population of resource users in Obanliku. As population increases, the demand for land and water for cropping and cattle rearing within the area inhabited by indigenous farmers, early Fulani settlers and migrant herdsmen have increased. It is

this competition over land and water resources between the groups that are fueling the frequent conflict between farmers/herdsmen in Obanliku.

Causes of Farmers/ Herdsmen Conflict in Obanliku

As the conflict between farmers and herders in many parts of the country escalated into widespread violence, loss of property, displacement of people and loss of lives, several historical, social and environmental factors have been adduced to be responsible for this phenomenon. For this paper, we will summarize some of these factors with specific reference to our study area

Evolution of Mechanized Commercial Farming in Obanliku

The evolution of commercial farming in Obanliku is a contributory factor to farmers/herders clashes in the area. Taking advantage of Government agricultural policy and the increasing demand for agricultural products both for domestic and industrial consumption, some elites in Obanliku embarked on massive mechanized farming taking over grazing areas. For instance, the establishment of *Godilogo farms* for the cultivation, processing and marketing of Cassava products in 2005 reduced significantly the land available for Fulani Cattle herders who were already settled in Obanliku for grazing. The farm measuring over 2000 hectares of land is located in Blukunu community in Bebi council ward. Similarly, in a deliberate policy to promote large scale commercial farming, the Cross River State Government under Sen. Prof. Ben Ayade established Farms in the study area. Under this arrangement, over 1000 hectares of land have been allocated for large scale cultivation of rice and cassava. Given these developments, other areas grazed by the Fulani have been taken over by host farmers and the remains of what constitutes what was given to the herdsmen for grazing by the community do not permit strayed movement of cattle, which always destroys crops and farmlands. This explains why clashes between herdsmen and farmers are mostly reported in these communities during the dry season

Environmental Changes

Some of the changes to traditional Transhumance pattern of the Fulani were more intrinsically linked to environmental changes than Government policies even though the government ought to have made adequate preparation for it. Jonathan Ishaku observed that “Environmental changes, though not completely new; the cycle of drought in the north, notably (the 1970 drought), the increasing desertification of the Sahel, the drying of Lake Chad have been well known to both farmers and pastoralist in the past but it has recently been deepened by the phenomenon of global warming” (43) Drought and desertification have degraded pastures, dried up many natural water sources across Nigeria’s far-northern Sahelian belt and forced large numbers of herders to migrate south in search of grassland and water for their herds. The influx of nomadic herders from neighbouring Benue State into Communities in Obanliku has turned the once peaceful communities into a battleground between farmers and nomadic population due to the decreasing availability of land for farming and grazing. It is this competition over land and water resources between the groups that are fueling the frequent conflict between farmers/herdsmen in the area.

The proliferation of Small and Light Weapons

It would not be out of place to mention the proliferation of arms as a key factor in fueling and sustaining farmer – herdsmen conflict in the study area. By 2011, it was estimated that over 640 million small arms were circulating the world and of these, 100 million were in Africa and eight million were in West Africa. Most intriguing is the fact that 59 per cent of these were in the hands of civilians (Oji and Okeke 16). Small arms and light weapons are easy to conceal, maintain and cheap to procure and use, but very lethal. Considering the porous nature of the Nigerian borders, the situation is better imagined than seen.

Obanliku shares a common boundary with the Republic of Cameroon. The boundary around this area has never been properly defined on the ground,

due to the difficult terrain of the area as a large portion is under hills, valleys, thick forest, water and swamps which made it difficult for proper demarcation to be effected by the Nigerian/Cameroon mixed boundary commission. The situation is further compounded by the lack of a Nigeria border post and constant patrol in the area which has resulted in illicit trade in contraband goods and influx of alien to Nigeria (Bonchuk 69). This route over the years has become a haven for illegal arms dealers smuggling thousands of assault rifles and ammunition into Nigeria from Cameroon and vice versa especially during this period of fighting between separatist group and Government forces in Cameroon. Armed herdsmen from the Republic of Cameroon readily arrived communities in the study area either in the anticipation of crises or to ignite one when confronted by local farmers (Sunny Ayang 12/2/2018).

For instance, in one of the study villages in Bishiri, an informant reported that in January 2018, two Fulani herdsmen were sighted with two AK-47 rifles in the bush around the boundary between Buya and Bebi. Security men and local vigilantes were immediately mobilized into the bush in search of them to no avail. The matter was reported to Alhaji Baba the chief of the Fulani community in Obanliku who promised to investigate and bring those involved to book. The fear of armed Fulani herdsmen in the area is still looming large in the entire community; resident has continued to live in fear over renewed clashes with herdsmen (Sunny Ayang interviewed 12/2/2018).

Extortion of herdsmen by Traditional Rulers and Landowners

Field research also indicated that one of the major triggers of hostilities between the two groups in Obanliku is the extortion of herdsmen by local chiefs and land owners. They secretly collect monies and gifts from herdsmen for permission to settle and graze within their domain, in most cases without the knowledge of the entire community. To the herdsmen, the monetary exchange with traditional rulers is interpreted as payment for the right to pasture and graze their cattle, regardless of whether on crops or

grass and the herdsmen assume this right and defend it when accused of destroying crops. An informant reported the matter in the following words:

For some time now residents of Bugene have been living in fear of reprisal attacks by Fulani herdsmen in the area following the killing of a Fulani man in November 2017 by a farmer when the former attempted to stab him in the bush over disputed grazing land. The farmer overpowered him and stabbed him to death. This incident was the result of a traditional ruler receiving money from the herdsman for the right to graze without the knowledge of the land owner. For the Fulani, the right to graze is tantamount to land ownership (Friday Kanang 10/1/2018).

Worst still, the herdsmen operate without recourse to local boundaries and traditional land use system between their host communities and other villages where grazing is not permitted. This often results in clashes between herders and farmers in these communities and sometimes to inter-communal boundary clashes between Fulani/host communities and their neighbours.

Destruction of Crops

The destruction of harvested crops and crops on farmland is one of the immediate causes of the clashes in Obanliku. Farmers often complained that cattle of Fulani herders damage their crops on the field, and this activity often takes place in the night or at dawn when farmers are at homes, which makes it difficult for them to stop or prevent the animals. Crops such as yam, cassava and maize are widely consumed as herbage/pasture by the cattle. Sometimes extreme lean season inexperienced or young herders deliberately drive their cattle through farmland or uproot farmer crops to feed their cattle. Herders interviewed admitted that farm destruction by herds happens but quickly added that in most cases it is not intentional but because it is difficult to control hungry cattle. Nevertheless, they agreed that some Fulani herders consciously

allow their cattle to destroy farms or harvested crops and remained unconcerned because cattle owners do not provide them with food, clothes, boots and other essential things needed to do their work. They further blamed such destruction on migrating herdsman who stay for a short period, and have nothing to lose and not the settlers. This set of herders feed their animals with anything including crops, but when the farmers find out that their crop has been destroyed, they come straight to confront the settled herders, since the farmers are angry, they would not listen to any explanation (Alhaji Sule interviewed 15/1/2018). Informant's assertion above corroborates the works of scholars who have attributed crop destruction as the direct cause of farmers-herders' conflicts in the middle belt of Nigeria (Ishaku 16, Ganyi 34, Bala Takaya)

Competition Over Land for Farming and Grazing

A major cause, both as a trigger and underlying factor, of the conflict, is competition for arable land. Farmers need land for growing their crops, herders also demand the same land for grazing their animals. Cattle are raised in the study area through the open grazing method, grazing in the open and drinking from public streams. Herdsman feed their cattle in the wild or acquire land from landowners, especially traditional authorities. Most of the herders are illiterate, some unscrupulous landowner leases land to them in the area without any formal agreement or the knowledge of other members of the host communities. When the farmer showed up and demand their land it usually results in conflict. Because of this development, most communities in the area have resolved not to lease land to Fulani herders again, some have gone even further to ban herders from entering or grazing in their domain. This finding lay credence to the findings of some scholars that a key trigger and underlying cause of farmers-herder conflict is competition over land and water. Since herders' access to land is constrained, depletion of the grass (overgrazing) typically sets in, which forces them to go beyond their boundaries in search of pastures and water (Blench 126, Takaya 12, Ganyi 36).

Impact of farmers/herdsmen clashes on Food Security in Obanliku

The basic component of food security to be considered in analyzing food security in a given area must include production, availability of the food, access and stability of supplies over time. Therefore, our analyses will focus on the impact of the clashes on this basic component of the food security system in Obanliku, Upper Cross River Region.

Reduction in Crop and Cattle Production

In Obanliku like many rural communities in Nigeria, a greater percentage of the population is engaged in farming various food and cash crops like yam, cassava, rice, groundnut, ground beans etc. However, a substantial motivation for the production of these crops is for household consumption. Hence, the disruption of the production process, the distribution of crops or the inability to cultivate directly as a result of the clashes affects the command over food of the household members and by extension the entire community. Some farmers lose the whole year fortune when their matured or growing crops are destroyed and what is left is unable to recover due to unfavourable conditions of dry seasons. Farmers are compelled to farm on the same land every year because of the fear of crop destruction by cattle when they cultivate on lands that are remote from settlements, and this has resulted in low production since the lands are overused thereby losing most of their nutrients. Encroachment of farmlands has also prevented farmers from expanding their farms or cultivating on a large scale. All these have caused a decline in yields thereby reducing farmer's proceeds. Similarly, the clashes have led to disruption of farming activities because most farm household members abandon their farm and take refuge here because clashes usually occur during the peak of farming seasons, most farmers would not go to the farm for fear of being attacked. The implication of this is low productivity in the following harvest seasons.

On the other hand, herders were even more vulnerable compared to crop farmers, because their cattle were confiscated, seized or killed during the conflict. The conflict-affected their movement, migration and livestock. It

also affected their access to grazing fields, lives and property. Many were forcefully ejected from their host communities in Obanliku area as a result of uncompensated damages done to the farming communities. In areas where the conflict was severe, they were forced to abandon their cattle and fled the community. Cumulatively, these have ripple effects on both the productive resources, the productivity of livestock which in turn affect income, food and nutrition and health security of not only the pastoralist but the entire community. This no doubt translates into a lower daily supply of protein for the local population who depend on Fulani pastoralist for meat, milk and animal blood. A Fulani herder Alhaji Guda affected by the conflict narrates that; “before we migrated to our present abode here in Bayulga. I lost almost all my animals in the conflict between our people and Buya community in 1997. Our cattle were slaughtered in their numbers. I lost more than 50 cattle in the clashes. Life became very difficult for me and my household. Having lost my source of livelihood, I was leaving at the mercies of my kinsmen. I had no choice but to abandon cattle rearing which is our God-given profession for farming and petty trading in other to fend for myself and my family. Having saved some money from my business and with the help of my kinsmen, I went back to cattle rearing in 2000. Apart from the fact that cattle rearing is our main source of livelihood, to an average Fulani man life is worthless without his cattle (interviewed, 19/2/2018)”.

Lack of Access to Food Produced

Access to available food is another dimension of food security which is a central pivot in determining whether individuals/households are food secured or not. According to Simmons, access means that “consumers have both the physical and economic ability to acquire the food they need.” (12) Physical access can be realized through one’s production while economic access is dependent on income and the prices of food on the market. Therefore, the supply or production of enough food is not sufficient to ensure food for all households, especially in developing countries. The reason is that despite food aid, importation of food and commercial farming hunger remains a problem especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia

and some part of South America. Poverty is named as the cause since the poor are unable to afford food or produce their own due to lack of resources such as land, farm tools and others (Clover 15).

Therefore, national governments and international organizations efforts in tackling hunger should focus on accessibility with regards to individuals and households. Crop farmers and herders in Obanliku over the years depended on the income generated from the sale of their crops and herds for their livelihood, such earnings were used to buy other food needed for consumption. But hostilities between herdsman and farmers usually disrupt the marketing process of these by cutting access road accepting transport or prohibiting market transaction to take place. The result is food insecurity in the area especially for the farmer/herders household not only because their production capacity is hampered, but because they cannot command the sale of food in the market. Their inability to purchase food items from the market as a result of low income will define hunger and poverty for the herders/farmer and by extension the entire community.

Reduction in Supply and Availability of Food in Local Markets

Another area where the conflict between local farmers and herdsman is having a negative impact on food security system in the study area is in the supply and availability of food over time in local markets across the local government area. This is because when food production, storage and distribution are in imperiled as a result of hostilities between the major producers of food. The supply and availability of food to local markets decreases while the demand for food increases. It also pushed prices of food upward; more people need to rely on the market, while the latter receive less food to be sold. If the local markets are not able to receive supplies from market further away, the upward pressure on the price may be tempered. Conflicting parties usually cut off local communities from the supply of food and non-food items from other areas, which aggravates local food insecurity, potentially leading to famine (Honfonga and Boom 167-182).

Communities in Obanliku have depended largely on cereal food crops purchased from local markets in Benue State to supplement their local food production. Market such as Vandikya, Adikpo, Zakibiam, Iyong, Tsar in Benue State have been noted for the sale of cereals such as rice, guinea corn, millet and beans. However, the incessant conflict and attacks by herdsmen cut off access to these markets, disrupts transportation and equally affect transaction. When trade is allowed to take place in these markets, informants report that the markets are no longer safe and viable for traders to take part as a result of confiscation of goods, theft or high taxes. Rose Akamgbe who traded on rice and millet recounts her experience:

I no longer go to Adikpo to buy rice and millet for sale here in Sankwala market. Sometimes you will leave Obanliku for Adikpo only to be turned back as a result of protest by Tiv people over herdsmen killings. They usually block the road during such protest. The whole place is no longer safe for business again. Even if you get to the market, the prices of these food items are four times their usual prices. The best thing to do is to look for a different line of business” (interviewed on 13/12/2018).

The informant’s assertion above was the same with many other traders who traverse Obanliku in upper Cross River and Benue State for business. The resultant effects are limited supply and availability of these food crops in local markets in the study villages which could lead to food insecurity in the area.

Disruption in Stability of Food Supply

Another component to be considered when analyzing food security in a given area is the stability of the food supply. It ensures that availability, access, and utilization remain stable to avoid any temporary or short-term food insecurity. USAID defined stability as “The ability to access and utilize appropriate levels of nutritious food over time” (126). In most

definitions of food security, there is the presence of “at all times” which implies stability. Therefore, stability cannot be ignored when measuring food security. Stability can be guaranteed when supply is constant to meet demands, access improved and food appropriately utilized by all.

However, stability can be affected by two main factors: natural disasters or through man-made activities. Natural disasters may include; flood, low rainfall due to climate change and earthquake whereas man-made activities include violent conflict, political instability, land degradation, use of harmful chemicals and over-use of farmlands. The conflict between herdsman and farmers in the study villages often result in instability in the supply and availability of food over time. This often leads to fluctuations in supply which results in occasional food insecurity in the study area. A farmer lamented the prevailing food situation in the following words:

The supply and availability of food in our market is no longer stable. Today you will go to the market to buy food and tomorrow you would not see that particular food item to buy. Take honey for instance, Becheve people are famous in the production and supply of this product, but stability in the supply of the product have been adversely affected by herdsman and farmers hostilities. Sometimes those who travel from far places to buy honey here are frustrated because of the fluctuations in the supply and prices of the product (Joseph Okangwa interviewed 15/12/2018).

The same is true of farm crops like yam, cassava, potatoes in some part of the Local Government affected by recurrent clashes between crops farmers and herdsman. Furthermore, the food security situation is further compounded by some non-conflict features of rural communities in the area such as transportation and road infrastructure. The local communities in the study villages are remote and transport infrastructure under developed and some degraded as a result of poor maintenance culture. Conflicting parties do not have to do much effort to block food supplies,

the economic incentives are working against any trader or tuck to venture into the area to supply food.

Government Actions and Policies to Resolve the Conflicts in Obanliku

The governments in collaboration with other stakeholders have taken steps to end the hostilities between these two groups. One such strategy is seeking to resolve the conflict through regular stakeholder meetings. The Local Government through its Departmental Security Officer (DSO) ensure that every month, all the security heads of the council and other key stakeholders (leaders of herders and farmers, traditional authorities, youth leaders meet regularly to address issues relating to the conflict and make plans to prevent future occurrences. Through these meetings, community task forces have been established in almost all the villages to quickly respond to any confrontation between the two groups in order to prevent it from escalating.

The Government through the instruments of the law has continued to ensure quick intervention through investigation and timely arrest and prosecution of perpetrators of murder of herdsman and farmers in the studied villages. For instance in 1997, three villagers suspected to have murdered one Mallam Dogo a Fulani herdsman and buried his corps in a shallow grave were arrested and prosecuted. They were found guilty of the crime and sentenced to life imprisonment. This singular act by the community, and law enforcement agents assuage the Fulani, it immediately resolved the impending conflict between them and the host community.

Another strategy adopted by the Local Government and Traditional institutions to prevent conflict between farmers and herders was to relocate herders and their herds from the plains where crop farming activities is mostly carried out during the rainy season. The area around the mountains offered them enough fodder and temperate climate to graze their livestock. However, some farmers in Obanliku complained of their age long practice of burning dried grasses for fresh fodders to grow in the mountain. The

fires often get out of control and spread to unintended areas, burning down economic trees in the forest.

Finally aggressive herders are sometimes expelled from the community by Local authorities. This is often the last resort particularly when all other method seems not to yield the desired result or when there are newly arrived herders whose presence in the community may lead to confrontation with the locals. The action is usually carried out by a combined team of security men and the local vigilante. Resonate as this method may be among members of the community it often worsens the situation instead of solving it. For as Tonnah argued: “when herdsmen are forcefully evicted from a conflict area, they return stronger after some months to fight” (34). This has not been the case in Obanliku but herders often accused the locals of stealing or killing their animals during such evictions resulting to more trouble between them and the host communities.

Besides, this method has failed to achieve the desired result in Obanliku because some Fulani herders have strong ties with traditional rulers and landlords, who see each other as business partners with regards to land. They (traditional rulers) host and protect them in return for cash and gifts. Herders often get information/tip-offs from these traditional rulers about any planed evictions which help them to take safe positions or move to other part of the Local Government Area. Similarly, the constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria guaranteed free movement of people from one state to another, citizens are free to live and do businesses in any part of the country. This provision sometimes makes it difficult to evict herders from other states from the community and ban them from entering again (Idyorough 127).

Application of Traditional Conflict Prevention and Resolution Methods

The attendant failures of modern approaches to conflict resolution between herders and farmers in Obanliku have brought to the fore the imperative of

looking at the traditional methods of conflict prevention and resolution, which in the pre-colonial times, and even now in some critical times served the people effectively. Traditional methods of conflict prevention and resolution, rely essentially on traditional institutions and have been found to be more inclusive, easy to apply and cost effective. These methods are built on values and beliefs, needs and interests, attitude and reactions, relationships and networks which are the foundations of social life in the traditional setting (Oshita 9). When conflict breaks out in an area, the first step towards resolution is that the actors involved (herders and farmers) try to find an amicable solution. For instance, if a farm is destroyed by cattle, the farmer and the cattle owner and or herder meet for dialogues and negotiations in a bid to resolve the destruction. When an agreement is reached, the cattle owner pays an agreed amount as compensation to the farmer and refrains from entering the farm with cattle until crops are harvested. The payment of compensation to farmers for destroyed crops by herders has been an age long practice in Obanliku which has helped in resolving conflict between the two groups over time.

However, if this method fails, the case is referred to the committee members set up for such purpose who acts as mediators for the conflicting parties. They include the Wakili (Chief) of Hausa/Fulani in the community, the chief Imam of Obanliku, some respected community leaders and youths. They listen to both parties and settle the matter, whereby in most cases the wrongdoer is asked to pay compensation, which is ensured by committee members.

Lastly, if the committee fails to resolve the conflict, the matter is brought before the chiefs and community elders in the village town hall or playground where members of the community usually gather to discuss their affairs and settled minor disputes between the locals. The chief sit with his elders in the town hall or playground to mediate and adjudicate on matters brought before them. The individual who is found guilty by the traditional court is ordered to pay compensation to the innocent party (farmer or herder) who may ask for a reduction or flexible terms of payment. Besides,

when chiefs and elders get information about plans to attack Fulani herders and vice-versa, they can avert it through a mediation process.

In Obanliku the traditional rulers have played a vital role in managing and resolving the conflict since both parties involved in the conflict revere them. Nonetheless, this paper found out that most conflicting parties, especially farmers, believe that chiefs are in league with cattle owners and Fulani herders, they alleged that chiefs lease lands to herders in order to make money (Friday Kanang interviewed on 15/12/2018). Moreover, chiefs have lost many powers and functions in the area as in many other parts of the country due to the establishment of modern government and institutions such as the Local government, police, modern courts making many farmers and herders prefer using these institutions in resolving conflict. Despite these challenges, the relevance of traditional institutions in maintaining peace and order in their domain cannot be easily wished away. They are still revered by their subject as custodians of culture thereby building faith in them. This is a strong reason to give them statutory roles by state legislatures. The relevance of these roles being restricted to the state could be further explained by the reality of the nature of herdsman and herders conflict experienced in Nigeria today for which their roles are required.

Conclusion

The paper examined the conflict between host farmers and Fulani herders which has become a recurrent decimal in Obanliku for more than a decade. It was indicated that the relationship between farmers and herdsman in the Obanliku area is highly conflictual. The conflict has led to crop destruction, killings and rustling of cattle in the quest for acquisition and control over scarce arable lands and water. This explains why the conflict is intensified during the dry season when there is acute scarcity of pastures and water for crop farming and animal grazing. The attendant loss of human lives and destruction of farm lands has adversely affected agricultural activities resulting in food shortage in the area. It is imperative that government policies and laws must seek to find space for the two

groups to operate in harmony. Confinement or ranching system of cattle rearing ought to be introduced to replace open grazing method which is now obsolete and has proven to be incompatible with current trend of global practice. Traditional methods of conflicts mediation, resolution, reconciliation and peace building particularly in areas affected have proved to be successful over time. Quite often these traditional approaches resolved the emerging conflicts to the extent that both farmers and herdsman felt satisfied and comfortable with the resolutions or outcome of the interventions.

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**ADDRESSING SEXUAL GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
(SGBV) IN GOMBE METROPOLIS: THE ROLE OF
RELIGIOUS LEADERS**

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Abstract

Sexual gender based violence is a common social problem in Nigeria especially in Gombe State of the North Eastern part of the country. Within Gombe metropolis alone, there has been an alarming increase in cases of sexual exploitation, forced early marriage, and rape of minors in the recent years. This was the result of the failure of religious leaders to stem the tides of this violence through their action or inaction. The aim of the study was to stress the importance of the role of religious leaders in addressing sexual gender violence. The objectives of the paper were to address sexual gender base violence in Gombe metropolis, identify the main categories of Sexual gender based violence, their consequences and contributing factors. The method used in this research was qualitative through the use of primary and secondary sources. A descriptive form of analysis was applied to enable the researchers to look at the extent of sexual Gender Based Violence in Gombe metropolis. The study argued that sexual gender based violence increases where there is gross failure in

addressing the menace by religious leaders. Thus, the roles of religious leaders which is very critical included supporting legal assistance, giving advice to the victims of sexual gender based violence, fighting stigmatization and discrimination against victims of sexual gender based violence and including it as a subject of study and preaching in the curricula of the seminaries for churches, and schools where Muslims train their imams.

Keywords: Addressing, Sexual, Gender Based Violence, Role, Religious leaders

Introduction

According to Angaegbu L. S, Sexual gender based violence is one of the current challenges threatening the world. He went further to say that, sexual gender based violence is evident in many parts of the world including Africa and America. For him, “Sexual gender based violence has both theological and cultural root that dates back to the origin of mankind” (15). Buttressing this, it was reported that “nearly one in four women reports sexual violence as a result of their subordinate status in the societies” (Integrated Gender Working Group of United State Agency for International Development 4). This can be evident in the way male dominate women. As pointed out by Akpan, “the review of culture formation in Africa and other parts of the world show that women are ascribed subordinate status and are sexually abused by their male counterparts” (12). This is clearly rooted in “social, economic and political structures of the society through which women are perpetually reproduced by socialization process” (Bella 16). Sexual gender based violence highlights the relationships between women subordination in the society and their increased vulnerability to violence. While men, boys and other vulnerable groups or detested populations also experience sexual gender based violence, this paper focuses specifically on addressing sexual gender

based violence against women in Gombe metropolis. Sexual gender based violence: -

is a violence involving men and women in which the female is usually the victim; and this is derived from unequal power, relationships, between men and women. It includes but not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological harm...it includes that violence which is perpetuated or condoned by the state (United Nations Population Fund 1).

On the other hand, sexual gender based violence can show itself in “physical violence, emotional violence, economic violence, and harmful traditional practices” (Community Change Agent 33). For Mathew Kukah “In Nigeria, and Gombe metropolis in particular, women have suffered immense humiliation, rape discrimination, rejection as well as deprivation as a result of gender bias. Such experience has over the years set back women and affects their peace and dignity as well as their right as human being.” According to National Survey on Violence Against Children conducted by United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund in 2014, Gombe state has recorded 52% prevalence of the sexual gender based violence (SGBV) in Nigeria. The findings further revealed high incidence of emotional, physical and sexual forms of violence against women in Gombe state. In the months of March and April 2020, there were “19 and 39 reported cases of sexual gender based violence in Gombe metropolis” (United Nations Nigeria 6).

In like manner, the Commissioner of Police Gombe State Command, Maikudi Shehu disclosed that in 2020, there were over 250 reports of rape across the state”. The police boss lamented that such rape cases have been “steadily climbing up”. The Police Boss also during a media briefing on Wednesday January 6th 2021 pointed out that within six days in the New Year there were already seven (7) cases of rape that have been reported to the police”. He went further to say that: this particular “menace is what is disturbing the generality of the people because most of the victims are

minors they are children of Six years and below, and they are being exploited by unscrupulous elements who are adults. Their age ranges from 34 to 60, 70” (Complain about frequent Rape in Gombe 1-2)

Buttressing this, Abdulrazaq Mungadi also reported that the “Gombe State Police Commissioner while parading some suspects for raping girls under the age of 10 and 14 years –old in the state pointed out that “Rape cases bites harder in the state as police record three (3) and more cases daily in the state” According to him, despite the efforts of the government, SGBV cases in the state is on the increase daily (Rape bites Harder in Gombe 3). The main objectives of this paper are to address sexual gender base violence in Gombe metropolis, identify the main categories of Sexual gender based violence, their consequences, contributing factors and the role religious leaders could play to address the challenges of sexual gender based violence in Gombe metropolis.

Categories of Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence refers to sexual bustle where permission is not acquired or freely given. Sexual violence can also be described as “the abuse of sex and non-consenting sexual contact of any kind” including unwanted torching; sexual assault, such as rape, sodomy and coerced nudity; sexual explicit photography; and sexual contact with any person incapable of giving consent” (Sibani 432). In most cases, the victims that experience sexual violence are mostly women. While such violence is carried out by men, the perpetrators in most cases are known by the victim as a friend, co-worker, neighbor, or family member. On the other hand, “sexual violence includes, unwanted touching, rape and physical contacts. He went further to say that sexual violence can impair health in many ways such as chronic pain, stomach problems, and sexual transmitted diseases” (Atado 20). Sexual violence is also linked to sexual abuse and negative health behaviors. In most cases, sexual violence is not reported to the police and other security agents because of fear of being stigmatized, their stories of

abuse will not be believed and they may be ashamed or embarrassed when they share their experiences especially when it has to do with a close relation or friend of the extended family. On the other hand, sexual violence is not reported because of the threat issued to the victims. For Ugwu S.T., some signs of sexual violence in peoples in later life are genital injuries, human bites marks, imprint injuries, and bruising on thighs, buttocks, breast, face, and neck. He went further to say that other signs of sexual violence include fear, anxiety, mistrust and dramatic change in victim's behavior and many more" (31).

Physical violence

Physical violence is any non-accident and deliberate act causing injury or trauma to another person by a way of body contact. An example of physical violence includes hitting, slapping and beating. Another words for physical violence is physical abuse. As a result of physical violence, "women are beaten and punished for supposed transgression, raped and even murdered. In most cases, various acid attacks leave them with horrific disfigurements" (Uchem 34). Physical violence leaves the victims with wounds scars and painful experiences. Therefore, physical violence has to do with injuries which can lead to permanent disabilities and can lead to death. Take for instance in women, physical violence can lead to miscarriage, and forced abortion. This can happen during rape and sexual exploitation by men.

Emotional Violence

Emotional violence which also refers to psychological violence covers "repeated verbal abuse". This can happen as a result of sexual gender based violence. The incessant insults and tyrannies which constitute emotional or psychological abuse may be more painful than the physical attacks because they effectively undermine women's security and self- confidence (Oduyoye 22). This happens as a result of the outcome of rape or sexual exploitation

Contributing Factors to Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

There are many contributing factors to SGBV some of which includes:

Influence of Alcohol and Drugs

According to McKenry et al “clear evidence of links between alcohol consumption and sexual gender based violence have been found, but it is difficult to assess the exact nature of the link. Perhaps violence is more common after alcohol and drugs consumption because alcohol and drugs ‘disinhibits’ some types of behavior (a pharmacological explanation); or perhaps violence is more likely because some men blame alcohol for their misconduct (a socio-culture explanation)” (309). In buttressing this point, Gwagwa also claims that a man is more likely to be violent when he is drunk as a result of alcohol or drugs” (33). No wonder those paraded by the Gombe state police command on 6th January 2021 claimed to have raped the 10 and 14-year-old girls under the influence of alcohol and drugs”. Similarly, “men who consume much of alcohol and drugs and get drunken as a result of these substance are more likely to commit sexual gender based violence” (Alhabib, Nur and Jones, 369). This shows that people who are under the influences of drugs and alcohol can easily carry out sexual gender based violence on women. Ayuba Zira and Serah Musa in an interview opined that “there were cases where some men have sex or raped their biological daughters or little children in the community as a result of the influences of drugs and alcohol”.

Harmful Traditional Practices/Child Marriage

Harmful traditional practices are practices that are harmful to girls and women which have their root in traditional beliefs or superstition. On the other hand, child marriage is a situation where adolescents and teenagers are married to adult husbands. In most cases, the man can be twice the age of the wife, thereby making the girl child a child bride. This has become a major challenge in Gombe State as pointed out in an interview with Usman Bello Aliyu a community leader from Dukku who stated that “some people

give out their under-aged daughters in marriage because they believe traditionally and culturally it is accepted". According to Aliyu, it has become a regular practice that some elderly and rich persons prefer to marry under-aged girl child because they believe they are the best you can enjoy during sex because they are virgins. On the other hand, Ibrahim Abba and Hassana Buba also in an interview opined that "sex with or marrying under-aged girls increases one's chances of becoming rich if one dis-virgins them". No wonder most of the cases of sexual gender based violence reported in Gombe are being carried out by matured men from the ages of 35 - 70 against girl child between the ages of 7-14. "Sexual violent act such as marital rape, abduction, sexual harassment at work, within educational institutions or religious institutions, child marriage, forced prostitution or trafficking in women are harmful traditional practices" (Ushe 108). These can violate their fundamental human rights and limit the development of their capabilities in life.

Poor Communication between Families/Couples

To avoid SGBV, family which include father, mother, children and as many that are close to the family are to maintain good communication. Poor communication fertilizes SGBV. The inability to share thoughts and feelings or solicit each other's understanding on matters of personal idiosyncrasies, give rise to conflicts, marital or family disharmony, undue suspension or promotion of malice in the family. SGBV can destroy a family completely. Parents must understand, listen to and reason with their children in order to know who they interact with. In like manner, married couples should communicate on matters of sex appropriately, instead of the man telling the wife to just open her legs without her wish. This by implication means that sex matters need to be freely and properly communicated within a family.

Consequences of Sexual Gender Based Violence (GBV)

The consequences of sexual gender based violence are enormous. It all depends on the particular incidences, the woman relationship with her

abuser and the context in which the sexual gender based violence took place. Sexual gender based violence has physical, psychological and social consequences on the victims of abuse.

Physical consequences

- i. This includes injury especially when a young girl child is being dis-virgined by force
- ii. Chronic health problem
- iii. Sexual and reproductive health problem e.g contracting diseases like HIV/AIDS

Psychologically consequences

- i. Anxiety and fear
- ii. Mistrusting other people
- iii. Loneliness
- iv. Inability to concentrate
- v. Depression
- vi. Low self-esteem
- vii. Death

Social Consequences

- i. Damage of women confidence resulting in fear of going into public places like church, mosque, school and work places
- ii. Acute fear of other future violence
- iii. Reduces ability to participate in other social activities within and outside the community
- iv. Job losses due to absenteeism
- v.

Role of Religious Leaders in Fighting Sexual Gender Based Violence

Religions all over the globe speak to the inherent sacredness of human life. As a result of this, religious leaders have the moral authority to create awareness about sexual gender based violence in their communities. They

are the custodians of the peoples' faith in their communities because virtually everybody in any community belongs to one religion or the other. All these qualifies them to address social issues like sexual gender base violence and they have the capacity to bring together their communities to say "NO" to sexual gender base violence. That was why Abdurashed Yaruaduwa, during the training of religious leaders on Community Change Agents Guide for Gender Transformation Programme and Positive Masculinity, pointed out that "As guardians of the religious texts, religious leaders are the best placed to guide and influence their communities...It is recommended that religious leaders be exposed to education and awareness in respect to sexual gender based violence to be able to address the menace of sexual gender based violence in their communities. As highly influential people in their communities, religious leaders can play an important role in shifting their communities "beliefs, attitudes and behaviors" that are related to sexual gender base violence.

With the current statistics in Gombe that three or more cases of sexual gender based violence are reported on daily basis, the impact of this is being felt by the two major religions (Christianity and Islam) because their members are at the receiving end. It is in view of this that religious leaders in Gombe have to play a key role in addressing this challenge of sexual gender based violence. This will improve women's lives and reduce their risk of being exposed to sexual gender base violence. Religious leaders in the plan of action from the Africa Religious Leader's Assembly on Children and HIV/AIDS, in June 2002 in contributing toward fighting AID/AIDS commented that;

We commit ourselves to promote and develop a theology of compassion, love, healing and hope that can break through the judgment, shame and fear so often associated with sexual gender based violence...we will speak publicly at every opportunity particularly from our pulpits to counter such stigma, discrimination and affirm the God given dignity of all persons (Engaging Religious Leaders

and Communities in Addressing Gender Base Violence and HIV 9).

If religious leaders in Gombe metropolis in particular and Gombe state in general can make such commitments and take steps in addressing the challenges of sexual gender base violence, it means that this problem will be drastically reduced. Equally, in order to address SGBV in Gombe metropolis, religious leaders should endeavor to engage in the following activities:

Advocacy and Social mobilization

Religious leaders are expected to advocate and initiate approaches that spurs social mobilization in their communities on sexual gender base violence. This will help to bring social change and change of orientation or mindset in the society. They are expected to educate their subordinates (other religious leaders under them and their followers) within their communities. This should involve long term activities to create long term vision of change in regards to sexual gender base violence. Elisha Sobok pointed out that advocacy and social mobilization as regarding sexual gender based violence by religious leaders can be undertaken to achieve some or all of the following:

- i. Raising awareness or informing oneself
- ii. Helping to recognize the effect of sexual gender based violence in Gombe
- iii. Mobilizing their communities to understand its role in addressing the challenge of sexual gender based violence.
- iv. Establishing a linkage with other actors in Gombe state and beyond such as the government, security agencies, NGOs and many more on the issue of sexual gender base violence in the state
- v. Setting a positive example for other actors that a working toward eradicating sexual gender base violence to emulate

- vi. Mobilizing the community to speak with the Government through the state house of assembly to enact a law that will punish offenders of sexual gender base violence in the state.
- vii. Promoting an enabling environment for sustainable social change in Gombe state.

For religious leaders in Gombe state to be successful advocates against sexual gender base violence, they are expected to articulate issues related to gender based violence using Biblical and Qur'anic texts in such a way that they will inspire and motivate others to address the challenge of sexual gender based violence. This can be done according to Japhet Kaltume through “developing of religious messages and communication, education of people within religious institutions and communities and across faiths, offering spiritual support to those affected by gender based violence and also provide support programme for victims of sexual gender based violence”. Saleh Danburam in an interview pointed out that when “responding to sexual gender based violence, clergy and faith leaders should educate their worshippers, teach them the central tenet of their faith and ways they can live in harmony with other beliefs, with this it will not be difficult for their followers to respond positively to the fight against sexual gender based violence”. Having established this, religious leaders can draw upon their religious texts to argue for behavioral change related to sexual gender based violence. According to Usman Mohammed, religious leaders should look for Biblical text and Qur'anic text that speak on compassion, God's love, acceptance, self-discipline, tolerance, mercy and forgiveness, patience and care as it relates to sexual gender base violence to preach among their followers and the communities in which they live”. Stressing on this, Miles Reverend Al pointed out that;

We have a responsibility to preach and teach the biblical truths about God's love, which binds women and men together as equal rather than ordering them in hierarchy. As long as we refuse to fully carry out our pastoral duties, victims of sexual and domestic violence will continue to crumble emotionally, psychologically and spiritually

underneath the weight of brutality and scriptural misinterpretations, which no one deserves (67).

Religious leaders can use *Jummat* prayer sermon, *Sangaya* school (where the muslims youth are taught religious and secular education) , Bible studies, Sunday services and many more, to speak against sexual gender based violence. Additionally, religious leaders can make use of print, social and mass media to fight against sexual gender base violence.

Religious Discipline and Banishment from Religious Group

Nigeria in general and Gombe State in particular is known as a religious community. This is because there is no single street in Gombe metropolis in particular without a church building or Mosque. This by implication shows that virtually most of the perpetrators of this evil called sexual violence are either Muslims or Christians. In view of this, religious leaders and groups should expose, discipline and banish perpetrators of sexual gender based violence within their religious cycle. In line with this, Daniel Bala opined that “perpetrators of sexual gender base violence should be placed on church discipline irrespective of their status in the church and the society” According to him, if they refuse to change or repent from such a deadly sin, such persons should be excommunicated or banished from the church.

Offer Spiritual and Counselling Support to the Victim of Sexual Gender Base Violence

The main task of a religious leader is to offer support (spiritually, physically, psychologically), counselling services and many more to its followers and members of families of the victims of sexual gender base violence. According to Aliyu Ibrahim, “victims of sexual gender based violence need encouragement, care, especially those who have contracted sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS, gonorrhea, syphilis and more. Such people will need the support of religious leaders to disclose their medical statuses. Shelp Earl and Ronald H. Sunderland pointed out

that: “The loving care offered by God’s people, not the task that is performed...is the feature of the church ministry in the HIV/AIDS crisis that distinguishes it from the services provided by Government and secular agencies” (35). This by implication means that even though government and other agencies provide support, the support provided by the religious leaders and the church is of great help to victims of sexual gender base violence.

Provide SGBV Prevention and Support Programme

Apart from providing education and spiritual support, religious leaders and religious bodies can initiate, support and promote community programs for the prevention of discrimination against victims of sexual gender based violence. This can be done through preaching love and respect towards each other of which religious leader should live by example. This will make the communities in which they live to begin to examine and question actions related to sexual gender based violence and take steps to make modifications among themselves and their communities.

Working with Health Providers and other interest groups

Sexual gender based violence has a serious health implication on its victims including transmitting of sexual transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, gonorrhea, syphilis and many more. Additionally, as a result of sexual gender based violence, the victims can also get pregnant. Religious leaders cannot and don’t have the capacity to handle these health related issues. In order to achieve a desired result, religious leaders can work collaboratively with health care providers in their areas for testing and counselling services. Additionally, religious leaders and their organizations can provide financial support, equipment to health care providers within their communities. They can also advertise health programs targeted toward addressing the challenges of sexual gender based violence in their religious institutions by using either flyers, bulletins or billboards in Churches/Mosques and strategic locations. They can do well to also provide rehabilitation centers in their communities to educate and provide

skills for victims of SGBV. It is pertinent for them to engage in public awareness campaigns to draw government and public attention on issues relating to SGBV. This public awareness collaboration should involve traditional rulers in order to create and adopt new policies and programs that could support and address SGBV cases.

Conclusion

Religious leaders in Gombe state need to raise their voices for an end to silence against sexual gender based violence, stigma, negligence, fear and silence of prosecuting perpetrators. It is very clear that the Christian and Muslims leaders have not been doing much to address the challenges of sexual gender based violence in Gombe state. With theologies rooted in love and kindness, religious leaders in Gombe state are to address the menace of this scourge in the state based on their religious doctrines and beliefs. It is evident that all faiths and community leaders and their communities have the opportunities to lead by example, following the teachings of their faiths that discourage sexual gender based violence. Additionally, religious leaders can go beyond just simply following the Christian and Islamic beliefs, and serve as educators to others, guiding them to follow their beliefs and take action on issues of sexual gender base violence.

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CONSTITUTION AND SECURITY IN NIGERIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MILITARY CONSTITUTION OF 1999.

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Abstract

The 1999 constitution restored democratic rule to Nigeria, and remains in force today. However, the constitution has been seen to laughable with regards to security. In January 2011, two amendments of the 1999 constitution were signed by President Olusegun Obasanjo, the first modifications since the document came into use in 1999. But, even with that, it has been canvassed in some quarters that the present 1999 Constitution is nothing but a failed document and has been the reason behind the present predicament of the country and the issue of security in the country. Thus, the central focus of this paper is to interrogate the military constitution of 1999 and its impact on the Nigerian politics and society. The work is based on the normative theory of democracy. The work adopts historical methodology. The historical research method is considered appropriate in this study because the is a reflection of the human interaction that breed information grounded in human experience. As such, the study relied on documents and evidence during period under review. The work found that the military constitution of 1999 was a hurriedly produce document that protects the interest of the military and forced on the Nigerian people by the then military administration. And as such, has a lot of pitfalls and failed to meet the needs and aspiration of the Nigerian people.

Keywords: Constitution, Critical, Federalism, Military and Nigeria

Introduction

Constitution works mostly in a democracy. Democracy refers to method of group decision making characterized by a kind of equality among the participants at an essential stage of the collective decision making. Thus, three aspects of this definition should be noted. First, democracy concerns collective decision making, by which decisions that are made for groups and that are binding on all the members of the group. Second, this definition covers a lot of different kinds of groups that may be called democratic. So there can be democracy in families, voluntary organizations, economic firms, as well as states and transnational and global organizations. third, the equality required by the definition of democracy may be more or less deep. It may be the mere formal equality of one-person one-vote in an election for representatives to an assembly where there is competition among candidates for the position. Or it may be more robust, including equality in the processes of deliberation and coalition building. “Democracy” may refer to any of these political arrangements. It may involve direct participation of the members of a society in deciding on the laws and policies of the society or it may involve the participation of those members in selecting representatives to make the decisions.¹

The Constitution is the fundamental norm or the source of origin from which the legal authority of a country, state, group or organization derives in any legal system, therefore its importance cannot be over emphasized for the practice of democracy. Thus, when the military wanted to hand over power to the civilian government in Nigeria in 1999, they hurriedly put together what was later known as the 1999 constitution.

This was because the people were still angry with the annulment of the June 12 presidential election. The imposition of chief Ernest Shonekan infuriated many. Shonekan could not administer the nation. He was unable to command the loyalty of the Army: the nation was an easy pick for General Sani Abacha and ruminants of coup parishioners and fresh aspirants to position of power.²The need to return the nations to a

democratic system of government, led to the putting together of the 1999 constitution.

After the return of democracy, Nigerians hope for a better and secured future. This hope was hinged on the fact that military rule in Nigeria had demoralized the people socially, economically and politically. Julius Ihomvbere puts it right: According to Ihomvbere:

If there is any society where destruction in all aspects of life is at its peak, it is the Nigeria society under the military. If there is any society that is cleverly fashioned out purposely to wreck the spirit of the people, it is the Nigerian society under the military. If there is any society where the sane is compelled to doubt his sanity, it is the Nigerian society under, military rule. And we shall continue to despise the military for producing the greatest amount of sadness. For the greatest number of people.³

The above quotation, no matter how bizarre it sounds, does however, reflect the frustration of Nigeria under the military. It was the desire to be free that informed the massive support from the people for return to democratic rule and a democratic constitution. However, the military left a constitution in the form of military Decree for the people which has led to the many problems of insecurity the nation has faces today. The writers will now attempt an appraisal of the 1999 military constitution, however, for clarity, they will be conceptual and theoretical explanation.

Conceptual and Theoretical Explanation.

Constitution

Constitution can be seen as body of law, rules of a people or group of people or physical makeup of a body, including the mode of performance of its functions, the activity of its metabolic processes, the manner and degree of its reactions to stimuli, and its power of resistance to the attack of pathogenic organisms or other disease process.⁴ This definition speak to the

running of a society and how the people could challenge happenings if they are not satisfied. A constitution can also be seen according to oxford American dictionary as an aggregate of fundamental principles or established precedents that constitute the legal basis of a polity, organisation or other type of entity and commonly determine how that entity is to be governed.⁵

According to Hogg, “Constitution is important rules which establish, empower and regulate the principles of government, some rules not contained in the basic document, and some non-justifiable rules, such as in the case of United Kingdom.”⁶ All these proffered definitions admit a primary function of a Constitution which is the division of powers between arms and levels of government, their various functions, powers and the guaranteed fundamental rights. However, for the purpose of the ongoing work, it is pertinent to adopt the definition of Black’s Law Dictionary. According to the Black’s Law Dictionary:

The organic and fundamental law of a nation or State, which may be written or unwritten, establishing the character and conception of its government, laying the basic principles to which its internal life is to be conformed, organizing the government and regulating, distributing and limiting the functions of its different departments, prescribing the extent and manner of the exercise of sovereign powers; A charter of government deriving its whole authority from the governed.⁷

Security

Security as a term is a multidimensional and an intricate inference which has been existent since human civilization came into being. Security is feasibly a principal essential to the survival of persons and the survival of any nation-state. There is no permanent meaning of security to gratify every age and phase. Globalization has shaped a distinctive nous of sameness in every circles of economic, social and political life of mankind

and surprisingly revamped the traditional understanding of nation-state and the threat insight concurrently. The security is central among the issues of national interest and considered singular form of politics.⁸

Security, however, is not a straightforward concept but “essentially contested” – that is, a concept that generates unsolvable debates about its meaning and application.⁹ It is conceived as the freedom from danger, care intimidation, apprehension, the feeling or assurance of safety, peace of mind or absence of fear, and the certainty or assurance of the good life or welfare.¹⁰ Security constitutes one of the fundamental objectives and indeed the foremost responsibility of every government and the state.

Ken Booth argues that the ‘subject matter’ of security is to ensure people live lives comfortably and securely. He noted security as emancipation, freeing the people (as individuals and groups) from the physical and human constraints which stop them from carrying out what they would freely choose to do.¹¹ For the purpose of the ongoing work, the Arthur will adopt the definition of Achumba et al, 2013. They see security as, “all measures designed to protect and safeguard the citizenry and the resources of individuals, groups, businesses and the nation against sabotage or violent occurrence.”¹²

Theoretical framework: *Constitutionalism.*

The term constitution consists of a set of norms (rules, principles or values) creating, structuring, and possibly defining the limits of, government power or authority. All states have constitutions and all states are constitutional states. Anything recognizable as a state must have some means of constituting and specifying the limits (or lack thereof) placed upon the three basic forms of government power: legislative power (making new laws), executive power (implementing laws) and judicial power (adjudicating disputes under laws).¹³

Constitutionalism, however, they normally mean something that rules out Rex’s case. They mean not only that there are norms creating legislative,

executive and judicial powers, but that these norms impose significant limits on those powers. Often these limitations are in the form of civil rights against government, rights to things like free expression, association, equality and due process of law. But constitutional limits come in a variety of forms. They can concern such things as the *scope* of authority (e.g., in a federal system, provincial or state governments may have authority over health care and education while the federal government's jurisdiction extends to national defence and transportation); the *mechanisms* used in exercising the relevant power (e.g., procedural requirements governing the form and manner of legislation); and of course, *civil rights* (e.g., in a Charter or Bill of Rights). Constitutionalism is the idea that government can/should be limited in its powers and that its authority depends on its observing these limitations.¹⁴

The idea of constitutionalism came from Thomas Hobbes and John Locke who are thought to have defended, respectively, the notion of constitutionally unlimited sovereignty. But an equally good focal point is the English legal theorist John Austin who, like Hobbes, thought that the very notion of limited sovereignty is incoherent. For Austin, all law is the command of a sovereign person or body of persons, and so the notion that the sovereign could be limited by law requires a sovereign who is self-binding, who commands him/her/itself. But no one can command himself, except in some figurative sense, so the notion of limited sovereignty is, for Austin (and Hobbes), as incoherent as the idea of a square circle.¹⁵ Though at one time this feature of Austin's theory had some surface plausibility when applied to the British system of government, where Parliament was often said to be supreme and constitutionally unlimited.¹⁶

However, constitutionalism has been widely embraced round the world, it is by no means without its detractors. This is especially true when we turn to those constitutions that not only create and regulate the offices of government but also purport to protect abstract rights of political morality. Some critics we'll call these the *hard critics*-assert that such apparently rights-protective constitutions cannot effectively and legitimately serve to protect individuals against the oppressive forces of governments.¹⁷ On the

contrary, they only serve to mask legal and political practice in a false cloak of legitimacy. It faces obvious difficulty when applied to most other constitutional democracies such as one finds in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Germany, where it is abundantly clear that the powers of government are legally limited by a constitution.¹⁸

Argument Against The 1999 Military Constitution

The impact of the 1999 constitution has been mostly negative on the Nigerian people because of crafting and arrangement in the constitution. According to Ibrahim Gambari, “as studies by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) based in Geneva show, some sections of the country dominate the bureaucracy, while others dominate the cabinet. This pattern of uneven distribution of power goes right down to even local governments.”¹⁹

In the 1999 constitution, the federal system of government created by the Constitution, both the state governments and the federal government shared some powers. While federal laws were supreme, there were things both governments could do. For example, both governments could levy taxes. This helped the state governments and the federal government to raise money. The federal government could require people to join the military. Both the state governments and the federal governments were able to create courts under the Constitution. This allows for a way to resolve disputes. By giving the government more power, it had the ability to deal with other countries more effectively, to tackle economic issues, and to provide a place where disputes could be resolved.²⁰In a true democratic nation like the united states of America which practice true federalism, states powers are clearly spelt out and it include state police and control of resources. As peter Sagal puts it:

In the Tenth Amendment, the Constitution also recognizes the powers of the state governments. Traditionally, these included the “police powers” of health, education, and welfare. So many states feared the expanded powers of

the new national government that they insisted on amendments during the Constitution's ratification. The most popular of these proposed amendments, which became the Bill of Rights in 1791, was a protection of state power. The new Tenth Amendment stated: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."²¹

In the United States, the state police is a police body unique to each U.S. state, having statewide authority to conduct law enforcement activities and criminal investigations.²²In Nigeria, the federal authorities treat the states like vassals or subordinates who must be controlled from the deceptive comfort of Aso Presidential Villa. Alienation has become the order of the day. Nowhere is this manifested now as in the threatening security situation, which we have in our hands. The Federal Government appears to be overwhelmed by the onslaught of savages against the very basis of Nigerian unity. Whereas a nation with a thinking cap would begin to think of ways of ameliorating the crisis through innovative thinking. The Federal Government of Africa's most populous nation offers no glimmer of hope as it is stuck in its antiquated methods. This scenario has promoted a dangerous narrative – that the widespread attacks on individuals and communities are a prelude to a takeover of the country by extremist forces masked by religion. This is a dangerous perception. Added to this is a deep return to primordial cleavages, which we thought we had overcome in the last six odd decades.²³Explaining the federalism situation in Nigeria, Sodiq Adelakun opined that:

If the primacy of the people in a democracy is the philosophical underpinning of federalism, then we can assert that the leaders and rulers in the nation's capital have woefully failed the people. This is tragic and negates the very principle of accountability and consultation to listen to the harrowing experiences, which the people live with on a daily basis. Security,

which ought to be in the hands of locals is placed on the exclusive list.²⁴

If true federal is to be practice, policing should be removed from the exclusive list and transferred to the concurrent list and internal security as a whole be shared between states and the federal government. This way the Federal Government can concentrate fully on securing the territorial integrity of the nation and manage the economy properly. Aside the issue of security, another issue related to security and without which the issue of handling internal security by states will be impossible is that of resources control. Gambari puts it right:

Since its independence, the country has been facing the challenge of crafting a constitutional arrangement that has the backing of an overwhelming majority of Nigerians. In the 1940s and 1950s, our founding fathers battled with this problem. In the end, they arrived at the principle of federalism as a foundation for our nation. But federalism has faced stiff challenges over the years from those wanting a unitary form of government on the one hand, and from those wanting a confederal arrangement, on the other. To my mind, the worst enemies of Nigerian federalism are those who speak of federalism, but act in a unitary fashion by brushing aside all the divisions of powers between different levels of our federation. Related to the problem of federalism is the question of fiscal federalism. What is the appropriate and just basis for sharing revenue? Should the federal government have the right to deduct monies due to states without their permission? Should state governments continue to control local government allocations? These are all fundamental principles on which we have no clear consensus. While we all agree that Nigeria must be a federation, we have no clear consensus on the nature of

that federation, on whether we should have territorially defined states or ethnically defined states as some are demanding. We also do not have a consensus on the number of states or federating units we should have. While some are satisfied with the current 36 states, others are calling for more states for their own groups. On the other hand, yet others are arguing that the number of states should be reduced to 6. Here again, there is little by way of consensus.²⁵

For true federalism to be practiced and for the constitution to reflect what it stands for, the issue of resource control must be addressed, because it will free resources for states to effectively police their domain. It is against this background that we urge an urgent return to a true federal structure, ethos and practice of the pre-civil war era.²⁶ What this connotes is that the constituent parts should be financially and economically viable and also independent to make decisions on security and other related issues. Thus each part of the federation should be allowed to harness the natural resources in its territory and pay royalties to the centre. This can be achieved constitutionally by removing mineral resources exploration from the exclusive list.

The Making of the 1999 Constitution

The Making of the Constitution is more like the Making of a Nation and most nations in the most especially, democratic once pass through the process. In the United States of America where true federalism is practiced, during the Philadelphia conference Most the delegates agreed that the government's power did not come from Congress, or a president, or a king, or even a divinity. They clearly stated that the people themselves gave the Constitution its power. In the case of Nigeria, the present constitution is made by the military and as Ikuromo Margaret Oruan puts it:

Military constitutions have been drafted by different procedures, among which predominate are constitution

drafting committee, political bureau, constitution review committee, constitutional conference commission and constituent assemblies. Drafting of the constitution was done by a committee and submitted to a constituent assembly for deliberation; these bodies are made up of delegates appointed by the military rulers while the others are elected under their supervision. A review of the procedure adopted by the military in formulation and creation of the constitution will show that there had been some input which can be traced to the people but this 'popular' participation can be described as superficial.²⁷

The above statement shows clearly that; the constitution cannot be free of bias. The 1999 military constitution is drafted by committee members appointed by the military administration and also supervised by them. The questions are: who has the final say? It is true that the Justice Niki Tobi, led committee with Dr. Suleiman Kurmo as deputy chairman. There was no single military man on the committee. They went round the country to collect memoranda from the public through town hall meetings in Benin, Enugu, Jos, Port Harcourt, Kaduna, Kano, Ibadan, Lagos and Sokoto. They excluded military formations.²⁸ At the end of it all, the report was submitted. The final draft was submitted to the highest law making body of the military (PRC) for promulgation and the act of this body becomes final since there is no other means of ensuring that the recommendations were not altered. The Nigerian experience reveals that changes were made to the final draft before promulgation.²⁹ In the words of Achimu:

The level of participation especially in the formulation of the 1999 constitution does not justify the preamble to the constitution. The writer's opinion stems from the intervening constitutional order which immediately preceded the regime which passed the 1999 Constitution into law. The sovereign will of the people was undermine and reduced to no more than mere

words while the restrained and uncontrolled will of the one man held sway.³⁰

Aside the above, most of the suggestion in the constitution that did not favour the then military government and the subsequent government that followed were not adopted. For instance, in section 219 of the 1999 constitution provided for the provision of the armed forces commission, but that part of the constitution was overlooked. According to the section 219 of the 1999 constitution:

The National Assembly shall - (a) in giving effect to the functions specified in section 217 of this Constitution; and (b) with respect to the powers exercisable by the President under section 218 of this Constitution, by an Act, established a body which shall comprise such members as the National Assembly may determine, and which shall have power to ensure that the composition of the armed forces of the shall reflect the federal character of Nigeria in the manner prescribed in the section 217 of this Constitution.³¹

This section, if adopted or implemented would have help check the overbearing power of the president. They would have been the application of checks and balance in the activities of the military related agencies, but the then military administration, been obsessed with centralization and concentration of power in the center deliberately refused to implement that section of the constitution. According to the section, “the appointment of the chief defense staff, chief of army staff, chief of air staff, chief of naval staff and director of military intelligence and heads of other arm-bearing security agencies, shall be appointed, subject to recommendation by the commission.”³²

Recently, senate minority leader, Senator Enyinanya Abaribe tried to wake the dead section in the senate. His aim was to see if that could help solve the insecurity problem in the country. The bill successfully passed first reading, but when the question was asked whether the bill should be allowed to pass the second reading, northern senators except, Abdulahi Yahaya rejected the bill. Eyinnaya protested and raised order 73, but considering the number of northerners in the senate, the bill was defeated.³³This is because, most northern senators are of the ruling all progressives congress and are ardent supporters of the president, who was a former military head of state and also a supporter of centralization of power.

Why we are where we are

The history of the 1999 military constitution can be traced to the Nigeria civil war. After the end of the Nigerian civil war, the various military constitution has been tainted towards a very strong center and a weak federating units. This was because the various military leader believed that, the civil war wouldn't have occurred if not for the strong federating units after the attainment of independence.

After the first military coup, there was claim that, easterners were massacred in the north and the military government seem not to be forthcoming in action. Therefore, as a result of Gowon's failure to stop the easterners been massacred, Ojukwu on May 30 declared the Eastern Province an independent state called the *Republic of Biafra*. The Session was not an option, as the Federal Republic of Nigeria under the leadership of Lt Colonel Gowon saw Ojukwu's declaration as a rebellion against Nigeria. This led to the Nigerian civil war, which began on July 6, 1967. The three-year civil war (July 6, 1967, to January 13, 1970), ended with Gowon's declaration that no one had won and that no policy had been defeated.³⁴

An inquiry was conducted by Gabriel Onyuike, a former Nigerian attorney-general, in the east, after weeks of seeking to track down sources of

information, checking school records for new entrants in January 1967, and checking out hospitals lists and salary claims, he estimated the influx of refugee to have been between one million and 1,200,000 from the north and half that number from the other two regions. The death toll was put at something like 30,000 human beings.³⁵ In an early fact-finding mission in 1968, conducted by ICRC (international committee of the red cross), Doctor Edwin Spirgi found that at least 300,000 children were suffering from kwashiorkor....and three million children were near death.³⁶ According to Chinua Achebe, “it was said at the time that the number of displaced Nigeria citizens fleeing from other parts of the nation back to eastern Nigeria was close to a million.”³⁷

The Nigeria –Biafra conflict created a humanitarian crisis of epic magnitude. Millions of people flooded the main highway arteries between towns and villages fleeing the conflict. They traveled by truck, barefoot, wheelbarrow, by car with sleepers. Most had walked so long their soles were blistered and bleeding. As hunger and thirst grew, so did despair, confusion, and desperation. Most were heading in whatever direction the other was headed, propelled by the latest rumor of food and shelter spreading through the multitude like a virus. Refugees were on move-in in no specific direction, anywhere, just away from the fighting. The refugee learned to travel nights and hide in the forest by day.³⁸

The international community responded to the humanitarian crisis by establishing food distribution camps that spread from Enugu in the north to Owerri in the south. During the war, there were more than a thousand such facilities and camps, though, they were not enough for real needs.³⁹The war (Nigeria-Biafra) was the most televised war in history. According to Achebe:

It was the first time scenes and pictures-blood, guts, severed limbs-from the war front flooded into homes around the world through television sets, radio, newsprint, in real-time. It probably gave television evening news its first chance into its own and invade

without mercy the sanctity of people's living rooms with horrifying scenes of children immiserated by modern war. The international media was present throughout the war. The sheer amount of media attention on the conflict led to an outpouring of international public outrage at the war's brutality. The international agencies call for attention and address the humanitarian crisis as it relates to children. The presence of media made said baroness acquit in the British house of lords to comment. In his words: thanks to the miracle of television we see history happening before our eyes. We see no Igbo propaganda; we see the fact."⁴⁰

Achebe states that: following a ban imposed by the Nigerian government, "Biafra "resembled a tearful image of hungry children with blown-out bellies, a skull with no subcutaneous fat harboring pale, sunken eyes in sockets that betrayed their suffering."⁴¹

Early in the dry season, during the war, after the economic ban was announced, Biafran residents and soldiers alike died of starvation. The corpses lay rotting under the scorching sun on the side of the road, and the attackers' flapping wings seemed to be circling, waiting, patiently watching. At the height of the economic ban, more than 50,000 Biafran residents, most of them children and women, died every month. Ojukwu seized upon the humanitarian crisis and channeled the Biafra propaganda machinery through the multitude of foreign agents present to broadcast and showcase the suffering to the world. In a speech, he accused Gowon the then military head of state of a "calculated war of destruction and genocide. known in someplace as the 'Biafra babies' speech, it was hugely effective and touched the hearts of many people around the world."⁴²

In the United States, the Nixon administration has stepped up administrative pressure on Gowon executives to open up the way for international aid agencies simultaneously, following months of turmoil over the operation of shipping routes. Many members of Congress,

government officials, and ordinary citizens were outraged by the ongoing television image of the dying Biafran children, and the ban imposed by the Gowon government. Biafra had senator Edward m. Kennedy a humane and sympathetic ear. Kennedy called for early and sustained U.S humanitarian intervention throughout the bloody conflict.⁴³ Arthur M. Schlesinger contributing to the Biafra situation said:

The tragedy of the people of Biafra has now assumed a catastrophic dimension. Starvation is daily claiming the lives of an estimated 6,000 Igbo tribesmen, most of them children. If adequate food is not delivered to the people in the immediate future hundreds of thousands of human being will die of hunger.⁴⁴

as a result of the aforementioned, it was thought within the military circle was as a result of the strong federating unit (regions) and the weak center. Upon independence, Nigeria was composed of three federating regions: Northern, Eastern and Western regions. (Later in 1963 a new region, the Mid-West, was carved out of the West following a crisis in that region). Each of the regions was dominated by one of the country's three largest ethnic groups: Hausa-Fulani in the North, Yoruba in the West and Igbo in the East. This arrangement allowed the elites of the three largest ethnic groups to monopolize access to federal patronage, which they leveraged for political support. These three regions were largely autonomous from the federal and were constitutionally powerful as well, a historian of Nigeria's political parties during this period claimed as quoted by Teslim Opemipo Omipidan:

In their respective regions, the leaders of these dominant nationality groups controlled the means of access to wealth and power... They tended to equate their private interests with the objective interests of their nationality groups; conversely, they exploited the sentiments of their groups to promote their private interests.⁴⁵

It was strongly believed in the military circle that, this was why the military governor of the regions and also the reason Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu mustered the resources and support to secede from Nigeria and also engage in war with Nigeria. To avoid such occurrence and other unforeseen challenges as it relates to insecurity, the plan was to weaken the regions.

Consequently, the only reason to achieve it is to produce a constitution tainted towards that direction. The above is the reason why all military constitution has just been change of nomenclature but same content. It is not surprising after all the frenetic debates-up and down, north and south, east and west, the Tobi committee submitted its report to the military government. Tobi said:

In the light of the memoranda and the oral presentation on the 1995 Draft Constitution, it is clear that Nigerians basically opt for the 1979 Constitution with relevant amendments. They want it, and they have copiously given their reasons for their choice in the different memoranda and oral presentations. So, we have recommended to the Provisional Ruling Council the adoption of the 1979 Constitution with relevant amendments from the 1995 Draft Constitution.⁴⁶

The above buttress the point that, all military constitutions, including the 1999 constitution was tainted towards strong center and weak federating units. This was to prevent such events as the Nigeria civil war and other security issues. The reason for over centralisation would have been genuine if the nation experience peace and security challenges is a thing of the past.

However, many years after the civil war, and after many constitutions, the country still experience security challenge and remain one of the deadliest and flash point of the world. Today, Nigeria experience all sorts of security challenges ranging from Terrorism, herdsmen attack on communities (especially farmers), banditry and kidnapping. This terrorist (Boko Haram)

would go to churches armed with bombs and grenade and cause havoc to people and destroy properties. Herdsmen would invade communities and killed many persons, while others will sustain varying degrees of injuries. vehicles and motorcycles were often burnt, and properties were looted. Kidnapping has become the business in vogue. This group will abduct people and place a price on the person depending on their wealth and clout in the society.

Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity. This has made national security threat to be a major issue for the government and has prompted huge allocation of the national budget to security, a pellucid depiction that the 1999 military constitution has failed. With the persistent security encounters and the failure of the security apparatus of the government to pledge safety and security in the country, the question is “how can security of lives and properties be achievable?”

Conclusion/Recommendations

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has been widely criticised as a document put together by the military without the interest of the people at heart. Several of Nigeria’s challenges are attributed to perceived imbalances and inadequacies of the constitution. Attempts to amend the constitution to really address the imbalances have proved abortive.

Some of the contentious issues, which the proposed review needs to address include derivation formula, revenue allocation, fiscal federation, state creation, resource control, local government creation by states, state police, the establishment of armed forces commission and the perceived long-standing marginalization of the ethnic minorities and a few regions of the country.

For, across the world and in extant literature on the subject, federalist principles are clear and encoded, though each country adapts these principles to suit the exigencies of its cultural and historical experiences.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is about the people of the country. It is not about the governments at different levels that seem to be so immorally disconnected and somewhat insulated and detached from the biting socio-economic realities of our environment.

To restore Nigeria to the path to true federalism, the constitution should be reworked to include creating state police, introducing fiscal federalism, placing exploration of mineral resources on the concurrent list, and devolving power to the constituent parts the Federal Government would free itself of the excess burdens it currently bears and stimulate the states into unleashing their full potential.

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CHRISTIANITY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON YEKKU FESTIVAL AMONG THE TANGLE PEOPLE OF GOMBE STATE

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Abstract

This paper is on Christianity and its impact on Yekku Festival among the Tangle of Gombe State. Africa has a rich culture and this could be seen in the peoples' culture. Yekku festival provides colourful activities that bring out the beauty of Tangle culture and the festival has socio-cultural, religious and economic significance in the lives of the people. Unfortunately, owing to the advent of Christianity, Yekku festival is losing its relevance because of the way it has been perceived by people who converted to Christianity. This study aims at examining Christianity and its influence on Yekku Festival among the Tangle of Gombe State. The study is a qualitative research and relies on both primary and secondary sources. It has adopted the historical and observation method. It is found that, Yekku festival has a lot of social, cultural, political and religious significance but due to the teachings and practice of Christianity, the socio-religious, and economic roles of the festival is fading away. Thus, the study recommended that, Traditional institutions and the government should work towards the revival of traditional festivals among the Tangle of Gombe State.

Keywords: Yekku, Tangra, Wam Pi Mana, Saduku Yamba, Festival, Christianity.

Introduction

The advent of Christianity in Tangle land has brought about notable changes and these changes have a profound influence on the Yekku festival. This paper traces the history of Christianity in Tangle land and examines the challenges brought by Christianity on the practice of *Yekku* festival.

Definition of terms

Yekku: This is the Tangle national religious festival held at the onset of the rainy season. The purpose of the festival is to solicit for rain and good harvest, protection from plagues, peace and progress in the land.

Tangra: Is a form of religious worship observed by women. It is a fertility goddess, blessing both the products of the land and woman.

Wam pi mana (literally “things Behind the House” or backyard things) are household has *wampimana* sometimes called *suro* meaning spirits. The location can actually be at the backyard or in between barns which were also often situated at backyards. The spirits were said to torment people who neglected them.

Saduku Yamba: Is a religious festival celebrated during the month of December or January. It is a thanksgiving service after a bountiful harvest. It involves both male and female as the people joyfully express their gratitude to their creator and provider.

Festivals: Are festive periods when worshippers come together to honour and thank their God, divinities and ancestors. They are used to commemorate significant events in the community while others are to mark the beginning or end of important seasons in the year (Adega 49).

Christianity: The religion based on the person and the teachings of Jesus Christ, or its beliefs and practices. It is also an Abrahamic monotheistic religion based on the life, teachings, and miracles of Jesus of Nazareth, known by Christians as the Christ, or “Messiah” who is the focal point of the Christian faith. The religion is based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the messiah, sent by God. They believe that Jesus, by dying and rising from the dead, made up for the sin of Adam and thus redeemed the world, allowing all who believe in him to enter paradise.

The Advent of Christianity in Tangle Land

There are several factors that contributed to the coming of the Christian Missionaries into Tangle land. The missionaries that brought the gospel were the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). Their objective was the evangelization of the pagan tribes in the Sudan. According to Barnabas Kano¹ the tag name “Sudan” is an Arabic word meaning “land of the blacks”. It witnesses that the land of the Negro has become Arab. The Semites and Hamites dwell together in its sunny plains. He explains further that the Sudan lies between the great desert of Sahara and the vast Congo basin. It is bounded on the East by Abyssinia and on the West by the Atlantic. The Sudan consists of the upper Nile, while the central Sudan is the region around the Lake Chad. The Sudan is the true home of the Negro where the people speak a host of languages and has thus become the abundant mission areas at that time. It was from this setting that the SIM found its way onto the hill tribe of Tangaleland. Gordon Beacham testifies to this when he wrote that, “it was Roland V. Bingham who undertook a journey from Miango to Tangle homeland. It was during that time that, John Hall got moved and decided to take up the spiritual challenge.² Meanwhile Gordon Beacham was being consecrated in the service of the Lord in Africa by his mother. He felt called to bring the gospel to Tangle homeland. More so, the SIM were encouraged to focus their activities on

¹ Interview with Barnabas Kano, held at Billiri on 05/03/2020

² History of ECWA in Tangle p 56

the tribes and the non-Muslims areas. Tangle people were originally “pagans” or practicing traditional religion and the missionaries were only allowed into the “pagan” areas to evangelize based on their earlier agreement with Lord Lugard. He had rationalized principles on mission establishments in Muslim’s areas. On the other hand, Lord Lugard’s policy of non-interference with the Muslims groups restricted the evangelistic endeavors to Muslims.

According to Mathew Ardo, centuries, before the advent of Christianity in Tangle land, the people of Tangle were followers of traditional religions with a strong belief in and veneration of ancestors. These elements in the cultural set up of the Tangle people are common place in the neighboring tribes giving credence to the idea of their being of the same ancestral linkage ³ (qtd in Tadi). It is very important for us to understand this issue because it helps us know why the missionaries came to Tangle land.

According to Andirya Dogo, the first two missionaries who brought the gospel to the Tangle were John Hall and Gordon Beacham (5). (The spirit of freedom” covers the episode) When they arrived John Hall and Gordon Beacham had a brief stay in Tangle but finally settled at Kaltungo and a mission station was built in 1917. He added that these missionaries paid constant visits to Yel Tangle after which Frances Mulder and John Harry Harling were married at Kaltungo. They were posted by the mission to open a station in Tangle on 22 March, 1928. Prior to that in 1923 a small Church was built in Billiri (yel Tangle). Before the construction of the church, the new converts used to hold their prayers in the Mai Tangle’s (chief’s) palace. This small church was also used as a classroom where the Christians were taught how to read and write in Tangle language through “Tullecur” (Alphabets) “Kwagam” (Bible) and “Tandom Lara” (New Testament) but initially on Sundays all the Christians use to go to Kaltungo for their Sunday services. The missionaries had only a rest house at Kwi Kungu.

³ Tadi, N Yerima
Andriya Dogo, Billiri 5/03/2020

When Harry John Harling and his spouse (Nune) came to Billiri they also met twelve converts, being the fruits and efforts of Karga. According to Isaac Bunu ⁴prominent amongst these were: Mela Molton, Totso James Laubakta, Maibugu Tugob, Tawada Aliyu, Karau Peghe, Iliyasu Maiyamba, (who became founder of Banganje church and later became the Mai Tangle), Danbima Aliyu, Mailabari Wiltong, Sambo Bukbuk, Alkali Podipo, Dangwaram Sonje and Dangombe Kude. They were baptised and assigned to sub-mission stations in Tangle land. It was not men alone, few women were among the early converts. Prominent among them were: Amina Pawolo Aliyu, Mwalin Yusuf, Mowa Mijinyawa and Wandu Dantata, Danlingi Mamman.

According to Samaila Kauchi,⁵ even though all the converts were persecuted, the women experienced severe persecution from their parents and relations due to the patriarchal nature of the society, but they stood firm in the faith and their calling (10). ECWA Tangle D.C.C. (District Church Council) recorded that most of them later became Sunday school teachers and leaders of fellowships. Within a year of their ministry, it was assumed that the Harlings had organized a local church with over three hundred converts whom they disciplined during regular afternoon lessons. He adopted the two by two principles as their missionary strategy as is in the book of Matthew 10:1 and two people were sent to each major towns of Tangle to preach the gospel. Those sent were:

1. Mela Moltong and James Totso – Billiri
2. Karau Paghe and Iliyasu Maiyamba –Banganje
3. Maibugu Tugob and Ali Tawada –Kalmal
4. Dambima Aliyu and Mailabari Wiltong – Tangland
5. Sambo Bukbuk and Alkali Tal – Tal
6. Dangwaram Sonje and Awini – Todi and Later Dangombe

⁴ Isaac Bunu, Kalmal, 27/05/2020

⁵ Danlingi Mamman, Kume, 12/08/2020

Samaila Kauchi, Piyau, 15/11/2020

They won more coverts and thereafter the stage was set for expansion within these areas and beyond. The Following were some of the Evangelists that further undertook to spread the gospel outside Tangle areas:

1. Yolo/ kumo – Ayuba and Ali Zambar
2. Tambe/kumo town –Bawa Pawa and Makama
3. Bwapandi- Dangabar, Kure, Attaura, Dame Auka etc.
4. Kembu – Boyi Yerima (Waja) Dangabar and Kure Labelte
5. Nafada/Bajoga – Kure Labelte and Dangabar
6. Gadam – Kure Lubutte
7. Ker-Kuman 1938-Danbima
8. Bojude 1939 – Aluke
9. Pindiga 1931-1932 Assam Turaki and Rubainu Garkuwa
10. Gombe Town 1943 Karau Pane
11. Dukku 1953 – Pastor Meshack Yilwa
12. Kafarati 1953 – Mal. Ezekiel
13. Gadam – Pastor Samaila Mela 1953
14. Dolli –Pastor Bahago 1955
15. Malala –Mallam Zabulum 1956
16. Dokoro – Pastor Gana 1953
17. Kargo Mal. Wabida Nigruma 1957
18. Bula Mal. Appolo 1957
19. Futuk – 1956 Mal. Daure
20. Jos – Mal. Daure Maigari 1958
21. Tumu – Pastor Nesai – 1954
22. Kashere – Mal. Joshu’a Dogo
23. Zalanga –Pastor Ilu Danbima 1969
24. Bima – (11) pastor Ilu Danbima 1969⁶.

⁶ Zubairu Ahmadu, Kalmal, 17/12/2020
Esau Keftin, Amtawalam, 15/03/2020

Challenges affecting the celebration of *Yekku* Festival

Festivals are special periods of worship which are highly esteemed in the African communities. According to Zubairu Ahmadu, Festivals are festive periods when the worshipers gather together to honour and thank their God, divinities and ancestors. It is also a period to mark harvest time, planting, marriage, birth, death, coronation, victory over enemies among others (13). Festivals like *yekku*, are highly regarded in Tangle land and are done annually through which the people praise and give thanks, to God, offer sacrifices and libations to their gods/ancestors. The period marks the unity of Tangle people and their gods. Because of its great Importance, sons and daughters of Tangle all over the world comes home to celebrate *Yekku*. The period helps the young men and girls as well as visitors to find potential spouses to marry. It is a time to establish lasting relationships amongst different peoples (14) (Esau Keftin). *Yekku* festival like other aspects of Tangle culture has suffered several challenges due to modernization, globalization and Christian impact. The changes brought about by these forces are as a result of the cultural contact which was possible due to Christianity, western education and Modernization.

Yekku festival experienced a drastic set back as a result of activities of Christian Missionaries in Tangle land. The festival celebration was seriously affected that it is not much observed like in the past (15) (Sidi Komta,). Most women who were responsible for brewing the local wine for *Yekku* shrine have converted to Christianity. Furthermore, when the *Yekku* priest passes away, to get another priest becomes a serious problem as both men and women now see the *Yekku* as idolatrous. The Tangle sons and daughters that⁷ normally come home annually from far and near to celebrate *Yekku* no longer patronize it as before. The activities that were observed such as songs which were usually composed by women do no longer feature like in the past. The cultural dances which were once

⁷ Sidi Komta, Billiri 03/12/2020
Binta Keftin, Amtawalam, 15/03/2020
Mathew Dangabar, Tambe, 12/09/2020

cherished like kollo bit-bit (bit-bit-dance), kollo kwagam (kwagam dance) latang dance, belkama dance among others does not attract much attention any longer. The instruments used in music or rhythm combinations are such as kollo-Fofurum (taking drum), ladele (small taking drum), Ase (flute), Kwere (flute), Jita (karaya), rettu (kind of flute) and Lira (flute) made up of corn-stick are gradually disappearing from the land.

According to Binta Kaftin, parents no more allow their children to be initiated (tokko wan ma *yekku*) into *Yekku* worship, but prefer to send them to church for Baptism. Some of the customs and traditions which were taught during the worship are missing as the number of the custodians of these customs and traditions are reducing by the day. The original traditional utensils and materials are substituted with the modern ones since the artisans/ craftsmen have converted to Christianity (16). Some food items such as *Iluk ronjo* (draw soup made from shrubs) is not prepared as it used to be thereby making it to lose the aroma it was known with during sacrifices. In present times, most Tangle people do not celebrate *Yekku* like they used to do in the past, they rather engage seriously in celebrating Christmas and Easter. The attendance reduces annually because the Tangle mind has now adopted the teachings of Christianity (17) (Mathew Dangabar). The institution of elders that was once given prominence in traditional rites is now not well regarded as elders are no longer allowed to decide how ⁸festivals should be celebrated and when. This is because the church used to discourage people from participating in traditional festivals as those who participated are discipline or excommunicated.

Christianity

Christianity is one of the agents of change in Tangle land. The advent of Christianity to Tangle land has brought notable changes in most cultural practices in the area. The major aspect that was affected by this agent of change is the rituals involved in the celebration of the *Yekku* festival.

⁸ Gideon Danzanbuk, Labandishede, 25/05/2020

Almost all the rituals that were performed before and during the festival are no longer the same. Also, Christian Churches frown at some of the practices and forbid their members from participating in the *Yekku* festival (Gideon Danzambuk Lapandishede 10/06/2020). Before the advent of Christianity, both young and old, men and women participated in the festivals playing different roles demanded of them. For example, during the *Yekku* festival celebration, traditional costumes were the famous whereas at present, western or modern attires are worn by the young men and their female counterpart as against the traditional ones. As a result of this agent of change, the number of participants in the festival has reduced as many adherents of Christianity do not take part the celebrations. Also, most of the young men especially members of Christian group do not join in clearing the village square neither do most women participate in their feminine roles. The people no longer take the taboos associated with the festivals seriously (Sani Dangabar).

The gods of the land as well as priests are no longer held in high esteem as they are regarded as pagan gods due to the teachings and practices of Christianity. This perception and a changing attitude affect the practice of the *Yekku* festival and their significance in the lives of the people is reducing every day. In the⁹ same vein, some functionaries in the traditional religion of the people like the Mai *Yekku* (the chief priest) are seen as pagans and their place is no longer held sacred (18) (Teryson Philip).

Western Education

Western education in spite of its positive impact has brought significant changes that are affecting the practice of the *Yekku* festival. With the advent of western education, the people who received western education see the festivals as primitive and as activities that are meant for the elders and uneducated. Thus, only a few educated members of the Tangle society

⁹ Dauda Elken, Banganje, 16/03/2020

Terryson Philip, Banganje, 07/12/2020

Benjamin Namala Kaftin, Amtawalam, 10/03/2020

still take part in the celebration of the *Yekku* festival. According to Benjamin Namala Kaftin (19) many youths who have received western education often despised practices like festivals and prefer to attend gatherings that have no cultural significance like night clubs (20). This goes to show the extent with which western education has negatively impacted on the celebration of festivals like *Yekku*, Tangra and Wam pi mana in Tangle.

Cultural Contact

According to cultural anthropologist, cultural contact has some potential negative impact on the celebration of the *Yekku* festival, which is the process of systematic cultural change of a particular society carried out by an alien, dominant society (Winthrop 82-83). One can see the change brought about by the Christian religion on Tangle land which affects the *Yekku* festival of the people that are almost extinct. This change has brought about conditions of direct contact between individuals of each society (21) ([Winthrop 3](#)). Individuals of a foreign or minority culture learn the language, habits, and values of a standard or ¹⁰dominant culture by the cultural process of acculturation. In this case, the people of Tangle have embraced foreign cultures at the expense of their culture.

In Achebe's words he has put a knife on the things that held us, (Tangle) together and we have fallen apart (23) (Achebe 141). The European contact with Tangle culture has led to a shift from the original way of observing these festivals. According to Ude, as a result of the encounter with Colonialism and all its influences, the one-time confident and proud African emerged a mere marionette in the hands of the new masters. Brainwashed and gulled into accepting his inferior position, he hated everything African including his skin. He throws all his Africaness, manhood, religion etc into the bin and like a baby, he started from the scratch to learn the ways of his master (24). These agents of change have

¹⁰ (Winthrop 82-83), Dictionary of Concept in Cultural Anthropology. (Achebe 184), Things Fall Apart.

damaged the psyche of Tangle people, thereby reducing the once revered *Yekku* god and the shrines to ordinary objects. Unlike before, anybody can now wear whatever he/she likes to *Yekku* festival. Generally, there were a complex set of taboos related to the festivals each were significant enough to promote the unity and peaceful coexistence among Tangle. The harmony and well-being of society depended on a strict adherence to these taboos and both individuals and society had a stake in ensuring that every involvement in the *Yekku* festival was in full compliance with the letter and spirit of the taboos.

Socially, all the social activities that normally followed the festivals rites in a traditional setting are no longer observed due to Christian practices. Activities like age grade, traditional ¹¹music and dance like *Kwangam* (a popular dance group that was used for festivals and burial rites) have gone into to extinction due to the changes brought by the teaching of the Church (Jairus Sarma, Oral Interview). The institution of the elders and custodians of Tangle religion is no longer respected due to their declining roles in the festivals and the religion-cultural lives of the people. The festival was an opportunity for social gathering where social activities were carried out to entertain and educate the younger generation, all these have been affected due to the impact of Christianity (Matthew Ardo, Oral Interview).

The impact of Christianity on Yekku festival

Christianity has made a significant impact on Tangle and their religious and cultural practices. The celebration of *Yekku* festival has never remained the same since the advent of Christianity in the land. The impact could be seen culturally, religiously, socially and economically.

The Religious Impact

One of the factors that greatly influenced the totality of the life of the Tangle people was the coming of the Europeans in the early 20th Century.

¹¹ Tadi N, Yerima, Sam Kwi Bolji, 37
Talitha Mathew, Laden, 05/12/2020

The colonial and missionary impact on Tangle society reflects what happened in colonial Nigeria. Prior to the coming of the missionaries, the people were unreached by any religion other than their traditional beliefs. The 19th Century Jihadists had not been able to conquer and convert the Tangle people partly due to their strategic settlement in the hills. Thus, though Islam made its presence in most areas of Northern Nigeria, and though the Fulani were in contact with Tangle people for quite a long¹² time, the earliest known Muslim convert in the area was after European encounter (27) (Musal Saul, Oral Interview). Hence most Tangle Christian converts were compelled to be literate in Tangle language. However, as time went on teaching was mainly in Hausa and English language, particularly in the formal schools. Tangle language in its written form was left untaught with the dire consequences that today many Tangle people of the post-independence generation can competently read and write in Hausa and English, but find it difficult to read and write in Tangle. This explains the dearth of reading materials in Tangle language apart from the Christian religious books mentioned above (28) (Tadi, 37).

The missionaries in their effort to have converts looked down upon the culture of Tangle such as, *Yekku*, wampimana, Tangra among others as well as their art, music and dancing. They discouraged traditional names like Yokko, Lawalam, Bonti, Aisaba, Kwiliya, Samkong, Dami, Lakwang, Lawalam, Lakeke, Sene, Iataontau, Rokani, Shiru, Layuru, Lakomok among others, but encouraged Hebrew names e.g Moses, Meshack, Vasty, Paul, Mathias, Sarah, Abraham, Isaac among others. Religious zeal was accompanied by the defamation of many aspects of Tangle values (29) (Talitha Matthew). Religiously, Tangle religion lost its impact in the Tangle society. Massive conversion of the people to Christianity and later Islam has reduced and affected negatively the practice of Tangle traditional religion.

¹² Sussan Zubairu, 05/12/2020
Bula Musa, Pobawure, 04/08/2020

The Social Impact

The celebration of *Yekku* festival has a lot of social significance in the lives of Tangle, but due to the impact of Christianity, this has reduced its social significance. The festival period used to bring people together both those at home and elsewhere to celebrate the unity as one big family with one god but now participation in the festival celebration has robbed the people of the opportunity. The people prefer to celebrate Christmas and Easter more than *Yekku* festival (31) (Susanna Zubairu). The Tangle people practiced Polygamous marriages, and had extended families but as a result of Christian missionaries, who taught monogamy, resulted in having few women to cook local wine for *Yekku* and few children which were gotten from monogamous family. The idea of nuclear family was encouraged and security under the extended family gave way.

The Economic Impact

Agriculture was the bedrock of traditional Tangle economic it was the dominant occupation of the Tangle people majoring in farming and animal husbandry. They grow and cultivate crops and the status and importance of a Tangle man is determined by the size of his harvest, hence the greater the harvest the higher the social standing and vice versa. In general, land was communally owned, starting from family lands to clan lands. They also raised poultry and reared animals such as goats, sheep and cattle (Bula Musa Dengel). Some were engaged in blacksmithing, pottery, weaving, sculpting and leather works, building of houses, local ground-nut oil among others as specialized trades.

Christianity and Tangle culture at cross roads

The advent of Christianity in Tangle land like other parts of the African continent has brought notable changes in the way of life of the people. The Tangle society is not free from this development. As a nation, they practiced traditional values which upheld family norms such as marrying from designated clans, festival celebrations, leverage marriage, oath-

taking, communal living, parental guidance through non-formal education, folktales that provide moral education. However, with the advent of Christianity through colonialism, the established social systems particularly festival celebrations experienced drastic changes. The values that held the Tangle family together are fading away as the institution of the elders, communal approach to moral education and children upbringing, respect for chastity and virginity among others are no longer held in high esteem.¹³ (James Dami).

Ajiki noted that the abolition of indigenous values in Africa and by their replacement with those of Europe means that, the African lost his or her background as well as his or her personality and has taken up someone's orientation of life (35) (95). Christianity which plays a central role in the process of acculturation has made significant changes in areas like Tangle festivals, education, and burial rites among others. Some of the changes brought by Christianity are positive while some have caused a lot of damages to the Tangle traditional practices and values. This happened through the process of acculturation.

Thompson pointed out earlier that, first, dominant cultures coerced minorities and foreigners to acculturate and assimilate. This process was slowed down considerably when minorities are territorially or occupationally concentrated, such as in the case of large native minorities who often become ethno-nationalistic. Second, acculturation must precede assimilation. Third, even though a minority may be acculturated, assimilation is not always the end result and fourth, acculturation and assimilation served to homogenize the minority group into the dominant group. The many factors facilitating or preventing this homogenization include the age of the individual, ethnic background, religious and political affiliations, and economic level (Thompson).

¹³ James Dami, 09/08/2020

Ajiki T. T, *Understanding world Religions* 95

Thompson Richard H; "Assimilation" 114

Ways of promoting Yekku festival among Tangle

Given the important place that the *Yekku* festival has assumed in the socio-cultural and religious life of the people of Tangle, there is every need to find ways of promoting the *Yekku* festival among the people. Traditional institutions and government must create an enabling environment for the celebration of this festival. Traditional rulers who are the custodians of Tangle culture and religion must take measures to revive the celebration of *Yekku* and other festivals in the land by rallying their sons and daughters in the Diaspora to always come home to grace the occasion of the *Yekku* festival celebration. Also, they need to increase the level of awareness on the importance of celebrating *Yekku* festival and other traditional events through the social media, television, radio and newspapers. This will go a long in attracting not only the Tangle sons and daughters but other people from different cultures who may want to attend the festival celebration.

The traditional rulers (Mais) from all the seven clans of Tangle should make *Yekku* festivals mandatory on the community thereby observing the festival annually with seriousness. The members of the community will develop the spirit of patriotism thereby engaging in full participation. This will also encourage their siblings to love the culture regardless of their new faith. Tangle as a nation practiced traditional religion, Islam and Christianity. Therefore, the Imams and Pastors among them should not discourage their members in participating in *Yekku* festival. They should not see *Yekku* worship as idolatrous rather as a culture that should be observed. They should encourage their members to participate fully during the festival with the clergy attending.

Conclusion

The practice of *Yekku* festival among the Tangle over the years has helped in uniting the people together. It has been an avenue through which the people lived out their religious, social, economic and political lives. The festival enabled the people to come together to celebrate their culture, religion and socio-political life. The period of these festivals drew the

people from far and near together. Through this process, the gods of the land were celebrated and appeased as sacrifices were made for cleansing the land where necessary. With the advent of Christianity, the practice of *Yekku* and other festivals has witnessed a declining role in the life of the people. Many Christian converts frown at such practices resulting to low turnout during the festive periods. This development has a negative impact on the socio-economic, political, religious and cultural development of Tangleland.

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List of informants

S/NO	NAME	AGE	SEX	LOCATION	OCCUPATION	DATE
1	Andirya Dogo	78	Male	Billiri	Pastor	5/3/2020
2	Barnabas Kano	83	Male	Billiri	Pastor	5/3/2020
3	Benjamin Namala	62	Male	Amtawalam	Civil Servant	10/3/2020
4	Biba Dankwambo	76	Female	Piyau	House wife	12/3/2020
5	Binta Keftin	88	Female	Amtawalam	House wife	15/3/2020
6	Dauda Elken	54	Male	Banganje	Farmer	16/3/2020
7	Esau Keftin	75	Male	Amtawalam	Civil Servant	25/5/2020
8	Gideon Danzambuk	74	Male	Lapandishede	Pastor	27/5/2020
9	Isa'ac Bunu	76	Male	Kalmai	Farmer	5/7/2020
10	Isa Uba	54	Male	Pandintai	Pastor	9/8/2020
11	James Dami	49	Male	Papah	Business	12/8/202
12	Mamman Danlingi	70	Male	Kume	Farmer	1/9/2020
13	Matthew Ardo	51	Male	Tampibi	Pastor	1/9/2020
14	Matthew Dangabar	60	Male	Tambe	Farmer	12/9/2020
15	Samaila Kauchi	93	Male	Piyau	Pastor	1/9/2020
16	Sidi Komta	41	Male	Billiri	Farmer	3/12/2020
17	Sussanna Zubairu	45	Female	Tal	Business	4/12/2020
18	Talitha Matthew	62	Female	Laden	Business	5/12/2020
19	Terryson Philip	69	Male	Banganje	Civil Servant	7/12/2020
20	Zubairu Ahmadu	55	Male	Kalmai	Traditional Ruler	17/12/2020
21	Bula Musa	56	Male	Pobawure	Farmer	04/08/2020

PLATEAU STATE TOURISM: CHALLENGES AND ITS PROGRESSIVE DECLINE

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Abstract

This paper discusses the challenges confronting the Plateau state tourism sector, the need for government to take urgent steps to rescue it from total collapse and its progressive decline. Plateau State, created in 1976 is located in the North central Nigeria and blessed with a good weather and fertile land which supports the cultivation of varieties of food crops. The state located on a Plateau has the slogan “Home of Peace and Tourism” because of the hospitable nature of her people and the abundant tourist sites found in the state. Tourism in some parts of the world attracts thousands of people annually and in turn generates billions in revenue. The question then is, why is the Plateau State tourism sector struggling to attract tourist to the state and, to what extent is the sector contributing to the development of the state? The pivotal goal of this paper is to discuss the declining tourism sector of the state and the need for the government to revamp it, and by doing so it will no doubt reduce its overdependence on federal government allocation. Through the use of primary and secondary sources like oral interviews, books, and internet materials, the paper establishes that the condition of the tourism sector in Plateau State is deteriorating and therefore, is in dire need of all the attention government can give to it.

Introduction

Tourism all over the world is considered as one of the largest and important economic sectors of a country or state which is useful for its growth and development. Tourism in a lot of countries attracts tourists in large number which in turn brings about employment and revenue generation, thus, the development of the state or country. Nigeria is endowed with numerous tourist sites found in different states of the country, some of these tourist destinations include the Obudu Mountain Resort in Cross River, The War Museum at Umuahia, Tinapa and Leisure Resort in Cross River, Yankari Game Reserve in Bauchi State, Mambilla Plateau in Taraba State among many others scattered across the country have continue to attract tourists. Plateau state is blessed with both natural and man-made tourist sites to include rocks, hills, game reserves, zoological gardens, museums, bird sanctuaries among many other tourist sites spread across the state. They are capable of attracting tourists from within and outside the country, but seem not to be the case as some of these tourist sites are almost in ruins or non-functional due to a number of challenges the sector is grappling with. Among these challenges are poor infrastructure, mismanagement, insecurity, low budgetary allocations to the sector, poor publicity and negligence by the government made the condition of the sector to deteriorate. Revamping the sector to be attractive again, it requires government and relevant bodies to do away with those factors hindering the progress of the sector so that the image of the state as the “Home of Peace and tourism” will be restored and thereby making it a tourist delight as well as reduce the State’s over dependence on federal allocation.

Tourism in Nigeria

Nigeria is blessed with a lot of natural resources, a fertile land for the cultivation of different agricultural produce and tourist sites scattered across the country that should place it among the developed world. However, this is not the case as past and present governments have continued to pay little attention to the agricultural and tourism industry.

Tourism in Nigeria during the colonial period received little or no attention as there was no agency or corporation to oversee the activities or running of the sector. The first board established to oversee the activities of the sector was in 1976 when the government of Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo established the Nigeria Tourism Board (NTB) presently known as Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) via Decree No. 54 of 1976 amended in Decree No. 86 of 1991 which gave it a 'preferred sector' status respectively.¹ In 1999, the government created the Federal Ministry of Tourism and by 2006, it was renamed Federal Ministry of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation. This was done to actualize the dream of catching up with the global trend in tourism development.

At the state level, there have been the creation of State Tourism Boards (STBs) to identify, preserve, protect and develop tourism assets and resources within the state. Just in the federal and state levels, there is also the creation of the Local Government Tourism Agency responsible for identifying potential tourist attraction sites, serve information centers, preserve and maintain monuments and museums.² The Nigerian tourism sector is blessed with both man-made and natural sites across the country. Some of these tourist sites include natural attraction like, Assop Falls in Plateau State and Gurara Falls in Niger State. Mountains, resorts and rock formations include Shere Hills in Plateau State and Ogbunike Cave in Anambra State. Cultural attractions include the Argungu fishing festival in Kebbi, and Igue festival in Edo State. Heritage, Museums and Monuments include the Jos National Museum in Plateau State and National War Museum in Abia State and Eco-Tourism sites include Old Oyo National Park and the Jos Wild Life Park.³ In spite of all these, the Nigerian tourism sector performs poorly and is in dire need of government attention to be able to compete with other world tourist destinations in Africa as are in South Africa, Mauritius, Kenya, Madagascar and Seychelles among other Africa's tourist sites.

Tourists' sites in Plateau State

Plateau state is located in North Central Nigeria with a temperate climate of between 13 and 22°C . The weather is often cold between November and February and warm between March and April. The state has high lands rising from 1,200 metres to a peak of 1,829 metres above sea level at Shere Hills.⁴ Endowed with both natural and man-made tourist sites and a favourable weather, the state is a tourist delight with a number of tourist sites among which are:

Wase Rock: This is a massive dome shaped rock found in Wase Local Government Area of Plateau State and is believed to have come about as a result of volcanic eruption. There are only five types of its kind in the world.⁵ The rock stands idly at about 320 metres above the plains of Wase town⁶. Before the ethno-religious conflict recorded in the southern zone of the state, the Rock attracted researchers and rock climbers to the area. The rock is also home to the rosy pelican birds of Africa which is one of the five breeding places for the birds. Throughout its history, it has been recorded that only one White Mountain climber was able to reach the peak of the rock, but was stung by bees.⁷ However, due to the crisis in the southern part of the state from 2002, it has not been able to attract the needed tourists. Till date, the Wase rock is yet to receive the desired government attention to make it a world class tourist attraction site.

Riyom Rock: This rock is at times referred to as “Plateau Rock” due to its formation. Taking a look at the rock, one may be made to believe that it represents the map of Plateau State at different stages of its evolution. The view of the entire rock depicts the map of Benue-Plateau and when Nasarawa State was created out of Plateau in 1996, the last three rocks on top depicts the new and current map of the state. The Rock is located 25 kilometres from Jos along the Jos-Akwanga road and it is believed that nature carved out the geographical boundaries of Plateau State long before the creation of the state on the rock. It can be described as a natural gallery that displays the largest sculptures in Africa and the area surrounding the Riyom Rock attracts hikers.⁸ Due to the security challenges bedeviling the

state, most especially with the farmer/herders conflict, tourists now avoid this site for fear of attack.

Kahwang Basalt Rock: This rock is considered to be the only second of its kind in the world with the other found in Ireland,⁹ The Khawang Basalt Rock is located in Riyom Local Government Area of Plateau State with a river running over it, thereby making it a beauty to behold. Just as it is with most tourist sites in the state, its potentials have not been adequately harnessed in regard to attracting the needed tourists in the area.

Shere Hills: Shere hills is located in Jos East Local Government and considered one of Plateau's highest peaks and most rugged. It offers opportunities to mountain climbers and lovers of adventure and it serves as a camp spot to the citizenship and leadership training centre Jos. Shere hills have the highest peak of about 1,829 metres or 6,001 feet above sea level. therefore, it is considered the highest point of the Jos Plateau and the third highest point in Nigeria after Chappal Waddi on the Mambilla Plateau averaging about 2,419 metres and Mount Dimlang (Vogel peak) on the Shebshi Mountains reaching a height of about 2,042 metres.¹⁰ This site has continued to attract tourists.

Unity Rock: The rock is located in Shehe-Rayfield, Jos. It depicts the geographical boundary map of Nigeria.¹¹ This site has not gotten the needed attention of the government to develop it.

Pandam Game Reserve: The Pandam Game Reserve is located in Qua'an Pan Local Government Area of Plateau State and attracts researchers and tourists. It is home to animals like hippopotamus, antelopes, baboons, warthogs, monkeys and some exotic birds like the brilliantly coloured parrots, noisy hornbills and secretive herons.¹² The condition of the reserve has continued to decline without any serious commitment on the site of government to resuscitate it.

Jos Wild Life Park: The wild life park was established in 1972 by the government of Joseph Gomwalk and is considered among the biggest or

largest man-made zoological gardens in Nigeria. The park is home to variety of animals like lions, elephant, monkeys, crocodile, cougar, gorillas, ostrich and hyenas among other animals found in the park. Within the park is the history museum and the pine forest for picnic lovers. In spite of the availability of all these within the park, Government only pays lip service towards the development of the park, therefore, the deteriorating condition of the park.

Jos Museum: The museum was established in 1952 by Bernard Fagg initially as a research centre into the pre historic culture of Nigeria. Found in the museum are pottery, Nok terracotta heads and the museum of traditional Nigeria architecture.¹³ The museum today is almost in total ruins

The Amurum Bird Sanctuary: The bird sanctuary is a three hundred (300) hectare forest with granite inselbergs located near Lamingo. It is home to some rare species of birds like the plateau indigo and the rock firefinch.¹⁴

Other tourist sites in the state include, Kurra falls in Barkin Ladi, Jing Basalt Rock formation in Pankshin, the Zul-Gibang Mountain Range located along Panyam-Shendam road, and, Assop falls along Jos-Kagoro road.

Challenges of tourism in Plateau State

Plateau State which used to be known as the haven for tourism have virtually lost its reputation, the ministry was almost dead, something went wrong that we almost lost the glory of a tourist state”.¹⁵ This statement by the then Commissioner for Tourism, Sylvanus Demtoe in 2014 captures the true picture of the tourism sector in Plateau State till date with little attention given to it by the relevant authorities. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) states that, states are involved in tourism in five ways. Establishing a frame work to enable the private and public sectors to co-operate, legislate and regulate to protect the environment and cultural

heritage, construct infrastructure, develop training and education for tourism and the formulation of policies and plans for tourism development.¹⁶ The question then is, how far has the Plateau State government gone in achieving these? Could these issues be responsible for the sector's decline? It is based on these that the challenges confronting the Plateau State tourism will be discussed below.

Poor Infrastructure: For a tourism sector to thrive, tourism infrastructure must be put in place by the relevant authorities, and in this case, the Plateau State government. For easy access to tourist sites, roads leading to these sites must be in good condition. This cannot be said to be so with roads leading to some tourist sites like Pandam Game Reserve, Wase Rock, Assop falls and Shere hills among others. Some of these sites do not have electricity and good accommodation and supply of pipe borne water. Plateau hotel and Mado tourist Village is today in a sorry state. With the poor condition of the above mentioned tourist sites, no tourist would want to visit or lodge in any of the above sites because in no way will they attract tourists in their present state because they look like abandon structures without electricity and steady water supply

Mismanagement: Mismanagement is like a plague that has continued to spread across Nigeria defying all forms of medications or solution thus, hindering the growth and development of the country. In Plateau State, a visit to the Museum of Traditional Nigerian Architecture (MOTNA) Jos is an evidence of mismanagement. The site was a beauty when it was started in 1972 and completed in 1975 by prof. Z.R Dmochowski¹⁷ attracting researches and entertainers. The movie "AMINA" was shoot in the MOTNA in 2008 because of its beauty and attraction. However, the story has changed today, the whole MOTNA structures are almost in complete ruins, the huts within the Asiko arts theatre village in the museum is a shadow of what it used to be, no maintenance work is being carried out to ensure that the MOTNA structures do not totally collapse.

The Mado Tourist Village in Tudun Wada area of Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State built as a resort and vacation destination

is not today being used for the purpose for which it was built for. The site looked abandoned and no activity for which the tourist village was established is taking place rather, the round huts within the resort are rented out to people for six thousand naira for a year.¹⁸ The tourist village within the Pandam Game Reserve is in a deplorable condition and the forest which harbour different animals now attracts hunters and herders who sometimes temporary stay there. In the 2015 budget, the Plateau State government allocated to the tourism corporation one billion two hundred and eighty three million naira for Pandam and Jos Wild Life Park, but the money was never released. In 2016, the government again estimated the sum of eight hundred and two million naira to revive Pandam tourist village and some other tourist locations.¹⁹ In spite of all these, these two sites look unattended to.

Insecurity: “Any actor or producer coming to Jos sees it as a risk or going to war front due to insecurity occasioned by years of crisis”.²⁰ This has shown how much damage conflicts and crisis have done to the tourism sector on the Plateau. Before embarking on a journey to any state or country for tourism, the first thing that comes into consideration is safety which will eventually determine the decision making as a tourist. Plateau State over the years have at one point or the other grappled with security challenges like ethno-religious conflicts, kidnapping, farmer-herders clash and terror attacks which are all reasons for any tourist not to visit the state. Other security challenges that work against tourism are warfare, social unrest and political instability which are all considered high risk as they could endanger tourist lives and as a result of these, they feel reluctant to visit affected destinations.²¹ The various conflicts and security challenges recorded in the state were reported not only by local media stations but international media stations like CNN, BBC and Aljazeera thereby alerting would-be tourists to the state of the security challenges in their intended tourist destinations. This does not only get the attention of the would-be tourist, but that of their home governments who often warn and discourage their citizens against travelling to such destinations.

Low Budgetary Allocation: Without adequate financial support, the tourism sector in Plateau State will continue to experience a downturn. All over the world, tourist sites attract tourists due to the huge investment in them which ensure maintenance, good management and initiation of new ideas or restocking the tourist sites in order to make it relevant and attractive for it to generate the needed revenue and employment. In Plateau State, the sector is always among the ones that receive the lowest budgetary allocation in the state. This results in low revenue generation from the sector and its inability to attract many tourists. In 1999, it generated #720,000, #3,747,321 in 2001, #1,631,157 in 2005 and #25,750,000 in 2004.²² The question then is, what is responsible for this low revenue generation by the sector?

Funding is one of the major problems confronting the sector, the sector is grossly underfunded.²³ In 2019, the sector received #337, 900.000 million representing 0.50% from a total budget size of #153 billion²⁴ and in the budget of 2020, it received the second lowest allocation of #561.9 million representing 0.75%.²⁵ All these points to the reason why the sector is doing badly therefore, government must move beyond lip service to matching their words with action.

Poor Publicity: For tourists to visit the sites they must first know and hear what these tourist sites have to offer them, this is where the role of publicity comes in. A lot of states or countries publicize their tourism sectors locally and internationally through the use of the media. The London Eye or Millennium Wheel is advertised and sponsored by the British Airways when promoting UK tourism, the image of the Colosseum in Rome is used to advertise tourism in Italy, South Africa use the image of Table Mountain and the United States use the Grand Canyon.²⁶ This is done not only using their local media, but international media stations too. Through this means, the world gets to know about a country's tourism potentials and what it has to offer them. Therefore, for the desire to want to visit the tourist sites; Plateau State should enhance her publicity of her tourism sector locally and internationally or it will continue to experience low patronage especially by foreign tourists.

Potential remedies to tourism in Plateau State

Tourism sector is one of the largest and imported industries which is useful for the development of a nation and it occupies 11% of the world's GDP creating millions of jobs. In 2000 alone, \$595 billion was generated by the international tourism industry.²⁷ It is based on these that the following are possible remedies which may help in the resuscitation of the tourism sector in Plateau State.

Provision of Security: There is no sector in the world that can function well without security including the tourism sector. Plateau State has recorded several conflicts and other security challenges which are enough reasons to discourage any would-be tourist from visiting the state. To attract tourist, government must ensure that they deal with issues of ethno-religious and farmer-herders conflicts, kidnapping and arm robbery in order for the tourists to know that their safety is guaranteed, Thereby determining the decision taking of tourists whether to come or not.

Maintenance of Tourist Facilities: If facilities at tourist sites are not maintained often, it leads to the decline of the tourist facilities or site. In 2015, a lion escaped from the Jos wild life park and was later killed by soldiers. This news alone was enough to scare any intending tourist to the site. The Mado Tourist, Plateau Hotel and the Pandam Game Reserve all look abandoned. The Museum of Traditional Nigerian Architecture (MOTNA) is today almost in complete ruin due to lack of maintenance by the government. The maintenance of all tourist sites must be prioritized, all worn out facilities be replaced and regular maintenance work carried out to ensure some of these sites maintain their original shape in order to remain relevant and attractive.

Infrastructural Development: There should be concerted efforts towards the construction or rehabilitation of accessible roads, provision of electricity and pipe borne water to the various tourist sites. There is no tourist that would want to be exhausted before arriving at a tourist

destination because of bad road or being unable to make use of electricity or pipe borne water while at the tourist site.

Increased Budgetary Allocation: the sector is often among the ministries that receive the lowest budgetary allocation from the state government. To make the sector attractive, government must or should increase the funds allocated to this sector to enable them carryout maintenance, rehabilitation, provide electricity and pipe born water, and where animals are needed, new ones bought and well fed. Increased budgetary allocation will enable the sector publicize the tourism destinations in Plateau State local and internationally thereby attracting tourists and foreign investors into the state.

Publicity: Publicity is aimed at creating awareness about product and services without which, a wider range of people will not get to know about that product or services. For tourist to get to know about the numerous tourist sites in Plateau State, the publicity must be of wider coverage not only within the state, but national and international through the mass media. The state should create a website with the various tourist sites in order to show case what it has to offer tourists. Through this means, tourists from any part of the world can login into the site and learn about the different tourist destinations thereby, developing interest in one or two of the sites.

Staff Employment/Training: Regular training of staff will keep them up to date about their job especially, on how to maintain tourist facilities and maintaining good relationship with tourists on ground. The sector has no enough staff, therefore, to keep it going, more staff should be employed to meet the goals of the sector and the needs of tourists.

Conclusion

Plateau State is blessed with both natural and man-made tourists sites scattered across the state which should significantly contribute to the development of the state and make it less dependent on the federal

government for monthly allocation. However, this seems not to be the case as most of the tourist sites in the state have continued to suffer gradual decline due to several factors like mismanagement, poor infrastructure, security challenges and underfunding among other factors. These have contributed to the sector being less attractive to tourists both within and outside the state and country, thus, its negative effects on the sector. For the State to regain her slogan as “The Home of Peace and Tourism” it must tackle the challenges that have continued to bedevil the sector in Plateau State. For it to attract tourists in their numbers, boost internally generated revenue and place the state among tourist destinations of the world, government must live up to its responsibilities in this sector.

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**WOMEN SUBORDINATION IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION
IN SOUTHERN KADUNA: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF
ITS EFFECTS ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OF KADUNA STATE.**

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Abstract

Given the importance of family relationships in most women's lives, it is not surprising that the family and women have occupied a central place in the development and growth of the community in terms of production and distribution of farm produce as well as the processing of some of the farm produce to finished and consumable goods. Despite their contributions towards economic development women have suffered discrimination in various facets of life, including the most paramount which is Agricultural production. It is an undisputable fact base on this research that women are key players, playing a very major role in agricultural production in Southern Kaduna. However, despite their major role, men have consistently continued to dominate farm decision making, even in areas where women are the largest providers of farm labour. This paper therefore addresses Women's Subordination in Agricultural production in Southern Kaduna and its effect on the economic development of Kaduna State. It further explains how the above impinge on the people of Southern Kaduna and Kaduna State at large. The study is predicated on historical approach with reliance on secondary data which were thematically and textually analysed.

Keywords: Subordination, Agricultural Production, Economic Development

Introduction

The position of women in our societies in relation to men and subordination, oppression and marginalization has attracted the attention of scholars, activists, feminists and development workers for a very long time. The issues relating to what has come to be known as the women question or why women are oppressed has become very prominent in the last few decades. This can be traced back to the patriarchal nature of Nigeria Society which is a major feature of a traditional society. It is a structure of a set of social relations with material base which enables men to dominate women.¹

The word “patriarchy” has been recreated in the past two decades to analyse the origins and conditions of men’s oppression of women. Originally used to describe the power of the father as head of household, the term ‘patriarchy’ has been used within post 1960s feminism to refer to the systematic organization of male supremacy and female subordination. Patriarchy is a set of social relations which has a material base and in which there are hierarchical relations between men and solidarity among them which enable them in turn to dominate women. The material base of patriarchy is men’s control over women labor power. That control is maintained by excluding women from access to necessary economically productive resources and by restricting women’s sexuality. Men exercise their control in receiving personal service work from women, in not having to do housework or rear children, in having access to women’s bodies for sex, and in feeling powerful and being powerful.²

The Southern Kaduna communities are predominantly agrarian and women are active participants and also have the responsibility for food production, processing, cooking, child care and domestic activities. Women in these Communities are key players in the business of agriculture, they contribute a greater percentage of all hours spent in agricultural production, processing and also undertake 60 to 90% of the rural agricultural products marketing responsibilities. Thus providing more than two third of the workforce in agriculture. In spite of this, women who

are the ‘building block to the development of the society’ are not represented nor given the opportunity to participate actively in economic decision making, but are been subjected to the definitions and decisions of the men whose definitions serves their own interests.

Southern Kaduna

The concept of “Southern Kaduna” is not as imaginary as some spectrum of unintellectual opinion would want the world to believe. It is a real concept and derives its legitimacy from the existence of a geopolitical entity of a Northern Zaria. The mere existence of a Northern Zaria recognized and legitimized by the Emirate system 1846-1903, the Indirect Rule System 1903-1960, and the post-independence Administrations 1960 to date legitimizes the existence of a Southern Zaria now Southern Kaduna.³ The geographical or better still, geo-political entity commonly referred to as “Southern Zaria” now Southern Kaduna is situated within the central high plains of Northern Nigeria. It is located between longitude 5 and 7 east.⁴ The area shares common boundary to the north and east with Jos Plateau and Bauchi and to the south, with the Federal Capital Territory. It today comprises of Jaba, Kaura, Lere, Zango-Kataf, Kajuru, Chikun, Kachia, Jema’a and Sanga Local Government Areas of Kaduna State.⁵

Southern Kaduna is inhabited by multi-farious ethnic and linguistic groups belonging to the broader Niger-Congo linguistic family. Its main subdivision is the Benue Congo Linguistic group. Based on the linguistic and cultural linkages between and among these groups some five distinct ethnic linguistic clusters have since become evident. “These are the Kataf and Netzit cluster, the Hamm or Jaba cluster, the Adara-Kadara cluster, the Aninka or Ninzam cluster and the conglomeration of several groups in the Saminaka or the Ninam or Saminaka Clusters”.⁶ These Southern Kaduna ethnic clusters all speak dialects belonging to the Plateau groups of languages. The Plateau languages formed the Benue-Congo linguistic sub-family of the Niger-Congo. Greenberg, Williamson, Hoffman, Madison, Shimizu, Gerhard and Jokers are all unanimous in concluding that the

Southern Kaduna Communities speak languages that belong to Eastern and wider Plateau linguistic family.⁷

The Southern Kaduna sub-region forms a culture complex of its own. This culture complex comprises of the several distinctive features which culturally link these ethnic clusters together. These are expressed in the respective similarities in terms of their climate, fauna and flora, topography, types of settlement patterns, types of occupations, identical family and kinship structure, traditional political organizations, religious belief and practices etc which has been infiltrated by the “white man’s” culture thereby forcing this complex culture of the Southern Kaduna into gradual extinction. Be that as it may, there are many ethnic groups in Southern Kaduna as it has already been pointed out. However, their socio-political values and organization are quite similar. They exhibit similar characteristics in culture, language, religion, customs and physical features as well as economic activities. Having many things in common points to the fact that in the distant past they had the same origin.⁸

The vegetation of Southern Kaduna in the early period and even up to the period of British conquest of the area was influenced by climatic factors, soil, as well as the relationship between man and the environment. The area received higher amount of rainfall of about 55-65 inches when compared with some areas to the north like Kano and Soba districts, which had 34 and 43 inches respectively.⁹ The area has in the 1940s been brought under cultivation due to rapid increase in the population of the area. For example rice along with other crops was introduced as another cash crop in 1941 as a means of economic development of the area.¹⁰ This district falls into the vegetation zone described by Buchanan and Pugh as the Southern guinea savannah ecological zone.¹¹ This zone forms the transitional zone between the forest and the savannah belts consisting of broad-leaved savannah woodlands.¹²

The area is found within the Guinea Savannah vegetation belt of Nigeria. The vegetation comprises mainly shrubs, stubborn tall grasses with big trees. The grasses could grow to over 3.60mm tall. The grasses and trees

are of economic importance during both the wet and the dry season. The cool, dry climate, topography and soil types have influenced the vegetation of the area. The natural vegetation has been influenced by farming, grazing, mining and construction activities.¹³ The land and its physical features, vegetation cover and climate are of paramount significance to the historical geography as well as human development in Southern Kaduna in terms of the socio-political and economic activities of the people. Its configuration, its waters, the winds and all its physical geography, its flora, its zoology, is an indication of the level of agricultural activities engaged by the people.

A survey of the economy of the Southern Kaduna area showed that the people developed a complex society made up of various sectors that were effectively integrated together into a stable, viable and self-sufficient economy. This is not to say that throughout the existence of the people, everything was rosy and cosy, because there was time when the economy declined as a result of natural disasters such as locust invasion which in turn caused famine though not on a large scale.¹⁴ The economy was mostly considered subsistent especially by colonial historiography, but that did not hinder the production of crops by individuals and households in large quantities, which made it possible for them to exchanged it with their neighbors for items they did not have or for crops they did not produce.

Women Subordination in Southern Kaduna

The colonial domination in the late 19th century ushered in the introduction of the cash crop economy by the British colonial government, which altered pre-colonial gender division of labor to the detriment of women.¹⁵ The British Victorian ideology interacted with pre-colonial patriarchal structures to further push women to the background in the commercial agriculture. While cash crop became the preserve of men, women were left in the unremunerated subsistence agriculture meant for household consumption. In Southern Kaduna for example, men took control of the cash crop economy and were thereby able to accumulate wealth for

themselves, while this economy was sustained by the unpaid labor of their wives and children. According to Baba Timvak in an interview, men considered the work performed by wives on the farms as an extension of their traditional obligation to work on.¹⁶ The free labor wives provide on husband's farm must be noted, put constrains on the time available to them for income generating activities.

Over the years therefore, women have established more defined roles in Agriculture in Nigeria; they were involved in agricultural production, processing and utilization as well as labor force participation and time inputs. Women according to Ester Bosery, make a greater contribution to African agriculture than men. The evidence that she collected showed that the gap between male and female labor contribution in farming was widening and women's working day was lengthening. Yet, their enormous contributions of providing labor for agriculture, are still disregarded, subordinated and discriminated against and seen as the weaker sex in its literal sense.¹⁷

Though women constitute a large portion of the farming population, their possibilities in agriculture are hindered by formal and traditional rules. Generally, the extent of gender involvement in agricultural production varies across ethnic groups in Nigeria. Nigerian women farmers work alongside their male counterparts with some clear distinction in activities between them. In most cases, the men execute tasks such as land clearing, felling of trees, gathering and burning of bush and making ridges, while the women and girls are predominantly engaged in transplanting from the nursery to the main field, planting, weeding, harvesting, transporting the yields back home, on-farm processing and at times selling of farm produce. It should be noted that planting, weeding, transportation and processing is more time consuming and requires more labor force than clearing and ridging. It is obvious that both hoes and hands are used for weeding, but the usage of hand for weeding, depends on how strong or fragile the weed is. In some cases, women participate in small scale animal production including small ruminants, poultry and aquaculture.¹⁸

In an interview with Alheri women Soya beans cluster in Kwoi on the communities under discussion, the farming activities going on both in dry and wet season is a clear display of how women's contributions in agriculture is paramount, so much that if disregarded or eliminated then the farm output would be in jeopardy. Both men and women believed that God has placed the man up and above the woman, and as such had given the man the right to dominate, so the man then plays the role of a supervisor in agriculture whereas his wife/ wives and children are roughly engaged in clearing the farm.¹⁹

From the forgoing, the analyses are that, women in this community constitute a higher percentage of the entire workforce required in the farming venture. This is because the women assist their husbands in tilling, sowing, weeding, harvesting, transporting farm produce and processing them. During the time of harvest from the months of August to December, women are mostly mobilized for the task which includes cutting, threshing and transportation. During the harvest of millet and guinea corn, men carried out the task of cutting down the stalk of the plants while leaving the remaining tedious task of extracting the seeds and transporting the harvested food crops on the head to women, in the absence of any other means of transport. This period also provided women with an opportunity to compose songs in praise of their hard working men, while at the same time sang songs of contempt deriding the very lazy men in the society. Singing a song was a way of denouncing lazy men and a means of making them live up to their responsibilities of working hard.²⁰

Therefore, the word 'assist' in this venture becomes an irony. A closer look at the bigger picture of agricultural production at the family level in Southern Kaduna indicates that most men, on the contrary assist their wives in this venture. But their story would be like that of the slave and the slave master holding the whip, because at the end of the day, the man essentially owns everything as society delineates it. An outspoken woman especially one that clamors change in the status quo is regarded as a wayward woman, who has derailed from the norms of society and religion,

as the woman is expected to be submissive in every circumstances.²¹ Unfortunately the contributions of women in agriculture are grossly underestimated that their roles in economic change continued to be inadequately recognized in the development of agricultural policies and programmes. A number of factors are responsible for this. They include the following:

- The male dominated cultures which place women in inferior position
- Customs, taboos and the sexual division of labor which keeps women subordinate to men
- The inability of women to access land, loans and other agricultural inputs for commercial agricultural production.^{22s}

It is therefore an obvious fact that women's appropriate participation in agriculture in Southern Kaduna is hindered by various factors, and the men have capitalized on such factors to subordinate them. The most prominent are enumerated below:

Land Ownership

In Nigeria and Southern Kaduna in particular, women lack independent rights to land, especially inherited land. Land rights are only allocated through men, either sons or husbands. Land is allocated to men, who are the heads of households. Men are the ones who have full ownership of property and any valuable goods in the household must belong to the head of the household.²³ Women's lack of independent land rights, rules out one of the main fall back positions for women seeking sustainable livelihoods in the face of rising poverty. While there is enormous variation from one communal tenure system to another, women do not usually qualify to hold land especially inherited independently from men. Rules of access and inheritance generally tend to favour men over women and women with children over those without. The factors that constrain women generally in acquiring land rights as in many communities include the application of the customary law of patriarchy, which discriminates against women. Also, the

lack of women representatives on community land committees and participation in traditional community decision-making structures as in some communities, women are now allowed to attend and participate or actively speak at public meetings.²⁴ Lastly, there is widespread ignorance among women of their rights to land from the provisions of the constitution due to factors such illiteracy and lack of dissemination of the legislation to the grassroots levels.

The men have therefore capitalized on the above factors or constraints to totally subject and subordinate the women into working in their farms, where they contribute or work even greater than the men but without the right to decide or make use of any produce from the land without the permission of their husbands. Only few women have little access to some portion of lands, many have to cultivate such lands at the detects of their husbands or whoever must have given the portion of land out, at times what to be cultivated on the portion of land is decided by such persons or owners of the land. In some cases, the woman does not have any right or cannot take any independent decision on the produce from that land.

Access to Credit (loan) facilities

In addition to limited access to land, women face problems of access to their inputs, including credit (capital/money). This is because many credit associations and export crop market cooperatives limit membership to household heads in many African societies, thereby excluding married and single women.²⁵ Women face greater difficulties than men particularly with regards to participation in rural cooperatives and access to credit, training and agricultural extension. These difficulties rarely flow from explicitly discriminatory norms, as legislation on these issues are in most cases gender neutral. Rather, they mainly arise from cultural practices and stereotypes (e.g. women's role within the family and on interactions between persons of different sexes) and from socio-economic factors (e.g as for access to credit, women's higher illiteracy rates, lack of information about available credit programmes, lack of land titles to be offered as

collateral and exclusion from credit cooperation.²⁶ In many communities in Southern Kaduna in particular, women are encouraged only to produce food crops for sustaining the family, leaving men in control of the production of cash crop, this automatically placed the woman economically under her man, as she has to depend on his decision concerning whatsoever they might cultivated irrespective of her contribution in the process of production.²⁷

Education

Education is one of the significant factors affecting the participation of women in agricultural development. Rad agrees that education is one of the important factors that help development to be realized. The purpose of education (formal and informal) as stated by Rad is to communicate accumulated wisdom and knowledge from one generation to the next.²⁸ Education enhances active participation in innovation and the development of new knowledge. A study conducted by the Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, reveals that, illiteracy is a major constraint facing women in development. Women are unable to understand and utilize technical information because they lack basic formal education. This study also revealed that, because of illiteracy, women farmers are unable to read and understand the written material provided by extension programs that educate farmers. It is important to note that education has a relationship with farming progression. The reason is that there is positive correlation between education and farming. Lack of education and sufficient training has been identified as a key barrier to women's advancement in the society as well as paving more ways for men's subordination.²⁹

The Effects of Women Subordination to Economic Development

Development economists in general and agricultural economists in particular have long focused on how agriculture can best contribute to overall growth, development and modernization of an economy. Many early analysts highlighted agriculture because of its abundance of resources

and its ability to transfer surpluses to the more important sectors of the economy. Agriculture's primary role in the transformation of a developing economy is seen as subordinate to the central strategy of accelerating the pace of industrialization and meaningful development.³⁰ This conventional approach to the roles of agriculture in development concentrated on agriculture's important market-mediated linkages such as providing labor for an urbanized industrial workforce; producing food for expanding populations with higher incomes; supplying savings for investment in industry; enlarging markets for industrial output; providing export earnings to pay imported capital goods; and producing primary materials for agro-processing industries.³¹

The role that women play and their position in meeting the challenges of agricultural production and development are quite dominant and prominent. Their relevance and significance, therefore, cannot be overemphasized. Findings from a study financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) revealed that women make up some 60-80 percent of agricultural labor force in Nigeria, depending on the region and they produce two-thirds of the food crops. The most influential evidence on the importance of women to economic development through agricultural production has come from a research used to support the World Bank's 'Gender Mainstreaming Strategy'.³² This research highlighted that societies that discriminates by gender or subordinate women tend to experience less economic growth and poverty reduction than societies that treat male and female more equally, and that social gender disparities produce economically inefficient outcomes.³³

The primary Pathways through which women subordination affect growth and development is by influencing the productivity of labor and the allocative efficiency of the economy. In terms of productivity, for example, if the access of women farmers to productive inputs and human capital were same with men, total agricultural output could increase by an estimated 6 to 20 percent.³⁴ In terms of allocative efficiency, increase in household income are generally associated with reduced child mortality

risks, the marginal impact is almost 20 times larger if the income is in the hands of the mother rather than the father.³⁵

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the women question has occupied a central place in the quest for development over the years. There is also a progressive and deeper understanding of why women are oppressed and subordinated, and what needs to be done to reverse the situation in Southern Kaduna communities and beyond. Unfortunately, the programmes and actions (WAD, WID GAD) meant to address these issues have failed to transform the structures, institutions and systems that perpetuate women subordination and oppression. It is quite clear that patriarchy is a comprehensive explanatory framework. Therefore, in order to address the women question and transform gender relations, there is the need to challenge patriarchy in all its manifestations in domestic production, paid employment, culture and religion, sexuality, male violence and the State; and specifically promote women's rights. It is obvious that if programmes are carefully conceptualized in an innovative, creative and radical manner in a strategic way that will have the greatest impact on patriarchy, then the right path to overcoming the subordination and oppression of women in Southern Kaduna communities is chatted. Agricultural programmes should be all inclusive inclusion and women should be given the opportunity to fully participate in all agricultural activities

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