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A Critique of the Theory of Moral Luck

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Abstract

The problem with moral luck is basically that luck has a lingering influence towards the moral status of our actions. The crux of the question about moral luck hinges on the question: can luck make a difference in what a person is morally responsible for? Although many thinkers have contributed immensely to the issue of moral luck, Bernard Williams and Thomas Nagel argued that our moral status—how good or bad we are, and how much praise or blame we deserve—is largely determined by factors beyond our control. Accepting a phenomenon uncritically means acknowledging that one can be praised or blamed for things beyond one's control. This goes against our most fundamental prospect of evaluating moral actions where we have a deep attachment to the idea that we should be judged morally only about what is within our control. But abandoning the judgments and practices that seem to inevitably lead to these phenomena would require a radical and perhaps almost impossible modification of ordinary moral evaluation. This study, aimed to critically and analytically evaluate moral luck, as discussed by Bernard Williams and Thomas Nagel. The study noted that taking moral luck seriously may create moral dilemma in decision making. It concluded that the idea of moral luck makes moral agents reducible to fatalistic creations.

Keywords: Moral, Luck, Moral Agent, Freewill, Blame-worthy, Praise-worthy, Control Principle

Introduction

It can be argued that one of the defining characteristics of humanity is the capacity for moral behaviour. We have moral values, we think of our actions in moral terms, and we base our ideas about what people deserve on moral considerations. Humans are not the only creatures that act

morally. This means that morality is not exclusive to human; rather other non-sentient creatures possess the ability to act in ways that are moral. Though the cognitive ability and self-awareness cannot be equated with that of humans, but they demonstrate behaviours that agrees with moral principles such as cooperation and empathy. This explains Psychologist Frans de Waal (13) submission that, primates have at least proto-morality. However, our focus in this paper, pertains to human morality as this is what makes us unique as humans. What makes us unique in our morality is our ability to examine, understand, and modify our moral principles, beliefs, and practices. We strive to understand the principles that guide our actions and judgments, and we want them to be consistent with our judgments.

This testing and evaluation of our moral system makes our morality very unique. It is this testing and evaluation that has caused many of the biggest problems and controversies among people regarding our moral practices. Our morality is both one of our species' greatest achievements and one of its greatest curses. The evaluation of our moral system may have brought great growth to human society, but it also opened the way for criticism and challenge. This is not to say that criticism is necessarily bad, but it can sometimes create problems that threaten to undermine our very moral practices. These problems have been growing for centuries.

From Euthyphro's dilemma (which questions the relationship between morality and religion; does morality rest on divine command, or is there a higher standard of morality that the gods must also adhere to), to modern debates about free will and responsibility, as a specie, humans have been intrigued by questions about morality and its complexities. If we want to continually improve our world and our moral system, we must address these issues and ensure that our moral system itself remains intact. One of such issue is moral luck, and that is what we will consider in this study, in particular, the problem of moral luck as explained in the work of Bernard Williams. According to him, our moral system generally provides that we should not punish agents for actions that are outside the control of the agent in question. This seems to lead to a contradiction at the heart of our morality — should we punish or not punish people for actions that are beyond their control? How are actions beyond the rational control of human individuals? This is one question this study must attempt an answer.

Bernard Williams on Moral Luck

Bernard Williams in the introduction of his conception of moral luck viewed the term "Luck" as "lack of control", to mean a 'lack of control. Bernard's argument was that our moral systems presuppose a 'Control Principle', that states that agents may only be judged for actions within their control. In explaining William's perspective on moral luck, David Enoch in his work *A Case against Moral Luck* writes that:

We tend to assume that people cannot be praised or blamed for something that they are not responsible for. A simple example would be if someone knocked a glass of water out of your hand and it then spilt on another person. In such a case we would conclude that you are not morally responsible for this result, as you could not have done otherwise. The fact is simply that the water spilt was not under your control (3).

Williams then goes on to explain that, contradictorily, our moral systems also do seem to judge people for actions outside their control (27). These two opposing principles create a paradox within our moral systems. He explains that we as agents frequently lack the kind of control necessary for responsibility, due to factors outside of our control. He refers to such factors in so far as they pertain to morality as “moral luck”. “Luck” here refers to any part of an agent's life that seems to influence moral judgments related to the agent, but which is also outside of the agent's control.

In the paper “*Moral Luck*”, Williams uses the story of an aspiring artist to demonstrate a problem with our moral systems and practice in general. Williams starts the discussion with a description of how we usually see morality, i.e. as unique. As he explains, we are all aware that the world is full of good and bad luck, but, somehow, we see morality and those actions that we tend to make moral judgments about as being immune to these features thus:

The thought that there is a kind of value which is, unlike others, accessible to all rational agents, offers little encouragement if that kind of value is merely a last resort, the doss-house of the spirit. Rather, it must have a claim on one's most fundamental concerns as a rational agent, and in one's recognition of that one is supposed to grasp, not only morality's immunity to luck, but one's own partial immunity to luck through morality (36).

The intuition that we have about morality is that it pertains to those actions that we can rightly pass judgment on, due to the culpability of the agents performing those actions. This intuition seems to be widespread and is strengthened by various religious teachings, as well as Kant's famous work on morality. We believe that moral responsibility should not be influenced by the unlucky happenings of the moment and that agents should only be punished for those things that are within their control. This “Control Principle” can be formulated with the position that an agent should only be judged for those actions within the agent's control.

A corollary of this principle is that, usually, any action that is outside of the control of the agent should not be liable to moral judgment. The intuitive appeal of this principle is demonstrated when we consider the case of two people (X and Y) who both spill coffee on someone: X, while carrying some coffee, does not take proper notice of her environment because her attention is focusing on something else, perhaps her phone, carelessly trips over a desk and spills her coffee on her colleague sitting there. On this occasion most people will believe that X is at least responsible for being negligent. She is guilty of not taking proper note of her surroundings and should, therefore, be held morally responsible for neglect in this regard. In a second case, Y is also carrying a cup of coffee, but is concentrating on his surroundings and trying his best not to spill any coffee; however, as he passes his colleague, an office chair is pushed into his path and causes him to spill coffee on his colleague. Although the colleague might initially react in the same way in both instances, most people would agree that the second case is an accident and that Y is not to be blamed. Both X and Y spill coffee, yet they are treated differently. The only difference is that while it was within X's control to avoid spilling her coffee (by being more vigilant), it was not within Y's control since he could not avoid the chair.

As much as this moral difference seems intuitive, some philosophers have also explicitly argued that it must be a fundamental part of morality. For an example, Immanuel Kant in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* states:

Even if by some particular disfavour of fate, or by the scanty endowment of a step-motherly nature, this will should entirely lack the capacity to carry through its purpose; if despite its greatest striving it should still accomplish nothing, and only the good will were to remain (not, of course, as a mere wish, but as the summoning of all means that are within our control); then, like a jewel, it would still shine by itself, as something that has its full worth in itself. Usefulness or fruitlessness can neither add anything to this worth, nor take anything away from it (17).

From the foregoing, it is evident that Kant thus argues that even if a person is unable to act, or if their actions do not turn out as intended, their will remains fully in their control, and we are therefore able to hold them responsible for what they intended.

This free “will” is an important aspect of Kant's philosophy, and indeed our own conceptions of what it means to be human and what it means to be moral. How can we judge, blame, reward, and punish people if what they do is not in their control? When someone does something, it is only the fact that we believe that that action was “part of them”, that they meant to do it rather than doing something else, and that we feel we may judge them. This belief stems from the understanding that our choices and decision reflects our personal agency and autonomy. And when we act in accordance with our own will, we own our actions and accept the consequences that may result from it. It is this fully-free will of the human that is called into question when we realize that the world might not afford us the amount of control required by our moral systems. We now have to ask whether we do indeed have such control.

Williams famously argues that we do not have such control, or, at least, that we do not have enough control over our actions to be fully responsible for them. To illustrate this, Williams tells the story of a fictional artist named Gauguin, who had the responsibilities one might expect a grown man to have, such as holding down a job and caring for a family. However, he also felt that he would not reach his full potential as a painter leading the life that he currently led (Williams 38). It is important to note that Williams stipulates that Gauguin is not morally bankrupt. He knows he has these other responsibilities, and he believes he ought to fulfil them. Nevertheless, his desire to become a great painter eventually pushes him to neglect these duties. He hopes that by starting a new life he may become a great painter, but he has no way of knowing whether or not he will be successful.

It is here that Williams argues that Gauguin has no way of justifying his decision to be a good painter until he has gained success, hence, Gauguin has no way of knowing whether his decision is a good one or not. If Gauguin fails, his decision would have been a bad one, if he succeeds, his decision would be a good one (Williams 38). It is important to note that Williams does not cast this decision in moral terms; rather, he states that Gauguin has no way of knowing if his decision is rational, and therefore, a good one. Williams then argues that this insight also has bearing on moral decisions and actions. It is with the story of Gauguin that Williams

believes he is able to demonstrate the problem we face. The problem is not that we have to wait until after the fact to make our moral judgment, rather, it lies in how the circumstances which lead to either a good or bad judgment come about, and also in how the effects of our decisions play out.

William argues that it might seem theoretically possible to find a criterion which allows us to judge the rightness/wrongness of an action before we make it, but that such criteria would still seem to require some information about the future. The problem with the future, at least from this perspective, is that it is uncertain, and the reason for this uncertainty lies in all the different factors that are at play in any decision that we make, as well as its effects. No one person is able to control all aspects of his life; so, whether Gauguin becomes a successful artist or not will be partially up to him, but also partially up to how morally lucky he is in finding the right place to work, choosing the right moment to act, and working in the particularly popular style of art of that time, to name a few. Williams thus argues that Gauguin has no way of knowing whether or not he will be successful, and that to some degree his rational justification for his actions depends on his success or failure (Williams 40 – 41). Something similar applies when it comes to the morality of our actions.

One can summarize all of this as follows: Gauguin should only hold himself responsible for those things within his control. He decides to leave his family and pursue a career in art, whether he did the right or wrong thing (in neglecting his responsibilities) is also partially dependent upon his failure or success as a painter, yet these are not wholly within his control. This is due to the fact that people judge people not just for what was “rational” at a given time, but also for what actually happened, and moral judgment is therefore susceptible to post hoc factors. Hence, Gauguin is responsible for something not within his control. It is this story that captures the apparent paradox within our moral systems: we ought only to blame ourselves for what is in our control, but we do blame ourselves for what is not.

The Nature of Moral Luck and How They Affect Moral Responsibility

Thomas Nagel also contributed immensely to the problem of moral luck. Thomas Nagel tries to defend moral luck by saying that a moral agent is never responsible for the action performed by him, because the situation or outer conditions of an action, which are not controlled by the agent, are responsible for an action. In his work *Moral Luck*, Thomas Nagel claims that moral luck reveals a paradox. It holds that the apparent paradox emerges only because it is assumed that attributions of responsibility require agents to have total control over their actions.

Thomas Nagel was the first author to distinguish between four different “types” of luck and this paper will adopt same. Although Nagel distinguishes between the four types, they are still related to one another and all refer to the same issue: the seeming paradox between the Control Principle and the fact that we tend to include factors out of the agent's control. Nagel starts his discussion by admitting that the Control Principle seems to be intuitively appealing. But he argues that, although the Control Principle seems to be intuitively true, he does not agree with Kant that intentions are all that matter when making moral judgments. He believes it also seems intuitively true that what actually happens should also have an effect on moral judgments, and therefore, we have a conflict between the Control Principle and the way we actually make moral

assessments (Nagel 58). He further strengthens this intuition by distinguishing between two different forms of blame. According to him, although we may judge some things as being bad (such as death or harm), these are not necessarily within the scope of moral judgment. As Nagel explains: "...but when we blame someone for his actions we are not merely saying it is bad that they happened, or bad that he exists: we are judging him, saying he is bad, which is different from him being a bad thing." (58)

It is this second form of bad that the Control Principle is concerned with. We want to only blame and judge people as bad for doing what is within their control. Since it is undoubtedly true that much of what we do depends on factors beyond our control, Nagel asks whether we should not simply deny the Control Principle. If we can clearly show examples where it does not hold, we should reject it and find another, more refined principle by which to judge others.

The problem, Nagel argues, is that we cannot do this since the Control Principle is not only a foundational part of our moral systems; it is still an intuitively necessary requirement for justified moral judgments. It is not the principle of control itself that is the problem here (i.e. it is not an "ethical" or "logical" mistake), but the paradox that arises when we consider the facts about the way in which the world is constituted and the principles our moral systems imply (Nagel 59). The principle of control is not false, and hence is not something we can simply get rid of. Therefore, Nagel believes, we truly do have a paradox at the heart of our moral systems. With this in mind, he goes on to describe four separate instances of luck which each, in their own way, takes away one aspect of an agent's control over her actions and their results. It is Nagel's thesis that if we accept these to be true, we lose moral responsibility.

The first form of luck is called Resultant luck. Nagel identifies this as the first of two types of luck that fall within the sphere of external factors that affect the causes and effects of our actions. Resultant luck is concerned with how things turn out, or, put more simply, how your actions play out in the real world and "actually" occur. To demonstrate this, we can consider the case of two different truck drivers: Both of these truck drivers find themselves driving on the road. Known to both, their brakes have not been checked and serviced in a while. It is clear that both drivers are negligent. If the story were to stop here, most would agree that they should be blamed equally for this negligence. However, as luck would have it, one of the drivers makes it to his destination safe and sound, while the other is in an unfortunate accident where a child has fallen into the road, and due to the poor brakes of the truck, the driver was not able to come to a stop in time, thereby crushing the child to death.

The story above poses an interesting question: are both drivers equally blameworthy or is the second more blameworthy, given the results of his negligence? Nagel argues that cases like the above demonstrate that while we hold the Control Principle to be true, we also blame people for the results of their actions, even when these results were not within their control. Moral blame, according to Nagel, is thus subject to external factors (if we blame people for the results of their actions rather than their intentions). Luck (or otherwise stated, a lack of control) often characterizes the results of our actions and therefore undermines the Control Principle when it comes to moral judgments.

A second type of luck Nagel introduces is that of circumstantial luck. This is the type of luck in the circumstances in which you find yourself. Circumstances (the world around you) play a large role in who you are and what you do. It plays a role in the development of your

personality and, of course, different circumstances require different reactions. As Nagel explains: The things we are called upon to do, the moral tests we face, are importantly determined by factors beyond our control. It may be true of someone that in a dangerous situation he would behave in a cowardly or heroic fashion, but if the situation never arises, he will never have the chance to distinguish or disgrace himself in this way (Nagel 65). Again, to demonstrate how this diminishes your control when it comes to moral matters, Nagel uses the Second World War as an example. He explains that the ordinary citizens of Germany, during the rise of Nazism, had the option to either oppose the Nazi government (a commendable act) or to join them (an action which is now looked upon with disdain). This “test”, as Nagel calls it, was one not shared by the people in other countries, but that is not to say they would not have acted as badly as many Germans did, were they to have been presented with the same circumstances (Nagel 65).

The same is true of Germans who were lucky enough to have emigrated out of the country before the rise of the Nazi party. It would seem that whether one is morally judged as a good or bad person also depends on how lucky one is in the circumstances one finds oneself in. Or, as Nagel puts it: “We judge people for what they actually do or fail to do, not just for what they would have done if circumstances had been different” (56). The world pushes and pulls us in different directions, placing us in different circumstances. We are only able to react to those circumstances we are presented with, so why should we be held accountable for those actions when others (through no merit or fault of their own) are not?

The third type of luck, Constitutive luck, which determines who you are; arguably, our personalities, wills, desires, and capabilities are to a large extent formed by the world around us. We may have no direct control over who we are, and yet we hold one another responsible for actions that came about due to our personality, even though we may not be responsible for it. Some people have extremely hard lives, some people have privileged lives, and this shapes the sort of people they are (Walker 12). Why should we say a thief is a bad person when, for the sake of argument, his behaviour and attitudes were caused by a hard life full of struggle? We praise people who support and assist others, but, again, for the sake of argument, why should we praise them when such behaviour and attitudes were caused by a life of privilege where they had the opportunity to develop such a character? Examples such as these are meant to demonstrate that the people we are, and therefore the moral judgments accrued to us, are influenced by many factors out of our control.

And this observation takes us to causal luck that has to do with how one's actions are caused by the circumstances that precede them. In this regard, if determinism is true, then all our actions are caused by events that happened before us. These events are beyond our control, so why hold ourselves responsible for actions that inevitably result from them? To summarize, we seem to find the Control Principle intuitively plausible, yet, we also seem to lack control in three distinct yet related ways. First, we seem to lack control over how our actions turn out. Second, we seem to lack control over the opportunities and challenges we face. Finally, we lack control over the people we are and the intentions we have. Taken together, these three types of luck undermine the Control Principle and therefore moral responsibility.

Evaluation of the Theory of Moral Luck

It is indisputable that the realm of moral responsibility revolves around humans because of the capacity and ability to reason, the capacity to decipher what is right or wrong. Levy in his work *Hard Luck: How Luck Undermines Free Will and Moral Responsibility* asserts that the agent can control his actions and that he can be held responsible for such action, because intuitively, we understand people to have a part that controls their actions and another part which is controlled (54). The thrust of this idea is that man exhibits some level of decision over the things he does, and man is not absolutely a fatalistic creation. Similarly, Pereboom in *Living without Freewill* also writes that character traits or mental states cannot be seen as being beyond the control of the agent (13). For this reason, if we accept the Control Principle, we hold that agents can only be held morally responsible for their actions insofar as these actions are somehow under their control. But, the question remains, how can we decipher the fact that other actions which we feel an agent is not blameworthy are not under the agent's control? As demonstrated by Robert Adams in his *Involuntary Sins* this claim leads to a problem (91). Adams argued that there is no conception of circumstances that allows us to conclude that agents do not have a sufficient level of control over their characters to satisfy the Control Principle. Characters are voluntary by being operations of the will, since there is no way to make sense of the idea that agents can "try" or "will" their characters into being.

Now that we have a better understanding of the agent and what exactly it is that we expect to be in control, we can move on to understanding the relationship between the agent and their circumstances. The problem of circumstantial luck states that different people face different challenges and tests, as well as different opportunities for success, and that this is not fair since the praise or blame accrued to them would have also been accrued to others, had they found themselves in the same circumstances. Again, we lack control over our circumstances and this violates the Control Principle, which undermines our moral responsibility. If this is true, it then implies that no one is worthy of any praise since such actions may not be under the person's control, but only circumstantial influences.

From the foregoing, we may assert that the whole prospect of the argument about moral luck may be reduced to the idea that we have moral agents equipped with all the relevant psychological states and capacities necessary to make moral decisions and actions; without these states/properties, we would not be talking about moral agents. It is this set of states and capacities which exercises 'control' and therefore bares moral responsibility (agent-causality). This implies that moral judgements require actions that make the judgement possible, and for this to happen, it requires an environment in which a person can act in a way that indicates a moral position. These circumstances and the judgements that accompany them do not determine the agent's moral standing, but only the agent's moral record.

Practically, if we hold the perspective of moral luck which leans on the control principle, as hinted above, then nobody should be punished by the criminal code because people should be punished for their wrongdoing, not for any practical reason (such as deterrence), but solely on the bases that they deserve punishment because they did wrong. If an agent hurts someone, then they deserve to be hurt back. This principle will imply that anyone cannot escape punishment since such an agent can always have an excuse for the immoral actions committed.

Caruso in his *Why Luck (Still) Undermines Moral Responsibility* asserts that:

Kant was right when he thought that luck should not come into ethics. Every action which can be assessed in moral terms must be freely performed: you should not be held morally responsible for anything outside your conscious control. This view seems plausible: our notions of moral praise and blame are focused on what is and is not avoidable, on what is within the agent's control (19).

Kant believed that good or bad luck should influence neither our moral judgment of a person and his actions, nor his moral assessment of himself. The good will is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes or because of its adequacy to achieve some proposed end; it is good only because of its willing, i.e., it is good of itself. And, regarded for itself, it is to be esteemed incomparably higher than anything which could be brought about by it in favour of any inclination or even of the sum total of all inclinations.

Conclusion

The study notes that the problem of moral luck is the seeming paradox that occurs due to the fact that we believe two contradictory things, both to be intuitively true. The first is the Control Principle which states that an agent can only be held morally responsible for those things within their control (McCann 22). A corollary to this principle is that an agent cannot be held responsible for that which is not in their control. The second is the fact that we do, in general, judge agents for things not in their control, and intuitively we feel this is right.

The justification for the Control Principle is both intuitive and moral. As was discussed, we intuitively believe the Control Principle to be true because it seems right. More than this, the Control Principle also seems like a fundamental part of our moral systems. We can see in the writings of Kant that we cannot abort freewill from our moral frameworks because it is intrinsically linked to our actions.

The study concludes by stating that the idea of moral luck makes moral agents reducible to a fatalistic creation. Moreover, morality remains one of the ways of keeping society in order. Relying therefore on moral luck in assessing the actions of persons can yield anarchy since everyone will have an explanation as to their innocence, and the cause of their moral misdemeanour. Finally, the freedom of the will debate does threaten the particular case for moral luck by contradicting the fundamental tenets of the theory.

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The Role of Virtue in Building Strong International Alliances from Aristotle's Concept of Friendship

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Abstract

International relations of the day have veered off their course of creating a global village to rather leave the world with several imbalances ranging from, but not limited to economic, political, and technological imbalances. Due to the potential chaos that is likely to arise from these imbalances, there have been some concerted efforts to bridge this gap to promote equality, transparency, and cooperation among countries. These have only led to international alliances that can be reduced to one-sided role performance where one party is in the zone of being the provider whilst the other partner is at the receiving end the mark of a provider dependent relationship. Employing a critical analysis, the relationship that is devoid of intellectual reciprocity becomes an imminent time bomb likely to plunge the global world into the very same problem they seek to address with these relations. The aim of examining the role of virtue in building strong international alliances while drawing lessons from Aristotle's concept of friendship comes in handy and is meant to draw out the categories in which friendships latched onto provider dependent relationships fall and the flaws they come with. This will help to suggest the palpable footmark in building friendships capable of guiding the formation of international and political alliances among nations. The idea the paper seeks to project is that the shaping of our international political alliances is provided for by the intrinsic virtues of the perfect friendship of Aristotle in the *Nichomachean Ethics*

Keywords: International Relations, Virtue, Alliances, Aristotle, Friendship, Politics, Ethics

Introduction

"Friendship seems to hold states together, and lawgivers to care more for it than for justice; for unanimity seems to be something like friendship, and this they aim at most of all, and expel faction as their worst enemy; and when men are friends they have no need of justice, while when they are just, they need friendship as well, and the truest form of justice is thought to be a friendly quality" (Aristotle 1 155a22-282).

The concept of friendship is seldom mentioned in contemporary discussions. However, this was a concept which, hitherto, had great minds deliberating on and its possible impact on social, political, and any kind of relation. The phenomenon of friendship, with its richness and complexity, its ability to support but also at times to undercut virtue, and the promise it holds out of bringing together in one happy union so much of what is highest and so much of what is sweetest in life, formed a fruitful topic of philosophic inquiry for the ancients (Schall 122). The words of Aristotle as quoted above propel the thought that with the gradual eclipse of friendship in the system and the acknowledgement that friendship provides leverage in all aspects of our lives; there is the need to invite the concept back into deliberations.

We realize that Aristotle, with the intent of developing ethical theories that can transcend the scope of ethics to make an impact in politics and other aspects of life, the ethics bordering on his conception of friendship charts a path for discussions in the civic, social, economic, and political space to accommodate friendship and examine how the alliances in these fields could capitalize on the phenomenon of friendship to run their affairs. Friendship, as presented by Aristotle was and has thus become the fulcrum on which some basic concepts like justice, love, commerce, and many others operate. Remarkably, we seem to be more cognizant of the emotional attachments we have fostered with our families, parties we belong to, and other identity groups than we are of the connection we might have with fellow citizens, the political, and the government. It goes without saying then that, friendship is ubiquitous but entrenched in the fabric of human lives wherein the connection between one person and the other strikes each individual's consciousness when there is a mention of a mutual connection. To talk of mutual connection in our dispensation today, we may be limited to the satisfaction of two concerns. The first is the compassion we may have for others. Also, the self-interest we may satisfy from the connection marks the second. An acceptance of these two concerns would imply the reduction of friendship to a preference based on something shared. A rediscovery of the appropriate kind of friendship to establish means a restoration of the Aristotelian conceptualization of friendship to its place in our discourses.

As part of the aim of this paper, the concept of friendship in Aristotle's understanding will be retailed for the global setting we have today. This will be done to show how relationships in our global world can be fitted into the larger theory of friendship suggested by Aristotle. This will be done with an overarching way of seeking to ethically situate global relations between individuals or nations within the scope of virtuous connections between the parties involved. This is intended to target the growing imbalances in the economic, political, technological, and environmental spheres of the world. If any attempt to bridge the gaps of imbalances succeeds, the impending imminent chaos could be avoided. In a rather hortatory tone, the measures put

in place to enhance international relations only leave the world with two factions; the benefactors and the dependents. This has led to a system of international alliances devoid of substantive intellectual stimulations and mutual understanding of goals. These are characteristics of one-sided role performances in a relationship likely to plunge the global world into the very same problem they seek to address with these relations.

The Precursors of Aristotle's Formulation of Friendship

Aristotle's *Eudaimonism* sets the tone for further examination of his conception of friendship. In developing his ethical theory, Aristotle opined that all human activities are directed toward the attainment of certain ends. This means that every human action serves as a means to the attainment of an end the attainment of which leads to further ends until the ultimate end or good is reached. This ultimate end is of what is termed the *Summum Bonum*. The *Summum Bonum* is the ultimate end or good to which all our actions are directed (Broadie 154). A development of this nature led to the educing of a distinction between two types of goods/ends as a panacea to living a *Eudaimonic* or flourishing life. He distinguished between intrinsic and instrumental goodness. In effect, intrinsic and instrumental goodness are key concepts to consider when it comes to Aristotle's ethical theory. Intrinsic goodness is exemplified in things that are good in themselves while instrumental goodness is characteristic of things whose goodness is directed towards the attainment of other goods. The understanding we get from this distinction, that is, the distinction between intrinsic and instrumental goodness circumscribes his concept of friendship and how he delineates between the types of friendship (Cooper 290).

Succinctly, the good that is desirable in and of itself, and is esteemed uniquely for its usefulness to others is considered as intrinsic goodness. Happiness, virtue, and knowledge fall within the scope of intrinsic goodness because these phenomena define a flourishing life. Aristotle believed that the ultimate goal of human life is to achieve well-being, or *eudaimonia*, or a state of flourishing. The achieving of the state epitomizes intrinsic goodness. Instrumental goodness, however, concerns ends that are achieved for the purposes of achieving other goals or ends. They border around things that are valued for their usefulness in achieving other goals. Money, power, and fame, among others, are the things that can be instrumentally valuable or good since they facilitate the attainment of other goals in life. Instrumentally good phenomena have a peculiar place in the moral theory of Aristotle, nonetheless, they are ultimately subordinated to intrinsic goods (Aristotle).

The traits of the various goods spelled out by Aristotle have a level of significance that supports his moral theory. One thing that stands out from this distinction is that it furthers our understanding of the ultimate goals and values of our lives. It is from this that we get the clarity that the intrinsic goals are the ultimate goals of human life, while the means by which these goals are achieved are the instrumental goals. Based on this elaboration, the moral virtues of Aristotle's ethics are explained and these virtues, some of which include courage, justice, and generosity, have intrinsic goodness. This intrinsic goodness is developed through habit formation and practice.

They are virtues valued for their own sake but not for the attainment of any instrumental benefit. In like manner, friendship is an intrinsic good that ought to be developed through habituation and practice for it is relevant to human being's flourishing.

Aristotle's Account of Friendship

The lucid account of Aristotle on friendship is presented in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The great portion of *Eudemian Ethics* and other works of his give an account of the phenomenon. It is at the back of this that Heyking and Avramenko opined that the impactful ideas and foregrounding for the concept of friendship come from Aristotle amongst his contemporaries (6). He rejected the maxims of the prevailing doctrinal portrayal of friendship as a phenomenon linked to courage, republicanism, and resistance to injustice where it is assumed that the things of friends are in common and friendship is one soul in two bodies (14). According to Russell, Aristotle's friendship originates from the mutual desire of man to enjoy pleasure, to enjoy a mutual advantage, or to share in a mutual good. This leads to the classification of friendship into three types (748-749).

First and foremost, there is the friendship of utility. This type of friendship, according to Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, comes from the mutual advantage individuals are likely to enjoy from other partners in a friendship. It thrives on the idea of mutual usefulness which extends to encapsulate the benefit the parties involved in the relationship can provide for each other (Aristotle). The basic idea inherent in utility friendship is the valuation of the other partner's usefulness, examining what they can bring on board as benefits to them. The focus is not on the nature of the person with whom the relationship is being established but only on the benefit derivable from him or her. The factors that call for the formation of connections such as these are hinged on external factors subject to change (Russell 750). It is due to this underpinning motivation for friendship that Aristotle classified it as the kind of friendship that is less stable and less satisfying, for a change in the external factors holding the companionship would translate into a change in the benefits derivable from a person, and as a sequel leading to the dissolution of the friendship. Put otherwise, a utility-based friendship is likely to end if the targeted utility is not achieved. A classification of this kind of friendship under the concept of good will fall under instrumental good. This is because it looks forward to benefits that can be derived from other people for one's interest.

The friendship of pleasure constitutes another classification of friendship from the Aristotelian point of view. The object of love or motivation for this particular friendship comes from pleasant affection. A friendship of pleasure is, thus, centred on the enjoyment or pleasures that parties involved in such companionship can provide to each other. Michael Pakaluk adds his opinion that the value placed on each party involved is drawn from the pleasure they can contribute to the companionship. The implication is that the individual self is not considered as a value in such friendship. These enjoyments or pleasures come from the shared activities between the parties concerned. This friendship is a momentary friendship because it may not thrive beyond the shared activity responsible for the enjoyment or pleasure (925). Hence, it can be stated that the move away from the shared activity responsible for pleasure would mean the absence of pleasure, and this consequently, leads to the collapse of such friendship. For this reason, the friendship of pleasure is considered the least of friendship since it is

characteristically less stable and less satisfying. This sort of friendship, barring its unstableness, finds a place mostly among the youthful group who value the pleasure and enjoyment that comes from spending time with friends who share their interests. In short, the friendship of pleasure falls into the instrumentally good category just as the friendship of utility.

The friendship of goodness is the type of friendship in Russell's estimation gets its content for mutual relation from intrinsic goods—the desire of the good. These goods include shared values, virtues, and goals. This informs Aristotle's definition of the friendship of good as the kind that is based on a shared commitment to intrinsic goods such as virtue, wisdom, and wellbeing. By virtue of these underpinning factors of the friendship of good, it exhibits characteristics such as mutual respect, trust, and affection (764). The parties involved in this type of friendship value the individuals they are involved with for these individuals' own sake rather than for any instrumental benefits that can be provided by these individuals—this signifies the presence of mutual respect and admiration. In the friendship of good, the pursuit of virtue sees to it that each individual provides the necessary help to make their partners better while focusing on achieving the Eudemean life together through a long-term connection. This is the only friendship, according to Aristotle, in which the parties involved open up to each other intending to be honest and to build trust since they are convinced their partners have their best interests at heart.

Aristotle, in structuring the broad range of meanings of friendship in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, stipulated that the best model of friendship is the friendship of the good. He, therefore, articulated that all the various kinds of friendship take their meaning as forms from the paradigmatic or best model of friendship—the friendship of good people targeting the sustenance of their virtues throughout their lives (Aristotle). The difference between perfect friendship and the imperfect kind lies primarily in the goal or end being targeted. For the friendships of utility and pleasure there is an instrumental goal or end in mind. Differently from the two, the friendship of good has an intrinsic target. What is deducible from this understanding is that the instrumental goals of both friendships of utility and pleasure make their definition contingent on the friendship of the good. This, according to Stephen Salkever, does not mean the friendship of good belongs to a higher order of being than pleasure or utility. It however means that although all three forms of friendship meet the definitional requirements for friendship, where the friendship of goodness does so straightforwardly, the friendships of pleasure and utility do so only in a way or only with certain qualifications. The extent to which both friendships, that is, partial friendships express their pleasure and utility indicates their focus only on parts of human life—a pleasure to be enjoyed in the instance of the friendship of pleasure and utility or advantages to gain from utility friendship. The focusing of attention on these aspects of human needs directs their concentration to only sections of the needs of man. The friendship of good, differently, assigns importance to every aspect of human life. In a bid to enhance every partner through a mutual connection, each party comes into such friendship with the expectation of making meaningful impacts in the life of another. This, in Aristotle's definition, makes friendship of the good primary or perfect (5456).

Marking a distinction between the perfect and the partial conceptions of friendship comes as an upshoot of Aristotle's biological distinction between the parts or events that make up the life of any organism and its life as a whole. What the virtue friendships possess that partial

friendships do not is that they take seriously the problem of life as a whole (Salkever 73). The practical implication of his theoretical distinction between perfect and partial friendships is that we need friends to help us take seriously the problem of living a good life, a problem that is unique to human beings. If we are to take seriously the quest of living a good life, then we ought to establish connections targeting the enhancement of our whole life but not specific aspects of our lives. This is because the entirety of our lives is more than the sum of its parts. Hence our desire to lead good life would necessitate connections that would draw man closer to virtue.

The concept of the friendship of good was promoted by Aristotle with the assumption that when people engage in partnership and alliances their actions will be morally and intellectually guided. He does not out of the bloom connect friendship of good with virtuous friendship, however, the intent was to morally regulate the mutual activities that people are to engage in. Hence, his idea of the friendship of the good finds some leverage in the theory of virtue. Considering this assumption as something to go by, then the perfect friendship resides in the backdrop of regular mutual activities which find their restrictions within the confines of virtues. This means that the activities to mutually undertake are restrained within a certain scope where there will be no room for extremes as well as deficiencies. The implication gotten from this is that Aristotle's portrayal of the virtuous or perfect friendship was intended to situate the kind of alliances and partnerships to form within the scope of the mean wherein the mutual activities people are likely to share in are means between two extremes the deficiency and the excess.

Aristotle's Friendship of Good as a Blueprint for Forging Political Alliance

Aristotle's contribution to the concept of friendship from the whole and part stratifies friendship into two where there is the perfect friendship, formed based on the good, differently from the partial ones built on pleasures and utility. Based on the understanding derived from Aristotle's principle of best or perfect friendship, it can be alluded to that friendship, to him, given an in-depth description of how humans can build relations through peaceful, pleasant, and considerate means compared to the Justice approach. It is important to mention that while friendship was treated in his work as a virtue, the majority of times the concept came up was to depict an interaction or togetherness among human beings, and this is the sort of interaction found in the societal or family setting. Friendships and personal relationships are commonly the intimations of political deliberations (Heyking 6). Indeed, politics is conducted by persons with distinct personalities, moral aims, and motivations.

When considering the Aristotelian assertion that man is a political animal, it becomes easy to understand the interplay of personal relationships as the crucible of political alliances and moral decision-making in connection to such alliances (Kraut). The idea the paper seeks to project is that the shaping of our international political alliances is provided for by the perfect friendship of Aristotle outlined above. The friendship of good, in this regard, becomes the standard for regulating political amities while these amities are only attempts to approximate the perfection of the friendship of good. This means that political friendship, of course, is not so high as virtue friendship because political alliances capitalize on a wider but lower array of the human goods associable with the necessities of lifenecessities that include material well-being and security. However, the goods that make life worth living are found in the perfect

friendships we build. These are friendships whose moral horizon targets higher pedestals than the target of political friendships. Friendship of good or virtuous friendship, in this sense, stands out as the measure of political friendship.

For the friendship of the good to be characterized as the measure of political alliances, then the intrinsic goal is at work in such alliances. This is the point where this paper alludes to the fact that the intrinsic goal or end which is targeting Eudaimonia creates that connection between friendship (political alliance in this case) and virtue. Coming from this tangent, the friendship of good fosters like-mindedness between the various parties involved in an alliance. Like-mindedness pushes the desire to enhance the habits of affection and love within oneself. With this, the good of the others involved become one's good. In addition to this, other factors that are intrinsically geared towards happiness are inculcated in the alliances (Heyking 9-10). This will then ground the connection between the international allies on virtue (happiness).

The concept of like-mindedness conscientizes individuals or nations in the formation of alliances to embrace mutual goals. This assumption acknowledges the high chances there are for people involved in friendship to come to terms with the existence of mutual goals (this may be something to be produced or something constitutive of the activity itself) in the friendship they seek to foster or have fostered, experience these shared goals, and have a commitment towards them. This would, in the international space, mean the phenomenon where two countries or more have a shared understanding of what they want to achieve through their relationship and are committed to working together to achieve those goals. As a result, there is a clear and mutual understanding of each country's interests, priorities, and objectives, as well as a willingness to cooperate and collaborate towards a common goal. As might be expected, the mutual recognition of goals and commitment to work towards them creates the platform where communication, negotiations, and compromises are made to ensure all parties involved are content with the outcome of their alliance. This is what Aristotle makes reference to when he claims that friendship of good aims at intellectual development and pursuant to virtue (Badhar 44).

As an upshoot of the preceding claim, there builds a mutual understanding between the various nations or individuals involved in the alliance or friendship on the particular role to be played by each in the pursuit of the common goal propelling the connection. From this, there is a clear-cut outline and appreciation of the responsibilities and contributions toward achieving the shared objectives in a partnership or alliance (Moore and Frederick 19). This may come in the form of recognition and respect for each other's strengths and weaknesses, as well as an acknowledgment of the unique contributions that each country can make toward the common goal. As might be expected, a military alliance would call for the appreciation of the military virtues of each nation involved. This then necessitates the need for an understanding of the individual roles targeted at fulfilling their obligations toward the common goal which in this case may be ensuring security and stability. The idea is not far from similar to the alliances based on economic partnerships wherein there is the need to understand each other's roles in providing resources, expertise, or market access. It is only through these understandings that the various partners can make meaningful contributions toward achieving shared objectives. This mutual understanding also, in effect, characterizes like-mindedness within partners.

Like-mindedness also terminates in intellectual stimulation between partners in an alliance. It is evident that within the framework of mutual knowledge and commitment, nations engage in the sharing and exchange of ideas, knowledge, and perspectives between each other. This may be targeted at nurturing innovations, creativity, and problemsolving. Intellectual stimulations may come in forms like intellectual discourse engagements and debates, sharing of information and expertise, and collaborative research and development projects. Intellectual stimulations are epitomized in situations where countries may collaborate on scientific research projects, share best practices in areas such as healthcare or education, or engage in cultural exchange to promote mutual understanding and respect. By exchanging these ideas and perspectives, the countries involved learn from each other and develop new solutions to common challenges. These new solutions are predicated on the development of new technologies, products, and services that can benefit their economies and societies.

Examining these elements of like-mindedness reiterates Aristotle's position that the friendship of good is the primary and perfect kind of friendship or partnership. From the elaborations in the preceding paragraphs, the best-fit friendship or alliance projects various qualities that cover every aspect of the partner nation's affairs and ascribe importance to these affairs. In a bid to enhance every partner through mutual connections, each party comes into such friendship with the expectation of making meaningful impacts in the life of another. These expectations are geared towards achieving *Eudaimonia*. It becomes evident that lying underneath these benefits enjoyed from the like-minded international alliances are happiness, virtue, and knowledge which fall within the scope of intrinsic goods. By virtue of these intrinsic goods, the well-being or flourishing of the ally nations becomes the principal motivating factor upon which they make their choices and decisions. This is the ultimate goal for a nation's attainment of *Eudaimonia*.

One gets insights on how political or inter-state alliances ought to be crafted on the perfect friendship of Aristotle. Judging from the elaboration above, it would be a misplaced priority for a nation attempting to build any external relations not to consider the goals necessary for the building and sustenance of such alliance, to also not have mutual understandings that tie in with the maxims of their partner states, and to stimulate the intellectual capacities of the ally states. This is mostly seen among alliances that are targeting specific benefits to attain from their partner states. The consequences of this disposition are dire to the sustenance of the nation involved. Countries who are interested only in getting monetary assistance from their counterparts in alliances where the terms of the agreement are meant to have the donor regulating the national activities of the borrower epitomize the concept of a lack of mutual goals, no common understanding of responsibilities toward each other, and no intellectual stimulations between the two. This kind of relationship is reducible to provider-dependent relationship. The provider-dependent relationship sees one party performing a peculiar but unchanging duty towards the other (this may be the provider in this case), while the other based on the state of affairs functions as the receiver. This condition, in Badhar's opinion, defeats the idea of each individual performing the functions as both active and passive partners. The ramifications of this are not different from the utility and pleasure friendships whose aims are not to achieve the full complement of a flourishing life but some short-lived benefit targeting just an aspect of life (46).

Conclusion

The basic of this paper is to draw a connection between the political alliances that are forged in our present global world and the theory of friendship proffered by Aristotle. The paper alludes to the fact that the intrinsic goal or end that is, happiness or flourishing in Aristotle's conception creates a connection between virtue and our relations with people. It is the position of this paper that if this connection is something to go by, then alliances forged on the basis of Aristotle's friendship of good present palpable elements that can guide international, political, or inter-state alliances. To achieve this, Aristotle's theory of *Eudaimonia* was examined as the flourishing human life consisting essentially of morally and intellectually excellent activities. This state of flourishing increases the urge within a person to share these activities. It was established within the writeup that all of Aristotle's substantial accounts seeking to outline the marks of friendship stress mutuality and reciprocity as vital elements of genuine friendship, which culminate in like-mindedness between allies. The like-mindedness of the allies breeds qualities identified in the paper as virtuous acts capable of promoting the perfect partnership. The key thing that comes at the back of all these elaborations is that friendship, be it, political, social, or civic can only be perfect or virtuous if each party involved understands the part each has to play as both a passive and an active ally. It is only then that the true mark of virtuous friendship can permeate any partnership.

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Leibniz's Theodicy as a Critical Response to the Question of Human Suffering

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Abstract

This study is a critical appraisal of Leibniz's theodicy which centers on the perennial problem of evil in Philosophy. It investigated the justification of God by Leibniz in the face of human suffering as human suffering is a universal phenomenon and obviously an aspect of the perennial problem of evil. The problem of evil consists in the attempt to reconcile the existence of a good and powerful God with the presence of evil in the world. This study explored the question of whether God's goodness and power can be justified when one considers the amount of suffering evident in the world. It equally challenged the best possible world claim of Leibniz. The aim of this study was to examine Leibniz's response to the problem of human suffering through his theory of the best possible world. This study sought a possible justification for the presence of suffering in the world. It considered the various approaches to the problem of human suffering and the dimensions of human suffering. This study employed Criticism as its philosophical method of research. The major finding of the study is that Leibniz's response to the problem of human suffering in the world is not entirely satisfactory since it presents God as either a sovereign who has limited love or limited power. The study concluded that Leibniz's submission does not resolve the issue because man still finds it hard to make sense of the suffering in the world supposedly created by an all-loving and all-powerful God. Hence, Leibniz would have made more sense theorizing that God was once all-powerful but not all all-loving and then eventually became all-loving and no longer all-powerful.

Key Words: Theodicy, Evil, Suffering, All Loving, All powerful, Sovereign, God

Introduction

Human beings live their lives in pursuit of pleasure or happiness while suffering is the opposite of pleasure. It is often considered an experience of unpleasantness or aversion. As stated earlier, suffering is a universal human experience. All sentient beings experience suffering at varying degrees. This study is strictly concerned with human suffering as some sufferings may be considered mild and others severe and intolerable. People have different responses or reactions to the experience of suffering. Sometimes, these varying types of reactions could come from those who directly experience the suffering themselves, their friends, or relatives, or other people generally. It is precisely because suffering pervades human experience that many fields of human endeavours have concerned themselves with various aspects of suffering: its nature, its processes, its origin and causes, its meaning and significance, its remedies, its management, and usefulness.

Human suffering is a daily occurrence noticeable in the streets the poor village woman who struggles with her perishable goods by the road side and barely earn enough to feed her family, the poor and needy widow who cannot even harvest from her own farm due to interference from her late husband's family who want to claim all that their deceased brother owned, the low-income family that is unsure of their next meal; the sick old woman who cannot be attended to by the doctors because she has no one to pay the required deposit for the commencement of treatment; the countless number of village women that have no access to the hospital for ante-natal care, the numerous village children who cannot afford school, good food, good water, or good health system.

In addition to all of these, there are several other circumstances of life witnessed every day in the human society which depict suffering at different levels or intensity. Human suffering stares everyone in the face. One may have difficulty in explaining what it means, but one would not claim to have never experienced it. In his theodicy, Leibniz responds to the problem of human suffering, arguing that due to the principle of sufficient Reason, God created the best of all possible worlds. It is however difficult to accept Leibniz's theory once one is faced by the numerous sufferings noticeable in the world. This study is an appraisal of Leibniz's theodicy as a response to the issue of human suffering in the world.

Clarification of Terms

Theodicy: This is the vindication of divine providence in view of the existence of evil. This term was coined by the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in his 1710 work "Theodicies." In the philosophy of Religion, theodicy means an argument that attempts to resolve the problem of evil that arises when all power and all goodness are predicated of God. This term is derived from ancient Greek (*theos*) which means God and (*dike*) which means justice. According to A. Laytner, theodicy is an attempt to justify or defend God in the face of evil. Theodicies tend to address one of four audiences: atheists/atheodacists who reject the existence of God or who charge believers in God with being irrational on the grounds that the above is illogical; moral atheists who find the notion of God repugnant because of the amount of evil and suffering; theists who are troubled by the above; and sufferers of all kinds atheists or

theists (Laytner, 1998, p. 5). It has also been defined as a theological construct that attempts to vindicate God in response to the problem of evil that appears inconsistent with the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God.

Suffering: suffering is not a homogenous concept. Although many people are aware that there is suffering in the world, there is still some difficulty in defining what suffering is. One can easily point out numerous instances of suffering but still fail to provide a definition or description of that could capture its many dimensions. In any case, suffering is most times associated with pain. Suffering is the state or experience of one that suffers. Suffering is a multifaceted phenomenon that describes the many ways in which people deal with depression, pain, loss, and adversity. Suffering has been defined as “extreme anguish” (Gregory & Joseph, 1994, p. 20). As for Coulehan, suffering is simply “soul pain” (Coulehan, 2012, p. 227). Others have defined suffering as the state of “being less than whole” (Currow & Hegarty, 2006, p. 124). Furthermore, suffering is defined as the state of severe distress associated with events that threaten the intactness of the person. It is said to occur when an impending destruction of the person is perceived and it continues until the threat of disintegration has passed or until the integrity of the person can be restored in some other manner (Quilao, 2018, p. 45). Suffering is a phenomenon that is closely tied to evil. It refers to situations of pain and sorrow, unpleasant states of affairs for sentient beings. In any case, not all suffering is evil. There are some situations of distress and anguish which serve to edify a person. However, in this work, suffering is understood as all forms of pain and anguish which a person will not willingly accept and which do not serve any relevance for the person or group experiencing it.

The Reality of Human Suffering in the World

There is no gainsaying the fact that there is so much suffering in the world. It is one of the most evident things one could think of in that it colours the everyday life of people. In Nigeria, avoidable suffering has become part and parcel of the lives of people everyday. People are found to live in conditions of untold hardship and want because they find themselves in a society where the rule of law is neglected and justice is luxury. In a similar line of thought Christian Ele notes that Nigeria has many suffering indices that ruffle the-would-have-been smiling faces of citizens and change them into frowning facial contours that are squeezed with exposed ropes of arteries and veins that scare beholders. The experience that man comes into the world crying, lives in the world complaining, and departs at death with a sigh, is common in the lives of many in Nigeria. This situation corroborates the view of the English author Tomas Fuller (1608–1661) who said that ‘we are born crying, live complaining, and die disappointed.’ (Ele, 2020. P.46).

Although one may argue that the Nigerian situation is not reflective of the entire picture of suffering in the world, it is nevertheless a worthwhile representation because what takes place in Nigeria equally takes place more or less in other parts of the world. Ele describes beautifully this situation of suffering in Nigeria: the unpleasant experience affects the faces of sufferers as one could easily notice the frowning facial contours and the exposed ropes of arteries and veins which show that all is not well with such a people. The view of Thomas Fuller is accurate not only of people in Nigeria but also people in other parts of the world. It appears as if the cry of the

new born baby is indicative of the fear of the imminent suffering she would come to experience in the course of life. Human life is coloured every now and then with so much complaints and dissatisfaction due to pain and lack.

Approaches to the Problem of Human Suffering

Due to the puzzle that suffering has caused in the minds of many, different groups of people have developed both philosophical and theological responses to the problem of suffering and some of them are:

The Dualistic Approach: This is the first and oldest approach. It holds that there are two opposing forces at work in the world light and darkness, good and evil. The good God, according to this view, is responsible for every good thing in the world, while the evil god is responsible for evil and suffering. Many ancient myths of the Middle East hold such views. This view may not be acceptable to Christian thinkers since it opposes monotheism. The ancients generally believed that the world was governed by two contrary principles, two rival powers. They see this as the reason why there is a mixture of good and evil in human life. They equally see it as the cause of the inequalities and vicissitudes we find in the world. Their belief was based on the fact that nothing happens without a cause, and no good can produce evil. Hence, there must be in nature a particular principle that is the author of evil and another that is the author good. Some held that the principle of evil is Pluto while Jupiter is the principle of good (Siwek, 1991, p. 1).

The Classical Approach: This is usually called the classical, Freewill, or Augustinian theodicy since it was systematised by Augustine. According to this view, evil and suffering came as a result of the free choice of human beings, beginning with original sin. But we know that not every human suffering is caused by the free choice of human beings. Hence, the incompleteness of this approach is glaring. The central contention of the Classical approach is that human freewill is the root cause of evil in the world. In other words, man is capable of doing evil because he has been given this ability by God at creation. This is a very early theodicy which tends to exonerate God in the face of evil in the world and to put the blame on man who uses his freewill to choose evil when he can actually choose the good. Several other scholars have upheld this view after Augustine.

The Retaliatory Approach: This approach sees evil and suffering as God's punishment for human sin. The OT accounts of the floods and the plagues in Egypt reflect this view, and the view was later taken up by figures such as John Calvin and Karl Barth. However, this view is inconsistent with man's understanding of God as a loving and merciful father. Employing his dialectical method, Barth contends that evil must be understood as both not something and not nothing. For him, evil is a force that threatens to corrupt and destroy God's good creation. It is nothingness. It is an opposition and resistance to God's world dominion. It is an element, indeed an entire sinister system of elements which is not preserved, accompanied, nor ruled by the Almighty action of God like creaturely occurrence. He sees it as an alien factor among the objects of God's providence. (Woltesstoff, 1996, 43).

The Redemptive Approach: According to this approach, suffering is redemptive. This is a strictly theological approach which draws on the song of the suffering servant in Isaiah (40-45) and on the experience of Jesus in his passion and death. For those who hold this view, some human sufferings are only expiatory payment on a debt, whether one's own or that of others. Jesus is considered the archetype of the suffering servant in Isaiah. This approach explains only some suffering and not all, and people do not seem to agree to the meaningfulness of the idea of a redemptive suffering.

The Process Approach: This approach is traceable to the works of Irenaeus, and then later to be found in the writings of Chares Hartshorne, John Hick, and Tiehard de Chardin. According to this view, suffering and evil are realities that are inevitable in an unfinished world that is evolving towards its fulfilment and so is in the process of growth. For those who hold this view, suffering and evil are the natural spin-off, the inevitable growing pains of matter and spirit evolving from fetal immaturity into fullness of being. Hence, this view is seen as process, developmental, and evolutionary approach. However, this view presents God as being harsh and as one who denies or is ignorant of the fact that suffering is largely destructive and not a necessary condition at all.

The Remedial Approach: This view holds that God uses suffering as tests. He allows suffering and evil to test our moral and spiritual strength, and to purify us as we go through life. Hence, suffering and evil are a kind of moral and spiritual medicines for human beings. Some scholars have criticized this view since it refers only to some suffering and also since it portrays God as a harsh taskmaster and disciplinarian (Ezenweke&Kanu, 2010, p. 192). Furthermore, according to this view, suffering and evil are a kind of moral and spiritual medicines for human beings. This is a view that is consistent with some Christian thinkers' position which claim that God allows men to experience some pain in order to purify them or to test them.

The Dimensions of Suffering

Although suffering is experienced universally by people of all times and places, it does not affect people in just one way or one aspect of life. There are different degrees of suffering and also different layers of impact suffering makes on people, it affects different aspects or dimensions of peoples' lives. In this section, the study shall be considering some dimensions of suffering as identified by T. Quilao (2018. P. 70):

Physical Suffering: Pain is often regarded as one of the most burdensome causes of physical sufferings. When a physical symptom like pain is overlooked and not alleviated, it may lead to an experience of suffering. This is the type of evil that affects a living being by altering its physical integrity. Examples are cancer, birth defects, pain, etc (Ishaya, 2023, p.43). Excessive pains could be very invalidating and have the potential to provoke psychological symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and dependencies on families. Studies have shown that conflicting relationships might arise when patients are not listened to about the severity of their pains. There have been cases of people who try to solve their problem of chronic pain by drinking alcohol without support and understanding from health professionals. Physical pain brings up

a feeling of hopelessness sometimes and even a feeling of worthlessness as one in some cases becomes a burden to others. Some terminal advance cancer patients have revealed their desire for hastened death.

Psychological Suffering: There is equally a psychological dimension of suffering which consists of desirable and undesirable relationship with others. Several studies have been conducted overtime in which participants evoked psychological suffering as they expressed immense form of isolation from the family, the community, and the society. Sometimes this is due to ineffective professional care and support which results from lack of professionalism, and a failure to recognize and address needs or offer adequate information to empower those who suffer. Neglect from health care professionals makes the sufferers live painful and unbearable lives. Losing one's autonomy as a consequence of debilitating incurable illness is another example of psychological suffering. In some cases, patients are dependent on families' support. Some families tend to offer more reliable support than professional based care. Depression is sometimes overlooked but it is often times a consequence of psychological suffering resulting from losing one's good health, excessive pain and following a traumatic experience in life. In some cases, studies show that some patients suffer in silence as they are afraid to ask questions due to unwelcome experiences in the past and sometimes they avoid complaining in order to avoid humiliation from health professionals. Advanced nurse practitioners have the responsibility to promote openness and approachable attitude to enhance a relationship that is devoid of fear and shame.

Social Suffering: Naturally, people value their friends and the actions of their friends. Those who suffered often take solace in the unconditional love they receive from family and friends. However, ineffective care and support from family and friends reveal the impact of tested relationships, insensitive communication and the fear of rejection from loved ones and friends. Several older people who live in old peoples' homes far away from their children and relatives often get frustrated (a source of suffering) by their children's not wanting to have anything to do with them and cutting off all communication without any explanation. There is the concept of benevolent affiliations a term used to accentuate the value people place on significant connections with other persons, things, and ideas, which for them were a source of help, comfort, faith, hope, and courage. As a result, they feel lucky, thankful, fortunate, and blessed to have such people, things or ideas in their lives.

Ethical Suffering: The ethical dimension of suffering is chiefly about the loss of dignity. Suffering which affects the worth of people and their sense of responsibility definitely affects their dignity. For instance, the shame and betrayal suffered by people with *Hansen's* disease and advanced cancer is due to the fear and ignorance of people around them. Such attitudes of segregating them or discriminating against them makes them lose their dignity, it violates dignity which is the human becoming ethical phenomenon. This is perhaps one of the worst dimensions of human experience of suffering a situation which brings a man to think of himself as being worthless to society thereby affecting his self-esteem. The kind of suffering

that affects one's dignity is definitely of a far-reaching kind. It robs one of the very foundations of his social existence dignity.

Existential Suffering: From this perspective of human suffering, a patient can feel powerless or worthless when hindered from participating or taking responsibility for one's health decision. Many people who suffer several kinds of illnesses express lack of freedom to decide and participate in their patient-oriented care. This could increase the feeling of insecurity, forcing the patients to carry on an undignified fight for themselves provoking existential suffering. Uncontrollable pain and distress symptoms when not alleviated can also provoke an overwhelming feeling of worthlessness and a sense of being a burden to others resulting in a desire for hastened death.

In considering time as one of the five major themes of Existentialism, Archibong (2024, p.24) notes that the finitude of man (*Dasein*) is something of great concern. Man is expected to acknowledge this finitude and live responsibly in order to make the best out of his existence. This is what Heidegger considers an authentic life. The key to this life lies in the concept of angst which is sometimes translated as dread or anxiety. It refers to the vague feeling or mood that we experience when contemplating the finitude of our human existence. man sees in the future the termination of his life in death. This feeling call man's attention to himself as an individual and does not allow him to seek refuge in the crowd. This sort of feeling is a suffering in its own right.

Leibniz's Response to the Question of Human Suffering

The study shall attempt a critical evaluation of Leibniz's theodicy in order to discover to what extent it answers the question of human suffering. Leibniz argues that this world is the best of all possible worlds since God who acts in accordance with supreme reason chose it among all other possible worlds in spite of the evils therein. According to Leibniz, God's omnipotence makes it possible for God to actualize any possible world he chooses from among an infinite number of eternally fixed possibilities (Leibniz, 2007, p. 132).

God's perfect goodness, which always acts for the best, ensures that he chooses to create the most valuable possible world. His omniscience sees to it that he understands all possible worlds that he could create, accurately, calculates their worth, and identifies the very best one. For Leibniz therefore, the theistic concept of God entails the conclusion that whatever world exists is indeed the best of all possible ones (Leibniz, 2007, p. 134). As should be expected, no creaturely reality can be totally perfect. Hence, in this sense at least, reality will contain some evil (metaphysical). Leibniz holds that God's goodness and power guarantee that he will select that possible world from among all other alternatives that contains the optimum balance of good and evil.

Some interpreters of Leibniz mistakenly think he maintains that God brought about that world containing the least amount of evil commensurate with there being a world at all. A rather correct interpretation is that Leibniz envisions God actualizing that possible world that contains the amount of evil necessary to make the world the best one on the whole (Peterson, 1998, p.93). What does Leibniz intend to achieve with the theodicy?

Our end is to banish from men the false ideas that represent God to them as an absolute prince employing a despotic power, unfitted to be loved and unworthy of being loved. These notions are the more evil in relation to God inasmuch as the essence of piety is not only to fear him but also to love him above all things, and that cannot come about unless there be knowledge of his perfections capable of arousing the love which he deserves, and which makes the felicity of those that love him (Leibniz, 2007, p. 126).

One thing that appears quite clear from the above passage is the fact that Leibniz has the goal of restoring in men's heart the love for God. He observes that God is the first reason of things, everything else is contingent. He is the reason for the existence of the world (which is the whole assemblage of contingent things), he is necessary and eternal.

Furthermore, he argues that this cause (reason) must be intelligent since the world being contingent and an infinity of other worlds being equally possible and having equal claim to existence with it, the cause of this world should have reference to all these possible worlds in order to choose one of them. The regard or relation of an existent substance to simple possibilities can be nothing other than the understanding which has the ideas of them, and to fix upon one of them (that is to choose one of them) can be nothing other than the act of the will which chooses. It is the power of the substance that renders its will efficacious. "power relates to being, wisdom or understanding to truth, and will to good. And this intelligent cause ought to be infinite in all ways, and absolutely perfect in power, in wisdom, and in goodness, since it relates to all that which is possible" (Leibniz, 2007, p. 127). Now, since all is connected together, there is no ground for admitting more than one. The understanding of this intelligent cause is the source of essences, its will is the origin of existences.

Leibniz responds to the opinions of some of his adversaries who have provided a counter-argument by stating that if this were the best possible world, it should have been without sin and without suffering. Leibniz argues that the world would not have been better even if there were no sin and suffering in it. All things were connected in each one of the possible worlds according to Leibniz. Hence:

The universe, whatever it may be, is all of one piece, like an ocean: the least movement extends its effect there to any distance whatsoever, even though this effect become less perceptible in proportion to the distance. Therein God has ordered all things beforehand once for all, having foreseen prayers, good and bad actions, and all the rest; and each thing as an idea has contributed, before its existence, to the resolution that has been made upon the existence of all things; so that nothing can be changed in the universe (any more than in a number) save its essence or, if you will, save its numerical individuality. Thus, if the smallest evil that comes to pass in the world were missing in it, it would no longer be this world; which, with nothing omitted and all allowance made, was found the best by the creator who chose it (Leibniz, 2007, p. 128).

Considering the view of Leibniz in the passage just quoted, everything put together, good and evil, has been exhaustively and perfectly considered even before they came into existence. Hence, the whole world is complete because everything in it has been ordained by God who foresaw them and considered them necessary for the actual world. for this reason, if there were missing any evil which God had already pre-ordained to be in the world, this would not qualify as the best possible world. Even when people imagine possible worlds without sin and without suffering, some kind of utopian projections, Leibniz insists that even such worlds would be inferior to the actual world in goodness. This fact, he admits is something he cannot demonstrate in detail since he is not able to present infinities and compare them together.

Resolving the Problem of Evil and Human Suffering

Leibniz's response to the question of human suffering is that it is part of, a necessary part of, God's creation of the world which we must think of as the best following our conception of God's infinite goodness, wisdom, and power. In this world (the best possible world), evil and suffering are necessary for the greater good. They are necessary aspects of the divine plan serving as means to greater ends such as moral growth, spiritual development, and the realization of higher goods.

Again, his theory of the best possible world is in line with his vision of a universal harmony. He believes that the universe is characterized by an inherent order and harmony, which reflects the perfect wisdom and goodness of its creator. So, the best possible world is one in which every being fulfils its potential and contributes to the overall harmony and perfection of the whole. He suggests that the diversity and complexity of the universe are necessary for the realization of universal harmony as each individual entity plays a unique role in the grand symphony of existence.

Evaluation

It is important to note that contemporary objections to Leibniz's theodicy often focus on his claim that this world is the best possible world. One objection holds that the idea of the best possible world does not make sense. There are two sides to this argument. The first side is advocated by Robert Adams and it holds that there appears to be no limit to the number of possible worlds and so maximum perfection that could constitute a 'best possible world.' The second side is the position of scholars such as Swinburne, Mackie, Banner, Hoffman, and Rosen Krantz who hold that it is intelligible to speak of a maximum level of merit that a world can have, then it is likely that more than one possible world would possess this level of merit. Due to such difficulties, some scholars seek some procedure or parameters according to which God may rationally select a world, despite the absence of a best option. In the theodicy, Leibniz already anticipates such objections (Jacobs, 2012, p. 374).

A second objection to the best possible world theodicy states that even if there is not a best possible world, it would still be rational for God to create because a world is better than no world. this objection seems to suggest that God gains something by creating. Obviously, no orthodox Patristic would grant that God's goodness is enhanced by creation. God has no potentiality, in the act of creating he does not move his own potential into actuality. As Aquinas suggested, God's goodness is complete in itself and not enhanced by any subordinate end to

which he might choose to act. Hence, Leibniz's premise that if no best could be found among possible worlds, then no world would exist could be seen to have theological merit over the claims of the proponents of this objection such as Adams and Swinburne (Jacobs, 2012, p. 376).

A third objection states that one cannot sin against possible agents; only against actual agents; hence, God has no obligation to any possible world other than the one he chooses to actualize. Robert Adams is also the proponent of this objection. He argues that there is a significant difference between possible beings and actual beings. God has no obligation to treat the former in a certain way since they are not but he has obligation to treat the latter in a certain way since they are. Obviously, this objection has some merit on the surface value. In responding to this objection, one has to fall back to the way in which Leibniz understands divine duty. Leibniz speaks of God's duty to the best in two distinct ways. The first emphasizes the fact that God, unlike a tutor or a mother, has a duty to everything in creation. As God, his duty is to the whole, and there is nothing outside of his jurisdiction. The second way in which he understands divine duty is in reference to God's own self. That is, God's duty to perform the best is a duty to the perfection of his very divinity, namely, his wisdom, goodness, and power.

Now, Leibniz does not appeal to God's obligation to possible agents in either of the above senses of duty. Instead, both senses point to the fact of God having an obligation to God's self. The second sense of duty is more closely related to the objection since it is the basis for Leibniz's claim that God has a duty to the best. This sense of duty is not a claim that one group of possible individuals is more entitled to existence than another set of possible individuals. On the contrary, the claim is that God cannot fail in his obligation to himself. This means it would be unworthy of the divine intellect and wisdom to judge something less than the best to be the best.

Again, it would be unworthy of the divine will, which inclines perfectly towards the good, to choose contrary to the known good (i.e. the best) in favour of a lower good. This claim is an extension of Leibniz's contention that the hypothetical necessity of the best follows *a priori* from the very idea of God. so, for God to create a world that does not meet this hypothetical necessity is for God to destroy his very divinity, since in so doing he would will something utterly incompatible with his divine nature. The ultimate response to this objection is that the duty is not to possible agents, the duty is to God's own nature, since as John of Damascus notes, according to right reason, everything that has come about through providence has quite necessarily come about in the best manner and that most befitting God, so that it could not have happened in a better way (Jacobs, 2012, p.376).

The fourth objection states that a Christian worldview does not require that God create the best. This objection also emerges from the works of Robert Adams. The first problem with this objection is the concept of a Christian worldview. How is it to be defined? The extent to which we find antecedents of Leibniz's theodicy in the Christian tradition makes it difficult to grasp this concept of a Christian worldview. Adams argument is that God has a loving disposition, being graciously disposed towards creatures. Since grace does love without consideration of merit, a gracious person loves others without worrying about whether there is someone better to love. Adams conclude that grace is antithetical to the idea that God chooses the best possible world since God does not create beings because they are better but because but because he is gracious. For Adams therefore, it would be an act of grace for God to stoop down and create a

world that is inferior to the best since by so doing God would display his gracious character by giving existence to a world that does not merit it (Adams, 2001, p.21).

Conclusion

On the whole, Leibniz's theodicy is a highly commendable effort in answering the question of human suffering as he succeeds in showing that human reason can come up with some justification for the existence of evil in the world (contrary to what Bayle had suggested). In doing this, Leibniz firmly establishes himself as a rationalist. Most importantly, the primary goal of the theodicy is achieved. Leibniz gives the theist a reason to continue to trust in God and see God in all his majesty as worthy of all love and adoration. The theist in pain therefore, could take consolation in the fact that God has planned all that he experiences in order to achieve a greater good, even if he (the theist) is not able to discern what possible greater good this could be.

God sees the larger picture, man cannot because he is limited, hence he (man) must keep faith in God who acts in accordance with supreme reason. In any case, Leibniz's response is far from being satisfactory precisely because it is still very difficult to make sense of suffering, excessive suffering, in a world created by a God who is both all-loving and all-powerful at the same time. It might make better sense to state that God was once all-powerful and not all-loving and then eventually becomes all-loving but no longer all-powerful.

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True Federalism and Resource Control in Nigeria: The Niger Delta Experience

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Abstract

The focus of this paper is to examine the issue of true federalism and resource control in Nigeria, with particular reference to the Niger Delta region. Within Nigeria's governance structure, the argument over resource control and real federalism continues to be one of the most divisive political and economic topics. Nigeria has a federal government, but the centralisation of resource distribution has caused conflict, especially in the Niger Delta region, where the majority of the country's crude oil wealth is derived. The reason for this is the told and untold load of injustice and underdevelopment meted out to area due to the refusal of government to allow for true federalism and resource control despite being agitated for by the people. They have been brutalized and traumatized by chains of injustices from the federal government in conjunction with the multinational oil prospecting companies operating in the region. Given this scenario, this paper exposes and examines the historical development of Nigerian federalism, the concentration of power over natural resources, and the ensuing environmental and socioeconomic difficulties that the Niger Delta communities face. The study argues that the existing federal arrangement contradicts the principles of true federalism, where federating units should have greater autonomy over their resources. The

paper also analyses the struggles of the Niger Delta people for resource control, highlighting legal battles, militant activism, and government responses. Furthermore, it evaluates the implications of resource control on national unity, economic development, and political stability. Lastly, the study recommends a constitutional review to grant resource-producing states greater control over their resources while ensuring equitable revenue-sharing mechanisms that benefit all regions as a way of promoting justice, fairness and sustainable development not only in the Niger Delta, but also in the country in general.

Keywords: True Federalism, Resource Control, Niger Delta, Justice, sustainable development.

Introduction

In January 1956, Shell-BP discovered oil in Oloibiri in Ogbia district of Ijaw-area of the present day Delta state after the first attempt which was halted by the civil war. Around 1958, commercial oil exploration had begun in full scale and about 6000 barrels were produced daily. After this, many companies joined in the exploration and license was given to many Nigerians by the government in order to ensure the maximisation of the oil wealth. As a result, the federal government adopted open-door economic policies that gave right to both local and international companies to explore and produce oil in Nigeria. The standard and control of the regulation gave rise to other companies joining such as "Mobil Oil in 1960; Texaco 1961; Chevron Nigeria 1961; ELF 1962; Agip Oil 1962; American Petroleum 1963" (Raji and Abejide 24-25). Consequently, in 1970, the end of the civil war which came with the rise in oil prices increases Nigeria's economic wealth. Besides, in 1971, Nigeria joined OPEC and created the Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC). Currently, the companies operating in Nigeria include Shell, Chevron, Total, Agip, Exxon, Oando, etc.

However in the face of this oil boom, Nigeria very unfortunately abandoned its robust agricultural and light manufacturing foundations. Before the discovery of oil in 1957, each component region of Nigeria had its main source of economy, for instance, the North was known for the production of groundnut such that the region was mostly known by the groundnut pyramid. The West was known for cocoa production; Palm oil was produced in exportable quantity by the Eastern region, while the South was known for sea food.

During this time, Nigeria was engaging in international trades from this agrarian background. But after the discovery of crude oil, everything took a different turn in favour of crude oil at the detriment of other sources of economy. The focus was now on the revenue that came with crude oil. Politicians started playing the politics of revenue allocation and resource control which became serious problems in the nation. As a result of this issue, Nigeria's economic growth became stunted. In fact, the dimension in which the agitation for resource control and revenue allocation has taken is shaking the Nigeria state to its very foundation and even threatening its continued coexistence due to the negligence of the Niger Delta area that produces this oil. At this point, the oil seems more of a curse than a blessing. More excruciating is when one recalls that the wealth from cocoa produced mainly in the West was used to develop the Western part of Nigeria before the discovery of oil, while the wealth from the

flourishing groundnut pyramids in the 1960's was used to develop the Northern part of Nigeria. But the Niger Delta experience is different; a situation which renders them marginalized and unhappy as a minority people. In their reaction to such situations Udo and Essiet observed that; "life is so vulnerable to misfortunes that someone struck by tragedies may be said to be anything but happy".

This paper therefore identifies the philosophical issues embedded in the discourse on true federalism and resource control in Nigeria, especially as it affects the Niger Delta region and also proffers possible solutions to this societal quagmire that is hindering the peace and unity of the nation. It is pertinent to note that the states that make up the Niger Delta are: Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Edo and Cross River. These areas by their location are susceptible to the horrors of the sea and other aquatic threats. However, that may be, the very interesting thing about the Niger Delta area is that for now it is the goose that lays the golden egg for the Nigerian economy. Her crude oil is presently the main hold of Nigeria's economy.

Meaning of Federalism

The word 'Federalism' is etymologically derived from the Latin word *foedus*, which means 'covenant'. It denotes "a political concept in which a group of members are bound together by covenant with a governing representative head" (Majekodunmi, 108). The term is also used to describe a system of government in which sovereignty is constitutionally divided between a central governing authority and constitutional political units. This system is designed to balance the need for unity and cooperation among different regions while also respecting their autonomy and diversity. Federalism is often contrasted with other forms of governance, such as unitary system and a confederal system, each with its own strengths and weaknesses.

According to Wheare (187),

federalism is the method of sharing powers so that the central and regional governments are each within a sphere coordinate and independent. This definition has remained the benchmark for the practice of federalism in all nation-states structured using its principles. Its principles are to coordinate, independent and on different levels of government, promote the concept of separation of powers between the central government and the component units within a given territory.

From the above, it can be deduced that federalism is an organisational structure that encourages the division of governmental authority within a nation. For Tamuno (13), federalism is "a form of government where the component units of a political organisation participate in sharing powers and functions in a cooperative manner through the combined forces of ethnic pluralism and cultural diversity among others, which tends to pull people apart". This implies that "federalism is a device for dealing with the problem of unity in a plural society" (Dickson and Asua 2).

The defining features of federalism are highlighted by Appadorai (495). Among these are the presence of state or provincial administrations with the authority to enact laws and carry out administrative functions within the bounds of the Constitution, as well as the existence of a

central authority that speaks for the whole and acts on its behalf in matters of public interest both domestically and abroad. The inference is that the national government and the governments of its component entities have different roles, responsibilities, and tasks. Usually, a strict written constitution is the instrument that makes provision for the dividing. Vertical distribution of governmental powers and resources to two tiers of authority; the existence of a written and rigid constitution; presence of a central authority side by side authority at the level of component units constitutes the fundamental attributes of federalism as identified by Eremie (82). Amah (289) identifies two primary theoretical interpretations of federalism. On one hand, federalism is seen as the unifying factor or link that causes multiple countries to merge into one by sharing administrative and governmental positions. Anywhere this idea is implemented, the consequence is a robust and stable federal government. In contrast, the other interpretation of federalism sees it as a means of uniting disparate states into a single statehood with significantly fewer goals, while simultaneously allowing each state ample room to exist independently of the others and to exercise unrestricted autonomy within their respective territorial jurisdictions. This specific idea might be more suited for the federalism of Nigeria. This, however, anticipates the growth of a constrained central government.

In Nigeria, the quest for true federalism entails the equitable distribution of power and responsibility among the three tiers of government. Eremie (82) argued “that Nigerian federalism, like federalism elsewhere, is evolving; and evolution is what federal systems are known for”. This means that federalism should not be seen as static, rather as being evolutionary. Unitarianism and loose confederation are the two extremes of the never-ending process, that is, federalism. This position was earlier captured by Johari (282) when he avowed that:

Modern federal system falls somewhere between a unitary government and a loose association of sovereign states. It has developed a difference of kind with a confederal model, it has brought about a difference of degree with a unitarian system.

The exact direction or evolutionary path it adopts at any given time depends on many factors such as finance, constitutional amendments, etc. Eremie (83) argued that “rather than call for true federalism, the debate should be on how to restructure Nigerian federalism for it to meet the changing expectations of its citizens”. He notes that meeting the needs of citizens is paramount; and when the existing structures fail to meet the expectations and needs of the citizens, then the search for appropriate measures has to be undertaken.

The Concept of Resource Control

Resource control like any other concept of social discourse, has no exact or unanimous meaning. As rightly observed by Roberts and Oladeji (277),

While one group conceives it as the total takeover of the resources located in the resource-producing states by the people of those states, others understand it to mean that the stakeholders in the resource-bearing area should manage greater proportions of the resources harnessed in those areas.

This suggests that the notion is mostly defined by academics and even agitators from disparate and individualistic viewpoints. Accordingly, Dickson and Asua (5) cites Ifedayo (2010), who opines that “resource control involves the access of communities and state governments to natural resources located within their boundaries and the freedom to develop and utilise these resources without reference from the federal government”. From the above definition, what is evident is that resource control is characterised by the call or an agitation for regions or states to manage their resources and pay royalty to the federal government.

According to Adegbam, “resource control is the power and right of a community or state to raise funds by way of taxation on persons, matters, services and materials within its territory” (144). In other words, it involves the right of the state's governing body to administer and exercise control over the resources that are created and natural on its territory. To Ojo (16), it is “the right vested on the communities or state of derivation to levy customs and excise duties on goods manufactured in its territory”. It is the power of states or regions to manage and utilise the natural resources found within their territories. In Nigeria, this debate is particularly intense due to the country's rich deposits of oil and gas, primarily located in the Niger Delta region.

The politics of resource control often involve tensions and conflicts between the central government and resource-producing regions, as they compete for control and distribution of resources and revenues. This can lead to agitation, protests, and even violent conflicts in some cases (Editors, *steemit.com*). Nigeria, endowed with vast natural resources such as oil, faces significant challenges in distributing wealth equitably among its diverse population (Ignatius and Umotong, 12).

In recent times, states and some sections of the country have on one occasion or the other agitated for resource control for a number of reasons. For instance, the continued agitation for resource control by the Niger Delta region is, perceived as one of the manifestations of the struggles to redress perceived injustices and inequalities in fiscal relations among ethnic nationalities, regions and political units within the Nigerian federation (Dickson and Asua, 8).

Additionally, it is viewed as an inevitable consequence of the central government's disregard for their circumstances and the deterioration of their surroundings, which is thought to be serving the interests of the ethnic majorities at the expense of the minority. People in the Niger Delta have experienced immense poverty and loss of inheritance, which has sparked demands for resource management. It is pertinent to add here that “the agitations by the minority group in the Niger Delta over the control of oil revenue, compensation for environmental degradation arising from oil exploration appear to be the greatest challenge to nation-building and national stability in Nigeria in recent times” (Dickson and Asua, 8).

The Challenges of True Federalism and Resource Control in Nigeria

The Challenge of Revenue Allocation

The issue of resource control brings with it the problem of revenue allocation. This problem of how to share resources has created a great deal of heat that is nearly stifling the entire country. This is because the core issue of Nigeria's fiscal relations is who receives what share, when, and how of the country's cake. Given that Nigeria is a monolithic economy with the overdependence on oil to the detriment of other areas of economy, there are agitations, reactions and demonstrations among different ethnic groups in Nigeria, to the point that "some people have taken up arms in order to get their share of oil booty" (Adegbam, 144). The agitation lies on the question of which state should benefit more or benefit less.

Therefore, political factors have been linked to resource control in order to influence the distribution of wealth from the federation account. While the northerners want to receive equal allocation given to the oil-producing states from the federal government, the oil-producing regions argue that such cannot be the case since the Northerners are not the goose that lays the golden egg for the Nigerian economy. And more so, they (northern states) do not share in the pollution that is caused by oil exploration. Even the southerners go as far as accusing the Northerners for ownership of oil blocs and sharing it with their Northern cronies (Adegbam, 143).

The aforementioned debate has led some resource control opinion leaders to hold the sentiment that the states producing these resources should control their resources and pay an agreed upon percentage to the federal government as against what is in vogue. Counter opinions are that the current 13 percent derivation fund from oil produce is not enough; after all, before the discovery of oil, when we had the groundnut pyramid in the North, what the state paid to the federal government was 50 percent and not 13 percent. In response to the Northerners' agitation for increased revenue, the Southerners, particularly those in Nigeria's South-South geopolitical zone, accused the Northerners of being ungrateful. As a result, the South-South is now demanding complete control over the resources within their territory.

To strengthen their debate, the South-south geo-political zone of Nigeria based their argument on the premise of "True Federalism" which implies that the component of a federal nation should pursue their own developmental programmes at their own pace, using resources within their territory (Adegbam, 146). Unfortunately in Nigeria this is not the case as the federating units are still exerting pressure on the South South resources. There can be no significant progress in the area due to this pressure. For example, Egugbo (188) wrote:

From the words of former Governor James Ibori of Delta state, the agitation for resource control is not about total ownership of the oil found in the Niger-Delta region but the increment in the derivation fund from 13 percent to about 50 percent without offshore and onshore dichotomy. The agitation for resource control can be said to be a call for the restructuring of the Nigerian Federation in such a way as to ensure fiscal federalism whereby each state would have the autonomy to generate resources and use internally while paying adequate taxes to the central government.

According to Eminue (165),

Resource control became a prominent issue in Federal-State relations in Obasanjo's Nigeria, with the littoral states (Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Ogun, Ondo and Rivers) claiming that the natural resources located offshore ought to be treated or regarded as located within their respective states. The claim by the littoral states was more so accentuated by Decree No. 106(1992) which abrogated the onshore/offshore dichotomy for the purpose of calculating the amount of revenue accruing directly from any natural resources derived from any state pursuant to Section 162(2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999.

As Dickson and Asua note (8), it is also important to observe that Section 162(2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) states that:

- (a) the natural resources located within the boundaries of any State are deemed to be derived from that State;
- (b) the seaward boundary of each of the littoral States is the low water mark of the land surface thereof or inland waters within the States;
- (c) the natural resources located within the territorial waters of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory are deemed to be derived from the federation and not from any State; and that
- (d) the natural resources located within the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf of Nigeria are subject to the provisions of any treaty or other written agreement between Nigeria and any neighbouring littoral foreign State, derived from the federal and not from the State.

The Challenge of Economic Justice

The issue of economic justice and resource control is a central philosophical and practical challenge in the Nigerian federal system. Agitations for the restructuring of the Nigerian federation are fundamentally driven by demands for distributive justice within the public space. The Nigerian federation has been plagued by an imbalanced and centralised structure that has undermined the autonomy and self-determination of the constituent states. This has fuelled persistent demands for a more equitable distribution of resources and power benefits (Kwuamaeze and Dukor, 75).

Theories of distributive justice, such as those proposed by John Rawls and others emphasize the importance of fair and impartial allocation of societal resources. However, in Nigeria, the practice of resource control and revenue allocation has fallen short of these principles of justice (Ugandan, 48; Kwuamaeze and Dukor, 75). The over-centralisation of power and resources at the federal level has led to a perceived unfair distribution, with some regions feeling marginalised and deprived of their fair share of the national wealth. This has contributed to simmering tensions, violent agitations, and even threats of secession in certain parts of the country (Vande, 13).

Ultimately, the quest for economic justice and fair resource control is a fundamental philosophical and practical issue that must be addressed to ensure the stability, unity, and progress of the Nigerian federation. A more equitable distribution of resources and power, guided by principles of distributive justice, could help to foster a sense of inclusion and shared

prosperity among the diverse regions and communities of Nigeria. To address this challenge and achieve greater economic justice, there have been calls for a restructuring of the Nigerian federation that would devolve more powers and resources to the constituent states (Kwuamaeze and Dukor, 78). This would allow the states to have greater autonomy in managing their resources and development priorities, in line with the principles of true federalism.

Autonomy vs. Centralisation

Another challenge is the balance between state autonomy and national unity. Federalism as we have already established is the distribution of power between a central authority and constituent political units (states or regions). True federalism involves significant autonomy for these units, allowing them to govern themselves in certain areas independently of the central government. However, true federalism advocates for significant state control, but in practice, Nigeria has often leaned towards centralisation, creating tension between the central government and states (Dickson and Asua, 8). Resource-rich areas such as the Niger Delta argue for a greater share of revenue to address historical neglect and environmental degradation. Calls for resource control often advocate for more autonomy in managing resources and retaining a larger share of revenues generated within their territories. True federalism is seen as a means to promote equity by allowing states to address local needs more effectively. However, uneven resource distribution and governance capabilities could lead to greater inequality and regional imbalances.

Ethical Implications of the Plight of the Niger Delta Region

The exploitation of the Niger Delta's resources with little benefit to local communities raises ethical questions about justice, fairness, equality and restitution. From a justice perspective, resource control in Nigeria raises questions about who benefits from the exploitation of natural resources. Historically, oil revenues have not always translated into improved living conditions for all Nigerians, leading to perceptions of injustice. Regions like the Niger Delta, which bear the environmental and social costs of oil production, often feel marginalized and unjustly treated compared to other parts of the country. People in these regions are exposed to environmental hazards caused by oil spillage and its exploration, yet they are given a paltry 13 percent derivation allocation. This is not justice. It stands in contradistinction with the principle of subsidiarity, which holds that "matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest, or least centralized competent authority, supports local resource control". Conversely, the principle of solidarity emphasizes mutual support and sharing of resources to ensure collective well-being. This principle can justify more centralised control to redistribute resources and support the less wealthy regions. Striking a balance between these two is a *conditio sine qua non* for national unity and economic development.

In the areas of fairness and equality, the federal system in Nigeria allocates a significant portion of oil revenue to the central government, which then redistributes funds to states and local governments. However, disputes over the formula used for revenue allocation persist, with some people arguing that it does not adequately reflect the contribution of resource-rich states.

Evaluation

The plight of the Niger Delta dwellers is the told and untold tales of injustice meted out to them in the conspiracy between the federal government of Nigeria and the multinational oil prospecting companies in Nigeria. The Niger Delta people are suffering due to the degrading effects of oil exploration and exploitation. What makes their case pitiable is that God has blessed the area with so much, but all they are left with, of the blessings are marginalization, underdevelopment and destruction of their land, etc. In line with the above, John Odey averred:

Today those living around the oil producing area of the Niger Delta have been subjected to the worst neglect in the history of Nigeria. Of all the wealth that accrues to the country from the Niger Delta, all the inhabitants get as reward is the devastation of their land, the pollution of their water and environment and the killing of their illustrious sons. (102)

Despite efforts to address these issues through policies like the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the 13% derivation principle, challenges still remain. Corruption, mismanagement of funds, and lack of transparency in resource allocation continue to undermine efforts to achieve justice, fairness, and equality. In order to fully address the issue of resource control in Nigeria, there is need for a multi-faceted approach that includes constitutional reforms on revenue allocation formulas, enhancing transparency and accountability in resource management, empowering local communities, and addressing the environmental and social impacts of resource extraction. Achieving these goals would contribute to greater justice, fairness, and equality in Nigeria's resource control framework owing to the oil-producing communities have remained marginalised, deprived, exploited and underdeveloped.

Worst still, apart from environmental devastation brought on by oil drilling, the people are constantly exposed to gas flaring, which has severely damaged their farming and fishing industries. As a result, the Niger Deltans were forced to live in poverty without access to basic facilities like clean electricity, water, schools, hospitals and good roads, etc. In the words of John Wangbu "the whole region is today nothing but a Sahara Desert of poverty" (xi). Furthermore, the extent of material and human losses resulting from the ongoing conflict in the oil-bearing communities is concerning because every time the federal government sends troops to the region to put an end to civil disobedience, it always results in losses, not just of property but also of lives (Adegami 147). A typical example was the hanging of the environmental rights activists Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight (8) other minority rights campaigners on Friday Nov 10th 1995 in a prison surrounded by tanks and heavily armed soldiers. His last words were "Lord take our soul. The struggle continues". Therefore, it is recommended that for a peaceful and progressive country, there must be the willingness by the country's political leaders to bring everybody on board in the administration of the country by allowing the different producing areas to reasonably control their resources, as they know their problem, since the very structure of the federation is no longer practicable.

Conclusion

Nigeria is a diversified, multicultural country that is best suited for federalism as a system of governance. Its objective is to allow each group to govern itself in topics of local concern without interference or control from the others. Central management will handle matters of common interest, while concurrent administration will handle matters of both local and national relevance. This allows for the accommodation of the various interests and situations of the constituent groups while also ensuring the nation's peace and stability and its continued existence in the face of the forces of conflict and division that are inherent in the diverse nature of the society. This of course requires high sense of morality from our leaders because as observed by Udofia and Udo (2018);

Leadership anchors on decision-making and taking of action for the individual and on behalf of the led. The rightness or wrongness of choices and acts are determined within the precinct of morality, hence the essentiality of morality in charting the principles that ought to be employed in making morally sound decisions (60).

In a truly federal system, the federal government receives a specific percentage of the resources' revenue, which are geographically distributed and constitutionally controlled by the component states. However, this is not the situation in Nigeria, and the violent conflict that exists in some sections of the country, especially the Niger Delta, is a result of the Nigerian federal state's structure, which violates the principle of real federalism. It is our informed and candid opinion that the present government will set in motion, a system that will make our present democracy truly a government of the people, by the people and for the people to reflect true federalism where the oil producing areas (and of course other regions) are allowed to reasonably control their resources for the sake of peace, justice, equity, fairness, democracy and sustainable development.

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Achieving a World Free of Nuclear Weapons through Progressive Humanism Derived from African Philosophy

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Abstract

In this work I attempt to articulate how it can be held that there are adequate basis for a world that would not promote the culture of nuclear weapons as an option for a world order. To do this I advance the need for what I call a peaceable world—a world in which there is a fundamental structure for peace; where peace can be administered and made a world principle. I then provide proposals that can promote such a world by drawing from the African worldview as captured by the Nigerian philosopher Ifeanyi Menkiti to formulate the basis for a form of progressive humanism (interpreted to mean where a progressive desire for a better and worthier human nature should direct the culture of reason that leads to peace). I further illustrate how the proposal for progressive humanism can provide the basis for a world free from nuclear weapons.

Keywords: Nuclear Weapons, Progressive, Humanism, Morality, African worldview, Peace.

Introduction

There are scanty literatures that attempt to theorise on peace and how or whether there can be a progressive movement of humanity to principles, values and norms that can lead to peace or improved quality of peace through non-western norms and values. Among the list of topmost journals devoted to peace¹ just one among these -*Journal of Peace Research*: (<http://jpr.sagepub.com>) can be said to be devoted to the studying peace from a theoretical point of view. A claim that can be made about this state of affairs is that the idea of peace appears to be widely and universally accepted as given principle and as one that cannot be improved upon or that cultures that promote peace are the same everywhere.

But this notion of peace deserve to be contested because based on the nature of the human community in question, the nature of peace and what it means to be at peace with each other might vary from one community to the other more than is a common knowledge. Consider for instance a society with a proven culture of violence is accepted, where violence is rationalised and accepted as desirable norm, but which for one reason or the other begins to review its norm in favour of peace. It should be expected that the peace that can be achieved in such a society would have tinctures of tainted peace than an internalised peace culture; that the peace that

would be achieved in such society would only amount to a reluctant peace option than quality peace with reliable socio-psychological dividend. Consider another society that believes in the theory of social Darwinism- that is, the view that human society is fundamentally competitive and that the desire to eliminate species or weaken the capacity of other species is an inherent ethics of social belonging and so should be either desired or at least accommodated. Chances are that the notion of peace that such a society would support may not be the same notion of peace that a society that harbours contrary belief would accommodate. The essence of the claims made here is that the assumption that what peace means is same in all societies should be suspected and that philosophical reflection should attend to the idea of peace almost in the manner that that they have attend to other virtues such as truth, justice and right; by interrogating the idea of peace. Thus it is important to note that “any project of peace even at the level of nations must recognize the canons of rationality of the subjects involved” (L.O.Ugwuanyi, 2011:679) since there are conceptual underpinnings that define the values through which peace is desired, valued and validated.

This work attempts to provide theoretical positions on peace by questioning the ideology of nuclear weapons which is conceived as a way of achieving a peaceful world by curtailing the abuse of force and power by nations. It proposes the view that the ideology of nuclear weapons is a false route to peace and that the notion of peace implied by such effort deserve to be contested through an ethics of humanism that favours a culture of peace that can be measured progressively. The work addresses the following question : assuming that it is accepted that nuclear weaponry is not a reliable option to achieve world peace which options can be applied to achieve a culture of peace that would eliminate such option? The work will defend the claim that this can be achieved through a form of progressive humanism (interpreted to mean a world where a progressive desire for a better and worthier human nature should direct the culture of reason). It applies the views of the Nigerian-African philosopher Ifeanyi Menkiti to support this claim. I shall begin (i) by articulating the idea of a peaceable world; then interrogate the ideology of nuclear weapons. Thereafter, I shall (ii) proceed to formulate positions that reverse human thinking from accepting the ideology of nuclear weapon as formula for peace to a more ethically desirable option for peace derived from progressive humanism.

Towards a Peaceable World

Two significant variables define and direct social formations, namely culture and structure. I apply these variables to locate the route to a world free of nuclear weapons with the view that such a world would be realised when progressive humanism define these variables and provide the basis for a peaceable world through them. By peaceable world, I mean a world cultured and structured by peace, I mean a world in which peace has assumed the feature of a world project in the same rank as justice and knowledge. By this I mean a world in which peace becomes a driving force that defines and directs the movement and direction of mankind by defining the priorities, programmes, choices, options, plans, policies and objects of concern among mankind, one in which we were to work for and walk towards peace.

The need for such a world arises from the fact that human nature harbours potentials for conflict and would often prefer a fertile ground for its expression. The human seat of conflict is well captured by the Christian preacher St. Paul when he says that human beings often do those

things that are against their will or wish. Important thinkers and intellectuals, such as St. Augustine(2012) and Sigmund Freud, have also written to address this aspect of man.

The second need for this arises from the fact that the human society (the larger aggregation of human beings) is also prone to conflict. This conflict which is often borne out of change and the forces of growth and expansion is such that social relations by their nature desire peace to mediate in the tensions that define change. Social encounters often give rise to culture shock which results in one form of conflict or the other. Hence social formations must be properly located as a process of becoming which by its nature harbours conflict minimally (at least) and this defines the need for peace as an important ideal. Thus, when I envision a world cultured and structured by peace, I do not, however, imply that it is possible to have a world of absolute peace but that conflict and confusion can be reduced to the minimum as a result of which conflict will cease to be a desirable end or an approved project as to motivate the acquisition of nuclear weapon as an ideal.

After outlining the basis for the need for a world cultured and structured by peace a question arises: how can it be held that a world of nuclear weaponry (defined as a world in which acquiring and maintaining nuclear weapons is held as the norm) can serve the need for such a world? To address this question let me begin by outlining some outstanding values that lead to peace to see whether the ideology of nuclear weaponry support these values. Values that lead to peace include tolerance, forgiveness, empathy, sympathy, kindness, humanness, understanding, etc. These values support the cause of peace in the sense that they promote the cause of ordered human and social well-being without which a society would be in crisis. However, there are other values such as happiness, contentment, trust and love which support the society and serve as a sub-structure for peace without which individuals that make up the society cannot function as to promote peace. These values serve a very important need in the sense that they provide the foundation for individual or personal peace without which the social peace cannot be achieved. L. O. Ugwuanyi (1997:59; 2002:48) has argued that there are two kinds of peace—peace of mind and “peace of land”—and that peace of the land often depends on peace of mind to obtain since only those with inner peace can have the will for social peace or at least desire and demand social peace in a peaceful manner

Having outlined the values that promote peace, let me proceed to illustrate how or whether it can be held that a culture of nuclear weapon stands in a position to provide or support these values. To do this it is important to locate the ideology of nuclear weapons. A nuclear weapon is a destructive armament that can be applied for a maximum war also known as nuclear war. Nuclear war, on its own, is a war fought with nuclear weapons, a war with enormous potentials for destruction. In nuclear wars (such as those fought with such weapons as nuclear bombs), there is always a massive and uncontrollable destruction. The nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the World War II is a clear instance of nuclear war. This nuclear bombing killed thousands of lives in a few days. Because of the massive destructive effects of nuclear weapons, moralists argue that certain conditions must of necessity be verifiably satisfied for the use of nuclear weapons in war. They argue that (a) such war must be a defensive war, (b) the use of nuclear weapons must be indispensable for defence (for example, when an unjust aggressor is making use of a nuclear weapon which can only be defended against by the use of another nuclear weapon) (c) the proportion of good to evil must be weighed and the prospect of success

considered. Finally, (d) they also suggest that there must be limitations on the use of nuclear weapons and that the nation applying nuclear weapons must show restraint by imposing limits on its use. By this is meant that regulations must be applied to the use of nuclear weapons in order to avoid a war of total extermination.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that a nuclear weapon is a physical elaboration of an ideology of nuclear war and one which illustrates the willingness, desire or at least a disposition to nuclear war. Thus, in essence, nuclear weapon amounts a disposition towards nuclear death (interpreted to mean death without limit). In the light of this, it can be held to be counter to a world structured and cultured by peace and to harbour no potential towards peaceful values—tolerance, forgiveness, empathy, sympathy, kindness, humaneness, understanding, etc. outlined above. This is because it is rooted in a psychology of threat where the owner feels threatened or is prepared to make others feel threatened, something close to applying the ideology of fear, to promote peace.

A counterargument to this position may suggest that since dominance is an inherent aspect of human nature and most social groups would always function by dominating others, the nuclear weapon is a way to moderate this tendency. However, if this position is upheld it should be noted that nuclear weapon is, by this very argument, an approval of dominance since it demonstrates the desire to dominate the dominant force. Even more, almost every human on earth is dominated by this measure since the nuclear weapon has the capacity to kill nearly every human being on earth. So in a way nuclear weapon amounts to a disposition to maximum dominance and an approval of the vice it has purportedly set out to prevent

Secondly, if nuclear weapon should be upheld as a counter-dominance to the dominance suggested by human nature, there is need to interrogate whether this is a desired human ideal. If this position which can be likened to the theory of social Darwinism is accepted, what about the other view that there is a near-infinite capacity of man to negotiate his nature to worthier ideals such as love, tolerance, compromise and humaneness? The apostle of non-violence Martin Luther King (Jr) has illustrated this eloquently in his work *Strength to Love* (1963)

In the light of the foregoing, it can be held that the nuclear weapon is an inversion of the human ideal by elaborating human deficiency and expanding threat as a human and social capital, even though in the first place expanding threat should not be seen as an ideal. It is an expansion of man's destructive capacity which is not a desirable human ideal—instead of addressing the challenge of negotiating peace creatively, the nuclear weapon is an aberration of response to this need, by way of expanding the capacity for threat, fear and war, which even if it is suggested by the human nature, is not a desirable human ideal.

It is for this reason that a fresh value needs to be imported into the peace design to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Here I have in mind the need to import what can be called some humanistic values to the peace project. The need for this arises from the fact that all peace values and peace gains are a response to the human needs and desires and that the effort to promote peace through this measure would have worthy gains to the human project and to the human community at large. I shall promote the quest for this value by appealing to the idea of progressive humanism inscribed in the Igbo philosophy of communalism as captured in the ideas of the Nigerian philosopher Ifeanyi Menkiti.

A Progressive Humanism for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons through the African Worldview

The idea of progressive humanism which I forward as a proposal for a world free of nuclear weapons is part of the wider philosophy of communitarianism strongly associated with peoples of sub-Saharan African. According to this principle, the community is the basic determinant in the constitution of the individual and the individual should fundamentally be loyal to the community. Several scholars have articulated this philosophy on behalf of the African people in the effort to account for what is implied by African thought on this subject (Mbiti, 1970; Gyekye, 1997; Tempels, 1959; Kaphagawani, 2006). However, I am applying the views of the Nigerian philosopher Ifeanyi Menkiti to abstract and elaborate this idea and to suggest the potentials it has for a culture of peace. I apply Menkiti's position because Menkiti identifies the being human in African thought with being communal and being communal as locating the measure and values of one's personhood in and through the values and principles of the community. Although the other scholars mentioned provide valid notions of the person as deriving from or implicated in the concept of community, Menkiti believes that "the community takes metaphysical precedence over the individual and the identity of the individual is thoroughly fused with the community" (Matolino, 2014:55). He identifies the communal principle as the measure of a person's humanity from birth to death. By this is meant that one is held to be fully human to the extent that one lives a lifestyle that is approved by the community.

But participating in the life of the community is done as a person and this makes another important demand on the individual. According to Menkiti this personhood has to be attained and "the attainment of "excellencies" is a definitive aspect of what it means to be human .He submits that "personhood ... is attained in direct proportion as one participates in communal life through the discharge of the various obligations defined by one's stations" (Ifeanyi Menkiti, 1984, p.172). Thus for Menkiti, "As far as African societies are concerned, personhood is something at which individuals could fail, at which they could be competent or ineffective, better or worse" (ibid:173). For him, being human in African thought demands passing through different stations in life and personhood "is attained in direct proportion as one participates in communal life through the discharge of the various obligations defined by one's stations in life" (ibid:176). From Menkiti, it can be suggested that a number of social and moral ethics which the African applies to regulate life, such as "sense of human value", "sense of hospitality", "sense of the sacred", "the sacredness of life", "sense of community", "sense of good human relations", and "sense of identity" (O. Onwubiko, 1989) are all geared towards attaining excellencies necessary for maximum personhood.

What then are the progressivist humanist potentials implied in this manner of thinking and what are its credential and potentials to lead to a nuclear weapon-free world? A number of progressive humanist ideals are implied in this thinking .The view that being human is defined in terms of some measure have strong import from the point of view of ethical humanism. Inferring from this thought pattern, becoming a person is no longer what can be attained by right of birth but by conscious personal effort. Implied here is a measured ethics of being human or at least a disposition to being human which can lead to a claim that some people are more morally worthy to be called human than others. In the same way becoming human

demands stronger moral measures at each stage of one's life. For the larger aggregate of humanity it would mean that there are levels or grades at which they should be held to be human. It may not just be by the number of human beings that people the earth but by their moral weight and worth and how it can be said that there is a moral ideal that mankind has figured out and is progressively growing or moving towards, that the idea of a human world can be upheld. If this position is implied and applied, then industrial threat as suggested by nuclear weapons would not be a valued moral option for peace. I submit that the culture of nuclear weapons in the world today cannot be divorced from a wrong idea of being human where there is an exercise of absolute and irresponsible notion of being human that aligns freedom and morality with force and compulsion than reason and empathy.

The idea of being human suggested by the Igbo worldview and implicated in the thoughts of Menkiti and from where Menkiti arguably draw his thesis suggests otherwise. It is an illustration of the principles of African communalism. Among the Igbo from whose worldview Menkiti abstracts his thought, it is common to hear a question such as these thrown to a person—“*ibu madu ka ibu muo?*”; meaning, are you a human being or a spirit? This question is posed to a human being not in expectation of a logical answer but a moral answer, one that indicates that there is yet a certain behavioural norm required of the individual for the individual to acquire and defend his or her personhood. This normative ethics is what is emphasised by progressive humanism. This moral measure is not available—at least in such elaborate manner—in other philosophical traditions of humanity (at least with the same meaning and in the same measure)

There are strong reasons to believe that the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have become a world of having rather than being, of human beings who live by acquiring the hopes, aspirations and dreams of others, rather than being human in terms of engaging and deepening their self-worth through the examined life, and where the tendency to appropriate and acquire wealth, inclusive of human personalities is more forceful and compelling than the tendency to become human by humanising others through positive ideals. By this is meant that becoming itself has been subjected to serve the ambition to have. It is perhaps this tendency that have made some human folk to make a capital out of fear and to measure the quality of their existence in terms of their ability to “possess” other human beings by way of subjecting them to fear, by making other human beings afraid and enlarging the tendency towards fear. This, to a large extent, explains the ideology of the nuclear weapon. This is the ideology against which the African philosophy of progressive humanism harboured by the communal principle of the Igbo worldview as captured by Ifeanyi Menkiti stands in a position to contest.

It is important to harp on the idea that the attainment of excellencies as captured by Menkiti is strictly for human welfare and in favour of man. Thus a strong (re)location of being in favour of man which this humanistic ethics suggests is relevant for being human in this philosophy. In the Igbo world from which Menkiti drew his analogy of African communitarianism, the human being is referred to as *madu*—variously translated as *mma ndu* or *mma-di* (interpreted to mean “beauty of life” or “beauty is here”). While the northern Igbos prefer to use the word *madu*, the southern Igbos use the word *mmadu*. Emmanuel Ede(1985:100) holds that *madu* is a short form of *mma-di* which could be translated as “there is beauty”. Similarly, Chielozone Eze (1998:31) suggests that “to say that that *mma du(di)* would imply that the Igbos have a sense of taste and

moral probity". The implications of these is the role which Igbos assign to measured moral worth as the foundation and basis for being human and affirming humanity. It is this measured moral worth that I invoke to address the need for a world free of nuclear weapons. I suggest that a progressive moral disposition towards humanity would mean the need for a rise in the moral quotient of mankind and if this is the case, then, an approval of nuclear weapon would not pass for an improved moral worth of humanity. If this becomes the case, a rejection of nuclear weapons as an option for mankind would be more easily achieved and the search for worthier alternatives to peace than nuclear weapons would be more strongly desired.

Conclusion

In this work I have articulated how it can be held that there are adequate bases for a world that would not promote the culture of nuclear weapon as an option for a world order. To do this, I provided some justification for the project. I then tried to provide proposals in this direction by arguing against the ideology of nuclear weapons and drawing from the African worldview as captured by the Nigerian philosopher Ifeanyi Menkiti to formulate the basis for what I call progressive humanism. My effort to capture this (if adjudged to be successful) restates the case for searching for the solution to problems afflicting our world through the reservoir of diverse knowledge scattered all over the world and if this effort would drive the world away from a culture of threat as suggested by the nuclear weapon then this effort has been worthwhile.

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Philosophy and the Idea of Globalization

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Abstract

This work sets out to critique and (re)formulate possible ways philosophers can engage the subject of globalization. To do this, it interrogates the extent to which extant philosophical works that engage globalization could be said to bear worthy philosophical character in the sense of representing what should constitute the proper aspiration of philosophical discourse in relation to the idea of globalization. It then (i) discusses the different aspects of philosophy that harbour positions that are implied by the idea; (ii) map out and discuss the philosophical problems implied in the idea of globalization and the manner of enquiry that will address the problem. Thereafter the paper will (iii) locate an aspect of philosophy that is marginally applied in the discourse on globalization which the paper identifies as metaphilosophical approach to globalization. The paper applies this to propose an option for a philosophical discourse on the idea of globalization. The method applied is textual reviews and critical evaluation of extant works on philosophy and globalization.

Keywords: Philosophy, Globalization, Discourse, Culture, Fresh Agenda

Introduction

Since the advent of globalization several texts, essays and articles have been written by philosophers with the aim of creating a place for a philosophical discourse on the idea of globalization. Many of those texts tend to accept the ideology of globalization and attempt to address problems that emanate from the ideology. Among these works include A. T. Dalfovo ; Blachelle et al; John W. Murphy (1998); W. V. Binsbergen (2006); Vasiliki (2005). African scholars have not been left out of this project. Many of them attempt to locate how or whether globalization addresses the concerns of African justifiably and reliably. They include Uwaezuruoke (2010) and Owolabi (2002); Idowu Williams (2006) Odimegwu (2006), Badru Olufemi (2006) and Chukwujekwu (2006).

This work sets out to interrogate the extent to which these works could be said to bear worthy philosophical character in the sense of representing what should constitute the proper aspiration of philosophical discourse in relation to the idea of globalization. The focus of the

work is to demonstrate what a philosophical discussion on globalization should be and that a philosophical discourse on globalization should fundamentally be different from a social science discourse on globalization considering the disciplinary difference of both in terms of meaning and method. The paper will state the terms on which a position on globalization could be considered philosophical, that is, as arising from a peculiar love of wisdom and on this ground, attempt to map out projects and concerns that should define and direct the philosophers' concern with globalization.

To do this the paper will

- (i) discuss the different aspects of philosophy that harbour views and positions that are implied by the idea e.g. political philosophy, social philosophy, environmental philosophy, cultural philosophy and philosophy of culture and the gains of addressing globalization through these subjects articulate the meaning of globalization;
- (ii) map out and discuss the philosophical problems implied in the idea of globalization and the manner of enquiry that will address the problem. Thereafter the paper will
- (iii) locate an aspect of philosophy that is marginally applied in the discourse on globalization which the paper identifies as a meta-theoretical approach which harbours what the paper considers to be a strong philosophical potential for discussing the idea of globalization and go forward to locate the potentials of this new approach and how it should serve a worthier academic foundations for a philosophical discourse on globalization.

I. Locating Globalization in Philosophical Discourse

In this part of the work, I shall map out several aspects of philosophy where globalization can be found to be a worthy subject of discourse. Thereafter I shall demonstrate the proper character of philosophical discourse on globalization to see whether they can be achieved through a discourse on globalization done through these subjects. Through this study it shall then be shown whether or how there is the need to institute fresh discourse on globalization that would be considered to harbour a more philosophical character and how this could be done.

First it is necessary to re-capture the idea of globalization. Globalization is the intensification of linkages among the world community such that what is happening in one part of the globe produces same or similar effect in another part. It is the arrival at a zero distant world where local happenings produce effects and consequences beyond the location of the event. Severally globalization is held to be a political and economic event but a proper engagement with the theme of globalization would show that there is globalization of other aspects of human endeavor such as sports, religion, technology, etc.

At least three branches/aspects of philosophy provides questions/positions that demand that we interrogate globalization or positions through which globalization could be properly studied. These branches include: social and political philosophy; environmental philosophy and philosophy of culture. I have singled out these aspects of philosophy, not because they are the only subjects through which the idea of globalisation could be discussed but because they serve as strong areas of philosophy where the discourse on globalization could be found to be urgent and reliable. As what amounts to a pervading contemporary ideology globalization certainly provokes discourses in more areas of philosophy than the above. These areas include :

philosophy of development, philosophy of economics, philosophy of values, philosophy of technology, etc. However, these aspects of philosophy wherein the discourse on globalization could be said to find a space do not have the same strength as the former in relation to globalization.

To illustrate this further let me take on these aspects of philosophy and state how the questions/positions implied in them makes it urgent to interrogate globalization. (Notice that the term questions/positions have been severally applied to refer to issues relating to philosophy here because philosophy is strongly motivated for more questions than answers. Hence positions are only found to be philosophical when they suggest the need for a fresh or deeper in-look into anything through critical questioning).

Now let me take on the subjects outlined and articulate how globalization is implied. First is social and political philosophy. Social and political philosophy makes critical investigations on the need, mode and justification for social and political relations. It sets out to interrogate the terms and basis on which the social and political nature of man can be best realized and the forms of rights, laws, institutions, constitutions, powers, authority, social norms and values through which these can be done. The concern of this branch of philosophy entails formulating the basis for the realization of the ends of man as a social and political being as well as formulating the rational framework through which the formulated principles and laws could be regulated or at least made to function justifiably and reliably.

How does this entail the study of globalization? As implied by the content of this aspect of philosophy it could be seen that social and political philosophy entails a study of globalization. This is because there is the need to demonstrate whether globalization is in a position to provide the proper basis for the realization of social and political ends of man- and whether as the most compelling political ideology in contemporary times, its imperative character has worthy and desirable implications for human nature which is superior to other positions that respond to human nature. This concern can be found through the study of the political aspect of globalization which amounts to interconnection of political structures for shared political values and ends.

The second branch of philosophy that can be said to have a credible space for a discourse on globalization is environmental philosophy. Environmental philosophy entails a search for the proper terms through which the environment could be understood and through which the environment could be made to serve its proper end; the proper expectations from the environment and how it could be right to make the environment respond to these expectations. Environmental philosophy embraces such issues as environmental rights and justice- that is the correct demands that man should make from the environment and the best form of conduct that the environment deserves from man. As captured elsewhere (Ugwuanyi, L. O., 2011) environmental philosophy would address such riddles as this;

Assuming the environment is permitted to generate moral basis for action and given that the environment is not a human agent and has no evaluative capacity, how could the morality of such action be measured?

Given the demands of environmental philosophy as can be glimpsed from the above concern of the discipline it can be seen that globalization has a space in environmental philosophy. This is with special reference to the environmental aspect of globalization. This is because this aspect of globalization attempts to bridge the gap between different environmental worldviews with the aim of raising a common platform to address the challenge of the environment. This platform demands a common consent on the idea of environment which deserves to be adopted by all. It further demands that this idea of environment should not be conflictual, to the social or cultural ethics of any member of environmental community or that even if it is, there would be a superseding reason for the adoption of the position implied both for the community concerned and for the larger international community.

Another important branch of philosophy that harbours a strong space for globalization is philosophy of culture. Philosophy of culture is the branch of philosophy that interrogates the idea of culture and the terms by which the idea can serve a worthy intellectual and human dividend. Philosophy of culture attempts to articulate and interrogate the concept of culture to locate the source, nature and value of the concept and the role it has played or is expected to play in the advancement of the human project.

It should always be borne in mind that culture as elaborated by J. H. Bodley (cited in Ukpokolo 2004, p.20) carries a wide range of meanings and definitions- "typical, historical, behavioural, normative, functional, mental, structural and symbolic". Clyde Kluckhohn provides the following wide range of meanings that can be applied to culture;

- "the total way of life of a people"
- "the social legacy the individual acquires from this group"
- "a way of thinking, feeling and believing"
- "an abstraction from behaviour"
- "a theory on the part of the anthropologist about the way in which a group of people in fact behave"
- "a storehouse of pooled learning"
- "a set of standardized orientations to recurrent problems"
- "learned behaviour"
- "a mechanism for the normative regulation of behaviour"
- "a set of techniques for adjusting both to external environment and to other men"
- "a precipitate of history"
- "a behavioural map, sieve, or matrix" (for details see, Ukpokolo *ibid*; p.)

From these diverse meanings it would be found out that culture does not have specific meaning or implication more than as "named" or as held by the cultural community- and that whether culture amounts to "a given set of values" that formulates or defines a situation or "a fluid aspect of the human situation", "ever yet to be", has to be determined or defined by philosophy of culture.

In relation globalization, philosophy of culture becomes an attractive subject. This is because this idea of globalization permits a confluence of cultures and allows for a transfer and export of culture from one part of the world to the other. As a result of this tastes, desires,

feelings and dreams in one locality are direct outcome of cultural products elsewhere. In this situation the basic assumption is that the human phenomenon can no longer be localized or limited by its immediate culture but by a larger world of culture that defines all human beings.

II. Problematising the Philosophical Concern on Globalization

In this section of the paper I shall locate the strength and weakness of applying the aspects of philosophy identified above to a discourse on globalization. To do this I shall discuss the gains of applying them and the problems of doing same. By problems I mean the crucial philosophical questions demanded by globalization which cannot be addressed by applying these aspects of philosophy in discussing globalization.

To begin I wish to raise two cogent questions:

- (i) what would it amount to, for an intellectual discourse to lose or lack a philosophical character and
- (ii) what would a subject of discourse lose if a philosophical character is wrongly applied to it?

I begin with (I).

When a subject of discourse does not enjoy the benefit of philosophy the total and proper character of the subject would be lost. What this means is that the final nature of the subject in terms of which it should best be understood as offering fresh epistemological gains and wherein it is deemed fit to constitute a subject of enquiry shall have been lost. Being lost in this way, it would mean that the subject might take a false shape or form and assume a false character.

Conversely but ironically, when philosophy is wrongly applied to a discourse, it is at once an invitation to philosophy. This is because this amounts to a reconstitution of an idea in a different way and perhaps for a different reason which would demand a mode of enquiry to achieve a proper idea of both the reconstitution and the subject. If these positions are applied to a philosophical discourse in globalization, it would mean that such discourse provides no fresh insight on the theme or that it aims at an entirely fresh character for philosophy in relation to globalization which invites critical questioning that is at the heart of philosophy.

Indeed, this once more brings to the fore the tension that often exists between ideology and philosophy for which philosophy is always suspicious or critical of ideologies. As once captured by Kwasi Wiredu the leading African philosopher there is often a tension between ideology and philosophy because ideology is often totalitarian seeking to extend its features and character to everything in contrast philosophy which is often critical seeking to question or critique every aspect of anything. As a result of this philosophy is often critical of ideology.

In the light of the foregoing, a particular question deserves an urgent answer: how may philosophy be applied for a scholarly discourse on globalization, and how should this be done? To address this question let me take on the different branches of philosophy that can be applied for this reason and attempt to locate the strength, weakness and potentials of each to do this. I begin with political and social philosophy.

From our earlier submission it can be seen that when political and social philosophy is applied for a study on globalization it would attempt to discuss the implication of globalization to state relations; that it would seek to formulate or determine the idea of the state that would harbour the values and ideals of globalization in relation to rights, duties and social obligation

of state belonging. This method of study might be gainful because it would interrogate the ideals harboured by globalization and determine the significance and cogency of the ideals. However, this being the case; it might still be difficult to locate the distinct character of such discourse in relation to globalization. This is because the issues raised by them can conveniently be addressed by social and political philosophy. Secondly, such discourse might lack the distinctive features and novelty desired of a subject on the philosophy of globalization because it does not seek to unveil the peculiar demands of the subject in terms of which it could be seen that globalization demands philosophical enquiry. The emphasis here is that there is nothing significantly unique in addressing globalization through social and political philosophy as should be demanded of such enquiry.

The second subject that has been identified as one that can be applied to study globalization is environmental philosophy. Environmental philosophy when applied to the subject of globalization would seek to illuminate the nature of the relationship desired of man in relation to the global human environment. It would seek to determine whether man's notion of the environment should be defined by human needs and aspirations or whether the environment is a separate moral and legal agent with its own ethics, laws and regulations which should be obeyed on its own terms. For instance it should articulate whether a distinct idea of environment can be held to regulate the environment in the global demand of the term or whether this should arise from economic and social ideals of a people. In other words, environmental philosophy would seek to know what informs an idea of the environment, the principles and values that stand at the root of this, and to what end such idea should serve. But whereas environmental philosophy can provide the basis for addressing globalization in these regards, this again might also open up other issues that would limit its relevance. For instance, there are several other aspects of globalization that would be ignored by this measure notably cultural globalization, economic globalization, technological globalization, etc. It would then mean that globalization as a subject would lack cohesive umbrella for a comprehensive treatment through philosophy.

Added to this is the fact that environmental studies are after practical and do not seem to harbour or suggest strong theoretical demand. Thus, if globalization is entirely treated under environmental philosophy there may yet be the need to source for how to provide the basis for ideas that can accommodate the larger demand of the idea and generate fresh insights into the idea, wherein the gain lies in philosophical knowledge would lie.

The third aspect of philosophy identifies as one that can serve the purpose of addressing crucial questions in relation to globalization is philosophy of culture. As noted in the earlier part of this work this aspect of philosophy has enormous potentials for addressing the subject especially that of articulating the terms through which a global human culture can emerge and be seen to be one. Seen within the wide compass of the twelve notions of culture earlier identified it would seem that this aspect of philosophy has adequate response to any intellectual demand of philosophy in relation to globalization.

But culture it should be noted has strong limitations and/or complications when applied for addressing a philosophical concern. This is because culture is basically a human creation and invention and this makes it depend on human ideals for it to be one. Moreover culture is not of the same status as nature or science wherein globalization has its implied source and origin.

Again the extent to which culture is scientific or seen to be one is still debatable. This is because once culture is seen to be totally or thoroughly scientific then it would seek to affiliate more with science than with arts demanding that we establish the science of any culture that is believed to be one.

The point not note is that philosophy of culture when applied to the study of globalization gives the subject a false concern in the that it would locate the terms by which globalization falls or would fall within human cultural invention as against the phenomenal world of science where globalization can be more concretely located.

III. Mapping out the Philosophical Problems Implied by Globalization through a Metaphilosophical Option.

In the light of the foregoing the need then arises to source for and canvass fresh disciplinary boundaries for philosophy in relation to globalization. To do this I shall identify peculiar questions of philosophy in relation to globalization which demands that we apply a fresh approach to the subject.

At least two philosophical problems could be said to be implied by the idea of globalization. The first is the problem of one and many and the second is the problem of universals. These problems may not seem so obvious given the fact that the idea of globalization is multi-dimensional and fits into different areas of study. However, from a philosophical stand point-the critical review of ideas in relation to how they capture the fundamental reality that defines existence and how they define and direct the diverse aspects of our world, they are obvious enough. Now let me proceed to discuss how this is the case by elaborating on this problem and how they are harboured within the idea.

The problem of one and many is the problem of locating the extent to which it could be said that what is meant by the world is a universe literally meaning one version of several things. It is the issue of determining whether the world is basically one or whether we inhabit different worlds. This problem seeks to address the best form the world should be understood: whether things reveal themselves variedly or whether these various revelations of reality are but testimonies and components of one and same world. But how is the problem of one and many implied by the idea of globalization?

Recall that the idea of globalization finds its origin in the word "globe", itself a concept that captures the world as one. Globe is basically a geographical term. Thus it can safely be assumed that all physical components of the earth fits into the concept and is captured by the idea of globalization.

But while the globe can be promptly captured as representing the physical universe, the idea of globalization arising from this is questionable. For instance, if it is taken to mean that globalization amounts to turning everything to fit into one globe (assuming that they are in a different globes all these while), two questions would arise; why should this obtain and what will be the common feature of the intended (new) globe? It would still need to be determined whether this globe would be an outcome of the old or entirely a fresh creation with new values. Furthermore some realities harbour both physical and spiritual components. In some cases the spiritual component is more important that the physical. So if globalization is applied to mean or suggest the need to form a coalition of the inhabitants of the world into one globe there would

still be need to establish the forms and nature of this coalition.

Another problem that is implied by the desire for the new globe is to demonstrate whether it could be said that it is a desirable feature of the world and that if it is found desirable to every aspect of the world, it can also be said that every aspect of the world has the capacity to key into what is needed to fall into the globalised world. By this I mean that if it is accepted that all aspects of our world desire to fall into one global world or what has been called a “global village” (as far back as 1964), it should be shown that the diverse aspects of our world desire this new world; that they have the capacity to attain this and that it is not a forced aspiration or coalition.

The second problem that is implied in the idea of globalization is the problem of universals and particulars. The problem of universals is the problem of determining wherein things can be said to reveal themselves- whether as universal entities or as particular entities. Formulated in another way the problem can be captured this way: (e.g.) where lies the proper notion of man or the proper man: is it in the particular man (before me) or in and through the abstraction of features of particular man in their various numbers. This problem is historically accredited to find its origin in the works of Boethius the medieval philosopher. However it should be noted that before him Plato had held positions that implied a sharp distinction between universals and particulars and suggested the need to take a closer look into the source and implications of the difference implied.

Plato, it should be recalled, had postulated a tripartite world containing the one, the demiurge (which harbours the nurse of all becoming) and the phenomenal world of things. In this postulation, Plato further held that there is an ideal (one) world of things where the demiurge copies and transfers entities to the visible world of things, thereby causing the creation of things. By this postulation, Plato could be said to imply that there is one ideal (universal) category of anything and that anything has a universal and particular component of which the later is a mirror of the former, even if in a rather fake manner.

In relation to globalization, this problem could be found to be implied by the idea of globalisation in several ways. First (i) the problem is implied in the need to determine wherein should lie the idea of globalisation: would globalisation mean the emergence of a common “village square”, where every aspect of the world would “contribute what should be universally held to be human in and about the square- that is – that is something of common humanity that can be found in this? Would it mean a transfer or transplantation of a notion of ideal human culture from one nation to the various segments that build into this world or to the collective that is constituted from it?

A second question almost implied in the above would be wherein would lie the authentic (reliable) humanity, would it lie on the new universal humanity that is a product of globalisation or in the particular human societies and cultures that gave rise to these- assuming that is the case that these are found to be the proper implication of globalisation?

A further concern is also implied in (i) and (ii) is the need to demonstrate the kind of relationship that will be implied or desired by this arrangement. By this I imply resolving the nature of the relationship between the universal (global) world and the particular (local) worlds assuming that both are implied by the idea of globalization.

These issues pointed out demand that globalization should be more critically studied within the purview of the central problems of philosophy. Such study implies that the question of globalization should be deepened to embrace the fundamental level of questioning where philosophy plays its proper function and exhibits its central character as the discipline of disciplines and as the discipline that disciplines the various disciplines of human enquiry. The implication of this, is that, it is in the very art of raising those questions or concerns that are not yet visible to the intellect within the available discipline or by raising them in a fresh manner in relation to globalization that philosophy can play its proper role and would make a subject quality as a philosophical study of globalization.

Conclusion

This work has tried to interrogate the extent available philosophical literature could be said to bear worthy philosophical character in the sense of representing what should constitute the proper aspiration of philosophical discourse in relation to the idea of globalization. It has tried to demonstrate what a philosophical discussion on globalization should be. To do this the paper has discussed the different aspects of philosophy that harbour views and positions that are implied by the idea and applied to discuss globalization; map out and discuss the philosophical problems implied in the idea of globalization and the manner of enquiry that will address the problem and gone forward to locate an aspect of philosophy that is marginally applied in the discourse on globalization which the paper identifies as a meta-theoretical approach. It is hoped that this approach will gain more consideration among scholars and lead to fresh philosophical focus on the subject.

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Political Epistemology and the Phenomenon of Change in Nigeria: An Evaluation of Nigeria's Democratic Process (2015-2019)

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Abstract

Political epistemology is a relatively new field of study in philosophy. It is the intersection between epistemology and political philosophy. This field of study attempts to investigate how political ideas and knowledge, as well as political disputations, affect political decisions and actions. In other words, political epistemology suggests that ideologies, beliefs and knowledge about particular political issues, have empirical and normative impacts on political decisions which give rise to the establishment of political authorities. This is to say that political changes are midwived by ideologies and beliefs which ensure that people take particular courses of actions to birth one political dispensation or the other based on perceived ideologies. These beliefs and assumptions, depending on how sophisticated they are, are responsible for the type of people who come to power and the type of governance practiced. This paper aims to evaluate the concept of political epistemology, connecting it with the change phenomenon in the Nigerian political space from 2015-2023. In order to achieve this aim, the paper will examine to what extent beliefs and political education plays a role in the establishment of a credible and responsible government in Nigeria, and how political illiteracy and misplaced emotions nourished the phenomenon of change and contributed to bad governance in Nigeria. Thus, this paper establishes that the Nigerian electorate performed an epistemic blunder in 2015 and 2019 by avoiding critical evaluation and electing a government based on propaganda and emotions. In the final analysis, this paper will conclude by stating that going forward, political education is essential for there to be a possibility of

genuine political change in Nigeria.

Keywords: Democratic Process, Political Epistemology, Political Change, Nigeria, Propaganda, Political Education, Government.

Introduction

Politics is a very important enterprise in the life of man. Every society engages in political activities so as to determine who and who will be elected into political offices to hold power and authority in trust and act on behalf of and in the interest of the people. When everyone begins to seek his/her personal protection by using whatever means available, there will be anarchy which could be akin to the primitive society where there were no positive laws to regulate the community. But when a body of persons are elected and given legitimacy to promulgate laws with the consent of the people, a government has been put in place which exercises those natural rights given to individuals to protect themselves. As Bar-Ta (2001, p.606) discussed John Locke who explained in his social contract theory that it is immoral for one person or a group of persons to perpetually rule over other people without their consent and approval. This is why it is important that those who aspire to lead in various political capacities present themselves for the people to evaluate them and their ideologies, and make decisions based on what is best for the individual person. Government being established through this process of election should have the welfare and security of the people as its paramount purpose. In other words, governments are elected to serve the people and make life tolerable for them. Thus, the socioeconomic welfare of the people becomes priority to the government of the day, and it will assume the responsibility of easing the challenges of people.

Elections across the world, especially in democracies are meant to enthrone governments that will shoulder the responsibility of piloting the affairs of the country and ensuring that the legitimate interests of the people are protected and preserved. People invest high hopes and expectations in every government that comes to power, expecting that their lots will be improved (Bertuglia and Vaio, 2005, p.46). Unemployment, poverty, insecurity, bad economy, decayed infrastructure, poor education system, corruption, nepotism, to mention a few, are some of the challenges successive governments are tasked to address in Nigeria. Such hope and enthusiasm was at its zenith before and after the 2015 election in Nigeria (Nnamani, 2019, p.100). People were presumed to be tired with the then government as a result of insecurity and economic hardship. There was palpable hysteria within the political landscape, indicating that the then President was unlikely to survive the election. In all these, opposition propaganda played a vital role in galvanizing the public; throwing up all kinds of allegations and insinuations at the government with the use of both local and international media organisations (Igbokwe-Ibeto, et al., 2016, p.25). The onslaught against the government in power was even rumored to have been championed by an American-based organisation whose expertise in political propaganda is well known around the globe.

These onslaughts and propaganda were allowed to infiltrate even the so-called diehards of the government to the extent that it was alleged that some members of the then President's cabinet worked against his reelection. In addition, the opposition party cashed in on and deepened the trust deficit between the government and the people, making it even more

difficult for most people to evaluate their propaganda in the light of knowledge. The political landscape became rife for implosion as the people were ready to enthrone anybody but the then President. Thus, the opposition candidate and his manifesto escaped critical evaluation, even from the most critical minds in the country. In the midst of the crises, nobody bothered to ask to what extent and how the opposition leader was going to bring about his much-touted change (Ugbodaga, 2015). Even most of our intellectuals in the academia were carried away by the emotions and propaganda of the day and did not conduct any form of critical evaluation of the situation. For example, the opposition leader refused to conduct any form of media engagements throughout the electioneering period; neither did he participate in the ceremonial Presidential Debate ritual of the campaigns. The media and most of the academia gave him a pass for this and touted his acclaimed achievements as a military president as the reason he deserves the top job again (Owen and Usman, 2015, p.38). Every focus was on the seating president and no attention was paid to those hustling to grab power.

In 2011, the then President announced the removal of petroleum subsidy, as well as measure to cushion its effects in the way of palliatives such as transportation subsidies. This sparked nationwide protests which began in Lagos on January 3rd 2012. The protest was graced by celebrities, members of the academia, popular legal practitioners, and known opposition leaders who were alleged to have funded the protest (Owen and Usman, 2015, p.40). In spite of the fact that every known economic projection supported the removal of petroleum subsidy and monies meant for it reinvested into critical sectors of the economy such as education, social security, transportation and infrastructure, Nigerians refused to heed this economic expert advice and preferred to occupy the streets, and even threatened a violent dethronement of the government if the decision was not reversed. This can be described a classic case of cowering to political opportunism as a result of the absence of political knowledge. The government toed the path of peace by rescinding its decision and the protesters went home. But since that time, the issue of petroleum subsidy and its negative implications to the Nigerian economy has continued to occupy political discourses in Nigeria. This is even to the extent that during the just concluded elections, all candidates to the office of the president pledged to do away with petroleum subsidy on their first day on the job. President Tinubu made good on that promise and has removed petroleum subsidy, yet the country remains quiet. One might then ask; what is the difference between 2012 and now?

Political epistemology has the duty of investigating to what extent ignorance or political education determines the type of government that will be enthroned by the majority of the people. Political parties and their members always produce manifestoes and ideologies upon which they will base their government if elected into power (Cassam, 2019, p.17). The people who serve as the electorates for any election have the responsibility of appraising and critically examining such individuals, political parties and their programmes of actions, in order to have the chance of electing a responsible government. Political epistemology in other words presupposes that people's level of education, orientation, as well as capacity to reason critically will always impact the type of people they elect into political offices (Coady, 2012, p.19). The level of criticalness befitting of a consequential election such as the 2015 election was not exercised by political stakeholders due to political affiliations, propaganda and emotions which seemed to blind the eyes of even the most critical people in the Nigerian political space.

However, despite the well-publicised failings of the change government, the same epistemic mistake was repeated in 2019.

The field of political epistemology examines how bad ideas, false consciousness, and ideology come to exist in particular types of society, and how much they affect the politics (Crawford, 2000, p.121). This paper establishes the fact that political participation ought to be in line with critical evaluation of political issues which equips the participants with the proper knowledge.

1. Contextual Clarifications

1.1. Political Epistemology

While it is true that the field of political epistemology is a relatively new one, philosophers are said to have always been interested in the relationship between political philosophy and epistemology since antiquity. Political epistemology is a relatively new field of study in philosophy. As a field of study, it lies at the intersection between political philosophy and epistemology. Thus, political epistemologists investigate the ways in which epistemological issues are at the centre of political lives. In other words, how does claims of knowledge, truth and expertise impact political decisions and help to form legitimate political authority. In political epistemology, philosophers ask question about whether (or to what extent) legitimate authority and good governance depends on epistemic evaluation of the political process by individuals as political agents (Jackson, 2011, p.29). Again, the field of political epistemology is also concerned about how and to what extent propaganda, ignorance and misinformation undermine the legitimacy of popular political decisions. The role of disagreement in political decision is also examined in political epistemology, as well as its impact on the society. Political epistemology evaluates to what extent disagreements could lead to societal polarization and it can be leveraged to expose the blind spots based on different perspectives (Oatley, 2019, p.961). Since bad ideas, false consciousness and ignorance play such a negative role in the political process, the quest for proper rationality and knowledge cannot be overemphasised in this regard.

Coady (2012, p.18) points out that some of the issues that political epistemology is concerned with are fake news, propaganda, political disagreements, conspiracy theories, voter ignorance, epistemic merits of democracy, irrationality in politics, and general political distrust. This paper focuses primarily on the role of political ignorance during the democratic process in Nigeria between, particularly between 2015 and 2019. In the opinion of this research, this political ignorance helped to usher in a government based on false hope and unrealistic expectations. The Nigerian electorate was carried away by the allures of fake promises, propaganda, and malicious media campaigns against a seating government, and entrusted the future of the country to people who were seldom prepared for governance. In the words of Adeolu (2016a:21), this lack of preparation was obvious in the fact that it took the new President more than 6 months to form a cabinet after vying for the top job on three previous occasions. We opine that, had the people exercised more caution and conducted any form of epistemic inquiry into the ideas and behaviours of those who were playing opposition, it would have been found out that there was not much of a difference between them and the people they were seeking to

replace. In short, Adeolu (2016b, p.14) has argued that the then government was better, owing to some indices used to measure performance. In addition, political ignorance, false consciousness and susceptibility to political propaganda and conspiracy theory have been blamed for the spread of populism across the global political spectrum.

1.2. Political Change

It was Heraclitus who declared that change was a permanent occurrence in nature. Famously, he stated that “you cannot step into the same river twice.” The above statement of the Heraclitian philosophical tradition entails that there is nothing which is not vulnerable to change. In other words, change is an important agent of human civilisation and value reorientation. This assertion is certainly true concerning the field of politics as election is recognised as the only legitimate agent of change in a democracy. Political change is periodic in a democracy; making it mandatory that political office holders subject themselves to elections every four years (in the case of Nigeria) for the people to appraise their performances through either returning them (which is limited to two terms) or replace them with new individuals who the people believe would advance their interests better. Fayemi (2012) defines political change as the process of altering the leadership of a country or a local community by electing new people who have different and more acceptable programmes and policies. Another dimension of political change is what Yagboyaju (2007, p.347) describes as internal modifications. This is a situation where an existing government decides to modify its policies and programmes to align with prevailing realities. A government can decide to introduce changes to policies so as to respond to prevailing public needs. O'Donnel (1998, p.114) opines that political changes could either be positive or negative, depending on the impacts of such changes on the citizens.

However, political change in the context of this paper refers to the promise made by the opposition political party in 2014 through a political slogan, which ultimately led to a change of government in Nigeria. The change mantra of the opposition in the months leading to the 2015 national elections in Nigeria culminated in the first known transition of government from a ruling political party to the opposition in the history of Nigeria (Owen and Usman, 2015, p.38). To this extent, analysts have described the election as a landmark in the annals of Nigerian political process. Since we can rely on the assertion of O'Donnel (1998, p.115) that political changes can turn out either side, as well as the thrust of political epistemology which entails that ignorance and false consciousness can negatively impact politicking and the democratic process, this paper establishes that such false consciousness was on display in the Nigerian political space during the period under review, and negatively affected the political process by ushering in a government based on false hope of change. Lichtenberg (1998, p.46) holds that political actions such as voting in an election must be predicated on political actors' normative ideas (about the way things should be) and their empirical knowledge about the way things are and the way they are likely to be after political action occurs. In other words, the political actors have a huge role to play for there to be a responsible government.

1.3. Democratic Process

Democracy has been defined by Abraham Lincoln as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. This popular layman's definition of democracy presupposes that power and sovereignty should lie with the people in a democracy. The people occupy a central place in the democratic process because they are the one that ought to make the ultimate decisions concerning who and who should serve in government. Democracy has also been defined as the system of government whereby the people are encouraged to choose their leaders and representative through the ballot box periodically, usually on a four-year period (Landemore, 2020, p.21). Election is the major phenomenon in the democratic process because it affords the people the opportunity of making their choices of leaders through an electoral process. The importance of elections in the democratic process is the reason why free, fair and transparent elections are the hallmark of the entire process (Lever and Chin, 2019, p.434). If an election is adjudged to be manipulated and conducted contrary to the extant laws, such elections are not regarded as elections in the right sense of the word, and it puts the legitimacy of those who emerge through that process to question.

X-raying the essence of political ideas and their importance to the political change process, Lever and Chin (2019, p.439) opine that those who hold political ideas do not consider or see them as fantasies, but consider them as truth, hence knowledge. Talisse (2019, p.18) also agrees that Consciousness rising offers a paradigm shift in our understanding of the social world. Thus, the role of proper consciousness in the political consciousness cannot be overlooked. If the political process produces the change that can potentially transform the society, it will be important that knowledge claims are properly evaluated for the enthronement of a people-oriented government. So, the epistemic practice is vital in the process of change to determine what nature of change is being promised and how such change could be delivered. This epistemic practice ensures that the people develop the critical mind that is akin to the phenomenological *epoche* by removing every form of sentiments and emotions so as to evaluate political issues dispassionately to arrive at a desirable end (Talisse, 2021, p.22). This will help to sieve the natural attitudes of undue emotions, sentiments and prejudices from the political process.

2. The Challenge of Inadvertent False Beliefs in Nigerian Politics (Epistemic Dependence)

One major challenge of good governance and proper epistemic tradition in the political process is inadvertent false beliefs and hopes. The point made by Bellolio (2019, p.206) that most of our putative political knowledge usually rely on testimonies from other people is valid in this context. Put differently, not all of our political opinions are based on direct experience. If we are to know whatever we need to know in order to make sound political decisions, we will almost always have to get most of this knowledge from other people. This epistemic dependence might have its benefits such as the easy spread of information, but the burden of it is its associated epistemically vicious practices such as propaganda, lies and misinformation. This leads to the formation of false beliefs which encourages false hopes and consciousness. Anderson (2021, p.290) refers to these false beliefs as "morally uncriticisable" because no one has the moral right to criticise another's choice political beliefs and ideologies. They affect the collective and popular actions aimed at addressing sociopolitical issues through a democratic

process due to the fact that majority of the people may be exercising their democratic based on false consciousness and hope.

This evaluation is so because as McKenna (2021) considers it, when disagreement about facts, and about their best interpretation, is rife even among expert data gatherers and theoreticians, it simply entails that there is false consciousness somewhere along the line. When two parties disagree about the truth, at least one of the parties must be (inadvertently) mistaken, so the truth at issue cannot be self-evident; self-evident truths would produce unanimity. This epistemic dependence was rife in Nigeria, especially leading to the 2015 national elections. This was to the degree that rumours were no longer differentiated from the truth as many false information passed from one person to the other, creating chaos in the political space. In fact, there was the rumour circulated both in social and traditional media about how the then President always consumes too much local gin (*kaikai*), to make himself drunk even in the presidential office. Though rumours such as this sound unbelievable, the emotions of the period did not allow the opportunity for their epistemic investigation. Thus, they gained wide coverage and acceptance, helping to attack the integrity of the President and pruning his political capital. Reich and Barnoy (2021) however take a different view from this paper by arguing that such epistemic dependence can serve as viable platform for political evolution. According to them the same epistemic difficulties that facilitate the mistakes that must be occurring when there is dissensus can also facilitate mistakes when there is consensus. But the crux of this research is that epistemic dependence is necessary for rational political choices.

Furthering this view of epistemic difficulty for sociopolitical and scientific evolution, Cassam (2021) implies thus:

Even a consensus of natural scientists, social scientists, or social theorists is an ideational overlap among fallible human beings to whom opaque truths cannot, as such, be self-evident; this explains why, on occasion, there are scientific revolutions among natural scientists, and why in social science and social theory there are so many fads. In such cases we witness diachronic disagreement among consensus views, which demonstrates that no synchronic consensus should be assumed to be the living presence of Truth.

This is to the extent that epistemic dependence can galvanise for political evolution. However, this paper does caution against attaching certainty to whatever provisional conclusions data gatherers and theoreticians reach, regardless of whether these conclusions are consensually shared. Such attachment of certainty led to the disappointment and despondence experienced by the people in recent Nigerian political dispensations. As the case may be, the period this work is evaluating is not the only period of socioeconomic despondence in the political history of Nigeria, but is pertinent to focus on it due to its uniqueness in terms of mass epistemic dependence which resulted in what can be described as a gullible majority.

Belief heterogeneity should presuppose personal dialogue with the others whose ideas, including intentions, we aim to understand. But when this epistemic dialogue is absent, it gives way for epistemic dependence which breeds false beliefs and conjectures about political

ideologies. Though the concept of epistemic certainty has been criticised by epistemologists over the years, it does not preclude the idea that there ought to exist an epistemic threshold for political decision making (Galeotti, 2018). There are two different groups who partake in the spread of beliefs; they are the media and the citizens who consume these information. To think about the various ways in which false beliefs can come about, we should distinguish purveyors of information, the media through which they purvey it, and recipients of that information, who are the citizens to mark their supposed special role in a democratic society. Purveyors can be individuals or collective bodies like clubs, churches, corporations, or governments. Media include conversation, word of mouth, newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, documentaries, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Citizens are individual human beings (Friedman, 2019).

Thi Nguyen identifies misinformation with epistemic bubbles and disinformation with echo chambers (Nguyen 2020, p.142). An epistemic bubble can emerge “with no ill intent, through ordinary processes of social selection and community formation.” It can come about quite naturally. Your friends on Facebook are people you know and share interests and values with, so what comes across your newsfeed will most likely reinforce your point of view and omit alternative perspectives. And, as Regina Rini argues, despite risks, it is not unreasonable to “attribute greater credibility to co-partisan testifiers than to others, given that shared partisan affiliation points to shared normative values” (Rini 2017, p.55). Hence, in political epistemology, it is a regular practice for people to believe information simply for the fact that they are coming from their partisan colleagues and political associates. In the case of an echo chamber, there is conscious effort to isolate members of a particular political party from other relevant voices which have been discredited by the political group, thereby isolating its members from every form of outside epistemic sources (Nguyen, 2020:961). By so doing, recipients of information will not distinguish between misinformation and disinformation. It is hard to think how they could do so in real time because they will simply come to hold a false belief.

3. Political Epistemology for Real Change in Nigerian Politics

This paper argues for political epistemology for a real change in the Nigerian political terrain. To this end, it implies that political epistemology should be used as an instrument to effect the needed real and positive change needed within the Nigerian political space so as to make sure that government exists for the security and welfare of the people as enunciated in the 1999 Nigerian Constitution (as amended). Thus, political epistemology could serve as vehicle for positive political change which is the act of bringing about programmes, policies and ideas that will change the socioeconomic condition of the people for the better (Mallard and McGoey, 2018,p.887). As has been discussed elsewhere in this paper, the hope of millions of Nigerians was dashed between 2015 and 2019 due to the fact that so much trust was deposited in a group of people who promised change, not knowing that the change in question was more of a political slogan than a deliberate plan of action. Nigerians have always yearned for a better government, a government that will understand and ensure measures to address the social, political and economic needs of the people. Some of the issues bedeviling the Nigerian people system include corruption, poor infrastructure, unemployment, underemployment, economic hardship, poor elections, insecurity, terrorism, and a host of other sociopolitical issues

(Onuigbo, et al., 2018, p.247).

Proper political epistemology in Nigeria could ensure that false and conjectural political beliefs are addressed so as to afford the average citizen the opportunity to critically evaluate the political situation much better and be able to reach an epistemically independent decision. When citizens are enlightened and politically conscious to make savvy political decisions, it ensures that political power is entrusted to individuals who have actually passed through the necessary scrutiny and adjudged to have the interest of the people at heart. Education is important in this regard because it ensure that people are able to independently evaluate issues without depending on what politicians, religious leaders and other opinion moulders say concerning a particular political issue. The importance of education in the political process has been widely discussed by electoral officers who argues that widespread illiteracy among citizens could potentially negate the outcome of democratic processes (Tar and Mustapha, 2016). Thus, the success of a democracy presupposes that there should be a certain level of literacy among the citizens, so as to afford them the reasonableness and rationality to make critical decisions from critical minds. Politicians and their allies who speak publicly sometimes intentionally deceive their hearers, aiming for them to believe false propositions. Hence, there is need for proper education which will bring about the required political epistemology to ensure real change across the political spectrum.

Politicians, in particular, probably cannot avoid lies if they hope to keep their jobs, these excuses, if that is what they are, must be weighed against the need for trust, which must play a critical role in the relationship between politicians and the people they represent—and among people generally (Holbrook and Weinschenk, 2020, p.223). More so, the lies of politicians, public officials, and public figures often concern issues of wider significance, which is why a robust political epistemology is required to sieve through the baggage and arrive at empirically viable decisions in the democratic process. In addition to improving the lives of the citizens through the democratic process, this suggested political epistemology can also help to rebuild trust between the citizens and the government. Cohen and Luttig (2020:806) explain this by saying that when citizens cultivate epistemic independence through education, it will almost guaranty that government on its own side will no longer take the people for granted by dishing out lies and half-truths just to gain popularity and recognition. And by so doing, the trust deficit in the Nigerian political process could be addressed effectively. The absence of political epistemology weakens institutions of government and renders them porous. This is so because as Lamb and Perry (2020) suggest, such situation will afford a free reign for the government of the day; and has the potential of making autocrats out of hitherto democratic leaders. In essence, the absence of criticalness and rationality in the political process means absolute power to the politicians.

Such absence of political epistemology is evident in Nigeria in various forms. Vote buying is a form of this as citizens allegedly collect stipends ranging from N1000 to N5000 to cast their votes for a particular candidate without even caring if such candidates will advance their interests in any way. The challenge of vote buying/selling has become recurring in the Nigerian political discourse in recent years, owing to the fact that analysts describe the practice as eroding the democratic process. With political epistemology which ensures political criticalness, the citizens will understand that vote selling has far reaching negative implication

for them in the political process. This practice has continued to alienate and isolate the citizens from the political process in the sense that politicians now believe that they do not need to perform well, neither do they need to advance people-oriented manifestoes to win the people's votes at elections. They simply need to throw around few Naira notes at the polling booths and get the votes. In other words, citizens gradually lose their value in the electoral process; granting absolute powers.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research has evaluated the relatively new field of political epistemology by assessing how important a concept it could be for the enthronement of positive real change in the Nigerian political process. The relationship between political philosophy and epistemology is the focus of the field of political epistemology; the concept tends to evaluate the impacts of knowledge/ignorance on the political process, thereby determining the outcome of collective political actions. This paper linked this concept of political epistemology to the euphoric political decision that heralded the first transition of power to an opposition political party, as well as the false hope and misplaced consciousness that greeted it. Thus, the exercise of the criticalness associated with political epistemology is needed in the Nigerian political process in order to reach rational electoral decisions and keep whatever government that emerges on its toes. Without such criticalness which political epistemology affords, the citizens will continue to be vulnerable to political propaganda, false beliefs, false hopes and false consciousness which are the major factors festering the emergence of politically unaccountable leaders.

Having discussed the importance of political criticalness and consciousness, this research will make the following recommendations. Firstly, political parties should strengthen the democratic process by encouraging and funding unbiased orientations which will help the citizens to raise citizens' consciousness and create the necessary rational minds by spreading the type of information needed to help create a competitive political process. Secondly, political leaders should understand that whatever positions they occupy at any point is temporal, hence establishing institutions that will provide the citizens with the necessary education to equip them to challenge bad political programmes and action should be part of their priorities while in office. Politicians and citizens who engage in vote buying/selling should be prosecuted and punished according the legal regulations of the country so as to serve as a deterrent to others who might have such inordinate intentions. In addition, religious leaders ought to stay away from commenting on partisan political issues and focus on the moral obligation they have to ensure the proper conduct of their adherents and followers. In the final analysis, individual citizens must cultivate the habit of critical evaluation of political issues so as not to fall victim of political lies and propaganda which could erode the democratic process.

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An Analysis of Esan Oromhe and Western Adoption Models Using Kant's Categorical Imperative

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Abstract

This study explores the intersection of adoption practices, cultural identity, and moral philosophy by comparing the Esan Oromhe model of adoption with the Western adoption system. Through in-depth oral interviews with individuals familiar with the Esan Oromhe adoption practices, we gathered rich insights into the cultural values and traditions that shape this unique approach to adoption. Grounded in the African ontological concept of personhood and human dignity, the study evaluates both models through the lens of Kant's Categorical Imperative. It argues that while the Western model emphasizes individualism, privacy, and legal formalism, the Esan Oromhe model prioritizes community bonds, cultural continuity, and social integration. The study highlights areas of convergence and divergence between these models, showing that the Esan Oromhe approach aligns more closely with Kantian deontology by treating the child as an end rather than a means. The study contributes to philosophical and ethical discussions on adoption, advocating for culturally sensitive adoption policies that respect communal values and individual dignity.

Key Words: Esan Oromhe, Ethics, Kant, Deontology, Philosophy, Adoption

Introduction

Child adoption is a complex issue with many challenges. The country's cultural, social, and economic context plays a significant role in this complexity. In Africa, fertility is highly valued, and childlessness is stigmatized (Okonofua, 2014, p. 12). As a result, infertility and childlessness are significant problems, addressed through methods like polygamy, assisted reproduction, and adoption. However, these methods raise various financial, cultural, religious, social, and ethical concerns (Modell, 2002, p. 12; Nzegwu, 2006, p. 23).

In African culture, family and community are essential, and the concept of "ubuntu" or "personhood" emphasises the importance of relationships and responsibilities within the community (Gyekye, 1997, p. 45). However, Western scholars have often overlooked African ethical and intellectual contributions, imposing their own cultural biases on African societies instead (Wiredu, 1996, p. 20). This has led to a lack of understanding and appreciation for African cultures and philosophies.

This study identifies five primary problems that need to be addressed. Firstly, the high cost of adoption in Africa makes it inaccessible to many individuals and families, creating an environment where corruption and exploitation thrive, and leaving vulnerable children without permanent homes. Secondly, current adoption practices in Nigeria prioritise the interests of adoptive parents over those of the child and the broader community, neglecting the child's dignity and worth. Thirdly, Nigerian cultural values, such as Ubuntu and communalism, are not adequately considered in current adoption practices. This leads to a disconnect between the adopted child and their cultural heritage, potentially resulting in identity confusion and cultural dislocation. Fourthly, the inadequacy of existing adoption laws and policies in Nigeria lacks transparency and accountability, creating an environment where corruption and exploitation thrive. Lastly, the indigenous models of adoption in Africa, such as the Esan *Oromhe* model, have been silenced and marginalised due to the dominance of Western-oriented adoption practices.

To gain a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding child adoption in Nigeria, this study seeks to answer the following questions: What are the philosophical differences between the Esan *Oromhe* and Western adoption models, and how do these differences impact our understanding of adoption, community, and the rights and dignity of the child? How do these models align with Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative and the principle of treating individuals as ends in themselves?

The Western Model of Adoption

This section examines the Western model of adoption, starting with its history. In Western thought, adoption has a rich and varied history. Historically, adoption was often viewed as a means of providing care for children who were orphaned, abandoned, or born out of wedlock. Adoption is a legal process where a person or couple assumes the parental role and rights for a child, usually from their birth parents, creating a permanent family relationship. In other words, it is a process that involves the permanent transfer of parental rights and responsibilities from a child's biological parents to adoptive parents (Isibor, 2015). This process provides the child with a new family and a sense of belonging, while also offering a viable solution for infertility and a means of providing relief to parents who are unable to care for their children

(Ekeh, 1990).

The concept of adoption has evolved over time, influenced by changing social norms, cultural values, and philosophical perspectives. In ancient Rome, adoption was a common practice, where a childless couple could adopt a child to inherit their property and continue their family line. With the rise of Christianity, adoption became seen as a way to provide a loving family for children in need, reflecting the Christian values of compassion and charity. During the Enlightenment, adoption began to be viewed as a way to provide a rational and ordered family structure for children, reflecting the values of reason and social contract theory. In modern times, adoption has become more complicated, with changing attitudes towards family, identity, and cultural heritage. Philosophers like John Locke and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel have shaped the discussion, emphasizing consent, identity, and the tension between universal and particular family relationships. Feminist philosophers have critiqued traditional notions of family and adoption, highlighting issues of power, identity, and cultural heritage.

Today, debates surrounding transracial adoption and globalisation have raised questions about identity, cultural heritage, and the need for adoptive families to navigate complicated issues of belonging and identity. The concept of adoption in Western thought reflects changing social norms, cultural values, and philosophical perspectives over time.

It worthy of note that the Western model often emphasises the importance of secrecy and confidentiality in adoption, which can be problematic in African cultures where community and family ties are highly valued (Mbiti, 1969). Additionally, the Western model's focus on individual rights and interests can lead to a neglect of the broader social and cultural context in which adoption takes place. This can result in adoption practices that are insensitive to the unique needs and contexts of African societies, and that prioritise the interests of adoptive parents over those of the child and the broader community.

A Philosophical Examination of Esan *Oromhe* Adoption

In contrast to the Western model, adoption systems in African cultures, such as the Esan *Oromhe* model, maintain the child's connection to extended family, ensuring that adoption enhances rather than disrupts social cohesion (Okoro, 2013). This approach highlights the importance of communal narratives and cultural inheritance in shaping a child's identity, which is often disregarded in Western adoption practices (Gyekye, 1997; Menkiti, 1984).

Be that as it may, like many philosophical subjects, the concept of Esan *Oromhe*, a traditional principle of child adoption among the Esan people of Southern Nigeria, has garnered both praise and criticism from scholars. To gain a comprehensive understanding of this unique adoption approach, it is essential to consider multiple perspectives and engage in a thorough analysis that encompasses cultural, social, ethical, and legal dimensions. By doing so, we can identify the strengths and weaknesses of Esan *Oromhe* adoption and its implications for individuals and society.

On a positive note, Esan *Oromhe* adoption is viewed as a culturally sensitive, socially accommodating, and religiously connective home-grown solution. (Omodiagbon, Oral Interview, 2023). This approach contrasts with formal adoption systems prevalent in Western cultures, which often prioritise bureaucratic procedures over cultural and social

considerations. *Esan Oromhe* seeks to address the challenges of infertility and childlessness from within, drawing on the imagery and experiences of the people to address their ethical and existential concerns.

According to Ahianba (Oral Interview, 2024), the concept of *Oromhe* is deeply rooted in cultural and spiritual beliefs, derived from dreams, careful choices, and divination. Becoming an *Oromhe* is considered an honour, signifying recognition by the ancestors or divinities. This notion is further supported by Ahianba (Interview, 2024), Oiwoh, and Okonofua (Oral Interview, 2023), who argue that the adopting parents, also referred to as “*Oro*,” can counter and reverse any curse, even if biological parents do not wish the “*Oro*,” well.

Furthermore, the *EsanOromhe* model emphasises the importance of community and extended family ties. In this system, the adopted child is not severed from their ancestral lineage, connections, or interactions (Oiwoh, Interview, 2023). Instead, the child is integrated into the adoptive family while maintaining ties with their biological family. This approach prioritises the well-being and dignity of the child, ensuring that they are treated as an end in themselves, rather than a means to an end.

Unlike formal adoption systems that often involve monetary transactions, the *Esan Oromhe* process does not require financial exchange, thus avoiding the commercialisation that devalues a human person to the level of commodity. The process prioritises wise decision-making, divination, clear communication within the family, dreams, and sometimes sacrifices. Dreams and occasional sacrifices to appease the ancestors, with all elements documented if necessary.

Finally, *Esan Oromhe*'s adoption is lauded for minimising social stigma. Egbadon (Interview, 2024) emphasises that the *Esan* people view this practice as an integral part of their history. Unlike adoptions in the West, which can involve unrelated ethnicity and nationalities, *Esan Oromhe* prioritises adoption within the lineage, fostering a sense of belonging for the adopted child. This is particularly significant in Nigerian and African contexts, where cultural norms and customs often hold greater weight than legal adoptions during critical moments like inheritance or burial rites.

Despite its strengths as highlighted above, *Esan Oromhe* is not without criticism. Ojomo (Oral Interview, 2023) argues that the practice may not be fully functional in the contemporary world. She suggests that the tenets may be outdated and impractical in modern society. However, Ahianba (Oral Interview, 2024) counters these views, citing ongoing instances of *Esan Oromhe* in localities like Uromi and Ubiaja. He emphasises the need for continued education and promotion of this cultural practice through various media outlets and community leaders. Additionally, Ahianba suggests that research like this study, with its recommendations, can address Ojomo's concerns.

Another critique concerns the practice of adopted children retaining their biological surnames. This has been argued to lead to the eventual extinction of infertile families' names. Ahianba (Interview, 2024) addresses this by explaining the concept of surnames as a relatively recent phenomenon in *Esan* land. Traditionally, children were identified by the more prominent parental name within the community. Surnames, according to Ahianba, were not inherently tied to biological lineage and were often adopted based on prominent figures within the household. This historical context sheds light on the perceived insignificance of surname changes in *Esan Oromhe* adoption.

According to Ahianba and Omodiagbon (Interview-2024, 2023), surnaming is a relatively new phenomenon in Esan culture that emerged with the advent of Western education. Before this, individuals were identified primarily by their first names, and there was no standardised documentation procedure, nor was writing a common practice. Surnaming in early Esan culture was not associated with biological descent or gender. People were typically surnamed based on their place of residence or the most prominent names in their community. Therefore, the criticism that adopted children are still being identified by their biological parents' names is irrelevant in the context of Esan cosmology.

In recent times, there exists a criticism of the Esan *Oromhe* of child adoption, suggesting that modern families are increasingly hesitant to release their children to other families, even within the same clan, family, community, or village. This reluctance is attributed to contemporary couples having fewer children due to various factors. In response to this argument, Abu asserts that in the cultural perspective of the Esan people, an adoptive or a child's belonging extends beyond their biological family alone. Instead, every child is equally a part of the extended family, community, or the village as a whole. This belief underscores the collective involvement of the entire community in the upbringing and development of each child. Within this cultural context, no individual can claim exclusive ownership of a child, as the child is viewed as an integral part of the community.

Consequently, the principles of solidarity, connectivity, collectivity, and belongingness are highly emphasised and valued in Esan indigenous thought. Therefore, in the practice of Esan *Oromhe* adoption, it is emphasised that fertile members of the family should receive support and assistance from extended family structures, as well as from governmental and non-governmental organisations, to ensure the production of more children for future family members, including adoption by infertile and childless couples.

From the above analysis, the Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption offers a valuable window into a unique cultural approach to infertility and childlessness. While navigating contemporary challenges, its emphasis on social inclusion, spiritual connection, and affordability makes it a compelling alternative to formal adoption systems. Further research and community engagement can ensure this tradition's continued relevance, fostering a dialogue between cultural practices and evolving societal needs.

Convergence and Divergence in the Esan *Oromhe* and Western Model of Adoption

Points of Convergence:

The Universality of Human Needs: The convergence between the Esan *Oromhe* and Western models of adoption highlights the shared human experiences and universal needs that underlie these two distinct approaches to adoption. Firstly, both models address the existential needs of the human person, providing a sense of belonging, identity, and family connection (Hart, 2011, p.10). This fundamental human need for connection and belonging is a universal aspect of human experience, transcending cultural and societal boundaries. As the German philosopher, Hans-Georg Gadamer, notes, "human existence is characterised by its fundamental sociality" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 341). This sociality is reflected in the universal human need for connection and belonging.

Non-Biological Parents: Adoption shows that family relationships can be formed through love, care, and commitment, not just biology. Both Western and Esan *Oromhe* adoption models involve non-biological parents, highlighting that family ties are not solely defined by blood (Nancy, 2000, p. 123). According to Jean-Luc Nancy, “the family is a symbolic and social construct” shaped by cultural, social, and historical contexts. This means that family relationships are built on nurture, care, and mutual support, rather than just biological ties. By recognising this, we can redefine what it means to be a family and celebrate the diversity of family relationships across cultures.

The Importance of Cultural Sensitivity: both models acknowledge the significance of cultural and social factors in shaping the adoption process and experience, highlighting the need for cultural sensitivity and responsiveness in adoption practices (Okoro, 2013). As the Nigerian philosopher, Sophie Oluwole, notes, “culture is not just a static entity, but a dynamic and evolving process that shapes our understanding of the world and our place in it” (Oluwole, 1999, p. 156). This dynamic and evolving process is reflected in the diverse cultural practices and traditions that shape the adoption process.

Points of Divergence:

Adoption: Beyond Infertility: The Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption is not strictly tied to infertility and childlessness, unlike the Western model of adoption, which is often primarily motivated by these factors (Eze, 2017, p. 45). This distinction highlights the varying cultural attitudes towards family, kinship, and community relationships. In the Esan *Oromhe* culture, adoption is often seen as a way of strengthening family ties and promoting social cohesion, rather than solely as a means of addressing infertility or childlessness. This approach to adoption reflects the African philosophical concept of “ubuntu,” which emphasises the importance of community and interconnectedness (Tutu, 1999, p.10).

Adoption and Family Lineage: The Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption prioritises the adoption of children from within the family lineage or clan, whereas the Western model of adoption often involves the adoption of children from outside the family or community (Okoro, 2013, p.20). This difference reflects the strong emphasis on kinship ties and community relationships in Esan *Oromhe* culture. The prioritisation of kinship ties in Esan *Oromhe* adoption highlights the importance of maintaining family lineage and cultural heritage. This approach to adoption is grounded in the African philosophical concept of “filial piety,” which emphasises the importance of respect for one's ancestors and heritage (Gyekye, 1996, p.23).

Surname Retention in Esan Oromhe Adoption: The Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption does not require the adoptee to change their surname except otherwise, unlike the Western model of adoption, which often requires the adoptee to take the surname of the adoptive family (Nwachukwu, 2015, p.7). This difference highlights the varying cultural attitudes towards identity, family, and belonging. The retention of surname in Esan *Oromhe* adoption reflects the importance of maintaining cultural heritage and family lineage. This approach to adoption is grounded in the African philosophical concept of “nominal identity,” which emphasizes the

importance of names and naming practices in shaping identity and belonging (Appiah, 2005, p.12).

Kinship Ties in Adoption: The Western model of adoption often involves a complete severance of ties between the adoptee and their biological family, whereas the Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption typically maintains relationships between the adoptee and their biological family (Eze, 2017, pp.12-15). This difference reflects the strong emphasis on kinship ties and community relationships in Esan *Oromhe* culture. The maintenance of kinship ties in Esan *Oromhe* adoption is grounded in the African philosophical concept of "ubuntu," which emphasizes the importance of community and interconnectedness (Tutu, 1999, p.19).

Procedural Differences: The Western model of adoption often involves a rigorous and demanding procedural process, characterised by significant financial and bureaucratic hurdles, whereas the Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption is often less cumbersome and more flexible (Kirk, 1964, p.16). This difference highlights the varying cultural attitudes towards bureaucracy and formalism. The Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption reflects a more communitarian approach, which prioritises community recognition and witness over formal documentation and legal procedures.

Adoption and Community Involvement: The Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption relies on witness and community recognition, rather than formal documentation and legal procedures, which are characteristic of the Western model of adoption (Okoro, 2013, p.15). This difference reflects the strong emphasis on community relationships and social cohesion in Esan *Oromhe* culture. The role of community recognition in Esan *Oromhe* adoption is grounded in the African philosophical concept of "communitarianism," which emphasises the importance of community and collective responsibility (Gyekye, 1996).

The Social and Emotional Implications of Adoption: The Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption has significant social and emotional benefits for the adoptee, unlike the Western model, which can lead to social stigma and trauma (Nwachukwu, 2015, p.12). The Esan *Oromhe* approach prioritises the adoptee's well-being and social integration, recognising that adoption involves the broader community and social context. This model offers a holistic approach, emphasising kinship ties, community relationships, and cultural heritage. It also provides the adoptee with easier access to their family lineage and medical history. While criticisms exist, such as the lack of formal documentation and potential difficulties with inheritance and property rights, this study argues that the Esan *Oromhe* model offers a valuable approach to adoption, prioritising the needs and well-being of all parties involved.

Kantian Ethics and Western Adoption

Kant's categorical imperative, a fundamental principle of his deontological ethics, emphasises the importance of treating individuals as ends in themselves, rather than as means to an end. This principle is rooted in the concept of respect for persons, which requires that we treat individuals with dignity and respect, and recognise their autonomy and agency. In

African ontology, personhood is understood as a complex interplay of physical, spiritual, and metaphysical aspects, and is deeply rooted in the understanding of human existence, dignity, and worth.

The African concept of personhood is relational, emphasising the importance of community, social relationships, and the spiritual realm in shaping human existence. This perspective is reflected in the concept of "*ubuntu*," which emphasises the interconnectedness of human existence and the importance of treating others with dignity and respect. Similarly, Kant's categorical imperative prioritises the dignity and autonomy of individuals, recognizing their inherent worth and value as human beings.

The Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption, an indigenous adoption practice among the Esan people of Nigeria, offers a valuable framework for promoting human dignity in Africa. This model prioritises the autonomy and dignity of the adoptee, while also maintaining family ties and cultural heritage. By examining the Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption through the lens of Kant's categorical imperative and African personhood, we can gain a deeper understanding of the importance of prioritizing human dignity in adoption practices.

In contrast, the Western model of adoption often prioritizes the interests of adoptive parents over those of the adoptees, treating individuals as means to an end rather than as ends in themselves. This approach goes against the principles of Kant's categorical imperative and the African concept of personhood, which emphasize the importance of treating individuals with dignity and respect.

In contrast, the Western model of adoption has been criticized through the lens of Immanuel Kant's ethics, particularly his concept of the Categorical Imperative.

The Western model of adoption often commodifies children, treating them as goods to be bought and sold rather than as human beings with dignity and autonomy. This approach goes against the principles of Kant's categorical imperative and the African concept of personhood.

It neglects the autonomy and agency of adoptees, treating them as passive recipients of care rather than as active agents with their own interests and desires. This can lead to the erasure of adoptees' identities and experiences.

These criticisms highlight the need for an alternative approach to adoption. The Esan *Oromhe* model of adoption, an indigenous adoption practice among the Esan people of Nigeria, offers a different perspective. This model prioritizes the dignity and autonomy of the adoptee, while also maintaining family ties and cultural heritage.

By respecting the biological identity and autonomy of the adoptee, the Esan *Oromhe* model provides a more holistic approach to adoption. It prioritises the well-being and dignity of the adoptee, rather than treating them as a means to an end.

In conclusion, the Western model of adoption has significant criticisms, including commodification and neglect of adoptees' autonomy. The Esan *Oromhe* model offers a more dignified and respectful approach to adoption, prioritizing the well-being and autonomy of the adoptee.

Evaluation and Conclusion

This study explored the concept of adoption across cultures, raising questions about identity, belonging, and human existence. As the study examined the details of adoption, it

considered the relationships, values, and beliefs that shaped its understanding of this phenomenon. We also investigated the Esan Oromhe model of adoption, which is rooted in African philosophy, to gain a deeper understanding of adoption as a culturally situated practice. The Esan Oromhe model prioritised kinship, cultural continuity, and collective responsibility, which was different from the Western model of adoption. The Western model emphasised individual autonomy and legal formalism, which led to the severance of biological ties and the commodification of adoption, raising concerns from a Kantian perspective that individuals are being treated as means to an end rather than as ends in themselves.

In contrast, the Esan Oromhe model offered a more holistic and inclusive approach to adoption, focusing on community and social relationships. The findings of this study had significant implications for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners working in adoption. By highlighting the importance of cultural sensitivity and philosophical perspective, including the principles of Kant's categorical imperative, the study developed adoption policies and practices that were more effective and nuanced. The study contributed to a deeper understanding of adoption practices in Africa, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches that prioritized the well-being and dignity of all individuals involved.

In conclusion, the Esan Oromhe model of adoption offered a valuable framework for understanding adoption practices in Africa. By examining this model, the study gained a deeper understanding of the importance of community, social relationships, and cultural values in shaping its understanding of adoption, and how these values align with Kant's emphasis on treating individuals as ends in themselves. As a result of this study, it became clear that cultural sensitivity and philosophical perspective, including the principles of Kant's categorical imperative, are essential in shaping our understanding of adoption, and that adoption policies and practices should be developed with these considerations in mind.

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Russell's Logico-centric Commitment: is Logic The Essence of Metaphysics and Philosophy?

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Abstract

Bertrand Russell authored the chapter titled "Logic as the Essence of Philosophy" as the second essay in his book *Our Knowledge of the External World*. There is a difference between viewing logic as 'essential to' philosophy as opposed to seeing logic as 'the essence' of philosophy. It is incontestable that logic is essential to philosophy as its tool. However, Russell's idea that all philosophy is logic is analogical to saying that a tool is more important than the work that it helps one to accomplish. This is what this research described as 'Russell's logico-centric commitment'. This research demonstrated that this commitment presents an idea of philosophy that is oversimplified. Logic as the essence of philosophy only makes sense when viewed from the perspective of this oversimplification. The implication is that while Russell's idea of philosophy is too narrow, his idea of logic is too wide. Both conceptions are flawed when weighed against the criteria for real definition. While logic is a valuable tool in philosophical enquiry, it is not the sole or ultimate focus of philosophy which encompasses metaphysics, epistemology and axiology as concerns with reality, knowledge and values respectively. Using the method of critical analysis, this research argued that Russell's error can be corrected when logic is viewed correctly as the tool that it is, not the goal of philosophy which has to do with understanding reality, knowledge and values.

Keywords: Logic Metaphysics Epistemology Axiology Real Definition Philosophy

Introduction

Bertrand Arthur William Russell (18 May 1872 – 2 February 1970) is without doubt, a philosopher of many parts. Apart from being a frontline analytic philosopher, he is a logician, philosopher of mathematics, epistemologist, psychologist, moral philosopher, philosopher of education, political philosopher, philosopher of economics, philosopher of history and historian of philosophy, philosopher of Western and Eastern cultures, philosopher of religion, philosopher of science, a frontline political activist of his time and a Nobel Prize winner. Russell's breadth and depth in the concern with reality, knowledge and values make it possible for one to be lost in the maze of his ideas if contextual parameters are not set and adhered to. In fact with the possible exclusion of aesthetics, it can be safely stated that there is no area of philosophy that Russell did not leave a mark. His prolific output spanned the whole range of philosophical thought, and that is why it is believed that he has been more widely read in his own lifetime than any other philosopher in history (Beaney, p. 129). Frederick Copleston a foremost historian of philosophy asserts that "of all British philosophers Bertrand Russell is by far the best known to the world at large" (p. 425). He adds that this is partly due to the fact that Russell has published a very considerable number of books and essays on moral, social and political topics which are salted with amusing and provocative remarks and are written at a level which can be understood by a public that is scarcely capable of appreciating his more technical contributions to philosophical thought. He authored more than seventy books and wrote over two thousand published articles (Monk 1). Before looking into Russell's background and influences, it is important that this research clarifies some key concepts that will be used frequently.

Clarification of Key Concepts

Axiology: This can be defined as the philosophical study of values in general – not just moral, but aesthetic and other forms of value as well (Proudfoot and Lacey p. 29).

Epistemology: this is also called theory of knowledge. It is an enquiry into the nature and grounds of knowledge (Proudfoot and Lacey, p.118).

Logic: The central topic of logic is valid reasoning, its systematization and the study of notions relevant to it (Proudfoot and Lacey p. 233). Logic can be defined as an organized body of knowledge or science that evaluates argument. It is the study of the principles and criteria of correct inference. Logic belongs to the discipline of philosophy, not as a branch as such, but as its instrument or tool (Darty and Ekefre, How to Teach, 151).

Metaphysics: as a word, metaphysics means that which comes after 'physics' where physics means the study of nature in general. A central part of metaphysics is ontology which studies being and what there is in particular (Proudfoot and Lacey, p. 249). Metaphysics is etymologically derived from two Greek words 'meta-ta-physika' meaning 'after the physics'. This word was coined by Andronicus of Rhodes, a librarian in 10AD to categorize some of Aristotle's works that were written about things that were beyond the physical (Anyim and Ekefre p. 6).

Philosophy: Philosophy is defined as systematic study of fundamental questions about existence, knowledge and values, aiming to understand the world and the place of humans within it. Philosophy itself is defined as a combination of Greek root words '*philos*' and '*sophia*'

translated to mean 'love of wisdom'. The concerns of philosophy revolve around three core areas namely, reality, knowledge and values; the three major branches of philosophy that deal with these concerns are metaphysics, epistemology and axiology respectively (Darty and Ekefre, How to Teach 151)

Russell's Logico-centric Commitment: This is operationally defined in this work as Bertrand Russell's view that philosophy is reducible to logic as expressed in his article "Logic as the Essence of Philosophy" (p. 42).

Bertrand Russell: Life, Background and Early Influences

Russell was born to aristocratic parents who were 'freethinkers'. They are so called because they rejected socially accepted opinions, especially concerning religious beliefs. As 'freethinkers', Russell's parents held that knowledge about truth should be formed only on the basis of logic, reason and empiricism rather than an uncritical deference to authority, tradition, revelation or dogma. Russell's parents died before he turned four. But they had made provisions for him and willed that he be brought up by freethinkers who shared their views on how the society should be organized. After the demise of Russell's parents, his grandparents successfully petitioned the Court to set aside the provision in Russell's parent's will requiring Russell and his siblings to be raised as agnostics. With that aspect of the will set aside, Russell's grandparents succeeded in securing the custody of the young Russell. From all indications, they were determined to protect Russell from coming under the influence of his late parents' convictions. As noted by Nicholas Griffin a contemporary Russell scholar, "the young Russell was told very little about his late parents' beliefs. He only discovered with amazement as an adult how closely they resembled his own" (3). What this means is that somehow, Russell still imbibed beliefs, similar to those of his late parents in spite of deliberate attempts to shield him from such influences by his grandparents.

Bertrand Russell's paternal grandfather, The Earl Russell was a two-time Prime Minister serving under Queen Victoria in the 1840s and 1860s. What this means is that the Russells had been prominent in England even before Bertrand Russell was born. From fifteen years of age, Russell spent time thinking about the validity of Christian religious beliefs and it was after coming in contact with John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography* that Russell came to the conclusion that there is no life after death since for him, Mill had given an adequate refutation to the argument from design (Russell, *Autobiography* 36). Mill's objection to this argument which caught the attention of Russell was based on the idea of natural selection of Charles Darwin. Mill observed that nature was fundamentally cruel and that progress in nature was made at the cost of immense pain and suffering. Many things that happen in the natural world of non-human animals for instance, would be punishable as rape, murder and exploitation if they were done by humans. Mill held that since nature is ruthless, it is not reasonable to believe that an intelligent and loving creator would have designed a world which involves so much suffering. This idea was very appealing to the young Russell. For most of his adult life, Russell maintained that religion is harmful to people. He believed that it impedes knowledge, fosters fear and dependency, and is responsible for much of the war, oppression, and misery that we see in the world. He held that a good world needs knowledge, kindness and courage. It does not need a regretful hankering after the past or a fettering of the free intelligence by the words uttered long

ago by ignorant men.

Bertrand Russell's elder brother Frank had introduced him to the mathematical work of Euclid and Russell saw that as one of the greatest events of his life. Russell's encounter with that work sustained this interest in mathematics till he eventually won a scholarship to study mathematics at Trinity College, Cambridge. He became acquainted with George Edward Moore as a colleague and came under the influence of Alfred North Whitehead his teacher. Russell and Moore both got admitted into Trinity College at a period when the prevailing philosophical systems were Kantian and Hegelian Idealism. As admitted by Russell it was Moore that led way in their rebellion against Kant and Hegel as he only followed Moore's steps closely (*Philosophical Development* p. 42). Another significant intellectual influence on Russell was Gottlob Frege. In fact, it was Russell and Frege who worked on the foundations of mathematics and set the agenda for the emergence of analytic philosophy. Though their interpretation and understanding of the logic of relations is similar, Russell and Frege arrived at their positions independently. Russell states very clearly that "If I should have become acquainted sooner with the work of Professor Frege, I should have owed a great deal to him, but as it is I arrived independently at many results which he had already established" (*Principles*, p. xviii).

Russell attended the International Congress of Philosophy in Paris in 1900 where he met Italian philosophers and mathematicians, Giuseppe Peano and Alessandro Padoa. The encounter with Peano and his school in Paris was of momentous importance for Russell. He had been struggling with the problems of the foundation of mathematics for a number of years. After returning from the Paris congress, Russell familiarized himself with the publications of Peano and it became clear to him that Peano's notation was an excellent instrument for logical analysis, the type he had been seeking for years (Russell *Autobiography* p. 218). Russell writes that until he got hold of Peano, it had never occurred to him that symbolic logic would be any use for the principles of mathematics. It was Peano's discovery that relation could be fitted into his system that led Russell to adopt symbolic logic in advancing his position on logicism (Grattan-Guinness, p. 133). For Russell, philosophers should discover some logically ideal language that can exhibit the nature of the world in a manner that is free from the imprecision of natural language.

Russell lectured at Trinity College. He was considered for a Fellowship, which would have given him a vote in the college government and that would have granted him some immunity protecting him from being dismissed for his social and political activism. This privilege was denied him because of his stance on religion. In 1916, because of his active participation in pacifist agitations and anti-war writings against the First World War, Russell was dismissed from Trinity College. Russell described his dismissal as an illegitimate means to violate freedom of expression. His dismissal had created a scandal since the vast majority of the Fellows of the College opposed the decision. The ensuing pressure from the Fellows induced the Council to reinstate Russell. In January 1920, it was announced that Russell had accepted the reinstatement offer from Trinity. In July 1920, Russell applied for a one year leave of absence which he spent giving lectures in China and Japan. In January 1921, it was announced that Russell had resigned and his resignation had been accepted. This resignation was completely voluntary and was not the result of another altercation. It is suspected that the reason for the

resignation was that Russell was going through a difficult time in his private life with a divorce and subsequent remarriage. Russell did not have a very smooth marital life. He got married four times to different persons and was divorced three times. He married Alys Pearsall Smith from 1894 to 1921; Dora Black from 1921 to 1935; Patricia Spence from 1936 to 1952 and Edith Finch in 1952 till his death in 1970.

Russell still had running battles with academic institutions in his time due to his non-conformist posture. He taught at the University of Chicago, later moving on to Los Angeles to lecture at the University of California. He was appointed Professor at the City College of New York in 1940, but after a public outcry the appointment was annulled by a court judgment that pronounced him morally unfit to teach at the College due to his radical views. Many intellectuals led by John Dewey, protested against his treatment. Russell soon joined the Barnes Foundation, lecturing to a varied audience on the history of philosophy. These lectures formed the basis of *A History of Western Philosophy* which became a best-seller and provided Russell with a steady income for the remaining part of his life. His relationship with the Albert Barnes soon got sour; he was dismissed by Barnes without regards for due process. Russell took the matter to court, won the case and got a hefty compensation from Barnes before returning to the United Kingdom in 1944 to rejoin the faculty of Trinity College. In the course of his teaching, Russell was approached by the Austrian engineering student Ludwig Wittgenstein, who later became his doctorate degree student. Russell viewed Wittgenstein as a genius and successor who would continue his work on logic and greatly encouraged Wittgenstein. Russell supported his family by writing popular books explaining matters of physics, ethics, and education to the layman. He died of influenza on 2 February 1970 at his home. In accordance with his will, there was no religious ceremony; his body was cremated and his ashes were scattered over the Welsh mountains.

Bertrand Russell's Conception of Philosophy

Bertrand Russell is one of the most versatile philosophers of the twentieth century. He has defended different positions from his early attraction to the absolute idealism of the neo-Hegelian tradition to naive realism, from pure mathematics to empiricism, from pluralism to neutral monism. This why for a thinker like Alan Wood, Russell can be best described as “a philosopher without a philosophy” or “a philosopher of all philosophies” (Wood, *Russell's Philosophy*, p. 86). Some thinkers have maintained that in supporting these different positions at different times Russell's primary interest appears to be the attempt to justify science (Weitz p. 102; Clack p. 63). This however was the concern of a more mature Bertrand Russell. If we go to the roots of his attraction to Mill's dismissal of the argument from design, it appears that Russell's original interest in philosophy was mainly derived from his eagerness to discover if philosophy could provide any defense for religious beliefs. But soon he gave up his belief in free will, immortality and God. As elucidated by Alan Wood, Russell had two conceptions of philosophy: philosophy as analysis and philosophy as a no man's land (*Cautionary Notes*, p. 204). This research will now look into them piece-meal. The goal of this is to examine the role that logic plays in these conceptions of philosophy as presented by Russell.

Russell saw philosophy as an analysis of the complex into its simple constituents. He had as well set out machinery for generating compound statements from simple ones. He called the simple statements atomic propositions and these were distinguished from more complex statements which he called molecular propositions. Atomic statements have no parts which are themselves statements whereas molecular propositions are composed of statements. The first part of Russell's doctrine consisted in showing that molecular propositions are in all cases nothing but atomic propositions combined in various ways by the use of connectives. This part of Russell's logical doctrine proved of great value in simplifying certain problems of philosophical analysis. This can be seen as an attempt to "eliminate the particularity of the original subject-matter and to confine our attention entirely to the logical *form* of the facts concerned" (Russell *Our Knowledge*, 189-190). Analytic philosophy, the trend Russell spearheaded was a rebellion against idealism. It drew inspiration, philosophically from British empiricism. However, there are differences between the traditional empiricism and analytic philosophy as represented by Russell. Locke, when he declared the mind to be a '*tabula rasa*' did so by analyzing the possible contents of the new mind, and concluded that there could be nothing on the mind at such a state since experience was yet to make an impression on it. This was a radical proclamation against the Cartesian theory of innate ideas. Empiricism suffered from the lack of proper logical apparatus to deal with analysis. Russell, being inspired by Frege's protest against psychologism distinguishes the new analytic movement from the traditional empiricism in the sense that the 'analytical empiricism' as he calls it incorporates mathematics with modern logic as the tool or technique of analysis.

Russell maintains that philosophy is a 'no man's land' in between science and theology. Philosophical questions are questions which science cannot answer. On the other hand, theology claims to know the answers to such questions without offering convincing grounds, or recourse to empirical verification. Science tells us what we can know, but what we can know is little, and if we forget how much we cannot know we become insensitive to many things of great importance. It is not good either to forget the questions that philosophy asks, or to persuade ourselves that we have found indubitable answers to them. *For Russell,*

Philosophy is something intermediate between theology and science. Like theology it consists of speculations on matters as to which definite knowledge has so far been unascertainable; but like science it appeals to human reason rather than to authority, whether that of tradition or that of revelation. All definite knowledge or so I should contend belongs to science; all dogmas as to what surpasses definite knowledge belongs to theology. But between theology and science there is a No Man's Land exposed to attack from both sides and this No Man's Land is philosophy (Russell History p. 2).

Within the domain of philosophy, Russell believed that those philosophies were better which followed scientific and mathematical methods. He identified the idealistic philosophies of the Hegelian tradition as an unfortunate legacy from theology. It is natural of course for philosophy as a subject intermediary between science and religion to have leanings to either side. So there are philosophies with religious orientation and philosophies with scientific orientation. For Russell, philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to

its questions, since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves; because these questions enlarge our conception of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination, and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculation; but above all because, through the greatness of the universe which philosophy contemplates, the mind also is rendered great, and becomes capable of that union with the universe which constitutes its highest good (Russell, *The Problems* p. 93-94).

Russell on Logic as the Essence of Philosophy

Russell held the opinion that all philosophical topics all reduce themselves, in so far as they are genuinely philosophical, to problems of logic. In explaining this idea, he states that “this situation is not due to any accident, but to the fact that every philosophical problem, when it is subjected to the necessary analysis and purification, is found either to be not really philosophical at all, or else to be in the sense in which we are using the word logical” (Russell, *Logic as the Essence* p. 42). Russell held that philosophical schools should be characterized by their logic, not by their metaphysics. Russell's favorable leaning towards logic can be traced to his disillusionment with the monistic philosophy of the neo-Hegelian and Kantian tradition. Russell was especially dissatisfied with the doctrine of internal relation preached by that tradition according to which two terms when related by a particular relation becomes a different term. For Russell, this account made mathematics inexplicable (Russell *My Philosophical*, p. 9-10). This conclusion of the monistic philosophy was for Russell a necessary corollary of the Aristotelian term-logic where every proposition was composed of only two terms, subject and predicate. A relation thus gets transformed to a predicate (quality) of the subject. Russell held the position that fidelity to the subject-predicate logic leads to monism.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the development of symbolic logic helped Russell to see philosophical problems from a very different point of view. Some propositions which were treated as categorically ascribing predicate to a subject either universally or particularly in traditional logic were viewed by Russell as either hypothetical or existential statements. A universal proposition of the form 'All S is P' is now understood as 'in all possible cases, if anything is an S, then it is P'. Again, a particular proposition of the form 'Some S is P' is seen as 'there is at least one entity such that it is both S and P'. It is obvious that the two ways of viewing are completely different. The universal proposition is no more in subject-predicate form as it does not assert anything about anything. The hypothetical character of the proposition is further explained in terms of 'material implication' which is not equivalent to an 'if - then' statement. Again the particular proposition is reformulated as an existential statement in respect of a variable whose value is not determined. This again is not in subject-predicate form. Moreover, there are propositions with one place predicates, such as 'everything is determined' and 'something is valuable' which do not have reference to any definite subject. Existence is made the property of propositional functions so that universal propositions and singular propositions are deprived of existential import “All men are mortal” does not imply that there is anything to be called man. Propositions about ordinary proper names, such as Socrates, (e.g. Socrates is a philosopher) does not imply 'Socrates exists'. These proper names are also seen as abbreviations for descriptions. Descriptions in turn are shown to be misleading expressions

found in ordinary language; hence they should be dispensed with by following the method of logical analysis. Russell pointed out several flaws in the monistic idealism of the Hegelian tradition which he saw as results of adherence to the subject-predicate form of propositions.

Russell did not think very highly of Aristotle's syllogism. He raised a three-point criticism against the syllogism based on:

- (1) *Formal defects within the system itself. Aristotle does not draw any distinction between the two statements: 'Socrates is a man' and 'all Greeks are men'.*
- (2) *Over-estimation of the syllogism as compared to other forms of deductive argument. Within logic, there are non-syllogistic inferences such as 'a horse is an animal; therefore a horse's head is an animal's head'. Valid syllogisms in fact are only some among valid deductions and have no logical priority over others.*
- (3) *Over-estimation of deduction as a form of argument. With these three points of criticism, Russell concludes that "any person who wishes to learn logic will be wasting his time if he reads Aristotle or any of his disciples" (Russell Aristotle's Logic 124).*

Critical Remarks on Russell's Logico-centric Commitment

Russell held the opinion that:

Every philosophical problem, when it is subjected to analysis and purification, is found to either to be not really philosophical at all, or else to be, in the sense in which we are using the word, logical. But the word 'logic' is never used in the same sense by two different philosophers some explanation of what I mean by the word is indispensable at the outset. Logic, in the middle ages, and down to the present day in teaching, meant no more than a scholastic collection of technical terms and rules of syllogistic inference. Aristotle had spoken and it was the part of humbler men merely to repeat the lesson after him. The trivial nonsense embodied in this tradition is still set in examinations, and defended by eminent authorities as an excellent 'propaedeutic', i.e. a training in those habits of solemn humbug which are so great a help in later life. But it is not this that I mean to praise in saying that all philosophy is logic. (Russell, *Logic as the Essence* p. 42)

The notion of 'all philosophy is logic' implied here is what this research sees as a possible flaw when weighed against the criteria for real definitions. A real definition should neither be too broad, nor too narrow. A definition is too broad when its definiens includes too much and this is a deficiency. It is in this light that Russell's conception of logic amounts to equating the process with its product. Logic is the tool used in the process of philosophy, not the product itself.

On the other hand, Russell's conception of philosophy in this context appears to be too narrow and oversimplified. A definition is too narrow when its definiens includes too little to the point of excluding the essential properties of the definiendum. This is exactly what Russell's logico-centric commitment leads to. It ignores the essential aspects of philosophy which should constitute its real definition and as stated on the outset, it is only when viewed in this wrong

and oversimplified, reductionist manner that the idea of 'all philosophy is logic' appears to be meaningful. Another question that arises could be: what if Russell was only employing a figurative use of language? What if it is only a metaphor? This is possible since Ludwig Wittgenstein had switched language as an object designation theory of meaning for language as a labyrinth of paths (Wittgenstein p. 203). The answer to this question is that Russell's idea would still fail to meet the criteria for real definitions because a real definition should not be figurative, involving metaphors instead of exposing the essential meaning of the term. Perhaps one way of viewing the logico-centric commitment can be from the perspective of analytic philosophy, a movement that Russell championed. Can the idea be seen to have merits within that context?

As one of the founders of analytic philosophy, Russell held that it is the philosopher's job to discover a logically ideal language that will exhibit the nature of the world in a precise manner, such that we will not be misled by the imprecision of natural language. Russell believed that many problems of philosophy arose because of the misleading nature of ordinary language and so could be solved with the apparatus of logical analysis. For Russell, logic was not just a tool for understanding the foundations of mathematics; it was also a tool for the analysis of language. His attempt at this actually stood him out as a leading light in analytic philosophy. He held that the natural world cannot be comprehensively understood with natural language. In the words of Russell, "ordinary language is totally limited for expressing what physics really asserts, since the words of everyday life are not sufficiently abstract. Only mathematics and mathematical logic can say as little as the physicist means to say (Russell *The Scientific*, p. 82).

In dealing with the natural or external world, Russell made use of the metaphysics of logical atomism. According to this idea, the world consists of a complex of logical atoms and their properties and relations. It is these atoms that form atomic facts, which combine to give us logically complex objects. Thus for him the entities we see are logical constructions formed from our senses. Russell explained his logical atomism by setting forth his conception of an ideal isomorphic language that would mirror the world in the sense that our knowledge will be reduced to atomic propositions and their truth-functional compounds. Logical atomism is a brand of empiricism because it holds that the most important requirement for such an ideal language is that every meaningful proposition must consist of terms referring directly to the objects with which we are acquainted. One of the central themes of Russell's atomism is that the world consists of logically independent facts, and that our knowledge depends on the data of our direct experience of these facts. For Russell philosophy should be an exercise of breaking things down into their simplest components.

Russell chose the name 'logical atomism' for his philosophy though it is a version of realism. He started with a logical analysis of language since he believed that the structure of language had some relation to the structure of reality (Russell *Philosophical Development* p. 117). He held that language, more particularly the proposition, has to correspond to the reality or to the fact. So in order that the language corresponds to reality, it must be put in the correct logical syntax. That is why he thought it necessary to analyze the ordinary language in order to explicate the exact logical character or *form* of it so that the isomorphism between the two becomes clear. Russell sought to construct an artificial language, or a logical language free from the defects and ambiguities of the ordinary one. The artificial language would be homogeneous in structure

with reality. He adopted the method of analysis because he believed with Leibniz that the task of philosophy was to go from the complex to the simple as opposed to the idealism of his day which moved from simples to complexes.

Bertrand Russell has severally been criticized for inconsistency. For instance he had reproached Alexius Meinong for arguing that we can speak about 'the golden mountain' and 'the round square' and other such entities; and that in so far as we can make true propositions with these entities as subjects, they must have some kind of logical being. Russell insisted that "logic must no more admit a unicorn than zoology can; for logic is concerned with the real world just as truly as zoology" (*Introduction* 169). At this point there is a firm commitment to a robust sense of realism. However as noted by Udo Etuk, "Russell appears to have abandoned this avowal of realism, and to have taken a purely formalistic analysis, which robs ordinary language, as generally understood by most ordinary language users, and by traditional logicians of its significance." (80). Apart from this, there are other areas where Russell has been charged with inconsistency. Russell himself was conscious about his own shifting stand-points and that is why he asserts "although I have changed my opinion on various matters since those early days, I have not changed on points which, then as now, seemed of most importance" (*Philosophical Development* p. 49). **In spite of Russell's honest admittance of his lack of consistency especially on matters which he considered to be of less importance, his zealous defenders like Herbert Hochberg (p. 10) and Morris Weitz (p. 58) have defended the position** that the charge of inconsistency is 'absolutely untrue'. It is because of Russell's shifting positions that make a thinker like Alan Wood to describe him as "a philosopher without a philosophy" or "a philosopher of all philosophies" (Wood, Russell's Philosophy 86). The point here is that even an avowed commitment to the analysis of language does not excuse Russell of the definitional problems in his idea. After all, analytic philosophy itself has a cardinal goal of the clarification of meaning.

Conclusion

Bertrand Russell is definitely a philosopher of note in the analytic tradition. However, he appears to have been carried away by the effectiveness of the analytic method and logic as the tool of philosophy. The phrase 'all philosophy is logic' which is traceable to him is involved in definitional flaws on multiple fronts. Firstly, while a real definition should not be too narrow, Russell's notion of philosophy here is narrow. It is oversimplified and reductionist. Secondly, while a real definition should not be too broad, Russell's idea of logic is too broad, more like equating an instrument used in a process to its finished product. Thirdly, was Russell's idea contextual and metaphorical? A real definition should not make use of figurative language that tends to obfuscate rather than clarify meaning. Fourthly, while a real definition should state the essential properties of the definiendum in its definiens, Russell's statement that all philosophy is logic does not elucidate the essential concerns of philosophy which are reality, knowledge and values. In this sense, while it can be safely stated that logic is essential to philosophy, it cannot be safely stated that logic is the essence or goal of philosophy. The latter has a wider sphere which includes the former as its tool or instrument.

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An Appraisal of Socio-Economic Rights and the Pursuit of Dignity of the Human Person

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Abstract

The dignity of human person has been denied in many countries following the non-justiciability of socio-economic rights despite the litigation of civil and political rights. This problem is aggravated by the common misconception that human rights are basically natural rights an age-long notion. This paper is aimed at establishing that socio-economic rights are veritable tools for actualizing the dignity of human person and that civil, political and socio-economic right is human rights. To accomplish these objectives this paper adopted the philosophical expository and critical approach in investigating the issues on dignity of human person and socio-economic rights. The paper found that as long as socio-economic rights in a country is regarded as non-justiciable and treated as non human rights the protection of the dignity of human person will remain a mirage. The paper submits that the pursuit of the dignity of human person cannot be achieved by relying solely on civil and political right; as fundamental as they are their full actualization depend on the obligations and responsibilities of the state.

Introduction

The problem surrounding the internalization and litigation or justiciability of socio-economic rights in many countries arises more of misconception of its true purpose and less of the legal, cultural and economic processes involved. Since the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) was enacted in 1966 as an international law, its essence has not been adequately clarified leading to diverse interpretations and implementations by different countries. For many, the fundamental objectives of these rights are; to alleviate poverty, create equal opportunities, achieve the drive for sustainable development and act as instrument for accountable government and good governance (Edih and Ganagana (2020), Edeh (2018) and Olayinka (2019)), but these are its secondary purposes. Ibe (2010) attributes the factor responsible for this misconception to the ambiguity of language

of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Whatever the case may be, the true essence of enacting the socio-economic rights as international laws is to enable each individual citizen harness fully his/her potentials and the environment in order to actualize the joy of his being and protect the dignity of his/her human person.

The misconception of the essence of socio-economic rights could be considered to a large extent as the rationale behind the division of human rights into generations (categories) with civil and political rights assumed to be at the apex of these rights. In reality, the basic distinction between civil and political rights and socio-economic rights is that while the former asserts clearly what the government cannot do to interfere with citizens' dignity of human person, the latter highlights the obligations and responsibilities of the government to citizens to enable them attain the dignity of their human person. A critical examination of both civil and political rights and socio-economic rights reveals that these rights are two sides of the same coin. There is a growing consensus among scholars such as Ibe (2010), Faga et al (2020) that the advocacy for the respect of the rights to quality standard of living, education, housing and fundamental healthcare commonly referred to as socio-economic rights is the substructure of fundamental human rights. This presupposes that to achieve or protect the dignity of the human person of citizens, the aforementioned rights must be considered inevitable and inseparable. However, in many countries in the world especially those regarded as developing countries this notion has not been embraced and implemented; only few countries such as South Africa and many Western countries have adopted this perception enabling their citizens to fully actualize the dignity of the human person and further achieve their drive for sustainable development.

The thrust of this paper is to canvas socio-economic rights as a veritable instrument for protecting the dignity of the human person. It also aims at highlighting the nexus between civil and political rights and socio-economic rights. To these objectives this paper adopts the philosophical expository and critical approach of study. By employing the expository approach the paper brings to light the fundamental tenets of civil and political rights, socio-economic rights and the underlined principles of dignity of human person. On the other hand, adopting the critical approach to the subject under investigation, the paper analyses the basic roles of socio-economic rights as the drive for the projection of human dignity.

Conceptual Clarification

The need for the clarification of concept cannot be overemphasized reason being that it prevents every perceived ambiguity and misunderstanding that may rise and hinder us from having a full grasp of the argument. On this note, the paper states the meaning of Civil and Political Rights, Socio-Economic Rights and Human Dignity.

Civil and Political Rights (Fundamental Human Rights)

Civil and Political rights are rights which expressed clearly what the government cannot do to interfere with individual's dignity as a human being. These are rights considered inalienable such as the right to life, freedom of speech, freedom of movement, rights to worship etc.

Socio-Economic Rights (Second Generation Rights)

Socio-Economic rights are rights which expressed clearly the duties and responsibilities of the state (Government) to its citizens. They are rights which help citizens live a meaningful existence such as the right to accommodation, rights to access to medical services, right to meaningful employment, right to access to drinkable water, right to electricity and right to education.

Dignity of Human Person

The dignity of the human person holds that every person (human being) regardless of the age, race and status in the society has an inherent or immanent value which must be protected and respected by everyone. It involves issues pertaining to individual's well being; their existence and everything they do to achieve their needs and interests.

The Thrust of the Arguments on Fundamental Human Rights (Civil and Political Rights)

The discourse on human rights is age-long; it is as old as human civilization. There are various documents which serve as evidence to the historical origin of the arguments and advocacy for human rights such as Edicts of Ashoka issued by Ashoka the Great of India between 272-231 BC and the Constitution of Medina of 622 AD, drafted by Muhammad to mark a formal agreement between all of the significant tribes and families of Yathrib (later known as Medina) (Kori, 2018). Shelton (2007) posits that from the religious historical perspective; Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam all emphasized that all life is sacred, to be loved and respected. From the cultural (philosophical) perspective Hsün-tzu ancient Chinese philosopher (400 B.C) and ancient Greek philosopher (Cicero) argued from the natural stand point that all men by nature possess equal rights. In ancient time the approach to human rights varied from culture to culture; each culture had a way of protecting human dignity depending on their religious beliefs and philosophical ideas about the human person.

However, in modern time despite the variations there has been some sort of uniformed approach to the protection of human rights sequel to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The need for the universal recognition of human rights in modern era was occasioned by the events of the First and Second World War which claimed the lives of innocent citizens. At the root of the Second World War was the quest to establish a supposed superior race (*Ubermash*) distinct from other human race which resulted in the annihilation of thousands of Jews in Europe. Following the landmark achievement in Information Communication Technology (ICT) the world has become a small community; its reduction in size has increased global awareness of various existential issues bedeviling humanity especially the subject of human rights (Obioha, 2018). The underlined role of universal human rights is setting basic principles which serve as accepted paradigms for all human's moral conduct and to ensure the protection of human beings from mistreatment through forms of universal legal rights (Ernst and Heilinger, 2017). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 marked the era of a new dawn in the history of mankind. These rights expressed clearly what the government cannot do to interfere with citizens' dignity of human person. The United Nations (UN) holds that the substructure of freedom, justice and peace among the human race is ultimately the recognition of human rights (Obioha (2018) and Malik (2022).

The need for the protection and justification of human rights has become a pivotal issue which cuts across different walks of life such as religion, politics, law, psychology, pure and applied sciences and philosophy. Among these fields of study the issue of human rights is discussed elaborately in philosophy. The rationale for this assertion is that from ancient through contemporary period philosophers have critically analyzed this issue from the ontological standpoint down to its roles and functions in the global socio-political structure. Long before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as civil and political rights philosophers have held that these rights are naturally derived from our human nature. In recent time, there has been a serious debate concerning whether these rights are “natural, moral or legal entitlement; or whether they should be validated by intuition, culture, custom, social contract, principles of distributive justice or as pre-requisite for happiness; or whether they are to be understood as inalienable or alienable” (Obioha, 2018). These have nothing to do with the question of whether these rights exist or not, as it has been ascertained that these rights do exist. This controversy has birthed two major schools of thought; the naturalist school of thought (traditional doctrine) and the political school of thought.

Proponents of the natural or traditional doctrine hold that human rights are those rights we possess by virtue of being human. This notion is as old as the world; it was common among ancient civilizations. This school holds that man by nature has been endowed with inherent moral rights and these rights are inalienable. This implies that for this advocates, these rights are independent of social or institutional affirmation. Advocates of this school hold that the denial of human rights is tantamount to denying men those essential components that make them human beings. From the natural rights doctrine, Forsythe (2000) establish that human rights are basic rights and liberties to which all humans are naturally entitled. Some proponents of this school are: Grotius, Pufendorf and Locke (Cruft, Liao and Renzo, 2015). On the other hand, advocates of the political doctrine such as John Rawls, Charles Beitz, and Joseph Raz argued that human rights are not based on certain features of humanity; rather, the distinctive nature of human rights is to be understood in the light of their role or function in modern international political practice (Cruft, Liao and Renzo, 2015). Proponents of this school hold tenaciously that the essence of human rights is to maintain order in the world. It restricts the power of the government on issues that seeks to sustain the interest of an individual citizen. It would not be out of place to infer that advocates of this school of thought view these rights from its practical relevance in the world. It must be noted that for Raz the universality of these rights anchors on the facts that nations the world all over have accepted them as necessary or veritable tools for the political protection of human dignity and not on the notion that these rights are based on our humanity. Again, they repudiate the idea that human rights are a subset of moral rights.

Though diverse arguments have been postulated pointing out the pitfall of both schools of thought; naturalist and political, this paper holds that both schools complement each other and the only difference is that they approach the subject from different points of view with the same goal. The arguments of these schools of thought represent a coin with two sides. The arguments of the traditional and political doctrine complement each other. Cruft, Liao and Renzo, (2015) observe that while the political theory appears to deal with the issue of who is responsible for protecting and promoting human rights and the question of when and how such upholding

and enforcing is allowed, the traditional view deals with what important features of human life ground human rights. This does not show a difference rather it goes to show the additional essence of human rights. It is self evident that the loophole found in the former is filled up by the latter. The added advantage of the political doctrine of human rights is that the explanation they offered as grounds for the litigation of socio-economic rights makes more meaning to the argument on contemporary discourse on human rights.

Philosophical Discourse on the Dignity of Human Person

The discussion on the dignity of human person is one of the crucial issues in philosophy. The reason for this as explained by Oguche and Oguche (2022) is that every discourse revolves and centers on the human person. This discourse is vital as it involves issues pertaining to individual's well being; their existence and everything they do to achieve their needs and interests (Hasegawa, 2024). The philosophical discourse on dignity of human person attempts to proffer answers to the following questions:

1. What are those unique ontological components common to all human beings that distinguish them from other beings?
2. How important are these attributes to his well being?
3. What is the essence of human existence?
4. Can the idea of human person be appreciated outside the society?

Different approaches (such as the ethical, legal, religious and political) have been adopted to evaluate the arguments on the need to protect the dignity of human person. In contemporary time the dignity of human person has been regarded as a global common good which must be pursued by all and at all cost. The term dignity from the moral perspective implies the essence of what it means to be a human being (Steinmann, 2016). The answer to the question of what qualifies a being as human person as provided by different scholars, could be summarized to include: a being with consciousness, rationality, soul and spirit. The common notion about human being is that he is the only being who has these attributes. The central thesis of the argument on the dignity of human person is that every person regardless of the age, race and status in the society has an inherent or immanent dignity (honour) which must be protected and respected by everyone. This dignity include; the individual's emotion, opinion, liberty and the sanctity of life. Ontologically speaking, it is the dignity of the human person that distinguishes human beings from other beings (sentient and non-sentient). In the words of Hasegawa (2024) the dignity of human person is the foundation on which human identities, societal statuses, capabilities, and achievements are to be adequately realized.

The ethical and political argument on the need to protect the dignity of human person came into being sequel to diverse activities and actions perform to destroy or alter the sanctity of human life. Liseyev (2009) describes the question of the dignity of human person as a perennial problem; one which takes different pattern in every epoch. From antiquity through contemporary time, the respect for the dignity of human person has been down played and ignored subconsciously especially in the areas of religion, pure and applied science and politics. In some traditional religions in the world, the lack of respect for human dignity is downplayed in the religious beliefs and practices of human sacrifices. The justification for this

practice has always been that it is performed for the common good at the expense of innocent lives. In some parts of the world like Africa the inability of the government to provide adequate security measures has prompted the people to take laws into their hands by executing jungle justice and other degrading treatments to innocent citizens. Generally, violence such as killings, kidnappings, rapes, abortion, terrorist attacks, hunger and wars have become common phenomenon in the world (Aguas, 2009). People are seen and used as means to an end and not as ends in themselves. In the area of pure sciences some new medical discoveries and the use of advanced technologies have downplayed the importance of human life and so creating serious concern. This has prompted the ethical question of the negative effects of technologies enhancing human nature.

Contrary to Oguche and Oguche (2022) assertion that action and activities that are against the sanctity of human lives are products of contemporary ideologies, the fact is that the problem is age-long. The disregard for the sanctity of human life is age-long but this problem has been compounded by contemporary negative ideologies about the human person. Every human being regardless of his physiological, psychological and biological nature has an intrinsic value which is referred to as the dignity of the human person. The need to preserve and protect the dignity of human person is what gave rise to the enactment of human rights laws at the local and international level. The dignity of human person is not a relative concept, rather it is absolute and universal; it transcends culture. Its thrust centers on the way humans treat each other in the society. The interconnection between the concept of human dignity and human rights is one that many may be tempted to conclude that they are inseparable but this is not so. What is known as human rights are all ethical principles which adumbrate how humans are to be treated, not only in the passive but also in the active sense. They are an attempt to introduce ethical demands in social organization, in law and politics (Kucuradi, 2019). On the other hand, human dignity entails the consciousness of the inherent value of the human being. This intrinsic value is what makes every human being worthy of being treated in a special manner. The veracity of the matter is that the discourse or argument on the human dignity serves as the foundation for the advocacy of human rights.

As pointed out earlier, the crux of the ethical view on the dignity of human person involves the argument that every human being by nature of their being have intrinsic worth or value which cannot be taken away from them, regardless of the existence or non-existence of laws to protect this value. The argument on human dignity lays much emphasis on the ontological nature of human person and the sanctity of life. The arguments raised here revolves around:

1. any action aimed at jeopardizing the sanctity of human life
2. and, any action which degrades the human person.

In the first point, the consideration involves any scientific or medical practice aimed at altering the natural physiology of any human being whether to proffer solution to perceived problems or otherwise. For instance, any kind of genetic alteration aimed at improving human dispositions, capacities, and well-being. While the second involve actions such as rape, kidnapping, hate speech, murder, racism, religious bias, gender base violence, indiscriminate torture to mention but a few. The need to protect the dignity of human person is what gave rise to the discussion on human rights laws. The dignity of human person only makes meaning

within the purview of human society; that is human interpersonal relations. The way the subject of the dignity of human person is approached has a serious implication on the overall well being and the essence of human existence. What is worth noting as mentioned above is that human dignity is protected by the enforcement of human rights, and socio-economic Rights are themselves human Rights.

Socio-Economic Rights as Fundamental Human Rights

One of the concerns raise about the argument for the litigation and non-justiciability of socio-economic rights is the supposed nature of these rights. For many, socio-economic rights are not fundamental or inalienable rights but rights that basically depend on the economic, social and cultural condition of the country involved (Ikpeze and Udemezue, 2022). This assertion is a product of the one-sided view of the traditionalist school that civil and political rights are rights possess by virtue of our humanity. The origin of this misconception about socio-economic rights has a lot to do with its distinction from inception as second generation rights while civil and political rights are considered first generation rights. Another reason for the misconception about socio-economic rights is the wrong conception by many about the true essence of human rights and what human right seek to achieve. Lastly, the misconception stem from the debate between the traditionalist and political school of thought on human rights. The debate about the natural and political nature of human rights from critical observation shows that it emanated from the misconception of the nature and attributes of human rights. Human rights are moral framework universally recognized to guide the living together of humans. They protect different aspect of human lives that involve the basic interests and welfare of human agents (Heilinger, 2012). The purpose of enacting these rights is to safe guard the dignity of human person. However, this does not solely imply that since they are meant to protect the dignity of human person then they are rights possessed by virtue of our humanity. Rather these rights show what important features of human life ground human rights.

According to Olayinka (2019) and Edeh (2018) socio-economic rights are universal paradigm design for states to regulate the welfare and standard of living of global citizens. They include rights to healthcare, education, social security, housing and equal access to employment opportunities. The common notion about socio-economic rights is that these rights were established to eradicate poverty, create employment opportunities, environmental protection and overall achieve sustainable development. As a result of the unprecedented hardship that followed after the Second World War such as the high rate of unemployment, poverty and shortage of food supply in the world the need for the establishment of international laws to proffer solution to these needs became inevitable. The possible question that one may likely ask is, can these problems not be solved using civil and political rights which are said to be fundamental human rights? Civil and political rights as we know include the rights to life, freedom of speech, association etc but in reality these rights clearly state what the government cannot do to interfere with citizens' dignity. In simple terms, civil and political rights express the limited powers of the government over their citizens. On the other hand, socio-economic rights state the obligations and responsibilities of the government in assisting citizens achieve the dignity of their human person. Contrary to Obioha (2018) position that the main function of socio-economic rights is that they ensure that every citizen of a country and

the world at large have access to equal economic opportunities, social and cultural welfare. Socio-economic rights state categorically those obligations and responsibilities of the government to her citizens which enable them attain comprehensively the joy of being.

However, the main issue of concern is whether these rights are fundamental human rights either in the traditionalist sense or in the view of the political school of thought. As earlier noted above the ultimate goal of human rights is to protect the dignity of human person, if we toe the line of thought of Obioha (2018) that the main objective of socio-economic rights is to create and protect the access to equal economic opportunities, social and cultural welfare for every citizen regardless of age, race and social status then, socio-economic rights may not necessarily be considered human rights. In reality, the principles of socio-economic rights go beyond the quest for an egalitarian society to the overall idea of sustaining the entire well being of citizens in the global community. The starting point for socio-economic rights is to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor in the society while the underlining aim is to secure the total well being of each individual citizen. Jordan as referenced by Faga et al (2020) asserts that the notion of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can be attained if and only if adequate measures are put in place whereby every citizen enjoys economic, social and cultural rights. This presupposes that while civil and political rights of citizens are the substructure of human rights, socio-economic rights serve as the superstructure. Osita Eze as referenced by Ikpeze and Udemezue (2022) corroborate this point stating that if socio-economic rights are not guaranteed then civil and political rights will remain just as mere palliatives for the masses. For a citizen to effectively harness his fundamental right to life he must have adequate access to healthcare services, food security and security of life and property provided by the government else this right will remain futile. In other words, the right to life makes sense only when the government provides those basic social amenities and systems which make the existence of individual citizen worthwhile.

The interconnection between socio-economic rights and civil and political rights cannot be overemphasized. The success of civil and political rights is necessitated by the success of socio-economic rights vice versa. Socio-economic rights are human rights in the sense that these rights seek to sustain the overall well being of individual citizens and they are the superstructure of civil and political rights. Denying a citizen access to socio-economic rights is tantamount to denying the citizen access to those things which make his civil and political rights meaningful. If the true essence of socio-economic rights and civil and political rights are clearly understood then the argument whether socio-economic rights are human rights would become unnecessary. Though civil and political rights appear to be independent rights, these rights are fully harnessed when the socio-economic rights of citizens are litigated. In light of Joseph Raz's Philosophical standpoint which holds that in as much as all global citizens consent to the important role of socio-economic rights in sustaining the well being of each individual citizen then these rights are human rights. The idea of restricting human rights to those rights acquired by virtue of our humanity is myopic, not all encompassing. But, if human rights are considered as those rights to which all human beings agreed upon as principles for protecting the dignity of human person then the definition becomes holistic. In line with Raz's thought this paper holds that human rights are best understood when we look at their political function. And if this be the case socio-economic rights are human rights because they serve to protect the

dignity of human person.

Socio-Economic Rights as a Veritable Tool for the Protection of Human Dignity

The nexus between socio-economic rights and civil and political rights is best appreciated when the essence of socio-economic rights are clearly understood. The thrust of socio-economic rights like civil and political rights is the protection of human dignity. It has been established that the political function of civil and political rights is that these rights state clearly what the government cannot do to interfere with an individual's dignity of human person; that is, it shows the limitations of the government power in interfering with an individual's well being (Obioha, 2018). But, these rights do not adumbrate the roles of the government in ensuring that the individual's dignity of human person is protected. The need to protect civil and political rights is one of the pivotal reasons citizens decided to establish a civil society, charging those in authority with the obligation and responsibility of protecting these rights (Ikpeze and Udemezue, 2022). Despite the recognition of civil and political rights as human rights, in different parts of the world especially in developing countries the dignity of human person enshrined in these rights and internalized in different constitutions has been downplayed as the roles of the government in ensuring that these rights are protected have been politicized.

According to Obioha (2018) the function of the government is not only to protect the fundamental human rights which citizens ought to enjoy in a civil state, but to also provide ample opportunities that enable them enjoy their human rights. For any human being to have fully enjoyed the dignity of his human person he must have harnessed adequately his human rights protected by the government. This is where the litigation of socio-economic rights comes into play. In countries where socio-economic rights are considered policies and objectives of the state, the protection of the dignity of the human person in the country is at the mercy of those in authority. Categorizing the socio-economic rights of citizens as mere objectives and policies of the state indicates that these rights are not considered human rights. The litigation of socio-economic rights has far-reaching implications for protecting the lives and livelihood of the less privilege and low class citizens in the state (Ibe, 2010). In a civil society where only a few citizens have access to employment opportunities, education, housing and healthcare facilities then the supposed human rights of citizens in that state is subject to doubt.

Faga et al (2020) assert that the justiciability of socio-economic rights is a veritable instrument for exposing the ineptitude of the government in protecting the dignity of the human person of citizens. In many developing countries where the socio-economic rights of citizens are regarded as objectives and principles corruption such as embezzlement and siphoning of public funds have become common practices and with corresponding ratio of high rate of unemployment and poverty. Unemployment and poor standard of living in a country are indices which indicate the irresponsibility of the government towards the need to protect the dignity of human person of citizens. No civil society can speak of rights to life and movement where citizens lack access to means of livelihood, healthcare facilities and adequate security of lives and properties. The criteria for considering a country as developed is not limited to the use of advanced technologies and innovations (production skills) but much as to do with the standard of living of citizens as this is the major factor that guarantees the full enjoyment of the dignity of the human person.

In most civil societies where the socio-economic rights in the constitution are considered objectives and principles of the state, the populace appears to be naïve of these rights, a good example is Nigeria. Describing the situation in Nigeria, Ibe (2010) posits that

At the heart of the pervasive poverty and almost absolute disregard for the economic, social and cultural rights of citizens are ignorance and powerlessness. Public advocacy events directed at equipping the rural and urban poor with the requisite skills to interface with government and, more importantly, demand good governance, are crucial to sustaining Nigeria's fledgling democracy.

In many African countries citizens are naïve of their socio-economic rights. Therefore, they measure and applaud the success of each administration by the number of social amenities provided not seeing it as their fundamental human rights because the constitution has made them see it as mere objectives and principles of the state and not the necessary obligation of the state. It could be argued that the poor standard of education in Africa is a deliberate attempt of the government to keep the people in obscurity and denying them the chance of knowing the truth. The need for a sensitization program on socio-economic rights to enlighten the general populace cannot be overemphasized. As long as citizens continue to live in the dark about these rights the longer they would be denied the chances of enjoying them. The margin between the rich and poor in Africa is so wide because ordinary citizens are denied access to employment opportunities and sources of livelihood. But, this gap can be bridged if citizens get to know their socio-economic rights and these rights are justiciable in the court of law.

At the center of socio-economic rights is not only the fight for an egalitarian society but also the quest for the security of dignity of human person. The question of the respect of the dignity of human person still remains a mirage in many developing countries as the much needed social amenities and socio-economic policies to help better the lives of citizens are not on ground. The recognition and protection of civil and political rights are not enough to ensure the dignity of human person as it is just a stepping stone. As long as the socio-economic rights of citizens are not justiciable the possibility of harnessing their civil and political rights will be futile. The provision of healthcare facilities, education, food, security and housing is to enable individual citizen maximize their full potentials, live a comfortable life and attain the joy of their being. The preamble of the article of Universal Declaration of Human Rights aptly captures the essence of the entire human rights that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world". The implications of the justiciability and implementation of socio-economic rights as human rights are that they bring about true freedom, justice and peace.

It is imperative to state that at the center of every discussion on sustainable development is the need for the litigation of socio-economic rights and respect for the dignity of human person. The idea of sustainable development in itself is all encompassing but the thrust of the advocacy is basically the well being of the human person. In most publications on sustainable development the need for environmental protection and the intrinsic value of nature have been

overemphasized with less attention on the human person, this could be attributed to the present environmental degradation and climate change. Nevertheless, a critical evaluation of the debate reveals that at the end of the discourse is the goal to improve living condition of all human beings in the world.

Conclusion

The pursuit of the dignity of human person cannot be achieved by relying solely on civil and political rights because as fundamental as they are their full actualization depends on the obligations and responsibilities of the state. As seen in our discussion so far, the ethical principles enshrined in civil and political rights only express the limitations of the state power concerning the sanctity of the human life; that is, it explains what the government cannot do to interfere with citizens' dignity as humans. There are certain things which enable citizens enjoy the dignity of their person and these things are provided for in their socio-economic rights. Socio-economic rights express clearly the obligations and responsibilities of the government to citizens which enable them harness the dignity of their human person. Socio-economic rights are human rights in that the central aim is to secure human dignity.

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Afrolongevity and the Philosophy of Aging

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Abstract

The study evaluated African philosophical perspectives on aging to determine its status as a natural biological process or an ontological condition inherent to human existence. The paper applies the Afrolongevity framework which combines African metaphysical perspectives on personhood and ancestral continuity to challenge the prevalent global perspectives that portray aging as a process of decline or disease. The aim is to create a culturally based framework which positions aging as a significant and ethical phase in life. The study employs the qualitative approach of comparative analysis to extract insights from African philosophers like Menkiti, Mbiti, and Wiredu and compares these findings with Western philosophical beliefs about aging and selfhood. The findings suggest that African traditions present an ethical and comprehensive approach to aging which values relational bonds and societal contributions more than biological limitations. The study demonstrates how Afrolongevity acts as an essential philosophical tool for reshaping the understanding of aging which influences public health policy development, elder care practices and ethical theory construction.

Keywords: Afrolongevity, Aging, Ontology, African philosophy, Personhood, Longevity, Biophilosophy, Ubuntu

Introduction

Aging maintains a mysterious status within philosophical discussions. Does aging represent just a physical process that leads to cellular breakdown or does it serve as an existential state that discloses fundamental truths about human existence through time? Mainstream medical models depict aging as a progressive deterioration that scientific methods should work to decelerate or undo according to de Grey & Rae (2007, p. 14). This perspective treats the body of older people as an area where problems and disengagement accumulate alongside reduced worth. Such views reflect a metaphysical bias: Youth represents vitality and personhood whereas old age signifies loss and approaches erasure.

The biomedical framework commands strong influence but maintains a limited philosophical scope. This perspective fails to recognize the cultural significance and ethical implications of aging found in diverse knowledge systems. African philosophical traditions view aging as the transition toward ontological maturity. Instead of being innate at birth personhood develops through ethical behavior and contributes to community and ancestral bonds (Menkiti 1984, p. 176; Wiredu 1996, p. 95). The elder represents the peak of vitality since they embody a complete repository of wisdom and moral authority along with memory.

The study introduces Afrolongevity as a biophilosophical framework which reframes aging discussions through the lens of African ontologies of personhood while emphasizing community and temporal perspectives. Afrolongevity disputes Western dualistic thinking that divides body and spirit as well as biology from meaning and proposes that aging represents a sacred journey towards existential completeness. Traditional African concepts of life progression and ancestral connection alongside communal moral codes reveal a powerful substitute to modern narratives which prioritize individualism against aging. These theoretical reorientations produce practical effects for health policies and elder care systems as well as ethical debates in nations like Nigeria where aging populations increase yet traditional frameworks remain unused.

Through comparative philosophical methodology we analyze African thinkers such as John S. Mbiti (1969, pp. 24–25), Kwasi Wiredu (1996, pp. 89–100), and Odera Oruka (1990, pp. 24–25). The study examines Western approaches through a critical lens including Heidegger's existential temporality and de Grey's longevity science. The research establishes aging at the crossroads of ontology and ethics along with cultural aspects to demonstrate that Afrolongevity serves as a philosophical approach with both regional significance and global impact for pursuing meaningful life extension beyond biological limits.

Conceptual Clarifications

To ground the argument of this paper, several key concepts must be clarified: aging, ontology, personhood, and Afrolongevity. Philosophical and scientific traditions interpret these terms differently while their meanings remain crucial to both the ethical and metaphysical dimensions of this research.

The biomedical definition of aging describes it as “the progressive buildup of molecular and cellular damage which results in declining physiological functionality” (Kirkwood, 2005, p. 1). The clinical perspective of aging as a biological process accurately depicts its scientific aspects but fails to acknowledge its cultural significance or existential depth. From a philosophical perspective, aging represents a temporal progression of self-discovery during which individuals become more conscious of their mortality and the limited nature of their existence along with their lasting impact (Heidegger, 1962, p. 276). The deeper interpretation of aging calls for changing our perspective from seeing it as a problem requiring solutions toward embracing it as a process to be ethically and ontologically experienced.

Ontology represents the philosophical exploration of existence. Within this paper's framework, the ontological aspect of aging investigates how aging discloses fundamental truths about human existence instead of examining its physical effects. The philosophical approach of African thinkers Menkiti (1984) and Mbiti (1969) views existence as a fluid

developmental process embedded in community and ancestral ties instead of a fixed essence. The ontological nature of aging emerges from its function in fulfilling the temporal and mnemonic journey of personhood rather than biological transformation.

African philosophy defines personhood as an ethical accomplishment rather than just a legal or biological designation. According to Menkiti (1984), “the community defines the person” means that an individual achieves full personhood through their moral responsibility actions and their social connections as well as their fulfillment of duties passed down through generations (p. 176). Aging represents the fulfillment of personhood rather than its diminishment because it completes the journey of personhood through time and memory. People honor elders by recognizing their advanced age and their closeness to ancestral spirits while they stand as symbolic links between the living and the deceased.

The term Afrolongevity represents a newly created word that sums up an African perspective for examining aging. The biophilosophical model brings together metaphysical insights from traditional thought with modern ethical analysis. Unlike Western models that prioritize longevity in quantitative terms, such as life expectancy, biomarkers, or technological enhancement, Afrolongevity emphasizes the qualitative depth of aging: *legacy, wisdom, ritual continuity, and communal relevance*. Afrolongevity accepts biomedical science but interprets it through a wider moral and ontological framework which views aging as a complete stage of life instead of a period of deterioration.

This paper clarifies these concepts by asserting that discussions about aging need to move away from biological determinism to incorporate cultural and spiritual perspectives alongside ontological frameworks that different societies use to understand life and death.

Methodology

The study implements a comparative and interpretive philosophical methodology suitable for conceptual explorations which connect cultural frameworks. The objective here is to explore and question the meanings, assumptions, and ethical implications found in various philosophical traditions' understandings of aging rather than testing hypotheses through empirical data.

The comparative aspect analyzes aging through cross-cultural perspectives by contrasting African philosophical ideas with Western biomedical and philosophical models. The Afrolongevity model finds its philosophical foundation through the works on personhood, ontology, and community by African thinkers including Ifeanyi Menkiti, Kwasi Wiredu, John Mbiti, and Odera Oruka. The African philosophical perspectives enter into dialogue with Western traditions such as existential philosophy represented by Heidegger and bioethics while also engaging with modern longevity discussions from scholars like Aubrey de Grey and David Sinclair.

Textual analysis serves as the main methodological approach. The study discovers through the interpretation of primary philosophical texts and their ontological premises that aging exists both as a biological phenomenon and a metaphysical construct. Through philosophical hermeneutics scholars achieve comprehensive interpretations of concepts like “being,” “time,” and “death” and cultural hermeneutics provides insight into how these ideas are practiced and ritualized in particular African cultures.

The normative aspect of methodology derives its foundations from both critical philosophy and applied ethics. The research aims to describe various traditional perspectives on aging while also recommending that Afrolongevity provides a moral and culturally consistent framework with deep ontological insights that public discourse and policy makers in Nigeria and other regions should adopt. The methodology remains self-aware of its limitations: This investigation operates within theoretical and interpretive frameworks rather than sociological research settings. This paper originates from African philosophical traditions but does not make universal claims about African cultures. This work aims to build a rigorous philosophical structure based on established African intellectual traditions that will improve through additional empirical research and cross-disciplinary conversation.

Literature Review

Aging philosophy has historically been examined through three main perspectives which include biomedical science and existential and ethical considerations. Three main perspectives have historically guided philosophical and interdisciplinary examinations of aging.

- a. The biomedical perspective understands aging through clinical and physiological processes.
- b. Through the existential perspective, researchers analyze how individuals experience aging by examining their relationship with time and mortality while searching for meaning in life.
- c. The ethical perspective examines how aging intersects with moral considerations for older individuals and justice between generations along with caregiving duties.

The biomedical approach dominates global aging discussions by defining it as a clinical problem characterized by entropy and genetic breakdown along with natural aging processes (Kirkwood, 2005, p. 2). This model provides diagnostic accuracy alongside scientific understanding but ignores aging's ontological and existential aspects which are central to African perspectives. The biomedical perspective treats aging as molecular decay but ignores the rich symbolic, moral, and ritual meanings assigned to aging in African communities where elderhood represents ethical maturity and spiritual growth. Despite its limited use in current aging discussions mainstream approaches overlook African philosophy which presents valuable philosophical perspectives that can expand and enrich today's views on aging.

The fundamental idea within this tradition views personhood as an evolving ontological process. Ifeanyi Menkiti says in his 1984 work that one's identity emerges from community influence which enables complete personhood through continual moral development and societal integration (p. 172). Similarly, John Mbiti (1969) articulates the communal ethos of African societies with the statement: My existence depends on our collective existence because we exist and thus I exist. In this perspective people view aging as a sacred development towards honoring their ancestors.

The metaphysical perspective expands as Panteleon Iroegbu describes existence through the concept of belongingness. According to Iroegbu's philosophical framework existence depends upon one's connections with the community since being means belonging (Iroegbu, 1995, p. 374). He uses the Igbo principle of Egbe bere Ugo bere (let the kite perch, let the eagle perch) to show how all beings discover their essence through mutual coexistence and belonging (p. 379). The aging process strengthens the essence of existence by transforming the

elder into a repository of community wisdom and identity.

The philosophical interpretation of aging that focuses on morality and metaphysics finds resonance in Innocent Asouzu's *Ibuanyidanda* philosophy which highlights the interconnected relationality among all entities. According to Asouzu's 2004 work the aging individual is integrated into existence rather than isolated and serves as an essential part of the metaphysical reality rather than being a burden to the younger generation. The author challenges Western binary thought systems while promoting inclusive thinking that complements Afrolongevity's holistic methodology.

Izu Marcel Onyeocha develops parallel concerns about African identity and metaphysics through his concept of theistic humanism which positions the aged individual as a center of divine responsibility and existential development (Onyeocha, 1997, p. 88). These philosophers establish the fundamental ideas that support the development of Afrolongevity. Through his political-philosophical framework of necropolitics Achille Mbembe explains the regulation and abandonment of elderly bodies in postcolonial African states (Mbembe, 2003, p. 27). The state's inadequacies manifest through aging as they become more than just biological deterioration. Kwame Anthony Appiah (1992) challenges essentialist interpretations of African identity and demonstrates that ethical considerations need to adapt to cultural hybridity particularly within diasporic and postcolonial spaces where aging takes place among transforming cultural norms.

In his 1996 work Kwasi Wiredu advocates for conceptual decolonization which insists on rearticulating African philosophy using culturally coherent frameworks instead of Western-imposed structures. Through his examination of Akan moral principles he demonstrates aging represents ethical advancement rather than biological degradation (p. 93). In his 1997 work on moderate communitarianism Kwame Gyekye maintained that communities contribute to human flourishing because they give continuity and care which is vital in old age.

The Ubuntu philosophy developed by Mogobe Ramose (1999) and Thaddeus Metz (2011) establishes a shared moral journey through aging rather than treating it as a personal challenge. Ramose believes that aging allows individuals to expand their understanding of communal wisdom and achieve ontological harmony. Through his work Metz applies Ubuntu to modern ethical challenges and shows how this philosophy effectively addresses healthcare systems and justice measures alongside elder social support structures. Sophie Oluwole (2014) conducts intercultural analysis through Yoruba philosophy to demonstrate how traditional African thought provides new ways to understand dignity in aging. Through her work Oluwole demonstrates that African epistemology maintains dynamic intellectual traditions which showcase its liberating nature.

The critical work of Paulin Hountondji and V. Y. Mudimbe from the late twentieth century compels us to leave behind essentialist and romantic interpretations of African philosophy. While they demand scientific rigor they recognize the usefulness of indigenous knowledge for existential and ethical purposes which aligns directly with Afrolongevity's objectives. In his 2011 work, Souleymane Bachir Diagne encourages the study of African Islamic philosophy through the lens of aging by emphasizing doctrines that focus on the soul's development over time. Odera Oruka's "Sage Philosophy" project demonstrates the importance of lived wisdom during elderhood while echoing Dismas Masolo's viewpoint that African philosophy should

be grounded in practical experience instead of theoretical constructs.

Jonathan Chimakonam and Ada Agada currently propose frameworks for African logic systems and consolationism theories respectively. Chimakonam's research explores intercultural philosophy which demands African epistemologies to maintain dialogical characteristics while preserving originality (Chimakonam, 2019) and Agada's (2015) work provides a metaphysical perspective on suffering and transience which regards older people as moral leaders.

The philosophers Olufemi Taiwo, Mabogo Percy More, Lansana Keita, and Henry Odera Oruka have investigated fundamental tensions among modernity, identity and ethical transformation which are particularly significant to the experience of aging in modern Africa. Taiwo (2010) addresses colonial epistemicide in his work while advocating for the reconfiguration of African agency through the restoration of indigenous modernities. In the context of aging, his work invites us to ask: How do elders experience aging within societies that continue to uphold epistemic frameworks which devalue their knowledge?

Through a phenomenological and existentialist approach Mabogo Percy More (2017) examines the social and political perceptions of older Black bodies. Through his study of Frantz Fanon and African existentialism he reveals how race-related historical trauma and memory shape the experiences of elderly Africans who have survived colonial disruptions and now maintain cultural continuity. In his 2004 work Lansana Keita establishes rationality as fundamental to African philosophy while challenging the stereotype that indigenous traditions reject intellectualism. By prioritizing ethical growth and logical order within African frameworks he reveals how aging transforms into ethical maturation instead of mental decline. In societies that practice reason together as a group member rather than as individuals, elders serve as models for ethical behavior.

Through his Sage Philosophy project Henry Odera Oruka establishes his most important legacy in the realm of intellectual humility ethics and oral knowledge transmission. The work of Henry Odera Oruka argues that aging is inseparable from the practical wisdom present in African philosophy which encompasses lived experience and oral traditions (Oruka, 1990, pp. 33–36). Through his sages Oruka demonstrates how aging embodies deep ontological significance in African cultural traditions.

The collective works of classical and contemporary philosophers establish a profound and ethically driven base for Afrolongevity through rich and multifaceted concepts. The research shows that aging represents a cultural and metaphysical phenomenon beyond personal health issues. Within the African philosophical context aging represents a process of becoming that affects one's being and allows transformation through both community ties and spiritual growth.

Meta-Critique of the Literature

This meta-critique will do three key things:

1. Compile the variety of perspectives found in existing literature.
2. Unearth the missing elements and neglected areas within scholarly work about African aging and longevity.

3. The necessity for Afrolongevity emerges as a vital philosophical intervention to address specific theoretical needs.

Prior research shows an intellectually vibrant field in which aging is explored beyond biological limits to become a foundational element of philosophical exploration. Philosophers from Africa including Menkiti's communal personhood ethics through Iroegbu's metaphysics of belongingness and Asouzu's relational logic to Oluwole's indigenous epistemology present alternative views which contest Western biomedical discourse's atomistic and reductionist tendencies. The diversity of philosophical insights still leaves certain gaps and unresolved tensions.

African philosophers have widely discussed personhood, morality, and communal identity but aging remains an underexplored fundamental philosophical issue. The existing literature often represents elders as embodiments of wisdom and tradition or as respected figures but fails to develop a comprehensive theory of aging that integrates ontological and ethical dimensions. The lack of discussion about aging as a philosophical issue originates not from conceptual limitations but from the limited inclusion of gerontology studies within the African academic structure and philosophical programs.

Western longevity research led by Aubrey de Grey and David Sinclair alongside transhumanist theorists emphasizes technological control over time to postpone aging or achieve complete transcendence from aging. While scientifically provocative, this approach often fails to ask: The extension of life prompts questions about its quality and the cultural, moral or existential principles guiding this development. The goal of eternal life separated from ritual practices and social bonds leads to alienation rather than immortality by disconnecting people from essential human experiences that make life meaningful.

The global discourse on aging suffers from a serious methodological imbalance. Western theoretical approaches use empirical evidence-based models or medical technology to understand aging while African thought systems rich in ethical and metaphysical teachings lack comprehensive interdisciplinary frameworks that combine modern medical science with indigenous ethical perspectives. The situation reveals simultaneous challenges and opportunities.

Afrolongevity develops as a solution to these existing gaps. It seeks to:

- a. Consider aging within a philosophical framework instead of limiting it to biological factors.
- b. Restore African metaphysical concepts and integrate them with ethical principles focused on care, dignity, and memory across generations;
- c. Develop a scientific framework that preserves advancement while aligning it with cultural traditions and spiritual beliefs.
- d. The intervention should present both a critical analysis and a reconstructed understanding which remains locally rooted yet universally applicable.

The reviewed literature demonstrates strength and illumination yet demands a philosophical framework which provides African aging with deserved ontological dignity along with ethical clarity and cultural specificity. Afrolongevity represents a new paradigm that develops from existing insights through creative reorganization to offer a unified philosophical response for the 21st century. **Afrolongevity as a Biophilosophy.**

The concept of Afrolongevity develops from ancient African metaphysical inquiries about life depth, time morality and community identity perpetuation. The concept represents a philosophical integration of traditional African ontological principles into modern discourse while addressing critical issues about aging, life purpose, and death in contemporary society. Afrolongevity represents biophilosophy that views aging as a progression toward deeper existence instead of a decline or deficiency. This framework prioritizes African personhood models that promote elder elevation instead of marginalization and recognize spiritual essentiality instead of biological redundancy. Kálú's 2022 work states that Afrolongevity assumes aging in Africa means gaining moral clarity and ancestral resonance rather than fading away (p. 4). Longevity in this view extends beyond chronological lifespan to encompass ontological density which means living a complete life in harmony with one's community and environment along with metaphysical principles.

The ontological basis of this approach emerges from Panteleon Iroegbu's (1995) concept which defines existence as belongingness. According to Iroegbu human existence achieves realization through belonging instead of individual isolation and aging manifests as a process of growing identity in both community and cosmic order (pp. 372–374). The Afrolongevity proposition asserts that proper aging entails deeper connection with ancestors while gaining wisdom and moral authority. Ifeanyi Menkiti reinforces the ethical aspect of Afrolongevity in his 1984 work through his distinction between minimal and maximal personhood concepts. The African perspective values personhood development throughout one's lifetime according to his assertion (p. 176) which indicates that aging represents an ongoing ontological achievement rather than a deterioration process. John Mbiti (1969) shows that elders hold spiritual and moral memories while claiming that people grow closer to their ancestors as they age (p. 108).

Kalu's work stands as one of the most continuous contemporary expressions of Afrolongevity. In *Afrolongevity: Philosophy of Health and Aging in Africa*, Kálú defines longevity as, *the ability to age with moral, cultural and intergenerational richness instead of just clinical survival* (p. 7). The author argues against viewing aging solely as a technical or economic challenge and advocates for achieving existential balance through cultural inclusion, social roles, and metaphysical readiness. His 2024 paper *Policy Formulation as a Catalyst for Anti-Aging Research in Africa* claims public health needs ethical and ontological literacy to provide coherent and dignified services to Africa's elderly citizens (p. 12).

The integrative framework syncs with Innocent Asouzu's (2004) *Ibuanyidanda* principle which explains complementary reflection. Asouzu believes all beings exist in connection and that philosophy should uncover the underlying unity that exists in diverse entities (p. 69). Afrolongevity extends this logic to time and mortality: The processes of aging and youth along with life and death operate as complementary elements within a universal cosmic pattern. The aging process represents a shift in the experience of vitality as it brings about enhanced clarity and deeper rootedness while reducing urgency.

According to communitarian ethics Kwame Gyekye's (1997) concept of moderate communitarianism supports the belief that personal fulfillment comes from reciprocal relationships between different generations. Afrolongevity establishes elder well-being as a fundamental moral requirement rather than a discretionary social value.

Afrolongevity addresses the epistemic and ethical shortcomings present in Western anti-aging initiatives. Researchers like Aubrey de Grey (de Grey & Rae, 2007) and David Sinclair (Sinclair & LaPlante, 2020) approach aging as a mechanical problem which can be repaired. These ideas challenge scientific thinking but they transform elders into objects requiring maintenance which strips them of cultural significance and their relationship to mortality. According to Afrolongevity aging represents an ontological passage that occurs within oneself as opposed to just being a bodily event.

As Kálú writes in *Afrolongevity: A Future Vision That Starts Now*, aging in African philosophy represents a restorative path that embraces death with wisdom and communal beauty instead of attempting to defy it (p. 16). The philosophy of aging promotes completion as its objective instead of mere escape and seeks fulfillment based on values rather than unnecessary prolongation of life.

Afrolongevity demands an African policy restructure towards elderhood that recognizes it as a source of philosophical wealth and cultural guidance along with ethical vision beyond its usual depiction as a phase of dependency. Afrolongevity reflects the goals of intellectuals such as Ramose (1999), Chimakonam (2019), and Agada (2015) who promote African systems which emphasize spiritual alignment and communal well-being while maintaining ontological integrity.

The concept of Afrolongevity extends beyond simply validating cultural values. Afrolongevity stands as a biophilosophical model that combines normative vision with metaphysical critique to evaluate societal moral health through the lens of aging. This framework addresses both Africa's current state and its future trajectory.

Evaluation

The research-driven Afrolongevity provides a novel and powerful contribution to worldwide aging discussions. The framework gains its primary strength from its innovative perspective that defines aging as an ontological, moral, and cultural accomplishment instead of a biological defect. The principles from African metaphysical traditions place aging individuals at the heart of moral existence and community endurance instead of relegating them to society's outskirts.

The framework maintains coherence through its integration of multiple African philosophical systems including Iroegbu's belongingness concept together with Asouzu's *Ibuanyidanda* understanding, Menkiti's communal personhood idea and Mbiti's ancestral time theory. Each of these contributes to a robust redefinition of what it means to age well: An individual should develop a stronger sense of self while protecting core values and face death with honor instead of fear. These concepts develop naturally from African knowledge systems and real-life experiences.

The ethical sophistication of Afrolongevity stands out as a significant advantage. This framework differs from technocratic aging models because it encourages moral discussions about the desirable paths for aging. This approach highlights the importance of intergenerational responsibility together with memory ethics and existential wholeness. Kálú's (2022) statement "Longevity without legacy is a form of exile" reminds us that mere biological survival does not make life worth prolonging.

Afrolongevity is also intellectually inclusive. It accepts scientific advancement but works to reshape it according to cultural coherence and moral values. Through this approach Afrolongevity establishes an alternative perspective against longevity narratives that usually derive from Western business-oriented technology and individualistic values. This equilibrium provides the model with cultural authenticity while maintaining worldwide significance.

However, several challenges remain. Afrolongevity exists at the early developmental stage of its theoretical framework. The concept draws from profound philosophical foundations but remains unimplemented in African policy structures as well as healthcare training programs and grassroots cultural initiatives. The philosophy will stay a high-minded ideal without any practical implementation.

The framework faces challenges within diverse African societies due to significant variations in traditions, beliefs, and family structures. Traditional elder roles become complicated due to the combined effects of growing urban populations and increased religious diversity alongside migration trends. Afrolongevity must stay adaptable to social shifts while keeping its metaphysical foundations solid.

Afrolongevity needs to protect itself from romanticizing traditional structures which have historically excluded women along with marginalized ethnic groups and non-conforming family members. To achieve both inclusivity and justice a mature framework needs to integrate feminist viewpoints along with intercultural and disability perspectives.

Afrolongevity should maintain its critical engagement with Western longevity science while expressing its critiques respectfully. Biomedicine and gerontology offer important insights that can shape African aging approaches while preserving indigenous values. The future strength of Afrolongevity rests in its ability to maintain a dialogical stance instead of an oppositional one during international discussions.

Afrolongevity represents a well-founded philosophical approach to aging that integrates ethical considerations with cultural roots. The shortcomings of Afrolongevity stem from translation problems and implementation difficulties rather than design flaws while demanding interdisciplinary broadening. In its development phase Afrolongevity presents the possibility of becoming not only an African-centered option but also a worldwide humanistic perspective on aging with dignity and purpose through community engagement.

Recommendations

Afrolongevity needs to be incorporated into institutional structures that define knowledge, health care systems, and ethical discussions to move beyond theoretical beauty and effect real change in African communities. This requires targeted interventions across multiple domains: The implementation of Afrolongevity demands coordinated action involving governmental policy-making and academic educational standards along with local moral principles and global health discussions. The strategic recommendations presented here aim to establish Afrolongevity as both a theoretical structure and practical guide.

National health and aging policies and Afrolongevity principles.

Nigerian, South African, and Kenyan governments along with others throughout Africa need to develop health and social policies that incorporate indigenous aging philosophies. Contemporary gerontological models mirror Western biomedical views by focusing on dependency ratios, pension systems, and healthcare expenses while neglecting the ethical and spiritual aspects of elderhood which remain fundamental in African cultures according to Gyekye (1997).

Policies must therefore be reoriented to:

- a. Acknowledge older adults as moral contributors and teachers between generations.
- b. Public health frameworks should incorporate ritual care practices along with ancestral respect and community health initiatives.
- c. Establish inclusive community aging centers that are grounded in local languages and cultural traditions to create hubs for aging that reflect indigenous values. (76–78).

Kálú (2023) argues that policy needs ontological literacy which requires understanding both the identity and societal significance of the elderly (p. 14).

Institutionalizing Afrolongevity in Philosophical and Medical Curricula

African universities need to accept Afrolongevity as a legitimate interdisciplinary field that integrates philosophy, gerontology, anthropology, and public health instead of treating it as a temporary theme. This would involve:

- a. African universities should establish specific classes that focus on biophilosophy and African aging ethics together with the study of life cycle ontology.
- b. Support postgraduate research programs which apply Afrolongevity principles to fields like care ethics and health communication while examining cultural policy.
- c. Clinicians and caregivers require training in elder care methods that honor traditional values while applying modern scientific principles.

Asouzu's method of complementary reflection requires African ideas to be systematically extracted and re-applied using institutional logic (2004, p. 82). The Afrolongevity framework serves as the exact model needed to transform educational curriculums.

The development of ethical standards for scientific and technological solutions targeting the aging process

The growing presence of Africa in biomedical research areas like genomics and AI-driven diagnostics necessitates the creation of bioethical frameworks that draw from African philosophical principles. Afrolongevity can help develop:

- a. Age data management protocols demand focus on dignity and consent while preserving legacy values.
- b. Biogerontological innovations must follow ethical principles that honor shared aging traditions instead of enforcing Western standards.
- c. This philosophy of techno-moral aging positions medical technology as a cultural helper rather than a replacement.

Kálú (2022) warns that when biotechnology advances without ethical considerations aging turns into a scientific experiment rather than a meaningful human experience (p. 9).

Establish Public Platforms that Position Elders as Ethical Leaders in Public Discussions

Afrolongevity maintains that elders hold a central position in communities where they receive respect through consultation and celebration that guides ethical decisions. National and local governments should:

- a. Create Elder Advisory Councils that will provide guidance for ethical decisions as well as climate change adaptation and community justice procedures.
- b. Institutions should archive oral histories from elders together with their moral teachings within archival and civic education programs.
- c. Advocates for cultural justice must acknowledge age as an essential category of focus alongside race and gender and ability.

The Sage Philosophy project by Odera Oruka (1990) established a basis for valuing elderly wisdom from Africa. Afrolongevity turns this philosophical recognition into a principle for civic design.

Expanding Academic Collaboration and Global Discourse

The Afrolongevity concept requires broader academic engagement beyond African studies. Afrolongevity needs integration with global aging studies and postcolonial ethics alongside the philosophy of health. African scholars and institutions should:

- a. International researchers must work together with African scholars to develop biocultural models of longevity.
- b. Organize Afrolongevity symposia at forums including the African Philosophical Association alongside WHO aging research programs.
- c. Focus African viewpoints as fundamental elements rather than supplementary additions to redefine our understanding of human longevity.

The call by thinkers such as Mudimbe (1988) and Hountondji (1996) for African thought to shift from being an object to becoming a subject in global knowledge production matches this perspective. Afrolongevity represents a practical system requiring daily practice and formal instruction alongside legislative action and ritual incorporation. The proposed recommendations help integrate its insights into African life structures while transforming African elders from statistical burdens into philosophical witnesses of existence.

Conclusion

This study presents the view that aging represents an ontological phenomenon and moral accomplishment which requires thoughtful philosophical analysis along with cultural responsiveness and institutional adjustments. African philosophical traditions present untapped potential for redefining aging as an ethical enrichment process that integrates ancestral wisdom and promotes community well-being.

African intellectuals including Menkiti with his notion of communal personhood (1984), Iroegbu with his metaphysics of belongingness (1995), Asouzu with his complementary ontology (2004), and Oluwole with his defense of indigenous rationality (2014) have

consistently offered unique alternatives to reductionist interpretations of the human life cycle. The meta-critique demonstrated that these intellectual resources remain underutilized when addressing aging as a core subject. Western longevity science has developed strong methods for extending biological life but does not possess the ontological and cultural frameworks needed to direct its use.

Afrolongevity stands as both a restorative and formative framework which connects African metaphysical principles and moral anthropology with modern worldwide difficulties. The concept of Afrolongevity accepts scientific breakthroughs while refusing to surrender itself to scientific control. The approach shifts the process of aging into an African context that values wisdom and memory while maintaining ritual continuity and ontological maturity. The philosophical foundation of Afrolongevity states that aging transforms individuals into beings that develop higher moral roles within society. The ethical stance maintains that longevity holds value only when it encompasses meaningful integration within a community. The practical implementation of these ideas requires changes to educational curriculums, policy adjustments, and new public ethical standards that honor aging as a spiritual and civic asset instead of a simple financial concern.

The biophilosophical intervention continues to be at the initial stage of its development. The next stage of its development will need cooperative efforts from different academic fields and diverse language speakers spread across various regions. But its foundation is firm: The Afrolongevity framework stands as Africa's significant addition to worldwide aging discussions while presenting one of its most ethically consistent and ontologically strong perspectives. Afrolongevity teaches us to view time as a sacred path which should be fulfilled through wise living rather than an enemy we must defeat during this time-obsessed century.

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Doctrine of Completed Act in Jurisprudence: The Injustices, Hazards and Dangers

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Abstract

Justice is the sole basis under which social contracts were held for the emergence of civil societies. Any time justice is converted to a medium of injustice, then the fabric of a society has started tearing. Laws are meant to protect both the strong and the weak. This implies that each has equal desert of justice. However when the strong begins to take undue advantage over the weak of the society because of an unjust or biased principle or doctrine of law, then it becomes difficult to justify that the law protects the weak. It then becomes a tool in the hands of the strong to exploit the weak. The 'doctrine of completed act' is one of such means of perpetuating official injustice against the weak of the society. It is argued here, that the doctrine of completed act is a subtle way of perpetuating injustice by giving the strong undue advantage over the weak. It creates more disequilibria and imbalance. It is further argued and advocated that if the justice system ceases to acknowledge and rely on the doctrine as a means of justice dispensation, it will begin to serve as a deterrence to forceful, fraudulent and coercive appropriation of properties of the weak. It is a doctrine adopted by the strong of the society to deal with the weak of the society. It is concluded that rectificatory justice should be applied as a solution to those who acted under the cover of the doctrine so it can serve as a deterrence to potential(land)trespassers and usurpers.

Key Words: Doctrine of completed act, lawfare, rectificatory justice, jurisprudence, injustice, etc.

Introduction

Impunity can be backed and promoted by the law in certain cases and situations. This may be due to lack of critical reflection and thinking and due diligence when the law is coming into existence or when it is as a result of jurisprudential lacuna or interpretation. One of such situations is the emergence of the doctrine of completed act or action. This doctrine is mostly evoked where there are contentions about a project, a contract, mostly land issues, erection of buildings on lands under contentions, etc.

In these situations, a party might feel that if it acts fast enough in erecting a structure in the contested land, the party will have an edge or advantage in laying claims to the piece of land and ward off the other. This is based on the fact that the party thinks it would be improper or inconsiderate to be asked to pull down the structure. Here an appeal is made to pity, a sort of *misericordiam*.

The problem with such a view about completed acts is that it gives undue advantage to the wealthy or wealthier party over the other. In some cases the party who has the least chance of owning the land can use such a doctrine to claim a land that s/he knows if due process is followed, s/he would not have any chance.

From the other perspective, the doctrine creates unnecessary tensions and rivalries between parties. In most cases, it leads to violence, destruction of properties and loss of life. A party erects a structure, the other pulls it down for fear of the other using the advantage of the doctrine of completed act. This continues cyclically. Resources and lives are unnecessarily wasted.

Many individuals hide under this doctrine to perpetuate criminalities. The justice system may be promoting, perpetuating and institutionalizing injustice through this, thinking it has dispensed justice. The wealthy, the one with the upper hand, use it to deprive rightful, weak and poor owners of their space and property. It is bad system of appropriation.

It is the major thrust of this paper that the doctrine be less stressed and given support in justice dispensation. It creates more harm than good and aids official injustice to the weak. Laws meant to serve as deterrence should not acknowledge this doctrine. It is a tool in the hands of the rich and strong against the poor and weak of society. Whoever uses such intentionally to deal with the weak members of the society should be made to bear the brunt of not being protected by this doctrine. It is one of the conditions to make for a level and equal ground for both parties in a dispute. It should not constitute an undue advantage for those who feel strong and powerful over the other party.

Analytical Framework

The doctrine of completed act can be interrogated through many prisms of justice. That this doctrine can be successfully and justifiably critiqued as an accessory to injustice shows that it is not an original justice desert but seen much more as an outcome or pitfall of undue judicial precedence. What is implied here is that it is not a well propounded theory or principle of just appropriation, *ab initio*. It has no room in the various appropriation principles, especially in John Locke, considered as the father and apostle of private ownership of properties. Locke (2004) in his theory of appropriation only acknowledged rightful and just exchange by original land holders and later subsequent owners. He decried ownership by force, false pretences, sharp practices, or by fraud.

Justice has been a central theme in political thought and law. In most cases it is the basis of society. It is the balance on which a society and a system hangs. It is the major source of equilibrium. A just society must hang on a theory of law and a theory of morality. A concentric circle of these must have justice as its linkage.

Whenever a society loses or fails to adequately dispense justice, many things go wrong. There emerges disequilibrium. In order to restore the balance, justice must be dispensed. This is the essence of the aspect of justice known as rectificatory justice. Aristotle (1999) saw rectificatory justice as one of the ways to restore a disequilibrium. For Aristotle, when resources such as lands are distributed unequally or another's own unjustly acquired, rectificatory justice has to be applied. According to Roberts (2011) rectificatory justice rights injustice. It is a means to set aright unjust situations.

According to Crocker (2009), one dimension of Aristotle's rectificatory justice deals with when wrongdoers coercively or forcefully wrong their victims (like grabbing of lands or trespassing). That is to say that rectificatory justice restores a balance. This line of thought was equally explored by Manfred and Bernd (2009) emphasising the need for restitution and righting (past) wrongs in order to prevent future occurrences. Justice should be a balm to soothe and heal wrongs and restore balance. This is because memories of loss created by the doctrine (of completed act) will continue to haunt the weak forever. The thrust here is that it is possible to prevent whatever situations that would warrant ugly haunting memories and regretful reparations.

According to the entitlements theory of justice of Robert Nozick, a just distribution is one where resources like land are appropriated through voluntary transfers between individuals. Ab initio, individuals are entitled to their (land) holdings. This, was pointed out categorically by the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2025) that it needs no imposition by any institution, that is with the least governmental interference. Thus land holdings are by just appropriation or just transfers. Anything outside these two leads to injustice and thus demands rectificatory justice. This was equally emphasized by Rahman (2023) when he pointed out that when land holdings come by fraud, coercion, and force, then injustice sets in and requires another type of justice outside distributive justice, and that is rectificatory justice. The use of the doctrine of completed act trumps up this entitlement perspective of justice. Transfer of land holdings and other holdings is just only when based on its voluntariness.

The Application

Let us now cite some scenarios of examples where this doctrine of completed act are applied. It will help facilitate the appreciation of the thrust of this paper.

Mr. A has a land, or shares a boundary with Mr. B. A dispute ensues on the ownership of the land. Both lay claims. Mr. B has more resources and connections to authorities than Mr. A. He begins to erect a structure on the land as Mr. A continues to protest and complain. Overnight, before Mr. A could file a court case, Mr. B has completed his project (or has reached a significant level in his project). Mr. B in his defence relies on the doctrine of completed act and wins Mr. A. The structure cannot be pulled down. Why? Fortune (financial and material resources) has been invested. This would forever haunt Mr. A.

Another scenario. Mr. A shares a boundary with Mr. B. The boundary becomes contentious. Mr. B speedily erected a structure (probably a perimeter fence) before the boundary issue could be settled. The fencing cost a fortune. Mr. A sues. Mr. B relies on the doctrine of completed act and wins. The law refused Mr. A to pull down the fence. Mr. A continues to groan. Unfortunately, he lost because of the doctrine of completed act. He equally lost because s/he is

weaker financially and in other related ways. This loss will forever haunt him or her.

In all these, Mr. A initially followed the alternative or traditional dispute resolutions which Mr. B ignored and preferred a higher authority and system and therefore rushed to a court bearing in mind the advantages of the doctrine. This undermined the alternative resolution system as it succumbed to a higher authority system. Mr. B hurriedly completed the project with the hope of securing a ruling that would prevent any injunction or demolition based on the doctrine. This humiliates Mr. A instead of the system humbling Mr. B to be patient till the case is finally resolved equitably. Mr. B acted on an undue fast lane.

In all these, imbalance, disequilibrium, wrongful appropriation, etc. played out. How just was the entire system and process to the one who lost because of this doctrine? Would these have been the case if this type of doctrine was not in existence?

It is good to note that there has been cases where this doctrine has been faulted. It was refused to be applied or allow one hide under this doctrine to outsmart another. This was in citing the Supreme Court of Nigeria ruling in the case of AG Anambra State Government V. Okafor. Adejumo (2012) had ruled that:

It follows that in appropriate cases, a court of law will grant mandatory order of restorative injunction even where the act in question has been completed. I take the liberty to reproduce for emphasis the passage from the Supreme Court decision in AG ANAMBRA STATE V. OKAFOR (supra) 396 at 427 quoted by the Claimant, thus:

Although a mandatory injunction is sometimes classified as an interlocutory order of injunction in that it may be granted upon an interlocutory application, it is a different type of injunction, with its own features, and requiring a consideration of its own distinct principles. It is noteworthy in this respect that it is usually targeted upon a completed act and the order therefore may be made, for an example, to order a building which had been erected to be pulled down if it established that the defendant erected it stealthily in order to steal a match on the plaintiff on having noticed that an injunction was to be taken out against him.

This is a clear pointer that many hide under this doctrine to perpetuate criminalities. Whether it is to avoid injunction or to intimidate the weak, this doctrine has to cautiously applied, if not denied, to avoid giving the strong undue advantage over the weak.

Implications of Applying/Upholding the Doctrine Jungle Justice

This policy has led to many jungle justices in many societies and settings. The powerful employ all sorts of means to keep the other party away till s/he completes his/her act or reaches a reasonable extent so that *admisericordiam* could be evoked. In most cases, the 'weaker' is locked up or put away for significant period of time to perpetuate this trespass. People are incarcerated by their powerful opponents to achieve their aims in such cases. They come to be released after the 'act has been completed'.

Survival of the Fittest

This is related to jungle Justice. The powerful and strong stampede the weak. The weak in most cases unwillingly succumbs as s/he cannot match the opponent. Some hire hoodlums, some hire police (despite the fact that the current police act in many societies barred the use of police for land related tussles), others resort to physical abuse and harm. When these happen between communities, the toll becomes bigger and expansive.

Haunting Trauma (PTSD)

There is nothing haunting and traumatic as loss of important properties and holdings. After all efforts the restore balance and equilibrium are lost, the individual becomes desolate and despondent. The experience of the loss is traumatic. The memory is a lifelong one. It causes many psychological and other health related issues. It can equally kill one. It equally injures the personality of the victim. It kills and stifles his or her life flourishing. After the trauma, the stress disorder emerges. This, in some cases may be fatal and terminal.

Through the social contract, members of the society should be enjoying a flourishing life. This is one of the conditions for the support of government according to Locke (2004). Whenever this is violated, the principle of political obligation has to be evoked by the people. One way to evoke this power of political obligation is through the declination of the doctrine of completed act as a means justice dispensation. It breeds more breach of the social contract and extended injustices.

These are some of the dangers associated with the doctrine. The doctrine unsettles more than it should settle. It creates more victims than victors. It creates more imbalance and disequilibrium. It is one of the worst forms of justice dispensation.

The doctrine can be seen as a sort of lawfare. It is a lawfare in that it is now a tool in the hands of the strong to deal with the weak of the society. Just as the stronger society can intimidate the weaker society with warfare, the stronger individual can intimidate the weaker with such a lawfare instrument as the doctrine of completed act.

Justification for Stoppage

The doctrine of completed act has perpetuated more harm and injustices. People groan over loss of properties under this doctrine. Most victims, unwillingly lose their properties to aggressors and trespassers. It also emboldens violators and trespassers and even potential ones. The doctrine favours only the aggressors. It gives one party (the stronger and powerful) undue advantage over the other who might be the rightful and legal owner but has no wherewithal to match the opponent.

Certain justifiable reasons can be proffered against this doctrine and its further implementation. Some of these are highlighted below.

Equality of Rights

Just like it is argued that the accused is presumed innocent until proven otherwise by a competent jurisdiction, no one should cause an action to be completed and be backed by the law based on the doctrine until the entire contentions surrounding the matter are justifiably exhausted. This is because, the rightful owner, the one with the holding rights, has not yet been

decided. The same goes with boundary disputes. The parties involved are assumed to both have equal rights to the (land) property and as such the doctrine of completed act should never decide nor deprive one of his or her rightful ownership of the property.

All Have Same Rights

Since all have same rights to the property under contention until determined, none should have undue advantage based on the doctrine. The doctrine disadvantages the weaker.

The weaker might be weak due to circumstances but not weaker in law. The law should empower the weak to defend his or her right. The purported weaker one might be weak due to circumstances like not thinking or not ready to embark on a project on the land at the moment and time of trespass. The purported weaker party might not be around when the trespass was initiated. S/he might be incapacitated in many other ways. In view of all these, the law should not facilitate the usurpation, annexation or wrongful appropriation of another's property based on the doctrine of completed acts.

The caveat here is to deter intentional intrusion and trespass into another's property based on this 'dangerous' doctrine. The doctrine helps in trampling on the rights of the weaker person. It is like a defective contract. It needs revisiting.

The Weak/Weaker Party

In the administration of the doctrine of completed act, a weaker person or party always emerges. Circumstances can make one the weak or weaker party. Such circumstances at the material time may include: readiness, availability of material and financial resources, timing, incapacitations like health, disabilities, physical strength, etc. One can have financial resources and be characterised as weak based on the fact that the opponent has more power and access to authorities, judiciary, and other personalities. These can embolden one and weaken the other. True justice cannot give opportunities to such advantages. With respect to this doctrine, if indeed a just desert is vouched, justice can be delayed but not denied. Let justice be delayed provided it was not denied.

Evaluation and Conclusion

Earlier, it was pointed out that this doctrine could have come into existence from jurisprudential interpretation. This is based on a maxim of jurisprudence that those who have the right and power to interpret the laws are truly the lawmakers. In essence, a law can come into existence through legal interpretations. This new dimension (the doctrine) could have been introduced due to certain lacunae in positive laws. It could also be by judicial accident or miscarriage which came to be used as precedent.

The idea or allegation of sleeping on ones right - *vigilantibus non dormientibus aequitas subvenit* - may be an aid to this dangerous doctrine. The weaker one may not have the wherewithal to pursue a court case at the required level and material time. This disadvantage is then exploited by the wealthy or strong. If the law does not protect the weak in such a situation and circumstances, it becomes difficult to prove that the law protects the weak (especially when the weak later gets the necessary wherewithal). This is one of the issues with the idea of accusing one to have been sleeping on ones rights. This somehow spurs up the doctrine of completed act.

All lined up against the weak.

This doctrine has become a serious albatross on judicatures. Efforts are being made to defend and propagate it irrespective of its inherent injustices on the weaker party. There is need to revisit this doctrine. Why would one have undue advantage because of the doctrine of completed act? Why would another lose his land (land holding) because of such a doctrine?

It is in some cases argued that one was sleeping under one's right and therefore the doctrine of completed act is supported. This does not hold water in many ways. This doctrine is one of the ways to support and perpetuate impunity. It makes the rich and powerful to trample on the poor and weak in the society. It also emboldens potential culprits. One can wake up and decide to pounce on the property of a poor fellow based on this doctrine and still have his or her way.

Criminal elements in the society and property usurpers are encouraged with this to perpetuate their criminalities. Injustices can be perpetuated through this principle. Unscrupulous community leaders can equally use this to support their cronies and deal with their opponents. They will encourage their cronies to exploit the doctrine so that when they come into the matter, they will simply rely on it.

Whenever and if this principle is ceased to be relied upon, a lot of damages, injuries, injustices, etc. would have been taken care of. It would dissuade and deter people from forceful appropriation, trespass and entry into another's properties.

One should not hide under the doctrine of completed act to perpetuate criminalities. The law should not perpetuate injustices through the doctrine. Community leaders should not perpetuate criminalities through the doctrine. No one wants to take a blind risk by seeing his or her properties destroyed or demolished because of undue reliance on the doctrine of completed act. If the law indeed is meant to protect the weak against the strong, the poor against the rich, the illiterate against the enlightened, then the doctrine of completed act must not be seen as a true principle of justice. It gives undue advantage to the strong over the weak.

It is in rare cases that the poor has won cases against them despite the doctrine of completed acts. One has to recall that the perpetrator was initially motivated by the fact that since s/he has the resources, s/he would be protected by the doctrine. The perpetrator has access to authorities, can hire hoodlums, can influence panel members, has access to the judiciary (which can be used to intimidate the poor based on the fact that the poor cannot afford the services of a lawyer), intentional series of litigations can be employed by the strong, the court process can be unnecessarily prolonged to frustrate the poor fellow who gets wearied by the lawyers appearance fees. Sometimes the case may be filed where it costs the poor fellow fortunes to travel. If fortunately at the end the law does not oblige the doctrine, no one will like to take such unnecessary risks and gamble. It begins to serve as a deterrence. The more this doctrine is shunned the more and better the deterrence manifests. This is the summary position of seeing this doctrine as a typical example and case of lawfare launched against the weak of the society. We should respect one another's properties. We should learn restraint and patience. Let us start by resolving issues (amicably) first before embarking on a project on a contested property or land boundary. The doctrine of completed act is dictatorial. It is an inhuman treatment of the 'considered weak' party. The other party may be considered weak because it is thought s/he might not have the resources to match force by force or exert equal financial muscles.

The Bible in Luke 19:8 talked about restitution. Restitution is a heartedly effort to restore a balance or reverse a disequilibrium one created. The doctrine of completed act creates an imbalance, a disequilibrium, a displacement. This imbalance and disequilibrium must be reversed as a sign of justice, a soothing of harm done. Sacrificing justice on the altar of peace cannot be rationally justified. Likewise perpetrating and institutionalizing injustice under the aegis of peace is hypocritical. This is an aspect of knowingly and voluntarily sinning or committing an offence or inflicting harm on the other and then coming to talk of peace thereafter. This is the worst hypocrisy of Christianity. Peace can be camouflaged to justify injustice. Peace can be a coercive tool for the perpetuation of injustice. This is the reason behind the biblical call for restitution. Zacchaeus realized the importance of this need not to hide under this doctrine. He willingly decided to do the needful restitution. Anyone hiding under the doctrine should know that it was a clear adverted act and the sole solution is reverting back to the status quo – restitution. Justice is giving each his or her due. There is also justice in reversing injustice. A disequilibrium must be rectified. This is rectificatory justice. Aristotle (1999) hammered on the essence of this type of justice. Rectificatory justice remedies a disequilibrium. This makes the doctrine of completed act an unjustifiable act and doctrine.

This leads us to juxtapose justice and peace. There is a legal maxim known as 'clearing from the roots' – *senatio in radice*. If any unwanted material, herb, shrub or weed is to be really eliminated, it has to be cleared from the roots. If this is not done, definitely it will sprout again. Clearing from the roots is a sort of deterrence which prevents the weed from sprouting and thereby spreading. Peace does not serve as deterrence. It can be seen as a reinforcement. People can advertently commit crimes and come later to preach and plead peace. This can be exploited by Mr A., Mr B. and Mr C and thus goes cyclical. It abets instead of abating. Justice on the other hand serves more of a deterrence. This is in comparison with peace. Justice soothes the victim more than peace. Peace camouflages injustice in most cases. The victim of injustice under the aegis of peace will have haunting experience which can be traumatic. It is like a volcano waiting to erupt, in most cases, especially where the victim is cajoled or even 'coerced' into the peace deal. This is felt more in individual cases than in community or collective cases. Justice soothes the victim despite the loss. This is the reason injustice is a dangerous vice which can devastate an individual. It equally haunts both individuals and communities. It is not farfetched that the perpetual crisis in the Middle East (especially the Israeli-Palestinian crisis) is because of injustice. How many peace deals and treaties have the globe witnessed in the area? The crisis erupts frequently. The Israeli-Palestinian crisis needs to be cleared from the roots. Restorative justice needs to be applied in the matter. Restorative justice, just like other types of justice, soothes victims more than peace. Justice is a better form of deterrence compared to peace. Going for peace while keeping a blind eye to deterrence is a temporary relief or victory. Certain social ills are better cleared from the roots and nipped in the bud than creating room for its infestation.

The bottom line here is that flagging peace to cover injustice which can be prevented, deterred and nipped in the bud is like putting the cart before the horse. Humanity should organize the systems of relationships in a manner that the right things should be the priority. Rooms should not be created and promoted to perpetuate harm on others. Intentionally

creating lacunae for perpetuating harm, as in the case of the doctrine of completed act, is not justifiable.

We can equally glean at the scenario from the Kantian categorical imperative. Who likes to be robbed and assaulted intentionally to achieve a selfish end and later the culprit, while still holding a firm grip of the selfish gains and proceeds appropriated, will come to preach peace to the victim after achieving his or her inordinate ambitions? Who would like to have such as a universal principle of relationships? How would the world be like if this is not deterred and is allowed to be operational?

There is need to save the weak from the dictatorship of the wealthy, strong and powerful. With the circulation of elites being part of life, if the doctrine is allowed to be applied successfully, there is no end and rest for the weak. There is no permanent weak, there is no permanent wealthy, there is no permanent strong. The world cannot continue to be on a spiral and recycling of survival of the fittest.

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Style, Tone, and Voice in English Language Teaching: A Philosophical Exploration of the Relationship Between Teacher Communication Style and Student Comprehension

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Abstract

The study explored the intricate relationships between style, tone, and voice in English language teaching, examining how these concepts shape the pedagogical landscape through the lens of philosophy. The study reveals how style, tone and voice are not merely aesthetic beliefs, but rather, they embody the values, beliefs, and ideologies of teachers and learners. The study argued that a deeper understanding of style, tone and voice can foster more authentic, empathetic, and transformative language learning experiences. By probing the philosophical underpinnings of these concepts, the study aimed to inspire English teachers to cultivate a more divergent and reflective approach to their pedagogical practice.

Key Words: Language learning, style, tone, voice, philosophical perspective, English language teaching, pedagogical and teacher.

Introduction

Effective communication is a crucial aspect of teaching and learning, particularly in English language teaching. Communication is the mutual exchange of meaning between the sender and the receiver (Akpan, 2025). Therefore, the English language teacher must aim at achieving this mutuality. Thus, the teachers' communication styles, including their style, tone, and voice play a major role in shaping student understanding and comprehension, engagement, and motivation. Effective communication skills are essential for teachers to convey information, ideas, and instructions to students. The teachers therefore need to develop their verbal and nonverbal communication skills for clarity of thoughts, ideas, instructions, and reinforce teaching. To effectively achieve this, language must be the centre-piece of communication.

Language according to Akpan (2025) is primarily and principally an interactive system in which meaning is arbitrarily related to its symbol and used by people of the same or related communities. This therefore suggests that language serves to differentiate registers and people often study different styles through language use. The teachers then need to select from the 'linguistic bank' available at their disposals the forms, and structures that effectively relay the

communication needs of the students. Commenting on Style, Fish (1986) asserts that style is the peculiarity and uniqueness of doing things. This position brings to the fact, English language teachers need to develop their personal traits, uniqueness, approaches and methods for them to communicate effectively with their students for the latter's understanding and creation of meaning. Meaning according to Akpan (2019) is an opinion and its meaning interpretation is contingent on circumstances. What this means is that, what we say and how we say it, is influenced by who we are talking to and where and when the interaction is taking place. This supports an earlier position by Hybels and Weaver (1989) when they posited that communication, meaning and their efficacy lie on three levels: these are the actual intention of the speaker (teacher), the information (message) of the speaker (teacher), and what the audience (students) thinks the speaker (teacher) is saying.

On the other hand, the teachers tone refers to the emotional tone conveyed by the teachers' voice, facial expressions, and body language. This may be positive, negative or unconcerned attitude. While the teachers voice refers to the way a teacher uses their vocal qualities to communicate with students which may include, volume, pitch, inflection and pace. However, the relationships between teacher style and student comprehension is complex and influenced by various philosophical perspectives such as existentialism, phenomenology, poststructuralism, and pragmatism. This aim at exploring the relationships between teaching style and student comprehension in English language teaching, examining the role of philosophical perspectives in shaping teacher communication.

The Concepts of Style, Tone and Voice in English Language Teaching

According to Kamalu (2018) nobody has ever really known what the term style means, and in any case, hardly anyone seems to care. This is where the burden of the concept of style lie. Oftentimes, people refer to style as a way of doing things, for instance, style of dressing, style of talking, style of teaching, style of walking, style of dancing and so on (Kamalu, 2018). However, for our present paper, we will adopt the earlier definition of style as that which exhibits a history that is anything but uniform (Eco, 2004). Thus, style in English language teaching refers to the unique way in which a teacher communicates with students. This may include the way the teacher use non-verbal cues, example, body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice. It can also be the teacher's language use, such as, the vocabulary, grammar, and syntax or sometime it can be the way in which the teachers organize their speech or writing.

A teacher's style can influence student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes, for example, a teacher who uses a formal and structural style may be perceived as authoritative and knowledgeable, while a teacher who uses an informal and conversational style may be seen as approachable and supportive. On the other hand, tone, in the context of language, refers to the pitch or sound quality used to convey meaning and distinguish between words. Expanding this definition Udondata (2002) opines that tone include vocal quality, an accent or inflection expression of a mood or emotion, style or manner of expression in speaking or writing and pitch constituting an element in the intonation of a phrase or sentence. A teacher's tone can significantly impact student motivation and engagement. For example, a teacher who uses a supportive and encouraging tone may help students feel more confident and motivated, while a teacher who uses a critical or dismissive tone may lead to student demotivation and

disengagement.

Voice in English language refers to the unique personality, perspective, and values that a teacher conveys through their communication. It includes authenticity, authority and empathy. A teacher's voice can play a crucial role in building student trust, engagement, and motivation. For example, a teacher who uses an authentic and empathetic voice may be able to establish a positive and supportive learning environment, while a teacher who uses an authoritative but distant voice may struggle to connect with their students.

The concepts of style, tone, and voice have significant implications for English language teaching. Teachers should be aware of their own communication style, tone and voice, and make conscious efforts to adapt them to meet the needs of their students, by being mindful of their style, tone, and voice, English language teachers can create a more engaging, motivating, and effective learning environment for their students. But how does style, tone, and voice intersect with teacher's communication and student learning? The simple answer to this question is discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

A teacher must develop clear and concise teaching style which helps students understand complex concepts and retain information. This is in line with the positions of Malinowski (1923), Bloomfield (1933) and Wittgenstein (1953) on meaning and clarity when they defined meaning in terms of the extra linguistic world. Also, a well-developed and structured teaching style such as the use of visual aids and transitions, will facilitate student learning, engagement and understanding. Commenting on the importance of visual aids in communication Akpan (2025) asserts that visual aids such as graphs, charts, video, maps, photographs, diagrams, leave behinds, demonstration and pictorials can help the audience (student) in better comprehension and easy recall of the information.

It should be stated that the aim of every teacher is to engage the student, inspire their interest, persuade them and create in them the mental picture where they (students) leave the classroom environment more satisfied and with a lasting impression. According to Akpan (2025, p. 135) "speaking appeals more to the ear (oral), the visual aids appeal to the eyes (sight). This is so because people learn and recall things by both hearing information and seeing information". Simply put, visual aids are a supplement to words.

Furthermore, a teaching style that encourages student participation, feedback, and questioning promotes active learning and critical thinking. The fact of feedback as a necessary ingredient in communication cannot be overemphasized. This feedback is what Akpan (2003) called "what effect" does the teaching has on the students. In terms of tone, a teacher's tone should have emotional connection with the students, influence their motivation and make them create a "buy in"; in what Akpan (2025) calls "attention catcher". The teacher should as well create a conducive classroom atmosphere and give it all the necessary ambiance for teaching and learning to thrive. Importantly also, a teacher's tone when providing feedback and assessment can impact student self-esteem, confidence, and future learning.

Voice is also important as it conveys the teacher's authority, authenticity and credibility and gives the student sense of fulfilment and confidence. To promote deeper learning, the teacher should have passion, interest and patience with student. This will sure inspire the students and promote better learning and understanding. Let the teacher develop and demonstrate empathy, create a safe and supportive learning environment.

Teacher-Student Intersection in Communication and Learning

This is observed in the following ways which help the teacher to function optimally and the student to understand and comprehend effectively. First, the teacher's style, tone and voice intersect through verbal and non-verbal cues; second, the teacher's style, tone, and voice influence their choice of instructional strategies such as group work, technology integration and lectures. And thirdly, the teacher's style, tone, and voice impact the way they provide feedback and assessment.

On the other hand, the teacher's style, tone and voice intersect with the student engagement and motivation, influencing their willingness to learn and participate. Again, the teacher's style, tone, and voice affect student understanding and retention of subject matter, impacting academic achievement and future learning. And finally, the teacher's style, tone, and voice influence students' emotional and social learning, including their self-esteem, confidence, and relationships with peers and teachers. Therefore, by considering the intersection of style, tone, and voice with teacher communication and student learning, educators can create more effective and supportive learning environment.

Philosophical Perspectives to Teacher Communication

Teacher communication is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that has been studied from various philosophical perspectives. These perspectives provide insights into the nature of teacher communication, its relationships with student learning, and the role of teachers in shaping the learning environment. In this study, we will discuss briefly four perspectives: existentialist, phenomenological, poststructuralist and pragmatist.

(a) Existentialist Perspectives

The father of existentialism is Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher and theologian. However, the philosopher who popularized existentialism and made it a mainstream philosophical movement is Jean-Paul Satre, a French philosopher. This theory emphasizes individual freedom and choice. From this perspective, teacher communication is seen as a personal and subjective experience. Teachers are viewed as autonomous individuals who bring their unique experiences, values, and beliefs to the classroom.

What this means is that the teachers is seen as an autonomous entity capable of shaping their communication style. Teachers are encouraged to take ownership of their teaching practices and to be authentic in their interactions with students. While the students on the other hand, are encouraged to understand that they are free and free to make whatever choices and decisions. What this means is that teachers are encouraged to create a learning environment that allows students to make choices about their education path.

(b) Phenomenological Perspectives

The phenomenological perspective is primarily associated with Edmund Husserl. The key focus of this perspectives focuses on the subjective experience of individuals. From this perspective, teacher communication is seen as a lived experience that is shaped by the teacher's intentions, values, and beliefs. Phenomenology highlights the importance of intentionality in teacher communication. Teachers are encouraged to be mindful of their intentions and to

communicate in a way that is authentic and transparent. Also, teachers are encouraged to use their bodies and voices to convey meaning and to create a sense of presence in the classroom.

(c) Poststructuralist Perspectives

Poststructuralism had its roots in France during the 1960s and 1970s, with several key figures contributing to its development. Some of the thinkers include Roland Barthes, a French literary critic and philosopher, Jacques Derrida, a French philosopher and Michel Foucault, a French philosopher and social theorist. (Heidegger, 1959).

Poststructuralism challenges traditional notions of power, authority, and knowledge from this perspective, teacher communication is seen as a site of power struggle and negotiation. It highlights the importance of power dynamics as teacher communication. Teachers are encouraged to be aware of their position of power and to communicate in a way that is inclusive and empowering.

Furthermore, poststructuralism emphasizes the importance of knowledge construction in teacher communication. Teachers are encouraged to view knowledge as a social construct and to communicate in a way that acknowledges the complexity and multiplicity of knowledge.

(d) Pragmatist Perspectives

Pragmatism is a philosophical movement that originated in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Notable philosophers like Charles Sander Peirce, William James, John Dewey, George Herbert Mead and Richard Roty are behind this movement.

This movement emphasizes the importance of practicality and effectiveness in communication. From this perspective, teacher communication is seen as a means to achieve specific learning objectives. It emphasizes and encourages teachers to communicate in a way that achieves the desired learning outcomes and to be flexible and adaptable in their communication approach. Also, teachers are encouraged to communicate in a way that is clear, concise, and relevant to the learning objectives.

Students Perspective to Teacher Communication

Research has shown that students' perceptions and responses to different teacher communication styles can vary significantly. The perception can be positive communication. Students tend to respond positively to teachers who are warm, supportive, and empathetic. They feel more comfortable, motivated, and engaged in the learning process. Also, students appreciate teachers who communicate clearly and concisely. They are more likely to understand the material, follow instructions, and stay focused. Students equally respond well to teachers who offer genuine praise and encouragement. They feel more confident, motivated and willing to take risks.

However, students tend to be discouraged, deflated and demotivated when teachers are critical and dismissive. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to be willing to adapt their communication style to meet the diverse needs of their students.

Student may feel uncomfortable intimidated by teachers who are distant, unapproachable, or unresponsive. They may be less likely to ask questions, seek help, or participate in class discussions.

When teacher communication is ambiguous and unclear, students may feel confused, uncertain, and less likely to engage with the materials. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to strive to be aware of their communication style-and how it may impact their students. Equally, teachers should engage in professional development to improve their communication skills and build positive relationships with their students.

Conclusion

The way teachers communicate with their students is a crucial aspect of the learning process. The style, tone, and voice used by teachers can significantly impact students' understanding, engagement, and motivation. From a philosophical perspective, the relationships between teacher communication styles and students' understanding is complex and multifaceted. This article explores the significance of style, tone, and voice in English language teaching examining the philosophical perspectives that inform teaching practices.

Firstly, the concept of style in teaching is essential. Teachers' style encompasses their personality, teaching methods, and communication strategies. From a philosophical perspective, the pragmatist approach emphasizes the importance of practicality and experimentation in teaching. Teachers should be adaptable and willing to try different approaches to meet the diverse needs of their students.

Tone is another critical aspect of teacher communication. Tone refers to the emotional tone conveyed by the teacher's voice, facial expressions, and body language. A positive tone can create a supportive and inclusive learning environment while a negative tone can lead to student disengagement and demotivation. The existentialist perspective highlights the significance of teacher authenticity and genuineness.

Voice is also a vital component of teacher communication. Teacher voice can influence students' perceptions of the subject matter and their motivation to learn. The poststructuralist perspective emphasizes the importance of challenging dominant narratives and promoting diversity and inclusivity.

Finally, the significance of style, tone and voice in English language teaching cannot be overstated. Teachers' communication styles have a profound impact on students' understanding, engagement, and motivation. Philosophical perspectives such as pragmatism, existentialism, poststructuralism and phenomenological offer valuable insights into the nature of teacher communication and student understanding. By embracing a deeper understanding of style, tone, and voice, educators can foster more effective communication, promote student-centered learning, and cultivate a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

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The Socio-Onomastics of “Okpongo” in Ibibio Land

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Abstract

This ethnographic research undertakes an anthropological examination of socio-onomastics of Okpongo as a naming system among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study was conducted within selected Ibibio local government areas of Akwa Ibom State. Two objectives were adopted to guide the study and the descriptivist theory of names was adopted as used as a theoretical framework for the study. A simple random sampling method was used to select at least 24 study participants from each of the clans. Study participants were purposively selected to be 21 years of age and above so that they may have better understanding of the norms, values and taboos of their culture. The interview guide was used for data collection. Collected data were analysed thematically with excerpts. Findings show that the socio-onomastic of Okpongo as a naming system among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State is an ancient naming practice of name transfer from the elderly of late person to an infant or new-born. Finding also show that another socio-onomastic of Okpongo among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State is the attainment of social mobility. Through Okpongo naming system, a poor child can attain a rich status, and a poor child can share in a rich man's inheritance as his Okpongo. Among others, it was recommended that the naming practice of Okpongo as a levelling mechanism should be projected to reduce selfishness that leads to corruption.

Key Words: Socio-onomastics, Okpongo, Ibibio, Naming system, Social mobility, Preservation and Names

Introduction

Ainiala and Östman (2023) in their work *"Socio-Onomastics and Pragmatics"* posit that socio-onomastics is a research discipline that began as a sub-discipline of onomastics, the study of names. It was developed as a systematic perspective for the dynamic analysis of names and designations. While onomastics has traditionally focused primarily on the etymology and typology of names, socio-onomastics deals with how names are used. Although socio-onomastics recognizes the historical dimension of names and names, the role of names in the construction of (social) identities is at the centre of recent developments in this field. Socio-onomastic emphasizes the importance of examining the use of names in everyday interaction: the variation in the use of names, why some names are avoided, why some names are associated with particular derogatory attitudes, and how name users themselves perceive the names they use. Socio-onomastics takes into account the social, cultural and situational domains in which names are used and this applies to all types of names, place names, personal names, business names, ship names, pet names, etc. Socio-onomastics is the study of names through a sociolinguistic perspective and is part of the broader topic of onomastics. Socio-onomastic "examines the use and variety of names through methods that demonstrate the social, cultural conditions, and the situation of the use of the name.

Indigenous African personal names are linguistic practices and means of interaction that have implicit meanings beyond what they communicate in practical situations. Names and naming practices are thus embedded in large cultural scripts that allow cultural insiders to understand and interpret cultural experiences. There are different layers of meaning embodied in personal names based on the values, norms and cultural semantics of the people involved. The use of personal names in various cultures has been recognised as a means of communication and speech, according to both past and present perspectives (Mensah and Iloh, 2021; Mandende *et al.* 2019; Ansu-Kyeremeh 2000). Mensah *et al.*, (2020) posit that personal names are symbolic resources that can reflect the ideological and social systems of some societies.

According to Mensah and Iloh (2021), the individual names of the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria can also be understood and contextualised within the limits of their cultural values, worldviews, emotions and economic resources. Personal naming practices are a significant aspect of different cultures around the world, and naming practices, traditions and patterns vary across cultures. Names are symbolic resources that provide a lens for accessing a people's view of life, the world and humanity, and are sources of ethnic, religious and linguistic identities. Personal names may also provide a subtle reference to a people's history and traditions (Mensah, 2021).

Mensah (2015) in his work presented a brief ethnography of the Ibibio by reporting that the Ibibio people are found in the mainland part of the Cross-River Basin in south-eastern Nigeria. They are the dominant ethnic nationality in present-day Akwa Ibom State. They inhabit 18 out of the state's 31 Local Government Areas. The population of Ibibio is 3.76 million (based on 2006 census demographic data). They have the Annang and Oro people as their closest neighbours within the state. They share their north-west boundaries with the clusters of the Igbo nation. They are bounded in the south-south hinterland by the Efik. They also share a coastal boundary in the south-west with the Okpobo/Ijaw in Rivers State and are bounded north-east by the

Ejagham-speaking people up to southern Cameroon. The Bight of Bonny washes its southern borders into the Atlantic Ocean. The Ibibio language belongs to the Niger-Congo family of the Delta-Cross subfamily, which constitutes the Lower-Cross family within the enlarged Cross-River group of languages. Ibibio, together with Efik, Annang, Oro, Ekid, Usakedet, etc. belong to this Lower-Cross family. The languages are mutually intelligible with Ibibio but the degree is unidirectional in some cases.

According to Mensah *et al.*, (2021), in certain societies including the Ibibio of Akwa Ibom State, South-Eastern Nigeria, naming is a distinctive system of communicative practice which is used to express emotion and construct the personhood and identity of the name-bearer. Among the Ibibio, just as in most African societies, personal names provide information about their bearers' future expectations and givers' past experiences. They reflect social networks, socio-cultural values, traditional beliefs and worldviews, in addition to emotions. According to Mensah, Rowan and Ekpe (2004), among the Ibibio people, personal names serve as symbolic linguistic resources and provide insight into the Ibibio universe of meaning, where individuals are at the core of all social connections.

Among the Ibibio of Akwa Ibom State, "Okpongo" is a naming system whereby a set of parents for a diversity of reasons decide to name their child or children after a person living or dead. In the Okpongonaming epistemology, the name of a man or woman, living or dead is given to a new-born child who is expected to bear the name beyond the initial bearer of the name. In Okpongopractice among the Ibibio people, the name of one person is transferred to another particularly, the name is transferred from an older person to an infant during the naming ceremony by the parent of the child. Okpongonaming practice plays many roles in the social and cultural settings of the Ibibio people and the Ibibio society. Apart from continuity which plays a key role in Okpongonaming practice, there are other key roles performed by this practice. This anthropological investigation was set to examine the roles of Okpongoin the socio-cultural setting of the Ibibio people.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the socio-onomastic of Okpongoas a cultural practice of naming patterns among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to:

1. examine the role of Okpongo in name preservation among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
2. Investigate the role of Okpongoin attaining social mobility among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

Descriptivist Theory of Names

The **descriptivist theory of proper names** (also the **descriptivist theory of reference**) is the view that the meaning or semantic content of a proper name is identical to the descriptions associated with it by speakers, while their referents are determined to be the objects that satisfy these descriptions. Bertrand Russell and Gottlob Frege have both been associated with the descriptivist theory, which has been called the *mediated reference theory* or *Frege–Russell view*. In

the 1970s, this theory came under attack from causal theorists such as Saul Kripke, Hilary Putnam and others. However, it has seen something of a revival in recent years, especially under the form of what are called two-dimensional semantic theories. This latter trend is exemplified by the theories of David Chalmers, among others.

The Descriptive Theory and its Merits

A simple descriptivist theory of names can be thought of as follows: for every proper name p , there is some collection of descriptions D associated with p that constitute the meaning of p . For example, the descriptivist may hold that the proper name *Saul Kripke* is synonymous with the collection of descriptions such as

1. the man who wrote *Naming and Necessity*
2. a person who was born on November 13, 1940, in Bay Shore, New York
3. the son of a leader of Beth El Synagogue in Omaha, Nebraska etc.

The descriptivist takes the meaning of the name *Saul Kripke* to be that collection of descriptions and takes the referent of the name to be the thing that satisfies all or most of those descriptions.

A simple descriptivist theory may further hold that the meaning of a sentence S that contains p is given by the collection of sentences produced by replacing each instance of p in S with one of the descriptions in D . So, the sentence such as "Saul Kripke stands next to a table" has the same meaning as the following collection of sentences:

1. The man who wrote *Naming and Necessity* stands next to a table.
2. A person who was born on November 13, 1940, in Bay Shore, New York, stands next to a table.
3. The son of a leader of Beth El Synagogue in Omaha, Nebraska, stands next to a table.

The Descriptive Theorisation of Okpongo

From the analysis of the Descriptive Theory which explains that for every proper name p , there is some collection of descriptions D associated with p that constitute the meaning of p . The concept of Okpongo explains that the name of an older person p is allocated to an infant D . The allocated name D conveys the meanings and expected descriptions of the p in the original context, and the expressions are conveyed by the new bearer of D . Okpongo is the social network between the P and D . It is the description of P and its meaning which are expressed in D .

Methodology

The study was conducted within selected local government areas in Ibibio land in Akwa Ibom State. An ethnographic research design was adopted for the study. Adult Ibibio people drawn from the 16 clans randomly selected from all the clans in the Ibibio-speaking local government areas of Akwa Ibom State selected for the study. Akwa Ibom State was divided into three based on the existing senatorial district, then Local Government Areas were selected randomly taking borderlands and hinterlands into consideration. Ikono for Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District, Uruan, Ibesikpo Asutan and Nsit Ubium for Uyo Senatorial District, and Mkpato Enin for Eket Senatorial District.

A simple random sampling method was used to select at least 24 study participants from each of the clans. Study participants were purposively selected to be 21 years of age and above so that they may have better understanding of the norms, values and taboos of their culture. The study participants were interviewed using an open-ended semi-structured interview guide. This was done on individual study participants using the language each understands. Responses were recorded. Afterwards, focused group discussions were conducted using the same interview guide on six to eight study participants per group. The researcher recorded responses based on the group in which each study participant fell. Key informants were engaged at least one per chosen community. The observational technique and voice recorder were used to obtain the qualitative information through focus group discussion.



Source: Mensah (2015)

Findings

Okpongo in name preservation among the Ibibio People

Gathered data revealed that among the Ibibio people, Okpongo is a socio-cultural practice of name preservation whereby names are passed from one person to another with specific attachments to the first or older bearer by the new or infant bearer. Narratives of the

interviewees presented a fact among the Ibibio people within the practices of Okpongo whereby a set of parents give names already allocated to someone who might be influential in the society or within a family setting, someone who is wealthier, someone who is admired by the said parent, and to someone who shows love to the new-born baby, to their new-born child. According to one of the study participants, this practice is voluntary. In his words, he reported that:

This Okpongo practice is an ancient practice that has been practised by our fathers long ago. In those days, some parents always wanted their children to be brave and strong, some always wanted their children to be successful in life more than they were. So the Okpongo practice is where these parents will now search for someone brave and strong, someone who is successful and they will give their children the names these people bear to their children with the supernatural and superstitious belief that the spirit that has guided those men to be brave and strong, to be successful in life will be transferred same roles and duties to their children and cause them to be courageous, strong and successful under the name transfer (male, 69 years, traditional ruler, interviewed on 8th July 2024 at Edeobom 1, Nsit Ibom Local Government Area).

Another study participant in her narratives agreed that this practice according to narratives has become a cultural pattern for the preservation of names among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State. In her narratives, she explained that:

Okpongo is a practice in which some people want to preserve either their father's name or their mother's name and they will take a look at a new-born child of someone who might have served them as house help or servant or their close relative and give the name of their late father or their late mother to the child. This is mostly done with the late mother's name because in our society we answer names to our fathers. So, as a means of preserving their mother's name, they give the name to a new-born child. By so doing, they treat the child as their mother's name-sake and take care of the child as a means of transferring their responsibilities toward their late mother to the child just because the child is bearing their late mother's name. So, their late mother's name continues even when their mother is late. SO, Okpongo helps in the preservation of names (female, 52 years, trader, interviewed on 12th July 2024 at Uyo, Uyo Local Government Area)

Okpongo has been within the naming culture of the Ibibio people. Narratives have shown that the cultural practice has been one of the traditional patterns in name preservation among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. In some cases, this practice was discovered to be practised within a given immediate family. According to participants, some family members preserve their parent's name by transferring their parent's name through name-giving to their children. One of the study participants reported that:

Members of the same family very much practise Okpongo. Here you will see some families whereby a child is born and the father will name the male child after his late father and a female child is named after the late mother. That is why you hear a child answer a name like Ukpong Ekerete Ukpong. Here Ukpong is the grandfather's name which is the father's father's name and the immediate father decides to name his son after his father to preserve his father's name by the next third-generation child through the naming process of Okpongo. You will also hear the name Okpo Okpo Ufot. Here, Okpo is the name of the immediate father who transferred his name to his son as his Okpongo (Male, 48 years, civil servant, interviewed on 15th July 2024 at Idu, Uruan Local Government Area)

Another study participant in his narratives said that:

This naming practice call Okpongo are practiced by some people in such a way that the transfer the name of a renowned person or a successful person, sometimes these persons do not even know them and they are not related to the persons. They give their children such names in act of belief that the grace that make those people successful will also come on their children to make them successful. For instance, like Chief Godswill Obot Akpabio was the governor of our state Akwa Ibom, a lot of parents gave their children Godswill because of the successful story of the governor who grew from PA to former governor to SSA, to Commissioner and then to Governor of Akwa Ibom State. The same was the case of President Goodluck Jonathan. If you check this state, the children who answer Godswill and Goodluck are children who were born within the time Godswill was governor of Akwa Ibom State and Goodluck was the President of Nigeria (Male, 56 years, businessman, interviewed on 12th July 2024 at Nung Udoe, Ibesikpo-Asutan Local Government Area).

Narratives through interviews of study participants have revealed the practice of naming known and called Okpongo is an ancient naming practice which has been passed from one generation to another as a traditional means of name preservation. This practice has preserved names through the process of transferring names bear by either the living or the dead to a new-born child. Okpongo has enabled continuity of names and name-giving among the people of Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Okpongo and Social Mobility among the Ibibio People

Okpongoh as played many roles including the role of social mobility among the Ibibio people in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Data gathered from the field through narratives revealed that some low-class families have used the naming practice Okpongo as a means of helping their children to attain social mobility in life. Okpongo is practised in a way that the name of the wealthy man or woman, and a more capable human, is transferred to a new-born child of a poor family or low class with expectations, that the wealthy ones will take care and sponsorship of

the child which ordinarily the parent could not, to see the child grows and attain higher class in life which is correlative to the class of the origin of the original bearer of the name. One of the study participants said that:

Okpongo has many functions when it comes to giving a name to a child. It has been a helping practice to the poor class who use it as a means to seek help for their children, and to get their children out of the level of poverty which they don't their children to continue. By this, these low class families will seek a rich family member and transfer the name of the one they love to their child. This is normally done through official presentation of the child to the person after seeking the consent of the person. In acceptance of the person, the person will know that there is certain transfer of responsibilities of training the child to him/her. The parent of the child while nurturing the child at infant stage will from time to time take the child to visit his/her Okpongo with gifts from the parent and in return, the Okpongo give support back until the child grows to teenager whereby in some cases the child can go and stay with the Okpongo away from the parent and the Okpongo begin taking full responsibility of raising the child within the context of the rich class, sending the child to school, which in some cases to higher institution and then getting the child a job after graduation. By this, the child who was born into a poor family has been shifted by naming process from a poor class to a rich class (Male, 63 years, retired civil servant, interviewed on 13th July 2024 at Etinan, Etinan Local Government Area)

Another study participant added that:

Okpongo as a naming practice has really helped us in this land. It has in the social networking and transfer of wealth from one family to another. It can be said to be a means of levelling mechanism within some families who practices it. For instance, through Okpongo, a family has decided to share their inheritance with someone who was not originally born by a member of that family, but because the father was named Okpongo of the poor boy, in his will, he gave some of his inheritance to his Okpongo. So, the poor boy becomes richer and richer than his entire real parent (Male, 61 years, Welder, interviewed on 13th July 2024 at Afaha Offort, Uyo Local Government Area)

Okpongo naming practice among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State is a practice that has a level as a levelling mechanism among some people within the Ibibio society. According to narratives from interviewees, Okpongo has provided medium whereby wealth is shared from the rich class to the poor class. Study participants reported that many families have attained change in their economic statuses through Okpongoning practices in Ibibio land. It has also

provided the people with a medium through which the rich can share their wealth with the poor.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study show that the practice of naming people known as Okpongo is an ancient naming practice that has been passed down from one generation to another as a traditional way of name preservation. This practice preserved names through the process of transferring names held by the living or the dead to a new-born. Okpongo enabled the continuity of names and designations among the Ibibio people in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Okpongo is a sociocultural practice of name preservation, where names are passed from one person to another with specific links to the first or oldest bearer from the new bearer or child bearer. Gathered data also revealed that among the Ibibio people in the framework of Okpongo practices where a group of relatives gives names already assigned to a person who could be influential in a society or a family environment, to a person richer, to a person admired by the said relative, and to a person who shows love to the new-born. According to one of the study participants, this practice is voluntary. In some cases, this practice was discovered to be practised within a given immediate family. Some family members keep the surname of their parents and pass it on to their children. These findings give credence to Mensah and Iloh, 2021; Mandende *et al.* 2019; Ansu-Kyeremeh 2000 who posited that the use of personal names in various cultures has been recognised as a means of communication and speech, and is transient through both past and present perspectives.

Further findings revealed that some lower-class families used the practice of the name Okpongo as a way to help their children achieve social mobility in life. Okpongois practised in such a way that the name of the rich husband or wife, and a more capable person, is transferred to a new-born from a poor or low-class family in the hope that the rich will care for and sponsor the child. The practice of Okpongo among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State is a practice that has a levelling mechanism among some people in the Ibibio society. Gathered data also shown that Okpongo provided a means by which wealth are in some cases distributed from the rich class to the poor class. The participants in the study said that many families have achieved a change in their economic status through the practices of Okpongo name on Ibibio lands. It also provided the means to the population through which the rich can share their wealth with the poor. These findings give credence to Mensah *et al.*, (2021) who posit that in certain societies including the Ibibio of Akwa Ibom State, South-Eastern Nigeria, naming is a distinctive system of communicative practice which is used to express emotion and construct personhood and identity of the name-bearer.

Conclusion

The socio-onomastic of Okpongo as a naming system among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State is an ancient naming practice of name transfer from the elderly of late person to an infant or new-born. It has been a naming pattern of names preservation whereby names are preserved. In some cases, children preserved their parents' names by transferring the names to their children. In some cases, they transfer the same names to relatives or a new-born child of neighbours and anyone who desires to get the name of his/her child. Another socio-onomastic

of Okpongo among the Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State is the attainment of social mobility. Through Okpongo naming system, a poor child can attain a rich status, and a poor child can share in a rich man's inheritance as his Okpongo. This has made Okpongo naming system a levelling mechanism in some families among the Ibibio people.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

- The Okpongo should be given more publicity as a cultural practice to help build unity and togetherness among the people.
- Okpongo as a social mobility mechanism should be encouraged among the Ibibio people to achieve human capacity development in Ibibio society.
- The naming practice of Okpongo as a levelling mechanism should be projected to reduce selfishness that leads to corruption.

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A Study of Waste Management Policy Implementation and Akwa Ibom Environmental Protection and Waste Management Agency (AKSEPWMA)

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Abstract

This study examined Waste Management Policy Implementation in Nigeria: A Study of the Akwa Ibom Environmental Protection and Waste Management Agency (AKSEPWMA). The study was due to the persistent criticisms for lack of implementation of waste management policy in Uyo Municipality by AKSEPWMA which has resulted to waste management challenges. The main objective of the study was to examine the implementation of waste management policy in Nigeria with focus on AKSEPWMA. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study, while questionnaires was the main instrument used for collecting data from the 384 respondents that constituted the sample population for the study, using simple random sampling technique. Three hypotheses were formulated for the study which: ineffectiveness in waste evacuation and incidence of flooding, ineffectiveness in desilting and blocked drainages as well as ineffective waste management awareness programmes and poor waste management attitude. The hypotheses were tested using the chi-square. The study adopted policy implementation theory and the inter-organizational interaction approach. The theory states that, collaboration among community of organizations lead to a more comprehensive coordinated approach to a complex issue than can be achieve by one organization. Findings revealed that the three hypotheses were significant. Implying that ineffectiveness in waste evacuation, ineffectiveness in desilting and ineffective waste management awareness programmes have significant relationship with waste management policy implementation in preventing flood, blocking drainages and promoting good waste management attitude in Uyo Municipality. The study recommended

firstly, regular waste evacuation, to avoid waste spilling into water channels, that will subsequently lead to flooding. Another is, effective desilting, using modern technology-based equipment due to the peculiar nature of our geographical disposition. And thirdly, stakeholders-centred waste management awareness programme to provide an all-inclusive platform for all stakeholders to acquire knowledge of modern waste management practices. This will curb poor waste management attitude among the residents. If these recommendations are considered and implemented, it will go a long way in solving the problem of implementing waste management policy in Uyo Municipality.

Key Words: Waste, Policy, Implementation, Environment, Municipality, Evacuation, Desilting and Awareness.

Introduction

Managing waste has remained a daunting task globally, this is because waste generation is ever increasing and is expected to rise with economic development and population growth, and lower-income countries are likely to experience the greatest growth in waste production. The fastest growing regions are sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where total generation is expected to triple than double by 2050, respectively, making up 35% of the world's waste. The Middle-East and North African region is also expected to double waste generation by the same 2050 (Waste Statistics 2012).

In order to mitigate the negative impact of waste on the environment, efforts have been intensified in different countries of the world through policy framework to provide for waste management. It has been noted that, Nigeria like many other developing countries have continued to fare less in this regard, as a result of several barriers militating against sustainable municipal waste management (Ezeah, Roberts, Watkin, Philips, and Odunfa, 2009). Consequently, waste management in most developing countries is fast becoming a major and environmental challenge (Agunwamba, 2003; Ezeah, 2010).

Waste management ensures reduction in the volume of waste in the environment. According to Okey and Umana (2013), waste management generally involves several activities: the collection, transfer, treatment, recycling, resources recovery and disposal of waste in any location. As the volume of waste continue to rise due to increased socio-economic programmes and urbanisation, the need to manage waste generated becomes very imperative. With the advent of industrial revolution, waste management becomes a critical issue. Nigeria, like most developing countries is facing the challenges of managing waste. It could be said that the Nigerian government did not accord waste management the needed attention until the Koko Port waste dump scandal in 1988, when an Italian ship brought in toxic chemical waste, made up of poly chlorobiphenyls and dumped it in Nigeria, and following several media reactions, the then military government created the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA). The major mandate of the Agency was to establish natural environmental guidelines, standard and criteria, most especially in the area of waste quality, effluent discharge, and air and atmospheric quality (FEMA, 1998).

All the states in Nigeria are having serious challenges over the waste situations in their respective cities and efforts has been made through various policies and strategies to curb the 'waste challenge.' In Akwa Ibom State, the government enacted the Akwa Ibom State Environmental Protection and Waste Management Law Cap. 47, 2000 that provided for the establishment of Akwa Ibom State Environmental Protection and Waste Management Agency (AKSEPWMA) in 2000 (AKSEPWMA Law 2000). Part II section 6 of the law provide for the functions of the Agency to include among others: ensuring regular evacuation of refuse from public places and dustbins and clearing ant other domestic waste found residential premises, ensure opening and clearing of public drains and effective drainage of liquid waste and free flow of water and create awareness on the need for environmental education. The study examined the implementation of waste management policy in Uyo Municipality, Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, it examined how lack of effective waste evacuation is contributing to the incidence of flooding, determine how ineffective desilting is responsible for blocked drainage and also evaluate how ineffectiveness in waste management awareness programmes is promoting poor waste management attitude among residents in Uyo Municipality.

Statement of the Problem

Despite several attempts, Nigeria has not been able to implement waste management policy to achieve the envisaged goals because of numerous challenges impeding waste management policy implementation. According to Adama (2007), and Imam, Mohammed, Wilson, and Cheeseman, (2008), the most significant factor affecting municipal waste management in the city is most apparent inadequacies in the area of institutional and legal framework for waste management.

In Akwa Ibom state, Akwa Ibom State Environmental protection and Waste Management Agency (AKSEPWMA), is the statutory agency responsible for implementing waste management policy in the state has been embarking on some routine activities like waste collection, transportation and disposal at the dump site, organize clean up exercises, as well as making effort to desilt blocked drainages etc. It is observed that all these efforts have not yielded any meaningful impact as heaps of unevacuated refuse continue to adorn major locations in the state capital, flooding incidence has not abated, blocked drainages due to lack of desilting, indiscriminate dumping of waste by residents and so on. This situation has continued to attract endless criticisms from the public, who are disappointed and dissatisfied with the Agency over their ineffectiveness in implementing the waste management policy in the state.

Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to examine waste management policy implementation Nigeria, with focus on the role of Akwa Ibom State Environmental Protection and Waste Management Agency (AKSEPWMA).

Specifically, the study is:

1. To examine how ineffective waste evacuation has contributed to the incidence of flooding in Uyo municipality, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
2. To determine how ineffective desilting has accounted for blockage of drainage system in Uyo municipality, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
3. To evaluate how ineffectiveness in waste management awareness programmes has resulted in poor waste management attitude of residents in Uyo municipality, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. Has ineffectiveness in waste evacuation contributed to the incidence of flooding in Uyo Municipality?
2. Has ineffective desilting account for the blockage of the drainage system in Uyo municipality?
3. Has ineffectiveness in waste management awareness programmes resulted in poor waste management attitude of residents in Uyo municipality?

Literature Review

Concept of Waste

According to Amasuomo and Baird (2016) waste refer to necessary outcome of human activities. Solid waste may be defined as materials that is useless, unused, undesirable, or unwanted materials available in solid form (Sigh et al. 2014). Oyideran (1997) refer waste to substance or objects discarded as worthless or unwanted, defective or of no further value from manufacturing or production process. Sigh et al (2014), solid waste is defined as useless, unused, unwanted, or discarded materials available in solid form.

Waste Management Policy

It is government outlined programmes and strategies for waste management. In Nigeria, Section 20 of Chapter 11 of the 1999 constitution (As Amended) has prescribe the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State policy thus: the state shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wildlife of Nigeria. This provision demonstrates the important that Nigeria's government attach to environmental sustainability. Part 11 of the fourth schedule of the constitution specifically deal on waste and how it should be managed. It places waste management in the concurrent legislative list so that all tiers of government can take part in the management of waste.

Waste Management Policy Implementation

Public policy implementation is important in achieving the policy objectives because it is the mechanisms, resources, and relationships that link policies to programme action. More specifically, it means carrying out, accomplishing, fulfilling, producing, or completing a given task. Seraw and Lu (2005) confirmed that the success or failure of a policy depends upon its

effective implementation. Also, Ezeah (2010) stressed that: “there are various problem facing developing nations in terms of implementing policies, he also identified those challenges to include corruption, lack of continuity in government policies and inadequate human and material resources, all of which often led to implementation gap-that is a widening distance between the stated policy goals and the realization of such goals. Consequently, the Akwa Ibom State government under His Excellency, Obong (Arc.) Victor Attah provided the expected legal frame work for the management of waste in the state by signing into law the Akwa Ibom State Environmental Protection and Waste Management Agency (AKSEPWMA) Law Cap 47, 2000.

Waste Evacuation and Flooding

Waste evacuation refers to the removal of waste from a location such as buildings, community, pathway or drainage to disposal site or treatment facility. Waste generation is a recurrent problem globally and particularly in urban cities. It is considered one of the most serious issue confronting developing nations suffering from severe environmental pollution due to high waste generation profile. This increase waste generation has negative impact on the cities, especially in the aspect of blocking drainages and impeding free flow of water and other debris thereby resulting in flooding and other negative consequences. The challenges of waste evacuation are mainly attributable to lack of specialized personnel and equipment that can equaled the volume of waste generated in the cities. Also, lack of information concerning waste collection schedule, improper and inadequate number of receptacles deployed, inadequate vehicles, poor roads network impedes effective waste evacuation (Abdel-Shafy and Mansour, 2018). Waste evacuation has remained a serious challenge to waste management in Nigeria because of the ever-increasing waste generation occasioned by the increasing socioeconomic activities, industrialization and urbanization.

When wastes are not evacuated routinely to avoid accumulation, there is the possibility of the waste to spill into gutters thereby blocking the drains and when the drains are not free to allow for the flow of running water there is the tendency to cause flood. Flood is a destructive natural occurrence which affects both urban and rural areas (Dihn et. al., 2012). It is among the world most devastating natural disaster, claiming lives and causing damage to properties than any other natural phenomenon; with wide spread negative scenario (Kundu, 2011). Flooding is common in every urban city in Nigeria. To curb this menace, the city authority provides for policy that when implemented will help in promoting proper waste management by ensuring the provision of all the necessary equipment that is required to implement effective waste management programmes especially in ensuring the timely evacuation of waste from the different collection sites.

Desilting and Blocked Drainages

Desilting of waste refers to the removal of silt, dirt and debris that has accumulated and blocked the gutters, reducing or blocking running waters. Desilting is a very important aspect of waste management because it ensures that gutters that have been left overtime, which has become clogged with sediment and debris that are capable of blocking the drainages are removed. Desilting has continued to remain a daunting task to waste managers due to the unavailability of the technical equipment and infrastructure that is required to carry out these

operations effectively. What is usually obtained in most Nigerian cities, is to mobilise some adhoc workers called 'desilters' armed with shovels, diggers, machetes, some without personal protection, to the sites of the blocked drainages. The desilters will then dig out the debris and heap them on the roadsides, pending when they will be removed by those hired to do so. This debris sometimes is not evacuated for days and may also wash back into the gutters by raining waters thereby making the operations cyclic. The inability of the responsible agencies to effectively desilt the gutters and other channels has been responsible for the blocked drainages. It is therefore evident that if desilting is not effectively carried out, it has the potency to cause environmental related hazards.

Waste Management Awareness Programmes and Waste Management Attitude

One of the critical aspects of effective waste management is creating awareness about waste management practices among the people. It is practically impossible to operate effective waste management activities or implement any waste management policy without creating the necessary awareness to enable the people become part of the efforts. A comprehensive waste management programme will cover various aspects of waste management orientations such as: proper waste disposal method, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle practice, expose the negative impact of poor waste management, community participation and enlightenment, segregation and categorization of waste, government initiatives and policies and so on.

Theoretical Framework

Policy implementation theory, the inter-organisational interaction approach was adopted for this study. The theory propounded by Litwak and Rothman and Levine and White began in the 1960s, when researchers started to have a growing interest in how the environment affects the organisation behavior Hooyman (1976). Specifically, they were interested in how organisation could decrease uncertainty in the environment through collaboration (Marku, 2016). The basic assumption of the theory is that collaborations among community of organisations lead to a more comprehensive coordinated approach to a complex issue than can be achieved by one organisation. Hooyman (1976) suggest that for the inter-organisational interaction to be effective certain conditions have to be in place, these are: the existence of relationship between the agencies involved, the awareness of partial interdependence among the agencies, resource asymmetry between units to be coordinated and the type of task to be coordinated.

Methodology

Uyo became the capital city of Akwa Ibom State in 1987. It has a landmass of 362Km² and a population of 554,906 (NPC, 2006). Uyo Municipality lies between latitudes 4°58'N and 5°41'N and longitudes 7°51'E and 8°E. The city covers an area of about 214.31 square kilometers. The city can be accessed via Abak road, Nwaniba Road, Uyo-Itu/Calabar Road, Aka Nung Udoe Road and Ikot Ekpene Road (Mbina and Edem, 2015). The major language spoken in Uyo is Ibibio, majority of the people engages in farming and trading. Their main agricultural products are cassava, yam, cocoa and vegetable and Akpan Andem as the major market. Uyo Municipality was chosen as the area of study because of its strategic location as the political and

economic centre of the state and has continue to witness influx of people from the rural areas and other cities, couple with the increasing industrialization and urbanization, the volume of waste generation is heightening, with its attendant implications on public health and the environment.

3.3 Population of Study

The total population of the study is 554,906 (NPC, 2006). This population is people living in the Uyo municipality who are directly affected by the lack of implementation of waste management policy by AKSEPWMA.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

The simple random sampling technique will be use to pick sample population from the eleven (11) wards that make up the sample population which is 554, 906 and the sample size will be determined using Krejcie and Morgan statistical table. Krejcie and Morgan statistical formula was adopted to determine the sample size for the study. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan statistical table, the sample size from the population of 554, 906 is 384. Therefore, 384 was the sample population for the study.

Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique that was used for this study was structured questionnaires. The questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher working with four research assistants.

Instrumentation

The instrument that was used for the study was a structured questionnaire titled "Waste Management Policy Implementation in Uyo Municipality, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria" (WMPIUMAKSNQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections, 'Section A' for collection of information on respondent's socio-demographic data: sex, age and educational level while 'Section B' will be sub-divided into three subscales. The first was on ineffectiveness in waste evacuation and its impact on the incidence of flooding in the city. The second was on the lack of ineffectiveness in desilting and the relationship with the blocking of drainage system. The third was on how lack of waste management awareness programmes result in poor waste management attitude of residents, all in Uyo Municipality. It was a four-point Likert rating scale of:

Strongly Agreed (SA)	4
Agreed (A).....	3
Disagreed (D)	2
Strongly Disagreed (SD).....	1

Method of Analysis

Chi-square was used for the analysis of the data collected from the field. The Chi-square as denoted as:

Where: O = Observed frequency
 e = expected frequency

The critical value was compared with the calculated value and as required, if the calculated value is greater than the critical value, the null hypothesis (H_0) will be rejected while the alternative hypothesis (H_1) will be accepted.

In this study therefore, the researcher adopted a 95% confidence interval (0.05 level of significance). The degree of freedom therefore was derived thus:

$$\begin{aligned} D/F: & (C-1) \times (R-1) \\ & (4-1) \times (2-1) \\ & (3) \times (1) = 3 @ 0.05 \text{ level of significance} = 7.815 \end{aligned}$$

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics of Subjects	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
SEX:		
Males	213	55.5
Females	171	44.5
TOTAL	384	100
AGE:		
Below 28	99	25.8
29-39	121	31.5
40-50	102	26.6
51 & above	62	16.2
TOTAL	384	100
MARITAL STATUS:		
Single	87	22.7
Married	297	77.3
TOTAL	384	100
QUALIFICATIONS:		
FSLC	71	18.5
SSCE & OND	128	33.3
BSc, HND & above	139	36.2
Others	46	12.0
TOTAL	384	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2024.(By researcher)

The above data presentation shows the demographic characteristics of respondents for the study. Analysis of the above data shows that in respect to the sex of the respondents, 213 representing 55.5 percent were male while 171 representing 44.5 percent were female. In respect to age analysis, the number of respondents between the age of 0 to 28 years 99, that is 25.8 percent of the sample population. Those within 29 and 39 years were 121 that is 31.5 percent, 40 to 50 years were 102, that is 26.6 percent and those from 51 years and above were 62, that is 16.2 percent. On marital status of the respondents, data from the table shows that 87 respondents, that is 22.7 percent were singles while 297, that is 77.3 percent of the respondents were married. In terms of educational qualifications, the analysis indicates that respondent's First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) were 71, that is 18.5 percent. Those with Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Ordinary National Diploma (OND) were 128, that is 33.3 percent. Those with BSc, HND and above were 139, that is 36.2 percent while those with other forms of qualifications were 46 representing 12.0 percent of the sample population.

Table 1: Analysis of responses on the relationship between ineffectiveness in waste evacuation and incidence of flooding in Uyo Municipality.

S/N	Statements	SA	A	SD	D	Total
1.	Poor evacuation of waste can lead to flooding in Uyo Municipality?	289 (75%)	68 (18%)	14 (3%)	13 (4%)	384 (100%)
2.	Ineffective evacuation of waste in Uyo Municipality is as a result of lack of adequate equipment?	268 (70%)	97 (25%)	8 (2%)	11 (3%)	384 (100%)
3.	Poor road network has contributed to the problems of waste evacuation in Uyo Municipality?	183 (48%)	172 (45%)	14 (3%)	15 (4%)	384 (100%)
4.	Inadequate waste receptacles promote poor waste evacuation practices in Uyo Municipality?	247 (64%)	103 (27%)	22 (6%)	12 (3%)	384 (100%)
5.	Poor waste disposal can lead to difficulties in waste evacuation in Uyo Municipality?	208 (54%)	157 (41%)	8 (2%)	11 (3%)	384 (100%)

From the table above, it showed responses to question 1, on if poor waste evacuation can lead to incidence of flooding in Uyo Municipality, 289 (75%) strongly agreed that there is a relationship between poor waste evacuation and incidence of flooding in Uyo Municipality, 68 (18%) agreed, 13 (3%) strongly disagreed while 14 (4%) disagreed with the position that there is a relationship between poor waste evacuation and incidence of flooding in Uyo Municipality. Question 2, on if ineffective waste evacuation in Uyo Municipality is as a result of inadequate equipment, the respondents, responds as follows; 268 (70%) strongly agreed, 97 (25%) agreed while 8 (2%) strongly disagreed and 11 (3%) disagreed that ineffective in waste evacuation in Uyo Municipality is as a result of inadequate equipment. Question 3, the respondents were asked if poor road network has contributed to the problems of waste evacuation in Uyo

Municipality. A total of 183 representing 48% strongly agreed, 172 (45%) agreed that poor road network has contributed to the problems of waste evacuation in Uyo Municipality while 14 (3%) strongly disagreed and 15 (4%) disagreed that poor road network has contributed to the problems of waste evacuation in Uyo Municipality. Question 4, the responses from the respondents on if inadequate waste receptacles promote poor waste evacuation practices in Uyo Municipality shows that 247 (64%) strongly agreed and 103 (27%) agreed while 22 (6%) strongly disagreed and 12 (3%) disagreed that inadequate waste receptacles promote poor waste evacuation practices in Uyo Municipality. Question 5, this was to find out if poor waste disposal can lead to difficulties in waste evacuation in Uyo Municipality. From the analysis of the responses, a total of 208 (54%) strongly agreed, 157 (41%) agreed to that position while 8 (2%) strongly disagreed and 11 (3%) disagreed that poor waste disposal can lead to difficulties in waste evacuation in Uyo Municipality. From the table, the data collected and analyzed shows that there is a relationship between ineffectiveness in waste evacuation and incidence of flooding in Uyo Municipality.

Table 2: Analysis of the responses on the relationship between ineffectiveness in desilting and blockage of the drainage system in Uyo Municipality.

S/N	Statements	SA	A	SD	D	Total
6.	Ineffective desilting is responsible for blocked drainages in Uyo Municipality?	152 (40%)	209 (54%)	10 (2%)	13 (4%)	384 (100%)
7.	Lack of infrastructure is contributing to the poor desilting of water channels in Uyo Municipality?	224 (58%)	96 (25%)	25 (7%)	39 (10%)	384 (100%)
8.	Inadequate trained personnel have made desilting difficult in Uyo Municipality?	238 (62%)	88 (23%)	32 (8%)	26 (7%)	384 (100%)
9.	There is a relationship between availability of modern equipment and effective desilting in Uyo Municipality?	197 (51%)	162 (42%)	13 (3%)	12 (3%)	384 (100%)
10.	Indiscriminate dumping of waste is responsible for poor desilting of water channels in Uyo Municipality?	183 (48%)	174 (45%)	18 (5%)	9 (2%)	384 (100%)

The analysis on table 2, question 6, the question was to find out if ineffective desilting is responsible for blocked drainages in Uyo Municipality. From the analysis of the responses, 152 (40%) strongly agreed, 209 (54%) agreed that ineffectiveness in desilting is responsible for the blocked drainages in Uyo Municipality while 10 (2%) strongly disagreed and 13 (4%) disagreed. Question 7, the question was on lack of infrastructure contributing to the poor desilting of water channels in Uyo Municipality. The respondents responded as follows; 224 (58%) strongly agreed, 96 (25%) agreed that lack of infrastructure contribute to poor desilting of water channels in Uyo Municipality while 25 (7%) strongly disagreed and 39 (10%) disagreed

that lack of infrastructure contribute to poor desilting of water channels in Uyo Municipality. Question 8, the question was to find out how lack of trained personnel has made desilting difficult in Uyo Municipality.

The analysis from respondents shows that 238 (62%) strongly agreed and 88 (23%) agreed to that position while 32 (8%) strongly disagreed, 26 (7%) disagreed that inadequate trained personnel has made desilting difficult in Uyo Municipality. Question 9, the question bothers on the relationship between availability of modern equipment and effective desilting in Uyo Municipality. The responses from the analysis shows that 197 (51%) strongly agreed, 162 (42%) agreed that there is a relationship while 13 (3%) strongly disagreed and 12 (3%) disagreed that there is a relationship between availability of modern equipment and effective desilting in Uyo Municipality. Question 10, the question was to find out if indiscriminate dumping of waste is responsible for poor desilting of water channels in Uyo Municipality. The responses from the respondents to this question shows that 183 (48%) strongly agreed, 174 (45%) agreed that indiscriminate dumping of waste is responsible for poor desilting of water channels in Uyo Municipality while 18 (5%) strongly disagreed and 9 (2%) disagreed. From the analysis of the all the responses from the table, it shows that there is a relationship between ineffectiveness in desilting and blockage of drainage system in Uyo Municipality.

Table 3: Analysis of responses on the relationship between ineffectiveness in waste management awareness programmes and poor waste management attitude in Uyo Municipality

S/N	Statements	SA	A	SD	D	Total
11.	Ineffective waste management awareness programmes is responsible for the poor waste management attitude among residents of Uyo Municipality?	198 (52%)	128 (33%)	31 (8%)	27 (7%)	384 (100%)
12.	The level of funding affects the effectiveness of implementing waste management awareness programmes in Uyo municipality?	203 (53%)	162 (42%)	9 (2%)	10 (3%)	384 (100%)
13.	Lack of involvement of the people in designing waste management awareness programmes is responsible for the ineffective implementation Uyo Municipality?	172 (45%)	153 (40%)	32 (8%)	27 (7%)	384 (100%)
14.	Inappropriate implementation strategies are responsible for the ineffective waste management awareness programmes in Uyo Municipality?	211 (55%)	104 (27%)	29 (8%)	40 (10%)	384 (100%)
15.	Organizational inefficiency is responsible for the ineffective implementation of waste management awareness programmes in Uyo Municipality?	207 (54%)	121 (32%)	42 (11%)	14 (4%)	384 (100%)

Table 3 is on analysis of responses from question 11, this question was designed to find out if poor waste management awareness programme is responsible for the poor waste management attitude among residents of Uyo Municipality. From the analysis of data from the table, it shows that 198 (52%) strongly agreed and 128 (33%) agreed that poor waste management awareness programme is responsible for poor waste management attitude among residents of Uyo Municipality while 31 (8%) strong disagreed and 27 (7%) disagreed that poor waste management awareness programme is responsible for poor waste management attitude among residents of Uyo Municipality. Question 12, the question is to find out if the level of funding affects the effectiveness of implementing waste management awareness programme in Uyo Municipality. the responses from the respondents to this question shows that 203 (53%) strongly agreed, 162 (42%) agreed to this while 9 (2%) strongly disagreed and 10 (3%) disagreed that the level of funding affects the effectiveness of implementing waste management awareness programme in Uyo Municipality. Question 13, the question was to find out from the respondents if lack of involvement of the people in designing waste management awareness programme is responsible for the ineffective implementation in Uyo Municipality. The analysis shows that the respondents responded as follows; 172 (45%) strongly agreed, 153 (40%) agreed that effectiveness of implementing waste management awareness programme depend on involving the people in designing the programme while 32 (8%) strongly disagreed, 27 (7%) disagreed that lack of involvement of the people in designing waste management awareness programme is responsible for the ineffective implementation in Uyo Municipality.

Question 14, this question was to find out if inappropriate implementation strategies are responsible for the ineffective management awareness programme in Uyo Municipality. In respond to this question, 211 (55%) strongly agreed, 104 (27%) agreed that effectiveness of waste management awareness programmes depends on the strategies while 29 (8%) strongly disagreed and 40 (10%) disagreed that inappropriate implementation strategies are responsible for the ineffective management awareness programme in Uyo Municipality. Question 15, this question bothers on organizational efficiency and effectiveness in implementing waste management awareness programme. From table, the data shows that the responses were as follows; 207 (54%) strongly agreed, 121 (32) agreed while 42 (11%) strongly disagreed and 14 (4%) disagreed that organizational efficiency is responsible for the ineffective implementation of waste management awareness programme in Uyo Municipality. From the table 3, the data analyzed from all the respondents to the questions shows that there is a relationship between lack of waste management awareness programme and poor waste management attitude among residents in Uyo Municipality.

Discussion of Findings

Table one shows that there is a significant relationship between ineffectiveness in waste evacuation and incidence of flooding in Uyo Municipality. Waste evacuation is a very significant aspect of waste management. Without waste evacuation waste will remain in a location constituting a serious danger to the free flow in running waters due to impediments. This position is supported by Abdel-Shafy and Mansour (2018) who posit that improper and inadequate number of receptacles deployed, inadequate vehicle, poor roads network impedes effective waste evacuation. This situation is what is responsible for food frequency incidence of

flooding in Uyo Municipality. Because when wastes are not evacuated on time, they spill into nearby gutters and block water channel leading to flooding.

The result of table two shows that there is a significant relationship between ineffectiveness in desilting and blockage of drainage system in Uyo Municipality.

Blocked drainages have been responsible for the incidence of flooding in Uyo Municipality over the years. These blocked drainages are as a result of various kinds of waste that has been thrown into the gutter due to indiscriminate waste disposal habit by the residents. The negative impact of this situation is that, when it rains or there is channeling of water from any facility, the water will not have where to flow to due to block drainages, therefore the water will flow in any direction without control leading to flooding in the area.

The result of table three shows that there is a significant relationship between ineffectiveness in waste management awareness programmes and poor waste management attitude among residents of Uyo Municipality. It is through waste management awareness programmes that the resident come to imbibe modern waste management attitude, but if it is lacking or poorly executed, it will not achieve the expected result. Like Ayodeji (2012) observed, though there is appreciable awareness and knowledge about waste disposal among the people of Nigeria, only that there are crude and traditional methods. This shows that the widening knowledge gap in respect to traditional and modern waste management methods is responsible for the negative waste management attitude exhibited by the people. This is in line with the position of Adeyemo and Aboyesola (2013), who notes that attitude towards waste management, reflects the level of the people knowledge and awareness.

The negative impact of this ineffectiveness in waste management awareness programmes has been largely responsible for the poor waste management attitude among the residents of Uyo Municipality. Because only people who are more aware about modern waste management practices, are likely to engage in best waste management methods than those who are not aware (Rahman, 2016).

Conclusion

The study considered the implementation of waste management policy in Uyo Municipality, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Based on various variables and their relationship collated and analysed, it was concluded that the three variables: ineffectiveness in waste evacuation, ineffectiveness in desilting and ineffectiveness in waste management awareness programmes all have significant relationship with waste management in Uyo Municipality, Akwa Ibom State Nigeria. It was discovered that AKSEPWMA is still finding it difficult to implement waste management policy in Uyo Municipality due to various challenges that has continued to confront the agency. The study concludes that the agency must introduce effective waste management policy implementation approaches to ensure greater result in managing the waste situation in Uyo Municipality.

Recommendations

The study thus, has recommends some strategic measures to achieve waste management policy implementation in Uyo Municipality. These are:

Regular Evacuation of Waste

1. AKSEPWMA should ensure timely and regular evacuation of waste.
2. Waste dumps should be decentralized across the municipality.
3. More receptacles should be provided.
4. AKSEPWMA should ensure those companies contracted to handle waste evacuation has the required capacity.
5. Regular inspection of waste dump should be carried out to ascertain regularity and effectiveness of waste evacuation operations.

Effective Desilting of Water Channels

1. Effective enforcement of waste laws.
2. ASKEPWMA should work with or interface with other organizations/ministries to ensure that water channels are constructed in such a way it allows for easy desilting in case of blockage.
3. The agency should acquire modern desilting equipment.
4. More staff should be employed and trained them on modern desilting techniques and how to operate relevant equipment.
5. The agency should seek private sector collaborations in it operations.

Improved Waste Management Awareness Programme

1. The agency's department for public education should be reorganized and repositioned.
2. The agency should come up with stakeholders-centred waste management awareness programmes.
3. Waste management awareness programmes should be well funded.
4. Experts in strategic communication and information management should be engaged.
5. Waste management awareness should be incorporated into the school curriculum.

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Influence of Family Heads on Outcomes of Youths Behaviour in Tertiary Institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study addresses the role of gender in the leadership of the family. The study generally sought to ascertain the influence of family heads on the behaviour outcomes of youths in selected tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. A representative sample size of 396 was derived using the Taro Yamane Formula. A two-stage sampling technique was employed to select the 396 students within the study area. A structured questionnaire was employed to obtain information from the respondents. Data was analyzed by employing descriptive statistics, and the student's z-test. Upon analysis, it was found that 96% of the respondents had less than ₦70,000 (minimum wage) as their monthly allowance. It was discovered that youths' behaviour outcomes can be both positive and negative (pro-social and antisocial). Gender had a strong association with both prosocial behavior ($\chi^2=2.877$, $p<0.10$) and antisocial behavior ($\chi^2=1.740$, $p<0.10$), as revealed by the Chi-square analysis results. According to the z-test scores of students, there is a significant difference in their antisocial behavior based on the gender of their household heads. The study recommended the provision of targeted measures to assist both male- and female-led households to promote healthy behavioral development of their children.

Keywords: Gender, household leadership, Prosocial and antisocial behavior, Child development, Social policy interventions.

Introduction

Many sociological and psychological studies have been conducted on how family structure and dynamics impact young people's behaviour. The gender of the family head is just one of several variables influencing a child's development (Nkan and Asa, 2023; Nkan and Nnubia, 2023). Especially in higher education, studies are being conducted to understand how it influences behaviour, since students at tertiary level of education are somewhat autonomous. Family heads, whether male or female, influence parenting strategies, emotional support, discipline, and monitoring (Nkan and Asa, 2023). All of these components influence young people's ideas, behaviours, and interactions with others (Lamb, 2012). The presence or absence of a male or female head in a family could particularly influence behaviour patterns such as academic involvement, social conduct, and risk-taking behaviour during the transitional phase in higher education (Amato, 2014).

Traditionally, men in patriarchal families have been viewed as leaders, their focus being on power and financial support. On the other hand, women are perceived as more sensitive and kind (Adongo et al., 2023). However one views it, young people's behaviour which in many aspects, include their wish to succeed in school, their reaction to peer pressure, and their drug use, may be influenced by the gender of the family leader (Akpan and Nkan, 2013; Akpan et al., 2012).

Several studies have connected greater academic success and lower crime rates to the conventional method of male leadership, often known as the "father-knows-best" approach (Doan and Schwarz, 2020; King, 2013), and some other research suggests that children raised in households where women are head may be more resilient and flexible given that mothers are known to be caring and chatty (Doucet, 2000; McLanahan and Sandefur, 2009). As more and more families have only one parent, women are typically in charge of these houses which could enable young people to be more self-sufficient and responsible, which would be good in the future (Dunifonet al., 2005). Conversely, socioeconomic concerns can also have an impact on families managed by women, which might indirectly influence young people's performance in life (McLoyd, 2013). On the other hand, male-headed households could have greater restrictions that would either harm or benefit young people's willingness to take chances (Warshak, 2015). A father's involvement, warmth, and communication style can influence the results of male leadership (Jang, 2015).

The effects of family headship are particularly relevant in higher education settings, when students have more autonomy and exposure to a broader range of social factors. Studies show that the early independence that mother leadership promotes in children from female-headed homes often leads to more social responsibility and self-control (McLanahan and Percheski, 2008). Under difficulty, these students might demonstrate greater intellectual drive and perseverance. Households with men in control can provide kids safety and power, which impacts their behaviour; on the other side, rigorous regulations could push youngsters to transgress them (Stewart and Menning, 2009).

Examining factors like academic achievement, social ties, and risk-taking behaviours, this study seeks to explain how the gender of family heads impacts the behaviour of young people in tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. This study intends to contribute to the discussion on family ties and juvenile development by examining present research and pragmatic evidence. The findings of the study could help to guide initiatives and services intended to assist young people's healthy development as well as to address the specific issues children from various household settings experience.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are to;

- I. to investigate how the head of household affects the pro-social conduct of students in tertiary institutions; and
- ii. to ascertain how male-headed and female-headed homes affect students' participation in anti-social activities

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the behaviour outcomes of youths from male and female headed households

Methodology

Study Area

Akwa Ibom State is located in southern Nigeria. It is located between latitudes 4°32' and 5°53' North and longitudes 7°25' and 8°25' East. It is located in the tropical rainforest zone and has an area of 8,412 km² (Nelson et al., 2020; 2018). Akwa Ibom State is considered an education advantaged state with several tertiary institutions of mission, private and public ownership located within.

Sampling Method of Data Collection

The study population included all students in 3 public tertiary institutions (40,062) in the state namely, the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State University, Ikot Akpaden and the College of Education, Afaha Nsit. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the representative sample size of 396.

Data collection for this study utilized a questionnaire with a self-report measure seeking information on behaviour outcomes of the respondents. The Behaviour Outcomes Scale (BOS) was used with 17 statements ascertaining prosocial behaviour and 42 statements ascertaining anti-social behaviour. To ensure the instrument's validity, experts from the Departments of Home Economics and Agric Extension in the University of Uyo reviewed it for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study's objectives. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.76, which indicated high internal consistency. For data collection, the researcher visited the selected tertiary institutions, obtained necessary permissions, and randomly administered the questionnaires directly to the 396 participants. Careful measures were taken to ensure all questionnaires were completed and

retrieved, minimizing the risk of missing responses and ensuring data integrity (Nkan et al., 2024).

Data Analysis

The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage, frequency, mean. Inferential statistics like z-test were also employed in data analysis.

Results

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Most (78.83%) of the 396 survey responses were between 16 and 25 years old, implying most of the respondents were young adults (Table 1). Only 1.77% of students fell between 36 and 45 years old; 19.4% were between 26 and 35. Women accounted for 53.3% of the sample compared to 44.7% for men, hence the gender split was somewhat skewed in their favour. Though their educational backgrounds varied between institutions, most of the respondents (41.7%) were in their second year (200 level). Following this came lower figures at higher levels, including 4.8% in their fourth year (400 level), 2.5% in their fifth year (500 level), 2.3% in postgraduate studies, 28.0% in their first year (100 level), and 20.7% in their third year (300 level). Also, the most prevalent family structure was one with five to six people, which accounted for 43.7% of all households. While slightly larger households with seven to eight people accounted for 20.7%, families with three to four people accounted for around 24.5% of all responses, while the least (11.1%) reported having nine or more family members. In addition, 88.6% of the respondents stated their family was headed by a male; just 11.4% claimed their family head was a woman. Of the educational level of the household head, 20.5% reported them to have completed secondary school; 65.4% had obtained university education, 11.9% had completed primary school, while 0.5% had no formal education. Furthermore, 1.8% of the respondents reported that the heads of their households received their education through adult literacy courses or computer training. In terms of income, most of the responses (69%) indicated they had a monthly income of ₦30,000 or less, 21.9% made between ₦30,000 and ₦50,000, while 5.1% made between ₦50,000 and ₦70,000. Only 4% of individuals surveyed claimed to have over ₦70,000 monthly.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
16-25 years	312	78.83
26-35 years	77	19.4
36-45 years	7	1.77
Sex		
Male	177	44.7
Female	219	53.3

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Education level in school		
100	111	28.0
200	165	41.7
300	82	20.7
400	19	4.8
500	10	2.5
Post graduate	9	2.3
Family size		
3-4	97	24.5
5-6	173	43.7
7-8	82	20.7
9 and above	44	11.1
Sex of family head		
Male	351	88.6
Female	45	11.4
Education Status of Family Head		
No formal education	2	0.5
Primary education	47	11.9
Secondary education	8	20.5
Tertiary education	259	65.4
Others (adult literacy, computer training etc	7	1.8
Monthly Allowance (in naira)		
≥30,000	273	69
30001 50,000	87	21.9
50,001 70,000	20	5.1
>70,000	16	4.0

Behavioral Characteristics of Respondents

The results reveal several ways in which respondents acted depending on significant traits including caring, sharing, assisting, volunteering, honesty and fairness, responsibility, and calm demeanour (Table 2). Caring was found to be the most important behaviour ($\bar{x} = 3.36$), implying a genuine desire to demonstrate care and comfort to others. Also, 54.3% of the respondents stated they like delivering presents to their parents; 46.5% said they find time to console upset or furious individuals. The second most frequent response was "helping," with 47.7% claiming they help someone who has been wounded and 48.7% indicating they help their buddies with lesson evaluations.

The respondents' calm demeanour ranked up third ($\bar{x} = 3.33$) behind more than half who said they shun conflicts or confrontations. Coming in at number four ($\bar{x} = 3.20$), sharing implied a desire to participate in social activities. For example, 44.9% of those polled said they invite

friends to play games; 48.5% claimed they enjoy doing housework. Among the 51.3% of respondents who indicated cooperative work, duties came in sixth ($\bar{x} = 3.17$). However, somewhat less often was observing school rules. Only 42.9% of those polled believed following the guidelines was easy; 11.1% disagreed. Coming in sixth were honesty and fairness ($\bar{x} = 3.05$); 52.8% said less-able people should be acknowledged for their achievements; 38.1% claimed they would never violate the law. Volunteering scored the lowest ($\bar{x} = 2.86$) probably because less people reported spontaneous actions of help. Only 30.6% strongly agreed to help pick up items left behind by others; only 25.3% claimed they would clean up after another.

Table 2: Behavioral Characteristics of Respondents in the study area

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	Rank
1. Caring						
I enjoy giving presents to my parent(s)	215 (54.3)	150 (37.9)	14 (3.5)	17 (4.3)		
I show sympathy to someone who has made a mistake.	69 (42.7)	194 (49.0)	19 (4.8)	14 (3.5)		
I take time to comfort people who are upset and heart broken	184 (46.5)	170 (42.9)	34 (8.6)	8 (2.0)	3.36	1
2 Sharing						
I invite others to join in a game	133 (33.6)	178 (44.9)	68 (17.2)	17 (4.3)		
I enjoy the company of others a lot	172 (43.4)	164 (41.4)	43 (10.9)	17 (4.3)		
I enjoy sharing in household work (e.g., cooking, cleaning dishes, sweeping the floor)	192 (48.5)	151 (38.1)	25 (6.3)	28 (7.1)	3.20	4
3 Helping						
Where I understand better, I help my course mates revise their lessons	193 (48.7)	177 (44.7)	20 (5.1)	6 (1.5)		
I try to help someone who has been hurt	189 (47.7)	184 (46.5)	18 (4.5)	5 (1.3)		

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	Rank
I offer to help other people who are having difficulty with a task in school	145 (36.6)	209 (52.8)	35 (8.8)	7 (1.8)		
I help other people who are feeling sick	162 (40.9)	194 (49.0)	28 (7.1)	12 (3.0)	3.34	2
4 Volunteering I spontaneously help to pick up objects which another has dropped	121 (30.6)	156 (39.4)	66 (16.7)	53 (13.4)		
I volunteer to clear up a mess someone else has made	100 (25.3)	162 (40.9)	110 (27.8)	24 (6.1)	2.86	7
5 Honesty/fairness I take the opportunity to praise the work of less able people	107 (27.0)	209 (52.8)	56 (14.1)	24 (6.1)		
I will not break the law no matter the circumstance	151 (38.1)	155 (39.1)	62 (15.7)	28 (7.1)	3.05	6
6 Responsibility I co-operate with others	203 (51.3)	144 (36.4)	33 (8.3)	16 (4.0)		
Complying with school rules does not take much effort	32 (33.3)	170 (42.9)	50 (12.6)	44 (11.1)	3.17	5
7 Peaceful disposition If there is a quarrel or dispute, I will try to stop it	169 (42.7)	201 (50.8)	14 (3.5)	12 (3.0)	3.33	3

Anti-Social Behavior Among Respondents

Unfriendly Actions of Respondents

The results, which fall into three groups—loud behaviour, drug and substance abuse and selling, and harassment and intimidation—show different degrees of antisocial behaviour. Harassment and intimidation got the highest scores ($\bar{x} = 3.37$) suggesting that certain respondents might act negatively towards others. Unexpectedly, 8.1% of those polled said they carried a knife or other weapon for self-defence; 71.0% vehemently disagreed with this claim. Furthermore, 7.6% of those surveyed confessed to ganging up on a friend; 62.9% vehemently disagreed with this. With 8.1% confessing to using offensive language and 45.2% vehemently disagreeing with it, many others were also unkind to each other. The survey findings show that although most of the respondents are against harassment and bullying, a small percentage still participate in these behaviours. Rowdy behaviour came in second ($\bar{x} = 3.32$), and opinions on disruptive behaviour differed somewhat. Of those who answered, for example, 61.6% strongly disagreed with deliberately beating or slapping someone; 63.6% strongly disagreed with saying that person acts badly because they have consumed too much alcohol. On the other hand, 14.4% confessed to using public transport without payment and 16.9% said they liked being in noisy crowds. Astonishingly, only 8.3% said they did not use trash cans; 38.9% vehemently disagreed that it was challenging to throw away waste. Most of those who answered said the third most common response was "drug/substance abuse and dealing." Of those who could avoid arrest, 66.7% were against selling illegal drugs; 68.9% were vehemently against using drugs or alcohol to enhance confidence. Still, 10.4% confessed to giving in to group pressure to fit in; 24.7% said they would go to any length to reach their objectives.

Table 2.2: Anti-social behaviour of respondents in the study area

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	Rank
1. Rowdy behaviour						
I find it waste of time locating the waste bin	33 (8.3)	76 (19.2)	133 (33.6)	154 (38.9)		
I would urinate in a public place without giving much thought	17(4.3)	39(9.8)	113 (28.5)	227 (57.3)		
I act the way I am not supposed to because I drink too much	30 (7.6)	25 (6.3)	89 (22.5)	252 (63.6)		
I hit, or punch people on purpose with the intention of really hurting them	17(4.3)	26.(6.6)	109 (27.5)	244 (61.6)		

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	Rank
I make so much noise in a public place so that people complain	21 (5.3)	20 (5.5)	117 (29.5)	238 (60.1)		
I enjoy a rowdy group	28 (7.1)	67 (16.9)	118 (29.8)	183 (46.2)		
I use a public transportation without paying any or enough money	21(5.3)	57(14.4)	79(19.9)	239(40.4)	3.32	2
2. Drug/substance misuse and dealing						
I would do what I have to do to get things working for me	84(21.2)	98 (24.7)	102(25.8)	1129(28.3)		
For a good reason, I would commit a crime	28 (7.1)	78 (19.7)	104(47.0)	186(47.0)		
I hang around with people who get in trouble	27(6.8)	55(13.9)	77(19.4)	237(59.8)		
I do what my friends do in order to be accepted in a group	16(4.0)	41(10.4)	100(25.3)	239(60.4)		
While hanging out with peers I could take more substance than necessary	24(6.1)	36(9.1)	137(34.6)	199(50.3)		
I could sell illegal substance if I could get away with it	14(3.5)	36(9.1)	82(20.7)	264(66.7)		
I use alcohol or drug to boost myself confidence	17 (4.3)	15 (3.8)	91(23.0)	273(68.9)	3.26	3
3. Intimidation/harassment						
It does not really bother me if my actions hurt people's feelings	25 (6.3)	53 (13.4)	128(32.3)	190(48.0)		
I do say nasty things to someone I know or called them names	32 (8.1)	89(22.5)	96(24.2)	179(45.2)		

I have carried a knife or other weapon with me for protection or in case it was needed in a fight	32 (8.1)	21 (95.3)	62(15.7)	281(71.0)		
I get others to gang up on a peer I do not like	13(3.3)	30(7.6)	164(26.3)	249(62.9)		
I use physical force or threaten to use force in order to dominate others	17(4.3)	37(9.3)	88(22.2)	254(64.1)		
I send nasty/offensive words to opposite sex	22(5.6)	29(7.3)	81(20.5)	264(66.7)		
I take delight in pestering people	20(5.8)	37(9.3)	119(30.1)	217(54.8)	3.37	1

Difference between behaviours

The test results on whether there were significant differences in behavioural outcomes between students from male-headed and female-headed households (Table 4) revealed a computed z-score of pro-social behaviour of -1.85, which was below the critical z-value of 1.96 at a 0.05 significance level. This suggested the null hypothesis could not be rejected. This implies that children from households with male and female heads behave similarly in terms of helping others. However, the expected z-score (1.998), caused rejection of the null hypothesis for antisocial behaviour as it surpassed the critical z-value (1.96) implying that students from households with male heads are more likely to be antisocial than those with female heads.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 4: Hypothesis testing of behaviour outcomes between students from male-headed households and female-headed households

Groups	Pro-social behaviour				antisocial behaviour			
	df	zcal	criticalz	decision	df	zcal	criticalz	decision
Male-headed households	394	-1.85	1.96	not significant	394	1.98	1.96	significant
Female-headed households								

Note: df = degree of freedom, zcal = calculated z, level of significance = 0.05

Discussions

The findings of the study reveal significant differences in youth behaviour between male- and female-headed households, especially in terms of pro-social and anti-social tendencies. In line with studies stressing the nurturing part of maternal figures in fostering empathy and emotional control, students from female-headed homes exhibited more pro-social behaviours including kindness and cooperation (Munarini and Kgadima, 2023). Often, female-headed homes foster unity and open communication, therefore encouraging positive social behaviours (Mabelane, 2016). Since maternal figures usually provide more emotional support, children in these homes may develop stronger interpersonal skills and a more inclination to engage in selfless acts.

On the other hand, children from male-headed households exhibited greater antisocial conduct, which corroborated research linking paternal absence or emotional distance to greater delinquency (Makoni., 2017). Men-led homes could promote traditional male values that discourage emotional expression and, in some cases, cause aggressive behaviour (DeGue *et al.*, 2024). This suggests that homes run by men may create less desirable atmosphere for internalizing social norms, therefore increasing the likelihood of rule-breaking and violent behaviour. Furthermore, research suggests that when fathers are authoritarian or distant, children may struggle with emotional control, which would result in behavioural issues (Pinquart, 2017).

Despite these differences, both household types scored similarly on fundamental pro-social behaviours like honesty and responsibility, implying that these traits are developed through broader social interactions rather than being influenced just by family headship (Arnett, 2018). Peer relationships and community involvement are key factors in creating good behaviours, sometimes offsetting the effects of family dynamics (Lily *et al.*, 2024; Nkan and Nnubia, 2023).

The study also revealed that students from male-headed households were less likely to participate in voluntary acts of service, which corresponds with lower emotional modelling in these environments. Studies show that teenagers' wish to engage in pro-social activities is shaped by their level of social support and community involvement (Garrod and Dowell, 2020). Young people in male-led households may struggle to internalize and consistently act on social values. Furthermore, studies reported that young people in these homes are more likely to experience mental or behavioural issues, especially when father figures provide little emotional support (Cleary, 2022). These findings emphasize the complex relationship between household structure and behavioural outcomes, therefore reinforcing the notion that family headship does not entirely predict young behaviour. Larger social networks, peer pressures, and socioeconomic factors all have a major impact as well (Olanrewaju and Omoponle, 2017). Seeing behavioural development from an ecological perspective—defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as the interaction of many environmental systems shaping an individual's development—underscores the importance of this.

Although there were no significant changes in prosocial behaviour, the hypothesis test revealed significant differences in antisocial behaviour between male and female-headed households. This suggests that while anti-social tendencies are influenced by household leadership, outside elements such as peer interactions and community engagement have a

greater impact on fostering pro-social behaviours (Hartup and Stevens, 1997). These findings back research underlining the significance of bigger social environments in shaping positive behaviours beyond parental influence. Higher levels of antisocial behaviour among students from male-headed homes, however, suggest family structure's possible influence on behavioural outcomes. Research indicate that children raised in emotionally distant paternal environments are more likely to exhibit violence and delinquency (Savage, 2014). Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) backs up this explanation by implying that children in such homes could mimic their fathers' violent or controlling actions, so reinforcing negative behavioural patterns. On the other hand, female-headed households are occasionally connected to stronger social support networks, which might serve as a protective factor against antisocial tendencies (Cummings et al., 2004). Hajal and Paley (2020) observed that mothers in these households provide consistent emotional guidance, therefore regulating their children's behaviour and reducing aggressive tendencies. Although some research suggests family structure by itself is insufficient to predict behaviour, this one emphasizes the need of emotional support from the home head. Though environmental and socioeconomic factors influence antisocial behaviour (Amato and Keith, 1991), the findings reveal that the degree of parental involvement is also important. This backs the more general argument that structural household leadership as well as social involvement and emotional connection inside the family unit shape youth behaviour.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study sought to determine how family headship influenced the behaviour of young people in Akwa Ibom State tertiary institutions. The study looked at how gender influences family leadership and how it affects young people's moral, social, and academic behaviour. Family structure and head of household gender had a major impact on students' behaviour, academic performance, and peer fit. Although male-headed households are stricter, female-headed households are more caring, which fosters emotional resilience. On the other hand, financial challenges associated with single-parent households can sometimes lead to negative behaviour in teenagers. The study also emphasises the need of targeted projects to assist both male- and female-led families to promote the healthy development of their children. Future research should investigate how changing sociocultural factors influence family leadership and adolescent behaviour. This will help lawmakers to choose policies supporting teens' academic success and stability.

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The Role of Lecturers Innovative Assessment Strategies in Fostering Critical Thinking among Teacher-Trainees of Universities in Plateau State-Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the role of lecturers' innovative assessment strategies in fostering critical thinking among teacher-trainees of universities in Plateau State. The population of the study consists of all teacher trainees from two public universities in Plateau State. The study adopted a survey research design with a sample of 180 lecturers who are teacher-educators drawn from the population. Three research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. An instrument developed by the researcher titled: "Innovative Assessment Strategies for Critical Thinking Scale" (IASCTS) was used for data collection. The validity of the instrument was established using experts in Measurement and Evaluation from the Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha technique with coefficient 0.76. Data analyses were done using mean and standard deviation to answer there search questions, while one-way ANOVA was used to test the corresponding null hypotheses. The findings revealed that the most used assessment strategy in teacher education was the final examination at the end of the course, while the least used is field trip. Furthermore, the major factor hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking is the high enrollment of students, while the least factor is inadequate support from fellow lecturers. Based on some of the aforementioned findings, it was recommended that there should be improved in-service training for teacher educators in the

development and use of innovative assessment strategies in Plateau State among others.

Keywords: Role of lecturers', innovative assessment, strategies, fostering, critical thinking, teacher-trainees

Introduction

The need for innovative assessment practices in today's educational system cannot be overemphasized. Society today is becoming more demanding and complex and has therefore, required that educational practices, including assessment, employ a more sophisticated, aligned, and robust approach to developing students for the future. In this way, Atisi (2021), notes that assessment should be used to support high-level learning, rather than the current focus on knowledge testing and comprehension. Therefore, assessment must evolve from traditional assessment to modern assessment as the educational system addresses the needs for modern learning outcomes such as critical thinking. Assessment is all activities that teachers use to help students learn and to measure and evaluate students' progress (Anikweze, 2016). There are different types of assessment that have been developed depending on the purposes of and the approaches to assessment for which is to be used. Generally, assessment is classified based on the time the assessment is conducted which are summative and formative assessments. Summative assessment is generally carried out at the end of a course or project for decision making as it affects promotion, selection, grouping, certification of students as well as curriculum planning and evaluation. Formative assessment on the other hand is often done during the course of the programme to guide instruction and support individual learning for improving learners' performance through remediation. Summative assessment is also regarded as *assessment of learning*, while formative assessment is referred to as *assessment for learning* (Anikweze, 2016).

However, a more recent classification of assessment is that which classifies assessment into traditional and innovative assessment strategies. Traditional assessment is a conventional method of evaluating students' knowledge and skills through tests, quizzes and written assignment. Traditional assessments are often summative, meaning they are given at the end of a learning. Traditional assessments are tests taken with paper and pencil that are usually true or false, matching or multiple choice. These assessments are easy to grade, but only test isolated application, facts, or memorized data at lower level thinking skills. Traditional refers to assessment tasks that check students' ability to recollect and reproduce the content studied during a course. These are often teacher-made or state-wide standardized tests that are at times applied to all learners under the same conditions (Coombe, Vadafar and Mohebbi, 2020). Other characteristics of traditional assessment as identified by Anikweze (2016) include an excessive focus on the final product of assessment, expecting standardized answers, having feedback based on grade computation, and lacking real-world application of the assessment process. On the other hand, innovative assessment strategies which a real so called authentic assessment strategies are designed to simulate a complex and real-life situation. Innovative assessment enables the learner to transfer knowledge, skills, competencies and dispositions between

learning and assessment. They are often designed to ascertain how students would approach, respond and resolve a problem. Atisi (2021) provided a more simplistic distinction between traditional assessment and innovative assessment as shown in the table below.

Traditional	Innovative
Selecting a response	Performing a Task
Contrived	Real-life
Recall/Recognition	Construction/Application
Teacher-structured	Student-structured
Indirect Evidence	Direct Evidence
Curriculum-driven	Mastery-driven

The distinction and implications between traditional and innovative assessment have continued to generate research concerns, with results showing that innovative assessment has significant advantages over traditional assessment. This is affirmed in a recent research by Ajala (2021) who indicates that integration of rubrics in the assessment of teacher-trainees in Rivers State has a significant effect on their performance in a statistics course. Innovative assessments have more valid implications than traditional tests because they require higher-order thinking skills. They are also likely to be more interesting and motivating for students as they involve more real-world tasks. Finally, they are more likely to generate useful, specific, and practical information about what students have learned, what gap in performance remains to be filled, and what needs to be done to fill such gaps (Ponciano and Yan, 2017).

Various forms of authentic assessment identified by Atisi (2021) include interviews, short stories, writing samples, group projects, public speaking and debates, experiments, app development, constructed response, recorded observations, and portfolio projects.

The concept of critical thinking has ancient roots, with great philosophers from Socrates to Aristotle emphasizing the importance of questioning, reasoning, and the pursuit of truth (Ajala., 2021). However, it was in the modern era, with the advent of the scientific method and Enlightenment philosophy, that critical thinking began to emerge as a formalized educational objective (Jones, R., and Clark, S. 2021). In the 20th century, as higher education expanded and diversified, the role of critical thinking in the curriculum gained prominence (Garrison, D. R. (2018). Critical thinking, defined as ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information to form reasoned judgements and make sound decisions, serves as the bedrock of effective learning, decision-making, and lifelong intellectual growth (Halphern, 2014; Bailin and Siegel, 2016). It transcends the confines of disciplinary boundaries, imparting students with the capacity to approach problems with intellectual rigor, creativity, and skepticism (Paul and Elder, 2006; Facione, 2015). Critical thinking has received greater attention in the 21st century. Different educational authorities, including national, state, regional and local government have recognized critical thinking as one of the skills needed for individuals to function effectively in the 21st century. For example, the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2008) stated that critical thinking is one of the fundamental skills that students need to learn in the 21st century where there is an apparent information overload. Specifically, in arguing for the relevance of critical thinking among university students, Sunday

and Iweke (2021) averred that it enables students to ask questions, define words operationally, solve problems with novelty, examine issues practically, and avoid hasty generalization. Similarly, Ponciano et al (2017) opined that critical thinking is one of the higher-order skills, believed to play a central role in logical thinking, decision making and problem-solving.

At the policy level, critical thinking as a learning outcome of 21st-century education has received positive acclaim. About a decade ago, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC & U, 2011) reported a survey in which 95% of academic officers in 433 institutions ranked critical thinking as one of the most important intellectual skills for their students. The survey also showed that 81% of employers surveyed out of the 400 employers reported that critical thinking should be included in the skills taught to students in school. Irrespective of this importance and the attention placed on critical thinking, there exists no clear-cut definition of what critical thinking means. Commenting on this, Anikweze (2016) stated that critical thinking continues to be a contentious skill with regular debates on its definition, its amenability to assessment, and the practicality of its impacts on academic achievement, career advancements, and personal life choices. Based on this assertion considerable evidence abounds on what critical thinking means and how best it can be assessed, as well as used for improving educational outcomes, especially at the higher education level.

The concept of critical thinking has been relatively difficult to define. This can be partly attributed to the reality that it has been employed in a variety of disciplines and concerns itself with ethical, pedagogical, and technical implications (Lorencova, Janosova, Avgitidon and Dimitriadon 2019). Critical thinking is a complex cognitive process that is purposeful and involves insightful judgment requiring multiple cognitive aspects to interpret and analyze a situation to arrive at the most suitable conclusion (Facione 2013). To Ennis et al (2005), critical thinking is a reflective thinking pattern that focuses on the rational evaluation of perspectives or alternatives to arrive at an informed and right decision. Critical thinking is the ability to actively analyze, interpret, evaluate, and question information to form informed judgments and make decisions, rather than simply accepting facts at face value. It is intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information gathered from observation, experience, reflection, reasoning or communication as a guide to belief and action in consideration of the various definitions provided above, it can be seen that critical thinking involves more than just compiling information or gathering facts, knowledge, or ideas. Rather it involves the rational evaluation of ideas, opinions, or information to deduce consequence from a known premise. It involves questioning assumptions, considering multiple perspectives, and applying logic to make informed decision.

The relevance of critical thinking in 21st- century education, and for 21st-century teachers has been well-documented. Zulfiqar (2016) asserted that critical thinking provides the foundation for strategic thinking and good judgment which are skills that enable teachers to identify relevant information from the abundant information. Similarly, Lorencova et al (2019) reported that critical thinking is important in teacher education programmes as it can equip teachers and learners to be good thinkers which can further enable them to compete for educational opportunities, jobs, and recognition; and to perform effectively in the workplace, become good

citizens, and to attain an optimal state of well-being and the full expression of humanity. Furthermore, since critical thinking is relevant to the generation of new knowledge and innovation in all human fields, teachers who provide the needed education should be adequately trained on effective critical thinking (Anastasiadou and Dimitriadou, 2011).

Finally, the promotion of critical thinking is useful for the teaching of the new generation of students who are expected to exhibit a high level of flexibility in an age of massive digital revolution. Thus, teacher education programmes must provide training for pre-service teachers to acquire critical thinking skills regarding the organization, practice, and evaluation of their work at school and to turn their students into good critical thinkers, which is not possible unless the teachers are effective critical thinkers. It becomes imperative that the assessment strategies adopted by lecturers in teacher education programmes advance critical thinking among teacher-trainees in Plateau State. This study therefore, focuses on the role of lecturers' innovative assessment strategies in fostering critical thinking among teacher-trainees of universities in Plateau State.

Statement of the Problem

Higher education institutions are specially positioned to provide not only educational and economic skills, but to develop in those who pass through them the ability for self-confidence, self-respect, and self-reliance. Individuals who pass through higher education institutions are expected to possess the ability to generate new knowledge, create innovative solutions as well as promote national development. Unfortunately, the higher education system of most countries, including Nigeria is tailored towards the acquisition of knowledge and the recall of facts. Teaching and learning are often tailored towards the writing of exams and the issuance of certificates, with little or no application of knowledge gained to everyday life.

The resultant effect of this is that students lack the skills to be critical thinkers with little or no innovative strategies developed to solve real-world problems. In addition, students invest more time in trying to recall segregated knowledge rather than in processing information. While the effect of the problem is evident in students' academic and professional outcomes, it is unfortunate that most lecturers still adopt the traditional assessment paradigm which only tests for lower-order skills. In the short term, students have resorted to unethical practices to achieve a minimum standard of performance. Repeated cases of examination malpractices, with instances of staff and students' expulsion, have become a staple in social media as well as mainstream media. In the long term, employers of labour have complained about the shortage of competent manpower, irrespective of the large number of students that are turned out from higher educational institutions. The situation becomes more glooming when a teacher-education programme is considered. Teacher education programmes are geared towards providing manpower globally. In addition, graduates of teacher programmes are expected to serve as models of critical thinking in the changing educational system. Considering that the development of critical thinking ability is one of the most "universally emphasized goals" of higher education, there is a need to examine the assessment strategies used by lecturers in teacher education programmes as well as establish some innovative assessment strategies that can foster critical thinking among teacher-trainees in Plateau State. This was informed by research findings that critical thinking as well as its various components can be learned,

developed and improved through purposefully designed education. It is therefore on this basis that the current research seeks to investigate the role of lecturers' innovative assessment strategies in fostering critical thinking skills among teacher trainees towards meeting global demand.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the role of lecturers' innovative assessment strategies in fostering critical thinking among teacher-trainees in Plateau State. others are to:

1. investigate the assessment strategies that are predominantly used by lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State.
2. determine factors hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking among teacher trainees of universities in Plateau State.
3. ascertain the perceived assessment strategies that lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes in Plateau State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. What are the assessment strategies that are predominantly used by lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State?
2. What are the factors hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking among teacher trainees of universities in Plateau State?
3. What are the perceived assessment strategies that lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes in Plateau State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance in this study.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of assessment strategies used by humanities, social science, and science education lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State.
2. There is no significant difference in the perceived assessment strategies that humanities, social science, and science education lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes in Plateau State.

Methodology

The survey research design was used for this study. The survey research design was considered the most appropriate because the researcher only sampled the opinion of teacher educators on the innovative assessment strategies that can be used to foster critical thinking among teacher-trainees in Plateau State. Lecturers who were teacher educators were considered the most appropriate for this study because they were more likely to understand the changes taking place in the educational system. Furthermore, they are more likely to understand the difference between traditional and innovative assessment strategies. A sample of 180 teacher-educators was conveniently drawn from two public universities in Plateau State. An instrument developed by the researcher titled: "Innovative Assessment Strategies for Critical Thinking

Scale" (IASCTS) was used for data collection. The instrument consists of four sections: A, B, C and D. Section A is designed to gather data on the demographic characteristics of respondents, Section B to elicit responses to the assessment strategies used by lecturers, Section C to generate data on the perceived factors that hinder the use of critical thinking assessment and section D to elicit responses on the assessment strategies that foster creativity. Each section of the instrument contained 10 items each and the responses were based on the four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The instrument was validated by three experts in Measurement and Evaluation from the Federal University of Lafia, Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach Alpha technique with coefficients of 0.76 obtained. Data analyses were done using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while one-way ANOVA was used to test the corresponding hypotheses. A criterion mean of 2.50 was used to determine the decision of acceptance or rejection. The results obtained were shown in the tables below.

Results

Research Question 1

1. What are the assessment strategies that are predominantly used by lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State?

Table 1: Mean rating of assessment strategies used by lecturers.

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Regular Assignments	3.18	0.98	Accepted
2	Final Examination at the end of course	3.26	0.97	Accepted
3	Group Assignment	2.80	0.87	Accepted
4	Class work	2.32	0.93	Rejected
5	Oral presentation	2.61	0.98	Accepted
6	Field trips	1.80	0.98	Rejected
7	Group Practical work	2.53	0.77	Accepted
8	Unscheduled Test	2.08	1.06	Rejected
9	Class discussion among students	2.18	0.81	Rejected
10	Individual Practical works	2.66	0.92	Accepted

Table 1 shows the mean rating on the assessment strategies used by lecturers. Regular assignment (mean=3.18, SD=0.98), final examination at the end of the course (mean = 3.26, SD = 0.97), group assignment (mean = 2.80, SD = 0.87), oral presentation (mean = 2.61, SD = 0.98), group practical work (mean=2.53, SD=0.77), and individual practical work (mean = 2.66, SD = 0.92) were accepted assessment strategies used by lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State. On the other hand, strategies such as classwork (mean=2.32, SD=0.93), field trips (mean=1.80, SD=0.98), unscheduled class test (mean = 2.08, SD = 1.06), and class discussion among students (mean = 2.18, SD = 0.81), were not accepted as assessment strategies used by lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State. From this result, it is deduced that the most used assessment strategy in teacher education was the final examination at the end of

the course, while the least used is field trip.

Research Question 2

What are the factors hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking among teacher trainees of Universities in Plateau State?

Table 2: Mean rating of the factors hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategists of ostercritical thinking among teacher trainees.

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	High enrollment of students (large class size)	3.43	0.78	Accepted
2	Excessive workload for lecturers	3.10	0.71	Accepted
3	Inadequate training in innovative assessment techniques	2.81	0.80	Accepted
4	The rigid structure of university administration	2.90	0.92	Accepted
5	Inadequate support from fellow lecturers	2.37	0.67	Rejected
6	Lack of cooperation from students	2.60	0.84	Accepted
7	Rigid assessment schedule by university management	2.73	0.62	Accepted
8	The negative attitude of students towards innovative assessment	2.62	0.71	Accepted
9	Short academic calendar	2.41	0.97	Rejected
10	Incessant strike action by trade unions	2.40	0.77	Rejected

Table 2 shows the mean ratings of the factors hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking. It indicates that high enrollment of students (large class size) (mean = 3.43, SD = 0.78), excessive workload for lecturers (mean = 3.10, SD = 0.71), inadequate training in innovative assessment techniques (mean=2.81, SD= 0.80) rigid structure of university administration (mean = 2.90, SD = 0.92), lack of cooperation from students (mean = 2.60, SD = 0.84), rigid assessment schedule by university management (mean=2.73,SD= 0.62), and negative attitude of students towards innovative assessment (mean = 2.62, SD = 0.71) were accepted as factors hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes in Plateau State. On the other hand, inadequate support from fellow lecturers (mean = 2.37, SD = 0.67), short academic calendar (mean = 2.41, SD = 0.97), and incessant strike actions by trade unions (mean = 2.40, SD = 0.77) were not accepted as factors hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking. From this result, it is shown that the major factor hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking is the high enrollment of students, while the least factor is inadequate support from fellow lecturers.

Research Question 3

What are the perceived assessment strategies that lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes in Plateau State?

Table3: Mean rating of innovative assessment strategies lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Posing questions that require students to make their contributions	3.20	0.81	Accepted
2	Assign students and their peers to solve group problems	3.04	0.60	Accepted
3	Require students to provide an application of learned materials to real-life situations.	3.07	0.57	Accepted
4	Allow a group of students to brainstorm on the information before presenting solutions.	3.12	0.73	Accepted
5	Assessment should involve argumentative essays where students defend their positions.	3.18	0.71	Accepted
6	Administer assignments that require the application of new knowledge	3.11	0.90	Accepted
7	Provide assignments that involve the synthesis of multiple perspectives	3.21	0.76	Accepted
8	Students' should criticize a policy that is related to education	3.22	0.66	Accepted
9	Use of portfolio projects across these mester to grade students	3.03	0.77	Accepted
10	Adoption of rubrics when assessing and grading students.	3.09	0.70	Accepted

Table 3 shows the mean rating on the possible assessment strategies lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education, reveals that among the accepted strategies includes posing questions that requires students to make their contributions (mean =3.20, SD= 0.81), assign students and their peers to solve group problems (mean = 3.04, SD = 0.60), require students to provide application of learnt materials to real life situation (mean = 3.07, SD = 0.57), allow group of students to brainstorm on an information before presenting solutions (mean = 3.12, SD = 0.73), assessment should involve argumentative essays where students defend their positions (mean=3.18,SD= 0.71),administer assignments that require application of new knowledge (mean = 3.11, SD = 0.90), provide assignment that involve synthesis of multiple perspectives(mean=3.21,SD=0.76),students should critic a policy that is related to education (mean = 3.22, SD=0.66),use of portfolio projects across the semester to grade students (mean = 3.03, SD = 0.77), and adoption of rubrics when assessing and grading students (mean = 3.09, SD = 0.70). This result showed that all the assessment strategies were considered useful in fostering critical thinking among teacher-trainees. However, the result further showed that the students'

critic of policy related to education is likely the most effective strategy while the use of portfolio projects across the semester is likely the least effective strategy.

Hypotheses 1

Table 4: ANOVA of assessment strategies used by lecturers in humanities, social science and science lecturers.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	362.574	2	189.865	0.691	.317
Within Groups	464461.811	177	277.122		
Total	464824.385	179			

Table 4 shows the calculated ANOVA on the extent of difference in the mean rating of assessment strategies used by humanities, social science and science lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State. It shows that $F(2, 177) = 0.691$, $p = 0.317$. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is upheld. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of assessment strategies used by humanities, social science and science lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State.

Hypothesis 2

Table 5: ANOVA of the perceived assessment strategies that humanities, social science, and science lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	481.682	2	237.691	0.759	.429
Within Groups	56223.768	177	324.789		
Total	56705.45	179			

Table 5 shows calculated ANOVA on the extent of difference in the perceived assessment strategies that humanities, social science and science lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes in Plateau State, it indicates that $F(2, 177) = 0.759$, $p = 0.429$. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is upheld. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of humanities, social science and science lecturers on the perceived assessment strategies they can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes in Plateau State.

Discussion of Findings

From the result in Table 1 on the assessment strategies used by lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State, the most used assessment strategy in teacher education was the final examination at the end of the course, while the least used is field trip. This result is expected and not surprising to the researcher because most of the schools and lecturers are constrained to administer the final exams due to the limited time frame for

assessment and submission of students course grades. In addition ,the finding that revealed field trip is the least used assessment strategy might be attributed to the fact that field trip is expensive and sometimes difficult to execute. The finding of this study agreed with the findings of Atisi (2021); Coombe (2020) who reported that in most teacher education programmes in Rivers State, Nigeria and Canada respectively, summative assessment is often used at the end of the programme, with little or no effort made to integrate novel assessment strategies. Similarly, Lorencova (2019) observed that most teacher education programmes do not traditionally prepare teachers on how to plan, implement and reflect on the field trips as a form of learning and assessment.

From research question two on the factors hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking among teacher trainees of universities in Plateau State, it was found that the major factor hindering lecturers' use of innovative assessment strategies to foster critical thinking is the high enrollment of students, while the least factor is inadequate support from fellow lecturers. Other factors also identified include the excessive workload of lecturers, inadequate training on modern innovative assessment strategies and rigid assessment schedule by university management. These findings affirmed the findings of Ajala (2021) and Atisi (2021) who showed that statewide or national policy on assessment, short time in the academic calendar, and lack of specific training on assessments were the factors identified.

The final result from this study on the possible innovative strategies that lecturers can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education revealed that among the accepted strategies includes posing questions that require students to make their contributions, require students to provide an application of learned materials to a real-life situation, allow a group of students to brainstorm on the information before presenting solutions, assessment should involve argumentative essays where students defend their positions, administer assignments that require the application of new knowledge, provide assignments that involve synthesis of multiple perspectives, students' should critic a policy that is related to education, use of portfolio projects across the semester to grade students and adoption of rubrics when assessing and grading students. This finding above agreed with the views of Ajala (2021) who indicated that integration of rubrics in the assessment of teacher-trainees in Rivers State has a significant effect on their performance in a statistics course.

Conclusion

In view of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of assessment strategies used by humanities, social science and science education lecturers in teacher education programmes in Plateau State. This study further established that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of humanities, social science and science lecturers on the perceived assessment strategies they can use to foster critical thinking in teacher education programmes in Plateau State. Study generally concludes that the most used assessment strategy in teacher education is the final examination at the end of the course, while the least used assessment is field trip.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. There should be enhanced in-service training for teacher-educators in the development and use of innovative assessment strategies.
2. University administration should encourage and provide lecturers with the opportunity to familiarize with the structure and method of assessment used in teacher education programmes.
3. There should be a reduction in the number of students admitted into teacher education programmes as this would allow for the implementation of more innovative assessment strategies in Plateau State public universities.
4. Lecturers should be stimulated to adopt assessment strategies that assess higher-order critical thinking among students.
5. Lecturers should incorporate aspects of educational policy analysis as part of the assessment framework used in developing critical thinking among teacher- trainees in Plateau State.

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Cultural Heritage Education as a Pedagogical Tool in Revolutionizing the Consciousness of Africans: A Radical Anthro-po-archaeological Perspective

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Abstract

The study makes a critical examination of cultural heritage education in Africa and advocates for its relevance as a revolutionary tool for conscientising the people. The study notes that the problems of cultural illiteracy and absence of proper pedagogy poses a challenge to cultural heritage education in Africa. The problem of the study is that deficit of appropriate pedagogical groundwork has left undone the delicate tasks of unearthing, distilling, documenting and studying the cultural heritage of the peoples of Africa. Data point to the fact that Africa's cultural heritage education has almost become sterile, irrelevant and superficial to the masses. Methodologically, the study uses critical pedagogy and radical anthropology. The methodology allows the study to rigorously examine all structures and patterns that are embedded in artefacts, ecofacts and cultural features as pedagogical tools. The study is justified in asserting the usefulness of cultural heritage education and also by contending that cultural resource education has not been doing what it ought to do in the consciousness of Black Africans because the unique cultural resources of the continent have not been properly utilized in educating the masses of their past heritage and conscientising them. The study concludes that it is in the context of critical questionings that cultural resource education can be relevant in the service of revolutionizing the consciousness of Africans and that cultural resource education holds the key to a proper understanding of cultural data of Africa.

Keywords: Afrocentric consciousness, cultural heritage, cultural illiteracy, pedagogy, radical anthropology

Introduction

The imperative of cultural heritage education as a pedagogical tool in revolutionizing the consciousness of Africans imposes itself on scholars, due to the alarming rate of cultural illiteracy and deficit of critical approach in cultural studies in Africa. This study calls for frontal challenge to cultural illiteracy by systematisation of cultural heritage education as a pedagogical tool. Hobart (2000) makes a call for anthropology as a radical metaphysical

critique. Thus, cultural heritage education that is thoroughly rooted in radical anthropology is a *conditio sine qua non* for consciousness raising of Africans who have been subjected to centuries of foreign hegemonic influences. Friere (1998) asserts that conscientisation is the cultivation of critical consciousness which leads to continuous reflection and transformation and Fyfe (2020) argues for radical interpretation of African studies. It is in this regard that the study appraises cultural heritage education in Africa; a continent riddled with mal-conformational effects of foreign influences. The terms cultural heritage and cultural resources are taken as synonyms and are used interchangeably. The study notes that deficit of critical pedagogy in cultural heritage studies has left undone the delicate tasks of unearthing, distilling, documenting and studying the cultural heritage of the peoples of Africa. As a result, anthropology and cultural heritage education in Africa have almost become irrelevant and superficial to the masses. The worst case studies are westernized and arabised African scholars whose opinions about African's past and heritages have been dogged by heavy fusions of foreign religions and philosophies. It was succinctly put that:

They analyzed the externals but missed the core; they made great deal of the shadow, but left out the substance. They confused symbols with what is symbolized and thus they are unable to make philosophical sense or conceptualize their experience (Ehusani 1991:78-79).

Establishing context:

The justification of the study comes from the imperative to fill knowledge gap by extending the frontiers of knowledge on cultural education as a pedagogical tool in the onerous task of revolutionizing the consciousness of Africans. Though scholars (Andah, 2008; Keitumtse, 2016; Schmidt, 2019; Yoshida and Mack, 2008), have contributed highly valuable treatises on some aspects of cultural education in general but the application of radical anthropological perspectives have not been well advanced. As data reveal, African studies have not been completely emancipated from hegemonic influences which suffused cultural education of the continent, (Andah, 1982; Boachie-Ansa, 1982; Ehusani, 1991; Fanon, 2018; Obikelu, Gerard-Marie and Odumegwu, 2023; Tegegne, 2023). This continues because the specters of arabisation, westernization, sinoization, globalization and influence of foreign religions have unleashed onslaughts of corroding influence on African cultural landscape. There is therefore the imperative to frontally challenge the hostile academic environment in which African culture is discussed by applying radical anthropological pedagogy.

Essentially the paper examines the current state of studies, practice and philosophies of cultural education in Africa. The paper equally engages in relevant discussion on the aims of cultural resource education and its relevance as a pedagogical tool. Some observations are made with specific respect to what the study considers to be the fundamental purpose of why cultural resource education should become engaged in radical pedagogy in view of revolutionizing the conscientiousness of the masses. This will lead to full affirmation of our humanity, a humanization praxis involving authentic cultural dialogue, awakening critical thinking and active struggle by participants in cultural heritage education. This study proposes that cultural heritage education can by its appeal, be able to identify and distill appropriate

indigenous frameworks for prosecuting relevant revolutionary themes in the areas of education, economy, technology, architecture, politics, social and spiritual development that are distinctly African.

Statement of the problem:

Africans are confronted with cultural illiteracy and inadequate cultural resource education in Africa, south of the Sahara. Also, cultural education has assumed almost an unproductive academic role that does not evolve critical consciousness among Africans. Scholars have called to question the purpose of cultural resources education especially its immediate relevance in the lives of Africans today, (Andah, 2008; Idiang, 2015; Kiriama 2020). This study opines that presently, cultural heritage education in Africa continues to thread the path of western educational system. Albeit, resourceful as western system is, it does not satisfy the yearnings of traditional Africans. Eurocentrist cultural educational system is incapable of retrieving, distilling and analyzing traditional African mores, lores and norms. Despite this, the study notes that the curricula of archaeological, anthropological and museological studies in Africa are largely tailored on Western paradigms and our various museums are fashioned after Europeans models. African cultural scholars and heritage managers are shirking the arduous tasks of breaking new frontiers in heritage theories and practice as they neglect to reappraise their own symbolic system and cultural heirlooms with authentic home grown pedagogical tool. The study notes that Africa's cultural heritage education has become almost sterile because of its failure to become a revolutionizing and conscientising pedagogy. The onslaughts of foreign influence dominate and thereby continue to do incalculable damage to the psyche of Africans about their cultural resources. Along this line, Barrrette (2016), Boachie-Ansa (1982), Law (2009), Pierre (2020), and Poncian (2015) sound the alarm that foreign imposed viewpoints are still prevalent in African historiographies.

The problems the study addresses are: In what ways can cultural resource education be useful as a pedagogical method in African studies? How can we overcome cultural illiteracy? How can we make use of cultural resource education when our intellectual output is externally focused to meet western standards of global indices? Why do Western trained African scholars tend to approach Africa's cultural heritage education from the perspectives of eurocentricism which they claim has global application and how can cultural heritage education bring about critical consciousness?

Objectives of the study:

The study seeks to offer a constructive engagement of the interconnectivity between cultural heritage education and the development of a critical pedagogical tool in the quest of revolutionizing the consciousness of Africans. The "pedagogy of the oppressed" by Paulo Friere (2009) as proper educational methodological approach to the study of Africa's past and present forms a starting point for the assessment of the objectives of this study. This study extends the scope of knowledge on decoloniality of African thought system as can be seen in the works of Lemu (1982), Emeagwali (1982) and Fyfe (2020) amongst others which highlight the revolutionary potentialities of cultural heritages among Africans. The dual objectives of the study are; (i) to make critical appraisal of the aims and character of cultural resources and

heritage education within African context, (ii) to use cultural heritage education as pedagogical tool of decoloniality and conscientization of the people.

Methodology of study:

Methodologically, the study engages in radical anthropology and critical pedagogy exegetical tools in discussing cultural heritage education in Africa. Radical is an adjective used in this text to mean fundamental reform. It has its origin in Latin words *radix* (root) and *radicalis* (the root of). It is used in this context to mean going to the root of African anthropology. As Kincheloe and Steinburg (1997:24) succinctly opine, “critical pedagogy is the term used to describe what emerges when critical theory encounters education”. The application of pedagogy as a methodology of critical liberationist approach has been discussed by Freire (2009), Giroux (1997), and Kincheloe and Steinburg (1997). Drawing from this, this study focuses on the grim realities of cultural imperialism and dysfunctional cultural education in Africa. It uses critical liberationist pedagogy to advocate for frontal challenge to all realities that engender cultural colonization. Such approach leads to heightened engagement in dialectical discourse (Kincheloe, 2008; Hobart, 2000). The study submits that by a recourse to dialectical processes and praxis, Africa's cultural heritage education would become a liberating exercise.

The application of critical pedagogy in cultural education was underscored by Sekou Toure when he asserts: “Culture implies our struggle, it is our struggle” (<https://www.panafricnperspective.com>). The relevance of critical pedagogy in cultural education is that it recognizes that social change is not solely determined by economic factors, but is also influenced by cultural factors amongst others. It also provides a comprehensive background for analyzing changes from the past to the present and is also useful in shaping the society by analysing the processes and dynamics that influenced persons and societies. Critical pedagogy that is rooted in dialectics helps to discover and distil the complexity in culture. According to Martin and Nakayama (2006), the approach helps to facilitate interparadigmatic dialogue and offers new ways to conceptualize and study intercultural communication.

Culture and cultural heritages/resources explained

Culture is a polysemous word. The Encyclopedia Britannica (<https://www.britannica.com>) defines culture as “beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time”, while the Cambridge Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>) defines it as “the way of life especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time”. This study defines culture as the totality of ways of life and behaviors acquired by human beings within a given locale that provides meaning to their society.

Cultural heritages are construed in this study as tangible and intangible assets that are heirlooms bequeathed from past generations. Tangible assets are movable or immovable heritages that are prehistoric and historic sites, monuments, artefacts, cultural features, work of arts. Intangible assets are non-physical aspects of culture and these include folklores, spiritual beliefs, language, artistic expressions, aesthetics, traditional knowledge and all indigenous intellectual properties. Cultural heritage also include natural assets that are peculiar to specific locales like landscapes and biodiversity. UNESCO says “Heritage is our

legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritages are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration" (<https://www.unesco.org>). African heritage means the totality of history, cultural identities, practices and beliefs of the peoples of Africa.

Understanding radical anthropology and cultural heritage education

Anthropology has succeeded in amassing tremendous data on humanity both past and present, thus it offers us the impetus to take action on behalf of the society by not studying anthropology for anthropology's sake. In this regard Henriksen (2003) argues that we use anthropology as a tool for change, by contesting urgent issues of domination, conflicts and hegemonic tendencies. Hobart (2000) conceives radical anthropology as a radical metaphysical critique. By this he asserts that radical anthropology is the appropriate tool that removes distortions in peoples' consciousness and shows them what truly they are. In this study, radical anthropology is used to mean a critical study of humanity through cultural data that seeks a fundamental change which modifies the status quo to bring about a transformative reform to the essence, structures, practices and interpretative schemes of cultural heritage education.

Felguieres, Tymoschuk, Saborano and Breai (2022), argue that cultural education is a necessary venture which enhances humanity in the widest sense, by incorporating knowledge of the past with the present. Casonato (2022) opines that cultural heritage education brings into sharp focus daily representation of cultural resources. The universal applicability of cultural resource education is underlined by Brandesi (2007), Smith (2006) and Waterton and Watson (2010). Freire (1998) for instance suggests that the goals of education should be in transformation of passive beings into active participants of the developmental process. In this case education then becomes a process which restores to the dehumanized the full realization of their potentials. The nexus between cultural heritage and education has been examined by scholars like Ayibadeinyela (www.ichekejournal.com), Bojang (2021) and Mazonde (1995) with focus on cultural education in Africa.

In this wise, the study explains cultural education in the wider sense. Cultural heritage education is construed in this study as the conscious efforts of identifying, acquiring, evaluating, documenting and educating people on their cultural heritage assets. Cultural heritage education is an applied anthropological subdiscipline, which links the past with the present. In this regards, Hunter (1988) submits that "heritage education is an approach to teaching and learning about history and culture that uses information available from the material culture and the human and built environments as primary instructional resources" (<https://eric.ed.gov>). As opined by him, it nourishes a sense of "connectedness with our historical and cultural experience; encourages citizens to consider their historical and cultural experiences in planning for the future; and fosters stewardship towards the legacies of our local, regional and national heritage" (<https://eric.ed.gov>).

Understanding basic challenges confronting cultural heritage education in Africa

There are several challenges to the study of cultural heritage education in Africa. Four salient challenges are examined because they have profound influence on the issue; these are external hegemony, insularity of researchers, lack of proper pedagogy and technical texts.

i. External hegemonic influences:

One of the greatest challenges to cultural education on the continent is the fact that Africa's cultural landscape is under immense external hegemonic forces of neocolonialism and external religions. Thus, semiotic tools that are applied in cultural education of Africa have been tainted by external influences. For this reason Fyfe (2020) calls for radical interpretation of African cultural histories. As observed by Ikara (1982:10), "colonialism has given us such a short, sharp shock that our memories and even our analyses of the past have become disoriented and twisted as recorders of our cultural heritage".

ii. Academic insularities by cultural educators:

Also, the problem of local insularity bedevils cultural education in Africa. Cultural educators in Africa largely operate as isolates characterised by narrow-mindedness, parochialism and provincialism. There is near absence of intra-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary collaborations between the various cultural educators in our universities and institutes even within the same country and across countries and regions of Africa where they are operating in cultural education cocoons. This hampers information flow among cultural educators in the continent, (Andah 1982).

iii. Inability to understand cultural meanings of Africa's symbolic system:

The inability to decipher correctly the profundity of cultural meanings observed in rituals, symbols and customs remains a major handicap to the study of African cultures by outsiders and many African researchers. There is absence of application of proper pedagogy in understanding Africa's culture and cultural education. This is exacerbated due to the inability to integrate researches with culture. According to Achi (1982), the role of archaeological data in integrating culture to education has not been highlighted in our educational system. Thus, an African scholar in his doctoral dissertation asserts before his professors in Rome saying;

The battle cry of most African intellectuals today has become "let's go African! Back to African roots!" Well and good, I say. I am all for African identity. The question of course is how? Do we return to the primitive stage of bow and arrow, with banana leaves for shirts? Do we go back to the killing of twins, the burying alive of wives with their dead husbands; back to cannibalism and the talking drums of the dark African jungles? Well, that was where we were before the missionaries came- if we really want to be completely and absolutely African (Obuna, 1986:53).

iv. Hypertechnical texts:

African cultural researches are often loaded with specialised technical jargons that are clearly out of scope for the unprofessional. Cultural educational texts are often unfathomable to nonprofessionals. Anthropological and archaeological texts that carry field sourced data are overly technical with terminologies, and excessively specific in scientific analysis to meet current global academic standards, but ended up being of little relevance to the masses.

Assessing the usefulness and tasks for cultural heritage education in Africa

As an appropriate pedagogy, cultural heritage education can conscientise the masses towards building and running relevant centers like museums, archives, libraries and institutes that make meaningful contributions to the struggle. The first task is to decolonize these educational centers and make them sources of critical thinking. Their functions and structure will be appropriately channeled to meeting the needs of Africans. To this study, it seems most of the cultural research centers do not have detailed perception of the meaning of culture and cultural development. This is why one finds that several institutions are merely for entertainment like Art Councils and Museums, or where institutions have concentrated on one aspect of culture like dance, as if that is the only culture of the people (Andah, 1982; Ikara, 1982; Emeagwali, 1982).

This study submits that cultural resources education should have specific goals. Proper education in general should in fact be a process which is capable of restoring to the colonized, and the oppressed, the dehumanized and the exploited, the full realization of humanity, by stressing their potentialities in bringing about a revolutionary change in the society. In this context, it is apropos to ask: What is the specific role and place of cultural resource education in revolutionizing the consciousness of Africans? What are to be the specific aims of cultural resource education? What are the possibilities for the development of revolutionary consciousness in the context of the teaching of cultural resource education? In what ways can cultural resource education be in the service of revolutionary change that would facilitate such transformation? The answers to these questions can best be seen in the context of the very nature of cultural resource education itself.

In bringing about the desire revolutionary consciousness and change, the study calls for specific tasks for cultural heritage education in Africa:

i. Retrieval of authentic data on Africa's heritage:

It is incumbent on African scholars to truly (re)discover, document and disseminate the rich cultural resources of Africa. African scholars have often jettison cultural resources and heritages and insisted on promoting foreign values and culture. Through uncritical acceptance of arabised and westernised theologies the traditional norms of African are ridiculed. The impartation of Arab, Chinese and Western categories, theories and philosophies on traditional African cultural concepts has ended up causing more confusion rather than explicating scholarship. An African scholar notes;

African's purported heritage was not derived from what Africans know or have found out about themselves, but rather from what outsiders, not well equipped to study the subject, have handed down to them, together with all the outsiders inbuilt cultural, and with it mental independence from the supposedly developed nations of the east and west.

(Andah 1982:5).

ii. Agent of conscientization:

Cultural resource education should become a necessary tool for engendering revolutionary consciousness. Lemu (1982) opines that the proper application of cultural heritage education is capable of bringing liberation for Africans. Because of its great value in retrieving, distilling, conserving and restoring of culture, cultural resource education can become a great tool of critical consciousness and is more than qualified and competent to initiate critical education of colonized minds. Emeagwali (1982) argues on this point by appraising cultural heritage education as a tool for revolutionary consciousness. Unfortunately, the rich cultural data of Africans at the disposal of researchers which are preserved in form of historical, ethnographic, folkloric and archeological data that are veritable tools of revolutionising the minds of the people have not been well articulated. Due to this fact, the arabised and westernized Africans not only jettison their traditional heritages but seek to discard them. As noted by Ehusani (1997:39);

It is unfortunate but true that no one is more brutally hostile and insensitive to his or her own national tradition than the new African scientist or intellectual, who is ignorant alike of the values of the African cultural heritage.

iii. To promote cultural identity:

Cultural resource education should promote cultural identity among Africans. Its emphasis on advocating appropriate education will re-orientate the masses because the colonial educational setup that operates in Africa has failed to meet the yearnings of Africans. The present educational system has produced elites, who do not share the traditional symbols of the people nor the aspirations of the masses for a better nationhood (Ikara 1982). Rather the masses are ensconced in cultural illiteracy. Cultural resource education by its emphasis in upholding indigenous cultural identity is best suited to correct the pedagogical anomaly bedeviling Africans. A concerned scholar notes:

The colonialists left behind some schools and roads, some post offices and bureaucracies. But their cruelest legacy on the African continent was a lingering inferiority complex, a confused sense of identity. After all, when people are told for a century that they're not as clever or capable as their masters, they eventually start to believe it, (Lamb 1986: 140).

v. Tool for advancement of tradotechnology:

A properly channeled cultural heritage education will make meaningful contributions to the advancement of tradotechnology and bring about societal development, (Kiriama, 2020; Idiang, 2015). It is undeniable that indigenous science, technology, medicine and folklores are endangered cultural resources in Africa due to the onslaughts of colonial education. The studies of scholars like Andah (1979), Anozie, (1979), Ehret (2023), Eggert (2014) and Okpoko (1987) point to enormous amount of archaeometallurgical scientific knowledge in several

communities of pre-colonial Africa. Unfortunately this science has been left to decay without modernization. Therefore, most engineering departments in our institutions of learning do not make effort to search for indigenous antecedents, because colonial tailored education taught them that there is nothing scientific in pre-colonial Africa. One looks nonplus how the Nigerian government over the years flung \$400m on a single iron and steel project with foreign model and execution, without achieving any result. This project is been executed without reference to traditional metallurgical practices as if there was no indigenous knowledge of iron workings in Africa. In addition, our agricultural mechanism has been stunted by importation of foreign models, without due regards to soil, climate and crops. Traditional ecofriendly agricultural practices have been replaced by modern methods such as synthetic manures which have done more harm to humans, crops and soils than hitherto known. Despite the advantages of foreign technologies, they came with indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources that has led to the destruction of the ecology which Tubi (2020) refers to as ecocide.

vi. Tool for leadership training:

As an appropriate utilization of human resources, cultural heritage education can create needful atmosphere which is conducive for the emergence of appropriate leadership and followership. It is in this light that Andah (2008) and Idiung (2015) explore the various values of cultural heritage education in Africa. It will be extremely difficult for a leader who does not know the culture of the nation to attract good followers. This is why there has been several political upheavals and miscalculations in Africa. Cultural heritage education if accompanied with proper planning would highlight some irrelevant institutions of leadership and seek to replace them with workable and relevant ones. It can be pointed out that foreign imposed capitalist and socialist systems have breed mediocre leaders, sectional leaders and opportunists and therefore, the followership has not been as dynamic, resourceful and imaginative as it should be (Ikara, 1982).

vii. Formulating revolutionary policies for cultural heritage education:

It is envisaged that cultural resource education would contribute towards the formulation of critical and revolutionary consciousness among Africans. Revolutionary comes from the Latin word *revolutio* which means "turn/roll back". It demands that we undertake thorough sweeping reforms from the root. Cultural heritage education in Africa requires a complete rethink, and a fundamental change in structures, practices and interpretative schemes, (Emeagwali, 1982; Ikara, 1982; Lemu, 1982). The application of critical policies to pedagogy of cultural education will result in critical distillation of institutionalized values, norms, mores and lores. Cultural heritage education would therefore be in the realms of revolutionary consciousness which makes meaningful contribution to liberation, (Andah, 2008; Ikara, 1982). Our artefacts, material culture, and chronology would be viewed in the context of impacting self-transforming knowledge. Through appropriate pedagogy, cultural resource education will harmonize research and cultural centers for dialectical struggles, (Smith, 2006; Martin and Nakayama, 2006).

viii. Enhancement of cultural communication:

Cultural communication is very relevant to our quest for revolutionary consciousness. In fact consciousness hinges on appropriate education and communication. As opined by Kiriama (2020) cultural heritage education is a veritable communication strategy. Cultural centers should be able to conscientize the public through multiple channels like ethnographic, historical and archeological information. Medium of communication should be accessible to all without hindrance. In addition, the language of communication must be lucid and less technical for the enjoyment of the public. The pathetic case in which all cultural centers, institutions and universities are understaffed, does not give room for adequate cultural education and communication.

Summary and conclusion

In summary, the study notes that cultural resources education by its focus on conserving, preserving, restoring, and exhibiting human's activities helps to illustrate the way and manner in which humanity has transformed their lives, societies and environment over time. By its focus on aspects of humans material culture both on the micro and macro levels, cultural resource education indeed is reminding Africans of their struggles over time to cope with and gain mastery over the vagaries of life. The study advocates that the awareness of the dynamic nature of change and growth over time which cultural education bequeathes is even a fundamental prerequisite for revolutionary consciousness. The study thus asserts that it is therefore its onus to stimulate the masses towards that critical consciousness. The study further notes that most traditional symbols in forms of archaeological finds and anthropological data in Africa have not been used functionally. One would have expected that eurocentricism should have been dead, but recent studies indicate otherwise as many academic papers and books recommended as standard texts for students contain elements of such, (Boachie-Ansah, 1982; Law, 2009; Pierre, 2020).

Sustaining pedagogy for heritage resources education in Africa should help to understand and overcome social structures through which people are dominated, marginalized and oppressed. Critical pedagogy will also influence students towards understanding cultural heritage and heirlooms of their ancestors. Critical pedagogy compels Africans to make a choice in interpreting their symbolic system as cultural heirlooms to either support the status quo or to challenge and uproot it. Neutrality simply gives support to the dominant societal context. In the words of Freire (1982) "washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral". In addition the application of critical pedagogy will unearth the tension between how things are and how they ought to be. Thus there is an urgent need to be equipped with critical pedagogy towards achieving critical consciousness in interpreting cultural heritages.

Conclusively, the study advances that we must not equally accept cultural romanticism that seeks to identify Africa's past with all that is noble and beautiful. The warts must be enunciated too. It brings about critical conscientisation where we go beyond the surface meanings to understand the deep meanings, root causes, social contexts and ideologies that produce Africa's symbolic system and cultural heritages. Indeed cultural resource management holds the key to our proper understanding of historical phenomena. But such

exercise should be done in the context of revolutionary consciousness if it is to be a meaningful exercise (Fanon, 2018). Cultural resource education should be done in the context of praxis. Researchers, students and the masses are to be active participants in the process of unearthing, conserving, restoring and exhibiting Africa's symbolic system so that they will not become passive receptacles of information. In this way, critical thinking becomes a functional exercise.

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Does National Health Insurance Programme in Nigeria Protect Against Catastrophic Health Expenditure? Evidence from Enrollees Versus Non-Enrollees.

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Abstract

One of the aims of establishing the national health insurance programme in Nigeria is to reduce health care expenditure induced poverty, a financial situation that is caused by high catastrophic health expenditure by households. Meanwhile, studies that examine the protection of enrollees on the national health insurance programme in Nigeria against catastrophic health expenditure are scarce. This study, for that purpose, examined if enrolment on the national health insurance programme provided protection against catastrophic health expenditure. Cross-sectional research design was adopted in the study as primary data was collected through the instrumentality of a structured questionnaire from enrollees and non-enrollees working in the federal and state government establishments in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Fisher's exact proportion test was used in analysing the data. The result indicated a significant reduction in incurring catastrophic health expenditure for enrollees on the national health insurance programme against the non-enrollees. It was concluded that enrolment on the national health insurance protects against catastrophic health expenditure. The establishment of social health insurance agencies by state governments in Nigeria to facilitate expansion of coverage to the economically vulnerable households was the key recommendation.

Keywords: Catastrophic health expenditure; Social health insurance; Financial protection; Universal health coverage; Poverty reduction.

Introduction

Medical care is a necessary emergency expenditure as illness is typically fortuitous in nature. According to biopsychosocial theory, first conceptualised by George Engel in 1977, health is as an asset and as such staying healthy is a priority for all individuals leading to individuals always working out ways to settle medical care bills (Physiopedia, 2025). However, for Some individuals, paying medical bills when the need arises can lead to unpleasant consequences, chief among them being the depletion of their finances. This depletion of personal finances exposes individuals to poverty. This concern is even more in a developing country like Nigeria where the level of poverty is high and actionable approaches are needed to eradicate poverty. Sadly, government total expenditure on health care in Nigeria is abysmally low resulting in about 80.4% of total health care expenditure funded through out-of-pocket payment(ReportLinker, 2024).

Increase in out-of-pocket expenditure on medical care is linked to increase in the rate of poverty (Sirag & Mohamed, 2021). Furthermore, the high out-of-pocket expenditure on medical care is counterproductive to poverty reduction strategies in Nigeria where 133 million people living in the country are multidimensionally poor (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). To put it in perspective, there is imminent threat of increase in number of Nigerians that are multidimensionally poor if payment of medical care bills out-of-pocket persist. However, out-of-pocketexpenditure on medical care can only lead to poverty if the spending results in what is called catastrophic health expenditure, CHE.

Catastrophic health expenditure, CHE, occurs when payment for medical care exceeds the financial capacity of an individual or a household with the potential of exposure to hardship or poverty (Eze, Lawani, Agu & Acharya, 2022).. CHE can be incurred from payment for any form of health care needs from in and out patients care to medications, consultation, laboratory test and ambulatory service. Such, medical care payment by households must exceed 40% of the total household non-food expenditure for it to be considered catastrophic (Zhaoet.al., 2020). Catastrophic health expenditure induced poverty is common place in developing economies as a significant proportion of those that are not poor but are living just on the poverty line or a little above the poverty line rendering them economically vulnerable.What this mean then is that catastrophic health expenditure from medical care use exposes households to slipping into poverty. In addition, CHE limits the ability of individuals or households that are poor to access and utilize basic healthcare which is detrimental to economic recovery (Yadav, Menon & John, 2021).

Regrettably, a significantly high number of households in Nigeria consistently incur CHE from medical care use (Edeh, 2022). In a bid to reduce CHE for households, the federal government of Nigeria increased budgetary allocation to health care sector by 25% in 2024 from 2023 allocation (Nigeria Health Watch, 2025). The increase in the 2024 financial allocation for health care sector is meant to fund targeted activities aimed at boosting enrolment on the National health insurance programmes operated by the National health insurance Authority, NHIA. Against this background, it is important to understand if the national health insurance

programme provides financial protection to enrollees by reducing their Exposure to CHE. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine if enrolment on the national health insurance programme managed by National Health insurance authority, NHIA, in Nigeria guarantees financial protection by reducing CHE against non-enrolment. The findings of this study will support healthcare funding decisions through the mechanism of insurance to reduce poverty in Nigeria and other developing economies.

Review of Related Literature

Aregbeshola and Khan, (2018) utilized secondary data from the Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard Survey (HNLSS) of 2009/2010 to assess the catastrophic and impoverishing effects of payment for healthcare on households in Nigeria with simple descriptive study design of percentage as the method of data analysis. The result of the study indicated that a total of 16.4% of households incurred catastrophic health payments at 10% threshold of total consumption expenditure while 13.7% of households incurred catastrophic health payments at 40% threshold of nonfood expenditure. The study recommended proper funding of healthcare by the government and the provision of a viable social health insurance as the way out of the negative effects that was reported.

Rickard *et al.*, (2018) study aimed at determining in-hospital charges for patients with peritonitis and if patients are at risk of catastrophic health expenditure. As part of a larger study examining the epidemiology and outcomes of patients with peritonitis at a referral hospital in Rwanda, patients undergoing operation for peritonitis were enrolled and hospital charges were examined. The primary outcome was gathering data on the percentage of patients at risk for catastrophic health expenditure. Logistic regression was used to determine the association of various factors with risk for catastrophic health expenditure. The results indicated that over a 6-month period, 280 patients underwent operation for peritonitis and in-hospital charges were available for 245 patients while a total of 240 (98%) patients had health insurance. The Median total hospital charge was 308.1 USD, and the median amount paid by patients was 26.9 USD. Thirty-three (14%) patients were at risk of catastrophic health expenditure based on direct medical expenses. Estimating out-of-pocket non-medical expenses, 68 (28%) patients were at risk of catastrophic health expenditure. Unplanned reoperation was associated with increased risk of catastrophic health expenditure ($p < 0.001$), whereas patients with community-based health insurance had decreased risk of catastrophic health expenditure ($p < 0.001$). The study concluded that the median hospital charges paid out-of-pocket by patients with health insurance were small in relation to total charges and that a significant number of patients with peritonitis were at risk of catastrophic health expenditure.

Azzani, Roslani and Su, (2019) conducted a systematic review to identify the determinants of household catastrophic health expenditure (CHE) in low-to high-income countries around the world using both electronic and manual searches were conducted with the determinants of CHE due to healthcare payments as main outcome of interest and thirty-eight studies met the inclusion criteria and was reviewed. The review outcome revealed that household economic status, incidence of hospitalisation, presence of an elderly or disabled household member in the family, and presence of a family member with a chronic illness were the common significant factors associated with household CHE. The authors concluded that socio-economic inequality

plays an important role in the incidence of CHE all over the world, where low-income households are at high risk of financial hardship from healthcare payments. It was thus, recommended that healthcare financing policies should be revised in order to narrow the gap in socio-economic inequality and where social safety nets should be implemented and strengthened for people who have a high need for health care.

Li, Shi, Yang & Wang, (2019) analyzed the extent of Catastrophic health expenditure (CHE) among Chinese households and explore the effect of critical illness insurance (CII) and other associated factors on CHE. Data that was derived from the Sixth National Health Service Survey (NHSS, 2018) with a sample of 3660 households in urban and rural areas in Jiangsu Province, China was used for the study and Logistic regression and multiple linear regression models were used to estimate the effect of CII and related factors on CHE. The results indicated that the proportion of households with no one insured by CII was 50.08% (1833). At each given threshold, from 20% to 60%, the incidence and intensity were higher in rural households than in urban ones. CII implementation reduced the incidence of CHE but increased the intensity of CHE. Meanwhile, the number of household members insured by CII did not affect CHE incidence but significantly decreased CHE intensity. Socioeconomic factors, such as marital status, education, employment, registered type of household head, household income and size, chronic disease status, and health service utilization, significantly affected household CHE. It was concluded that policy effort should further focus on appropriate adjustments, such as dynamization of CII lists, medical cost control, increasing the CII coverage rate, and improving the reimbursement level to achieve the ultimate aim of using CII to protect Chinese households against financial risk caused by illness.

A study by Lee and Yoon, (2019) examined the determinants of catastrophic health expenditure in households with cancer patients by conducting a panel analysis of three-year data from surveys administered by Korea Health Panel for 2012-2014 on 1380 households with cancer patients. A correspondence and conditional transition probability analyses to examine households that incurred catastrophic health expenditure, followed by a panel logit analysis were adopted for data analysis. The analyses revealed three notable results. First, the occurrence of catastrophic health expenditure differed by age group, that is, the probability of incurring catastrophic health expenditure increased with age. Second, this probability was higher in households with National Health Insurance than those receiving medical care benefits. Thirdly, households without private health insurance reported a higher occurrence rate. The findings suggested that elderly people with cancer had greater medical coverage and healthcare needs and that private health insurance contributes toward protecting households from catastrophic health expenditure. Future study on catastrophic health expenditure with focus on varying age groups, healthcare coverage type, and private health insurance was recommended.

Liu, Coyte, Fu & Zhang, (2019) investigated the catastrophic health expenditure and equity in the incidence of catastrophic health expenditure by addressing its potential determinants in both integrated and non-integrated areas in China in 2013 using primary data drawn from the fifth China National Health Services Survey in 2013 with the final sample comprising 19,788 households (38.4%) from integrated areas and 31,797 households (61.6%) from non-integrated areas. A probit model was employed to decompose inequality in the incidence of catastrophic

health expenditure in line with the methodology used for decomposing the concentration index. The results indicated that the incidence of catastrophic health expenditure in integrated areas was higher than in non-integrated areas (13.87% vs. 13.68%, respectively). The concentration index in integrated areas and non-integrated areas was -0.071 and -0.073, respectively. Average household out-of-pocket health expenditure and average capacity to pay in integrated areas were higher than those in non-integrated areas. However, households in integrated areas had lower share of out-of-pocket expenditures in the capacity to pay than households in non-integrated areas. The majority of the observed inequalities in catastrophic health expenditure were explained by differences in the health insurance and householders' educational attainment both in integrated areas and non-integrated areas. The study concluded that the medical insurance integration system in China is still at the exploratory stage; hence, its effects are of limited significance, even though the positive impact of this system on low-income residents is confirmed. Moreover, catastrophic health expenditure was associated with pro-poor inequality. Medical insurance, urban-rural disparities, the elderly population, and use of health services significantly affect the equity of catastrophic health expenditure incidence and should be key areas in the implementation of future insurance integration policies.

Methods

The study adopted a cross-sectional study design as data was gathered from a cross-section of the population of study. The population of the study was state and federal government workers in Akwa-Ibom State, Nigeria. The federal government workers are compulsorily enrolled on the formal sector social health insurance programme, FSSHIP and constitute the sample of enrollees in the study. State government workers who are not enrolled on any form of health insurance were sampled to make up the non-enrollees in the study. A total of 1000 workers were sampled for the study constituting 500 enrollees and 500 non-enrollees on the FISSHIP for the study. The choice of the state and federal workers was to ensure similarity of social, demographic and economic characteristics of the participants to support the method of data analysis adopted in the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select participants in the study as the relevant government establishments turned down the request to furnish the researchers with the total number of state and federal workers in the Akwa Ibom state. Data was collected through the instrumentality of a structured questionnaire administered on the participants on a face to face basis at their place of work.

The Respondents were profiled using simple descriptive statistics to provide an understanding of the characteristics of participants. Furthermore, proportion test was used in data analysis. Proportion test was used because the two independent variables which are enrolment status and catastrophic health expenditure status are binary in nature and typically will not be normally distributed. The binary variables produced four contingent outcomes as follows;

- EIC = Enrolled but incurred CHE
- NEIC = Not enrolled but incurred CHE
- ENIC = Enrolled but did not incur CHE
- NENIC = Not enrolled but did not incur CHE

The odd of enrolment amongst those that incurred CHE with regards to enrolment status will be:

$$\frac{EIC}{NEIC} \quad (1)$$

While the odd among those that did not incur CHE will be:

$$\frac{ENIC}{NENIC} \quad (2)$$

The odd ratio of the proportion test is estimated as,

$$\frac{EIC}{NEIC} \times \frac{ENIC}{NENIC} \quad (3)$$

The estimate obtained from (3) must be less than 1 to assert that enrolment reduced CHE. To confirm if the effect was statistically significant, 5% level of significance was applied in the analysis. In this study, a household was considered to have incurred CHE if the total expenditure on health care exceeded 40% of the household non-food expenditure. Stata statistical software was used in the analysis.

Results

Profiling of the respondents

All 1000 questionnaires administered were returned but 970 were useful representing 100% return rate and 97% useable rate. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the respondents by enrolment status. Enrollees and non-enrollees households had almost 5 members per household with 43.94 years and 42.77 years as the average ages of the heads of household respectively indicating that enrolment was not household size and age of household head responsive. Male heads of household constituted 57.78% of the respondents that had enrolled on the social health insurance while 52.22% of the male respondents did not enroll. Furthermore, 42.22% of the respondents were female heads of enrolled households and 47.78% of the respondents were female heads of households that did not enroll on the social health insurance programme. The gender distribution indicated that male household being headed by male seems to increase enrolment rate. Among the enrollees 10.74% and 89.26% reside in the rural and urban areas while 54.44% and 45.56% of the non-enrollees reside in the rural and urban areas respectively indicating that urban residence supports enrolment. Workers in the health care sector constituted 51.11% of the enrollees and workers in the academic sector constituted 48.89% whereas 47.04% of health workers were not enrolled and 52.96% of academics were equally not enrolled indicating that households whose heads were healthcare workers enrolled more.

Table 1 - Characteristics of respondents by enrolment Status

N = 970

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Enrolment Status (Mean or %)</i>	
	<i>Enrollee</i>	<i>Non-enrollee</i>
Household Size	4.91	4.76
Age (years)	43.94	42.77
Gender		
Male	57.78%	52.22%
Female	42.22%	47.78%
Location of residence		
Rural	10.74%	54.44%
Urban	89.26%	45.56%
Employment sector		
Health	51.11%	47.04%
Academics	48.89%	52.96%

Source: Researcher's computation using data from field survey and Stata 13 software.

Result of analysis and discussion of findings

Table 2 is the contingency table for exposure to CHE against enrolment status. 4.07% of households that enrolled incurred CHE while 95.93% of the households that enrolled did not incur CHE indicating that a higher percentage of the households that enrolled on the social health insurance were less exposed to CHE. However, 81.11% of households that did not enroll on the social health insurance incurred CHE while 18.89% of the non-enrolled households did not incur CHE suggesting that non-enrolment exposed more households to CHE.

Table 2 - Contingency table for exposure to CHE against enrolment status

	<i>Enrolled</i>	<i>Not Enrolled</i>
Incur CHE	4.07%	81.11%
Not-incur CHE	95.93%	18.89

Source: Researcher's computation using data from field survey and Stata 13 software

From the contingency table, the odd ratio of financial protection from CHE for households in the study was estimated using Fisher's exact proportion test and the estimate is presented in table 3. The odd ratio obtained is 0.10 with a p-value of 0.00 indicating that the effect was statistically significant at 5% level of significance. Recall that the odd ratio must be less than 1 to

assert that enrolment reduced CHE. Thus, the odd ratio of 0.10 is less than 1 which suggest that enrolment on the social health insurance programme reduced CHE for the enrollees. Furthermore, the result indicates a significant reduction in the exposure to CHE for households that enrolled on the national social health insurance programme against those that did not enroll. The result implies that enrolment on the national health insurance programme provided protection against CHE. In line with the finding of this study, a similar financial protection effect of a reduction in the CHE intensity by enrolment on social health insurance was reported by Li, et al., (2019) in China. Also, a study by (Jung & Lee, 2021) corroborates the finding of this study by establishing that the national health insurance programme in Japan reduced the burden of CHE by lowering high cost on medical care. Another study by (ref) aligns with the finding of this study as it reported that the national health insurance coverage protected households in Korea from CHE.

Table 3 - Estimate of Fisher's exact proportion test

Odd ratio	P-value	Confidence interval
0.10	0.00	0.0622 0.1155

Source: Researcher's computation using data from field survey and Stata 13 software

Conclusion

The national health insurance programme, managed by the national health insurance authority in Nigeria, is a public health insurance designed to provide protection against CHE which is one of the key exposures to poverty. This study thus examined if enrollees on the national health insurance programme in Nigeria were protected against CHE. Fisher's exact proportion test was used to analyse primary data of enrollees and non-enrollees on the national health insurance programme. Result indicates that enrolment on the national health insurance programme reduced CHE significantly. It was therefore concluded that enrolment on the national health insurance programme provided protection against CHE. The following are the recommendations:

- i) The national health insurance authority in Nigeria should strategize to increase coverage to expand the financial protection benefits that the programme offers.
- ii) State governments in Nigeria should establish the state social health insurance agencies that will collaborate with the national health insurance authority to expand coverage to the economically vulnerable for the much-needed protection.

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Etiology Test Anxiety Among Undergraduate Student of Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt

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Abstract

This study investigated on Etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students of Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of education, Port Harcourt. The design is survey research design, the population is three hundred and seventeen 317. The instrument for data collection was rating scale of 20 items. The sample was three hundred 300 respondents of students and staff from three departments. The main instrument for this study is a rating scale. The rating scale consists of the (20 sections, section A and section B. section a seeks information on the personal data of the respondents while section B contains items that were used to assess the personal opinion on the etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education The validity was established by three experts, two from guidance and counselling and one from measurement and evaluation. The reliability was ascertained using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and 0.94 was realized indicating that the instrument was reliable for study. The study found out that the cause of anxiety on undergraduate students was student's perception of extensive course load, infective studying lack of review and revising of course materials studied and so on. The researcher then recommended the following; The counsellor should assess test anxiety by

using standardized assessments to evaluate clients' test anxiety levels and identify underlying causes, The Educators should create a supportive learning environment to foster a positive and supportive classroom environment, improve study habit and time management among the students, teachers and counsellors should motivate students and so on.

Keyword: Etiology Test Anxiety, Undergraduate students, Academic Performance, Wellbeing.

Introduction

Etiology Test Anxiety is a pervasive issue affecting a significant number of students worldwide. It is characterized by physiological, emotional, and cognitive reactions to perceived evaluation. Understanding the etiology of test anxiety among undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, is crucial for developing effective interventions and support systems to enhance academic performance and wellbeing. According to Iwundu (2020), test anxiety is a complex phenomenon that involves cognitive, affective and behavioural components. It is characterized by feeling of apprehension, nervousness and worry that can interfere with a student's ability to perform optimally on exams and other academic tasks. Research has shown that text anxiety can have serious consequences for students, including decreased academic performance, reduced self-esteem and increase dropout rate (Cassady & Johnson, 2022). Furthermore, test anxiety can also have long-term effects such as limiting career choices and opportunities. In Nigeria, where education is highly valued and competitive, test anxiety is a significant concern. Studies have shown that Nigerian students experience high levels of test anxiety which can be attributed to various factors including cultural and societal pressures, inadequate preparation and lack of support from educators and parents (Okeke & Aluede 2022).

Test anxiety is a prevalent issue among undergraduate students, characterized by excessive worry, nervousness and apprehensions. This form of anxiety can significantly impair academic performance and overall well-being. Understanding the etiology of test anxiety is crucial for developing effective interventions to support students. According to Chinwe (2019), anxiety is a basic human emotion, consisting of fear and uncertainty. Iroegbu, Nkwocha, and Onyemerekeya (2018) posit that emotion produce string feeling of fear, anger, sexual desire, and affection and so on. Anxiety is an unpleasant state that involves a complex combination of emotions. It is often accompanied by physical sensations such as heart palpitations, nausea, and chest-pain, shortness of breath or tension and headache (Chuka-Okonkwo, 2018). Test anxiety encompasses cognitive, emotional and physiological components that negatively affects students' academic achievements. In Nigeria, several studies have explored various factors influencing test anxiety among undergraduates. For instance, Oladipo (2023) examined demographic predictors such as age and gender but found no significant correlation with test anxiety levels. Similarly, Lawal (2017) investigated the impact of academic self-confidence on test anxiety dimensions, highlighting the role of self-perception in managing anxiety. Additionally, research by Oladipo and Ogungbamila (2023) indicated that academic level and faculty affiliation do not significantly predict test anxiety, suggesting that other factors may be at play. These findings underscore the need for institution-specific studies to identify unique

contributors to test anxiety.

The literature on test anxiety among undergraduate students highlights the multifaceted nature of this issue. It underscores the importance of addressing both the internal and external factors contributing to test anxiety. By understanding the etiology of test anxiety, educators, psychologists, and policymakers can develop more effective interventions to help students manage their anxiety and improve their academic performance. This literature review sets the stage for the following sections of the paper, which will explore the methodology used in the current study, present the findings, and discuss their implications in the context of the Faculty of Education at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt.

Studies have shown that test anxiety is influenced by various factors, including:

- Academic Pressure: High expectations from self, parents, and teachers.
- Preparation: Inadequate preparation and study skills.
- Personality Traits: Traits such as perfectionism and low self-esteem.
- Environmental Factors: Classroom environment, teaching methods, and peer competition.

Some empirical studies like in the study of Abdul Rahaman (2019) which examined changes in levels of anxiety of college students over an academic session. The sample used in the study consisted of seventy female and fifty-five male student of Kwara state college of education Ilorin in the 1995/1996 academic year. Data was collected using two separate instruments. Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS), and Achievement Anxiety Test (AAI) which were administered during non-stress, middle and stress period. Findings of the study indicated that student had higher anxiety level during non- stress period than during the stress period, although no significant difference was obtained among the three periods. When comparison was made on the basis of sex, female student was found to exhibit higher mean anxiety score than the male students. There was however significant mean difference only during the non-stress period. Based on the findings, the implications of the result were discussed and appropriate recommendations made towards reducing anxiety and improving better academic performance among college student.

Test anxiety is a widespread issue that affects students of all ages and backgrounds. Despite its prevalence, there are still gaps in the understanding of the etiology of test anxiety. Here are some of the key gaps: lack of knowledge about causes of test anxiety, symptoms/effects test anxiety, the influences of test anxiety and remedial measures of test anxiety. These gaps highlighted the need for this study to fully understand the etiology of test anxiety and to develop effective strategies to mitigate its negative effects.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to investigate the etiology of test anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. But specifically, the study sought to achieve the following

- i. The causes of anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt.

- ii. The symptoms/effects of anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt.
- iii. The influences of anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt.
- iv. Remedial measures to curb anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt.
- v. To identify the prevalence of test anxiety among undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education.
- vi. To explore the factors contributing to test anxiety.
- vii. To analyze the impact of test anxiety on academic performance and overall well-being.
- viii. To recommend strategies for mitigating test anxiety.

Research Questions

In line with the purpose of this study, the researchers posed the following research questions to serve as a guide to the study;

- I. What are the causes of anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt?
- ii. What are the symptoms/effects of anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt?
- iii. What are influences of anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt?
- iv. What remedial measures should be used to curb anxiety on undergraduate students Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt?

Methodology

Based on the problems the study was descriptive survey research, designed to investigate the etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The survey research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or item considered as representing the entire group. The population of the study was three hundred and seventeen (317) students and forty eight (48) from three department from Faculty of Education in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, which includes Department of Psychology and Counselling, Social Science and Measurement and Evaluation which made an aggregate population size of 365. (source: faculty of education and www.inisuonline.org). It is delimited in finding out the influence of anxiety on undergraduate students. The study looked at the causes, effect, influences and remedies of anxiety on undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. The sample was made up of three hundred respondents (300), comprising of students and staffs from the different department mentioned above using purposive sampling technique which represent the population size. The instrument was a rating scale consisting of questions on the research topic containing the modified 4-point linked type scale of strongly agreed (SA) 4 point, agreed (A) 3 point, strongly disagree (SD) 2 points and disagree (D) 1 point. The rating scale consists of the (20 sections, section A and section B. section a seeks information on the personal data of the respondents while section B contains

items that were used to assess the personal opinion on the etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Data were collected using a structured rating scale comprising: Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI): A 20-item scale measuring the frequency of test anxiety symptoms, Study Habits Inventory (SHI): Assessing student's study practices and routines, Academic Self-Confidence Scale (ASCS): Evaluating student's confidence in their academic abilities.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The researchers sampled three departments which is the department of educational psychology, guidance and counselling, and measurement and evaluation from the three departments which made up the study and selected 300 respondents comprising of students and staff from the said department in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt using purposive sampling technique which represents 10 percent of population size.

Instrument for data Collection

The main instrument for this study is a rating scale. The rating scale consists of questions on the research topic containing the modified 4-point Likert type scale of strongly agreed (SA) 4 point, agreed (A) 3 point, strongly disagree (SD) 2 points and disagree (D) 1 point. The rating scale consists of the (20 sections, section A and section B. section A seeks information on the personal data of the respondents while section B contains items that were used to assess the personal opinion on the etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Data were collected using a structured rating scale comprising: Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI): A 20-item scale measuring the frequency of test anxiety symptoms, Study Habits Inventory (SHI): Assessing student's study practices and routines, Academic Self-Confidence Scale (ASCS): Evaluating student's confidence in their academic abilities. The rating scale contains twenty (20) item research structured rating scale. All necessary modifications were made during the final drafting of the rating scale during validation. To establish the reliability of the instrument, the instrument was administered to twenty (20) 'students and staffs that were not included in the study sample using the test retest method at two weeks interval. The responses of the two administrations were collected using the Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficient (PPMCCO) obtained. A reliability value of 0.94 was realized indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study. Rating scale was administered during lecture periods with prior consent from lecturers and participants. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured to encourage honest responses. Descriptive statistics summarized demographic data and test anxiety levels. Inferential statistics, including multiple regression analysis, identified significant predictors of test anxiety. The data collected were analyzed using mean score. The data were coded and the mean for each cluster of the item were calculated. A mean score of 2.5 and above was seen as significant while below 2.5 was seen as insignificant. This area covers the presentation of the analysis of data collected by the researcher for the study which was calculated using scores. A mean score of 2.5 and above was seen as significant while below 2.5 was seen as insignificant. The presentation is according to the four research questions and two hypotheses formulated earlier.

Findings

Research question 1

What are the symptoms of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

Table 1: Mean responses on the symptoms of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

S/N	Item statement	SA	A	D	SD	EFX	N	X
1.	Extreme body temperature changes	197	85	-	18	1061	300	3.7
2.	Constant nausea,	112	142	27	19	947	300	3.2
3.	Difficulty in organizing one's thought	223	77	-	-	1123	300	3.7
4.	Excessive feeling of fear	251	42	-	7	1137	300	3.8
5.	Light headedness or fainting	99	163	22	16	945	300	3.2
	Cluster mean							3.5

Source Field Survey, 2023

From the table above, item 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 represent the mean scores of 3.5, 3.2, 3.7, 3.8, and 3.2 respectively which indicate that extreme body temperature changes; constant nausea, headaches, and diarrhea; difficulty in organizing one's thought; excessive feeling of fear, and light headedness or fainting are the symptoms of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. This shows that the above item statements are significant as the cluster mean is above 2.5.

Research questions 2

What are the causes of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

Table 2: Mean responses on cause's etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

S/N	Item statement	SA	A	D	SD	EFX	N	X
6	Students perception extensive course load	159	121	10	-	1019	300	3.4
7	Ineffective studying which. include lack of review and revising of course materials studied	201	99			113	300	3.7
8	Poor time management	87	209	-	4	979	300	3.3
9	Students cramming course	186	100	11	3	1069	300	3.6
10	Fear of disappointing or alienating friends and family	115	169	2	14	985	300	3.3
	Cluster mean							3.5

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The above table indicates that item 6,7,8,9, and 10 represents 3.4,3.7,3.3, 3.6, and 3.3 respectively which showed that the causes of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education include; students perceptions of extensive course load' ineffective studying which include lack of review and revising of course materials studied; poor time management; students cramming course materials at the last minute, and fear of disappointment or alienating friends and family which has a cluster mean of 3.5. Therefore, it implies that the item statements are significant.

Research questions 3

What are the influences of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

Table 3: Mean responses on the etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

S/N	Item statement	SA	A	D	SD	EFX	N	X
11	Nervousness which include having difficulty in reading and understanding the questions on the exam paper	76	210	56	9	1055	300	3.5
12.	Remembering the correct answers as soon as the exam is over	197	102	1		1095	300	3.7
13.	Going to blank on exam answer scripts	211	89	-		1111	300	3.7
14.	Low performance during the release of examination results	105	109	46	40	878	300	2.9
15.	Worries about possible Negative consequences.	183	88	15	44	1070	300	3.6
	Cluster mean							3.5

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 3 shows that items 11,12,13,14, and 15 with the mean scores of 3.5, 3.7, 2.9, and 3.6 respectively have a cluster mean of 3.5 which indicates that the influence of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education are; nervousness, which include having difficulty in reading and understanding the questions on the exam paper, remembering the correct answers as soon as the exam is over; going blank on exam answer scripts; low performance during the release of examination results; and worries about possible negative consequences. Therefore, the above items statements were positively responded to, which shows that the statement is significant as they are above 2.5.

Research Question 4

What remedial measures should be used to etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

Table 4: Mean responses on the remedial measures used to curb etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

S/N	Item statement	SA	A	D	SD	EFX	N	X
16	Develop good study habit and ask	223	77	-	-	1123	300	3.7
17	Muscle relaxation techniques can help to increase focus and concentration	183	88	15	44	1070	300	3.6
18	Read questions and Directions carefully before you begin Students	197	102	1	-	1095	300	3.7
19	Proper relaxation	115	169	2	14	985	300	3.3
20	Explore ways to reduce the distraction in your immediate environment	99	163	22	16	945	300	3.2
	Cluster mean							3.5

Source: Field survey, 2023

From the table above, the item- statements 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 scored mean scores of 3.7, 3.6, 3.7, 3.3, and 3.2 respectively which indicate that remedial measures which should be used to curb etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education indicate; develop good study habit and ask for assistance whenever necessary; muscle relaxation techniques can help to increase focus and concentration; read questions and directions carefully before you begin; proper relaxation of mind and muscle; and explore ways to reduce the distraction in your immediate environment. These item statements are valid as the cluster mean is 3.5 which are above the agreed mean for significant of items statements.

Discussion of Findings

This research was on influence of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt four research questions were formulated and effort was made to discuss their results.

Research question one:

What are the symptoms of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education? In table 4.1, the respondents accepted that the symptoms of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education include extreme body temperature changes, constants nausea, headaches and diarrhea, difficulty in organizing ones though excessive feeling of fear, and light headedness or fainting. This is in line with the assertion of Anamonye and Amaechi (2018) who stated that 14 however, some symptoms are not normal and may require some help to overcome. If you experience the

following symptoms prior to taking an exam or similar action it may be best for you to seek assistance and these symptoms range from sweating heart palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness, and nausea, these symptoms may indicate a condition known as panic attacks many students experience panic attacks which makes exams and other stressful situations seem to trigger them.

Research Question Two:

What are the causes of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education? Table 4.2 In chapter four indicates that the respondents are of the view that the cause of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate student's in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education are students perception of extensive course load, ineffective studying which include lack of review and revising of course materials studied poor time management. Students cramming course materials at the last minute and fear of disappointing or alienation friends and family. This notion is in line with Collins (2018) who identified four causes of test anxiety. First is proposed to be a learned behaviour resulting from the expectation of parents and teachers or significant others in the student life. Another cause may be the association student has built between grades or test performance and personal worth. Next test anxiety may reflect a fear of disappointing or alienating friends, family and/or parents ability. Finally, students may experience test anxiety stemming from feeling of lack of control and or an inability to change one's present life situation (Collins 2020).

Research Question three:

What are the influences of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education? Table 4.3: Indicates that the respondents agreed to the following item statements which include having difficulty in reading and understanding the questions on the exam paper, remembering the correct answer as soon as the exam is over, going blank on exam answer scripts low performance during the release of examination results and worries about possible negative consequences are the influences of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The statement is supported by Putwain, Wood and Symes (2018) who found that achievement goals (fear of failure), perception of confidence and situation influences impact test anxiety for students. For some student, the teacher behaviour influences their performance and anxiety (Collins 2018, Sypon, 2020) therefore, it is important for teachers to keep this in mind as they go through their day. It is possible for teachers to minimize these influences in the student 15 classroom experience and as a result positively impact test scores and achievement. With increase in high states testing (Standardized testing) in education, comes speculation of a correlation between test scores and test anxiety.

Research question four

What remedial measures should be used to curb etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education? In table 4.4 as in chapter four all the respondents are of the view that the remedial measures which should be used to curb etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of

Education include: develop good study habit and ask for assistance whenever necessary, muscle relaxation techniques can help to increase focus and concentration, read questions and direction carefully before you begin, proper relaxation of mind and muscle and explore ways to reduce the distract in your immediate environment. This statement is in line with answer and Miranda (2018), who posited that the students think that teachers should motivate them and provide more specific orientation concerning the material that will be tested. In other words, subject point out that the teachers should inform the students on the content of tests and number of the questions before the administration they also suggest that eh teacher should avoid negative comment during test and should not frequently remind them of the time left. In addition students insist that teachers should give them enough time to complete the test another aspect in order to alleviate test anxiety is related to the students. They admit that studying systematically would make them less anxious during exams. According to them, the teachers should be aware of student anxiety and try to understand them.

Educational Implications

The findings of this study have far reaching implications for leading and managing schools. Anxiety which is seen as the tense, unsettling anticipation of a threatening but vague event, a feeling of uneasy suspense and student's actual levels of test anxiety cannot be directly measured or examined. The only thing that could be observed is the student's manifestation of test anxiety in the form of emotionality responses. The study implies that anxiety on undergraduate students in the institution is characterized by learning incapacity, task difficulty, the fear of getting bad grades and lack of preparation for a test are the other factors that make learners worried. Similarly, learners with high levels of anxiety have less control of detention. He also suggests that there is considerable -evidence that the performance of highly test anxious individuals on complex tasks is deleteriously affected by evaluation stressors, the less complex the task, the weaker this affect is.

Counselling implications

Past experiences: Explore clients' past experiences with testing, identifying any traumatic or negative events that may contribute to test anxiety.

Symptoms:

Physical symptoms: Help clients recognize and manage physical symptoms of test anxiety, such as rapid heartbeat, sweating, or trembling.

Influence/Effect:

Academic performance: Discuss how test anxiety can impact academic performance, including decreased motivation, poor concentration, and reduced self-esteem.

Remedies:

Relaxation techniques: Teach clients relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or visualization, to manage anxiety symptoms.

Counseling Strategies:

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT): Use CBT to help clients identify and challenge negative thought patterns and cognitive distortions that contribute to test anxiety.

Mindfulness-based interventions: Incorporate mindfulness-based interventions, such as mindfulness meditation or yoga, to help clients manage anxiety symptoms and improve focus.

Supportive therapy: Provide supportive therapy to help clients feel heard, validated, and supported, addressing any underlying emotional or psychological concerns.

By addressing the causes, symptoms, influence/effect, and remedies of test anxiety, counsellors can develop comprehensive counselling plans to help clients manage test anxiety and achieve academic success.

Summary of findings

From this study, the following findings were discovered;

- I. Extreme body temperature changes; constant nausea, headaches, and diarrhea; difficulty in organizing one's thought excessive feeling of fear; and light headedness or fainting are the symptoms of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.
- ii. The causes of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education include: students1 perception of extensive course load; infective studying which include lack of review and revising of course materials studied; poor time management; students cramming course materials at the last minute; and fear of disappointment or alienating friends and family. From the table above, the item- statements 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 scored mean scores of 3.7, 3.6, 3.7, 3.3, and 3.2 respectively which indicate that remedial measures which should be used to curb etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education indicate; develop good study habit and ask for assistance whenever necessary; muscle relaxation techniques can help to increase focus and concentration; read questions and directions carefully before you begin; proper relaxation of mind and muscle; and explore ways to reduce the distraction in your immediate environment. These item statements are valid as the cluster mean is 3.5 which are above the agreed mean for significant of items statements.
- iii. Extreme body temperature changes; constant nausea, headaches, and diarrhea; difficulty in organizing one's thought excessive feeling of fear; and light headedness or fainting are the symptoms of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.
- iv. The causes of etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education include: students' perception of extensive course load; infective studying which include lack of review and revising of course materials studied; poor time management; students cramming course materials at the last minute; and fear of disappointment or alienating friends and family.

- v. The influence etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education are; nervousness, which include having difficulty in reading and understanding the questions on the exam paper; remembering the correct answers as soon as the exam is over; going blank on exam answer scripts; low 13 performance during the release of examination results; and worries about possible negative consequences.
- vi. Remedial measures which should be used to curb etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education include; develop good study habit and ask for assistance whenever necessary; muscle relaxation techniques can help to increase focus and concentration; read questions and directions carefully before you begin; proper relaxation of mind and muscle; and explore ways to reduce the distraction in your immediate environment.

From the table above, the item statements 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 scored mean scores of 3.7, 3.6, 3.7, 3.3, and 3.2 respectively which indicate that remedial measures which should be used to curb etiology test anxiety among undergraduate students in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education indicate; develop good study habit and ask for assistance whenever necessary; muscle relaxation techniques can help to increase focus and concentration; read questions and directions carefully before you begin; proper relaxation of mind and muscle; and explore ways to reduce the distraction in your immediate environment. These item statements are valid as the cluster mean is 3.5 which are above the agreed mean for significant of items statements.

Recommendations

Based on the counselling implications and strategies discussed earlier, the following recommendations were made:

1. The counsellor should assess test anxiety by using standardized assessments to evaluate clients' test anxiety levels and identify underlying causes, develop personalized plans, integrate relaxation techniques and Foster a growth mindset.
2. The Educators should create a supportive learning environment to foster a positive and supportive classroom environment, encouraging open communication and reducing stress, provide test-taking strategies and Offer resources and support.
3. The Parents/Guardians should encourage open communication to foster open communication with your child, encouraging them to express their concerns and feelings about testing, provide emotional support and Help develop study habits.
4. The Institutions should develop test anxiety programs and services to support students with test anxiety, including counselling, workshops, and support groups, Provide resources and support and Foster a supportive campus culture.

Conclusion

Understanding the etiology of test anxiety among undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education is crucial for developing targeted interventions. By addressing the contributing factors and providing adequate support, it is possible to mitigate the impact of test anxiety on students' academic performance and wellbeing. The findings indicate that modifiable factors such as study habits, academic self-

confidence, and time management significantly contribute to test anxiety among undergraduates at Ignatius Ajuru University. Interventions focusing on improving study strategies, boosting self-confidence, and enhancing time management skills could effectively reduce test anxiety levels. These results are consistent with existing literature, emphasizing the importance of addressing these factors in anxiety reduction programs.

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Ethnic Resentment, Tension and the Nigeria – Biafra War: A Theoretical Approach

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Abstract

This study examines the role of ethnic resentment and tensions in the Nigeria-Biafra War (1967–1970). The study explores how deep-seated ethnic divisions, fueled by historical grievances, political marginalization, and competition over resources, led to the outbreak and escalation of the war. The objectives of the study are to investigate the evolution of ethnic resentment in Nigeria, the role it played in course of the war, and its consequence on nationhood. A descriptive methodology was employed and primary and secondary sources were consulted to assess the socio-political and economic factors underlying ethnic tensions. The study also integrates Kenneth Waltz's levels of analysis to evaluate the interplay of individual decisions, national dynamics, and sub-national influences on the conflict. Findings reveal that the colonial legacy of arbitrary boundaries and preferential treatment of certain ethnic groups laid the foundation for resentment. Post-independence political and economic policies encouraged these divisions, with the Igbo-led secessionist movement showing deep frustrations over perceived marginalization. Furthermore, external interventions and ideological politics (Cold War) complicated the efforts at peaceful resolution and reconciliation. The study concludes that ethnic tension and resentment in Nigeria remains an equipotent force which need a deliberate policies to foster inclusivity through equitable distribution of resources. Besides, the lessons of the Nigeria-Biafra War will help to address contemporary ethnic tensions and also promote sustainable peace in Nigeria.

Introduction

One untenable imprint which the colonial administrators left on the African continent was the carving out of boundaries that split territories inhabited by indigenous societies and consequently, the juxtaposition of different ethnic communities into a single central structure. For administrative reasons, the British colonial administrators created three regions that inherently explains the evolution of ethnic sentiments or simply put, 'ethno-genesis' and later 'ethno-tension.' The Eastern region was occupied by the Igbo, the Western region by the Yoruba

and the Northern region occupied by the Hausa/Fulani. Within this parochial colonial structure, ethnic tensions emerged between the unequally developed groups primarily in the 1950s. From the foregoing, one would not totally be wrong to argue that the British administration intentionally prevented the success of Nigerian nationalism. This is evident as she (Britain) instead promoted ethnic nationalism in a bid to gain more political power and keep influencing the affairs of the country.

It is worthy of note that amongst the federating units in Nigeria which comprises over 250 ethnic groups, the Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo have always been at the front of national politics. This could be as a result of their greater numbers in population as well as their somewhat active involvement in successive governments since the independence of the country in 1960. Such domineering presence has always enervated other ethnic groups. These other ethnic groups who could be referred to as 'minorities' feel obliterated in the politics of the country, a situation that has promoted hatred and distrust thus, leaving them with no option than seeking for identity, which when denied, can trigger violent conflicts. Ironically, the Igbo can also be categorized as 'minority' among the three major ethnic groups.

With appropriate illustrations, the study seeks to adumbrate on the Nigeria-Biafra War, rationalizing that ethnic resentment and tension played a climacteric role in the outbreak of the war.

Clarification of Key Concepts

The concepts that needs brief clarification for the purpose of this study are ethnic tension, ethnic resentment and ethnic conflict.

- 1. Ethnic Tension:** This indicates the stressful relationships that arise between various ethnic groups because of resource competition and discrimination and historical conflicts. This study examines the tensions between the ethnic groups of Nigeria including Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani which led to the Nigeria-Biafra War while intensifying the distrust among various ethnic groups.
- 2. Ethnic Resentment:** Ethnic resentment emerges as a strong sense of hostility which develops when one ethnic group feels excluded because of discrimination or discrimination or marginalization practices toward them. The work discusses the feelings of discrimination and political and economic rejection of the Igbo people that eventually led them to separate from Nigeria and start the Nigeria-Biafra War.
- 3. Ethnic Conflict:** This arises from ethnic groups entering violent or non-violent confrontations to obtain control over resources and power while preserving dominance over culture. The term appears in this passage to describe the Nigeria-Biafra War which began as an ethnic conflict between groups before it expanded into an all-out battle to represent Nigerian societal problems of inequality and political alienation.

Evolution of Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria

Categorically, for one to gain clarity on how ethnic tension and resentment resulted in series of conflicts in Nigeria, the topic under discourse would be explained in two phases - colonial and post-colonial rule.

The account of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria can be traced back to the colonially influenced union which brought together different ethnic groups of the Northern and Southern provinces together into an entity called Nigeria in 1914. It should also be remembered that these ethnic groups were not consulted or informed regarding the proposed union and so, in a bid to keep them loyal even at the point of anger, the British imposed on them a policy which was not only so autocratic but also undemocratic as well. The strange policy was aimed at segregating the people, thereby hampering the peace and progress of the people in disguise of birthing a United State. The separate governments introduced in the North and South were created to maintain colonial influence on the Nigerian society and also weaken the people's potential for resistance.

Subsequently, the introduction of indirect rule in Nigeria by Frederick Lugard which mainly was for British administrative convenience ended up rekindling ethnic divisions in Nigeria. This policy created a wide gap among these ethnic groups. Lugard handpicked amateur traditional rulers to assist him in governing these provinces. However, these traditional rulers ended up corruptly exercising their powers over villages whom they exploited. This act of insensitivity on the part of the warrant chiefs subsequently gave rise to nepotism.

The segregation of the Nigerian colony, which was also reinforced by the colonial laws that limited the mobility of Christian Southerners to the Muslim Northerners, created a distinct settlement for non-indigenous citizens in the North, and even limited the purchase of land outside one's own region. With these, resentment rose to an increased height in the provinces as different ethnic groups nurtured grief, disloyalty and prejudice against one another. It would not be forgotten that while adequate developmental attention was paid to some part of the country, others were abandoned. This, of course, created inequality in the political cum infrastructural development between Northern and Southern Nigeria.

After Nigeria had gained the sovereign right to become independent, she witnessed some political changes, the foremost being the introduction of the three regions with the camouflage of ethnic colouration. The struggle for independence was taken over by the quest for ethnic supremacy. At this time, ethnic loyalties threatened the survival of both the East and the West while the North was split on religious grounds into Muslims and Christians. It was indeed a period when ethnic groups competed for political recognition and resources and this was in no way good for a nation that just gained independence. Also, there was incessant corruption in the polity, anarchy and insecurity that bedeviled the country at the time, resulting in the demise of the first republic.

Further, military intervention aided the Nigeria Biafra War of 1967-1970, when the Igbo people of Eastern Nigeria felt deprived of security and social justice. They did not only threaten to secede, but also practically seceded from the Federation. This was owing to the fact that they felt aggrieved by the government's non-compliance with her own part of the social contract, which fundamentally was to provide the basic human need such as security, right to life and

religion, equality and citizenship autonomy and the like. Whenever, such needs which are quite ontological are denied, conflict often becomes imminent.

While the politicians tried to cope with the colonial legacy that lumped incompatible groups together into one country, the military staged coups (which to them, were a means to purge the polity of corruption and instability). By and large, the corruption and confusion that marked the military regimes, landed Nigeria into poverty, ethno-political and ethno-religious conflicts until 1999. It is said that the military intervened because they saw the civilian leaders as indecisive and incompetent, but the question remains: after they had controlled the affairs of the country from 1966 to 1999, were they able to make the polity better than they met it? What happened to poverty, corruption, abuse of human rights, among others? On the other hand, Nigerians in the South distrusted the military regime because they believed it was trying to stabilize a Hausa/Fulani hegemony in Nigeria. Subsequently, on June 12, 1993, Moshood Abiola, a Yoruba from South Western Nigeria, supposedly won Nigeria's presidential election, but his victory was revoked by the military regime of General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida. This went ahead to confirm the Southerners' belief of a Hausa/Fulani hegemony in Nigeria. In retaliation, Nigerians in the Southern part of the country began to form militant organizations to protest against unfair treatment and demanded for a democratically elected government. Also, when General Sani Abacha, a Muslim from the North ruled the country, Southerners increasingly feared political marginalization and thus, demanded for an end to the Hausa/Fulani domination of the political arena. This development signifies the weakness of the government and their inability to manage ethnic tension in the country.

Ethnic resentment, tension and conflict continued through the democratic transition. Violence continued to erupt as different ethnic groups requested for the political reorganization of the country in such a way that their interests would be protected. What is most perturbing is the religious dimension of ethnic competition for power and oil wealth in Nigeria.

The vast level of animosity that existed between the Igbo and her Hausa-Fulani counterparts can be traced back to the military coup of January 15, 1966 led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu. The coup was viewed as an Igbo plot to dominate Nigeria and as well, stage her hegemony on the country. Conversely, it can be argued that even though the Igbo officers were in the majority of the coup plotters, there were also officers from other ethnic groups who joined too. Some of them include Major Ademoyega, Lieutenant Colonel Fajuyi, Sergeant Daramola, among others. The coup attracted a counter coup organized by Northern officers few months later (July 29, 1966). The countercoup was a direct retaliation of the January 15, 1966 event. And it led to the assassination of General AguiyiIronsi who was then, the Head of State. It was not only a countercoup, but also a well-organized plot to exterminate the Igbo people all over the country beginning from the North. Fearing that the Federal Government could no longer safeguard their life and property, on May 30, 1967, the Eastern region, with the Igbo as majority, declared her independence from Nigeria and it was against this background that the Nigeria-Biafra war broke out.

Causes of the Nigeria-Biafra War

So many historians and scholars have written extensively on the causes of the Nigeria-Biafra War. While some wrote on the remote causes, others wrote on the immediate causes. Be that as it may, in the course of this study, we would consider applying Kenneth Waltz's levels of analysis of images. The theory will better explain the individual leadership choices together with the internal state factors of ethnic conflict, resource disputes and also the external Cold War political dynamics revealing how personal political factors connect to national forces and global affairs.

The first level of image argues that wars are often caused by the nature of a particular statesman and political leaders such as Napoleon, or by human nature more generally. The second level of image contends that wars are caused by the domestic makeup of states. A prime example that Waltz referred to was Lenin's theory of imperialism, which posits that the main cause of war is rooted in the need for capitalist states to continue to open up new markets in order to perpetuate their economic system at home. The third level of image posits that the cause of war is found at the systemic level, the anarchic structure of the international system is the root cause of the war. In this context, anarchy is not defined as a condition of chaos but rather one in which there is no sovereign body that governs the interaction between autonomous nation-states.

Applying this approach in the explanation of the causes of the Nigeria-Biafra War, the following should be examined.

The First Level of Image

By January 1966, Nigeria had become a nation and not just a geographical expression, but the principle of Nigerian nationhood was yet to be tried and tested. It was this scenario (the test of nationhood) that causes a lot of disposition which eventually led to the outbreak of the civil war. The differences between Ojukwu's and Gowon's lines of action in the months ahead hinged very much on their different personalities. In other words, the clash of personalities, apart from that of interests and principles culminated into a war. Born on November 4, 1933, in Zungeru, in Northern Nigeria, to Sir Louis Odumegwu Ojukwu and Grace Oyibonanu, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu was privileged to be raised in an environment of affluence. He was educated in one of the leading schools in the nation, King's College, Lagos. Later he was sent to Epsom College, England and then on to Lincoln College, University of Oxford. When he returned to Nigeria after his studies in England, he joined the colonial armed forces known as the Queen's own Nigeria Regiment against the wish of his father, who wanted him to attend law school and join the family business in some capacity. Joining the army after he had attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, he rapidly rose through the military ranks. He was accorded a great deal of respect by his military colleagues, who admired his pedigree and education. Frederick Forsyth, Ojukwu's close friend, while explaining Ojukwu's personality maintained that *"he developed a private philosophy of total self-reliance, an unyielding internal sufficiency that requires no external support from others."*

With the foregoing, it is therefore clear that Ojukwu was a realist who believed in himself alone. He never gave up in achieving whatever he wanted at any time he deemed fit. He was stubborn, yet courageous and this trait explains the reason behind his collision with Nnamdi

Azikiwe, Michael Okpara, Okechukwu Ikejiani and even Yakubu Gowon. These men were concerned about Ojukwu's tendency towards introversion and independent decision making.

Further, it is worth noting that Ojukwu received a mixed reaction among the expatriate, mainly British population in Nigeria. Many admired him for his background, as well as his oratorical skills, and took great pride in the fact that he had been educated extensively in England. There is a story of how Ojukwu's professor at Oxford enjoyed taking a spin or two in his sports car while he was a student there. Others, in contrast, felt that Ojukwu was some sort of spoiled rich kind. This impression made it more difficult for him to be seen as a sympathetic figure in the Western media when the war broke out. It was also on this note that David Hunt, the British ambassador to Nigeria during the war, and the British journalist, John de St. Jorre believed Ojukwu looked down on Gowon since he felt that as an Oxford man, he was far better prepared for leadership. By and large, it is obvious that Ojukwu's personal views for good or bad, influenced the decisions he made throughout the war and during much of what many believed was an individual war and collision of ego with Gowon.

Yakubu Gowon on the other hand was born in October 1934, in Pankshin, Plateau State, under circumstances very different from those of his military colleagues like Ojukwu. His parents were Christian missionaries and his family spent several years during his early development in Zaria, Hausa land, where he received his early education and learnt to speak Hausa language fluently. Upon receiving his military training in Ghana and Eaton Hall in England before proceeding to the legendary officer training school in Sandhurst, he attended the Young Officers' College, Hythe Warminster in 1957, Staff College, Camberley England (1962), and Joint Services College, Latimer, England (1965). He returned to Nigeria later on and became a star officer.

He was a particular favourite of the queen and other members of Britain's royal family. He was a charismatic, eloquent and personable soldier who utilized his skills to impress General Aguiyi Ironsi who appointed him Chief of Army staff during his regime. It is instructive to note that the internal rivalries that existed between Gowon and Ojukwu and the pathological intra-ethnic dynamics that plagued the Nigerian military and wartime government contributed in no small amount to the war.

When Gowon became Nigeria's Head of State, there was a stiffing anger at the dissolution of the Nigerian State with all its ramifications. Both Gowon and Ojukwu were so obsessive to seeking positions of strength and avoid being seen as weaklings throughout the war. Both had pride in themselves. Also, it is noteworthy that Gowon's and Ojukwu's civilian advisers worsened the conflict by transforming themselves into sycophants as they massaged their ego.

The Second Level of Image

Prior to 1966, ethnic tensions and resentment had already existed among the different ethnic groups in Nigeria. It is against this background that Waltz's second level of analysis will be utilized to assess and understand the domestic set-up of the country. These ethnic groups, as a matter of interests, competed for political recognition and the control of power. This was consequent upon their domestic policies and programmes which were to dominate and rule. Bringing this closer to the 1960s especially the events of the first Nigerian coup, which was followed by a counter coup (when Northern officers carried out revenge on Igbo people, killing

both military officers and civilians in large numbers), the refusal of General Yakubu Gowon to respect and implement the agreement of Aburi, the creation of twelve new states by Gowon and the official declaration of the secession of the republic of Biafra by Ojukwu, one should be able to conclude that all these represented the domestic policies of the belligerent groups and thus, since these policies antagonized the interests of the groups, the war remained inevitable. To Nigeria, if Biafra was allowed to secede, then a number of other ethnic nationals within Nigeria would follow suit. The Nigerian government therefore had to hinder Biafra's secessionist plans to prevent the dissolution of Nigeria, and Biafra, on the other hand, needed to leave the Federation in order to be free.

The Third Level of Image

At the systemic level as proposed by Waltz, it should be noted that the selfish interference of the great powers such as Britain, France, Soviet Union, Portugal, China, among others led to great despair and a prolongation of the tragedy that wrecked the war. It could be argued that the British official response to the conflict was more humanitarian based on the premise that it was her former colony. This is evident as Michael Lipman's report in 1998 uncovers a far more distrustful attitude.

The report was also supported by a Commonwealth office briefing documents to the Prime Minister which reads thus: *"The sole immediate British interest is to the Nigerian economy back to a condition in which our substantial trade and investment can be further developed."*

Also, the BBC's Rock fountain in a story on Monday, January 3, called "Secret Papers Reveal Biafra Intrigue," confirms that oil interests and competition among Britain, France and the United States played a far more important role than the "United Nigeria" position. On July 31, 1968, French council of ministers released a statement of approbation in support of Biafra, though it fell short of a full recognition of the secessionist republic:

The Government of France considered the bloodshed and suffering endured for over a year by the population of Biafra as a demonstration of their will to assert themselves as a people. Faithful to its principles, the French Government therefore considered that the present conflict should be solved on the basis of the right of people to self-determination and should include the setting in motion of appropriate international procedures. However, Paris wanted the French Oil Company ELF Aquitaine (which had a smaller market share Nigeria's oil industry) to have a greater footprint in the African region consistent with Jacques Foccart's vision of French dominance.

The Portuguese did not openly back one side over the other during the conflict. The Biafra relationship with Portugal was a quiet one as they allowed Biafran planes to land in the Portuguese territory of Sao Tome. The Chinese also joined in the contest even though they came late. On the side of the Biafran, reports of Chinese technical and military assistance were cited.

Effect of the Nigeria-Biafra War

The war cost the Igbo people a great deal in regards to casualties, money and properties. It has been estimated that about three million people may have died due to the conflict, most from hunger and diseases which were used as strategies against the Igbo people by the Nigerian forces. It is on record that more than five hundred thousand people died from the famine

imposed deliberately through blockade throughout the war. Also, thousands of people starved to death everyday as the war progressed. The international committee of the Red Cross in September 1968 estimated eight thousand to ten thousand deaths from starvation each day.

The war resulted in the continuous feelings of victimization and marginalization as well as the obvious demonstration of ethnic resentment among Nigerians. The sentiments of the war have ended up dividing the country the more as no Igbo group would agree to, on a clear conscience, relate with the Hausa/ Fulani group without recourse to tribal grudges which arise as a result of reflections on the events of the war as they even at present, feel marginalized in the polity. This notion is being passed on to their children, who live with it. What this does is that it further creates a sense of division and hatred in young minds and this dampens any thoughts of future progress the country intends making. In addition, minorities in Biafra also suffered atrocities in the hands of those fighting on both sides of the conflict.

The Igbo who ran for their lives during the war returned to find out that their positions had been taken when the war was over, the government did not reinstate them rather it preferred to regard them as having resigned. Also properties: houses, shops and the like belonging to the Igbo people in the North and elsewhere were considered "abandoned properties." Their monies in the banks were seized, (and if at all, they were released, only twenty pounds was be given to them) and their military officers were involuntarily retired with no settlement. This however, culminated to a feeling of injustice as government's policies continue to economically cripple the Igbo people long after the war.

When the war broke out, majority of the oil mills stopped functioning. People became unemployed, educational establishments were abandoned and closed, millions of children became orphans, prices of goods increased incessantly, among other horrendous effects. Conversely, the war led to great innovations by the Biafran side who did all they could in order to succeed. One was the political division of her administrative provinces from eleven to twenty. Two was the establishment of the Bank of Biafra which was located in Enugu, until the city fell in 1967, and then it was moved several times to different locations all over Igboland. The bank's first governor was Dr. Sylvester Ugoh. The legal tender produced by the institution in January 1968 was designed by Simon Okeke and other talented local artists. The different denominations of the currency included one pound, five pounds, ten pounds, five shilling and the like. The currency was not a recognized legal tender outside Biafra. Three was the Biafran flag which was based on the Pan-Africanist teachings of Marcus Garvey. Fourth was the Biafra national anthem. The economic blockade enforced by General Yakubu Gowon against Biafra led to great ingenuity as Biafran scientists from the Biafran Research and Production unit produced a great number of rockets, bombs and telecommunication gadgets, and devised an indigenous strategy to refine petroleum. Of great importance was one of the weapons of warfare called "Ogbunigwe" produced by the Biafran scientists which struck great terror in the hearts of many Nigerian soldiers and was used to great effect by the Biafran army throughout the war. However, it is so unfortunate that the brains behind these tactical innovations were not given adequate recognition after the war. Their expertise were ignorantly undermined and the things they built were left unkempt and unmaintained because of pride and ethnic resentment.

Theoretical Approaches to Ethnic Tension and Resentment and the Nigeria-Biafra War

Many scholars such as Ted Gurr, John Burton, among others have tried to develop theories that would aid the explanation of ethnic conflicts. Ethnicity has persisted in many parts of the world including Nigeria and this has ended up disrupting peace and harmony in the country. It is therefore on this note that Thomas Hobbes' Social Contract theory, Ted Gurr's Relative Deprivation Theory, John Burton's Human Needs theory and John Dollars, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer and Robert Sear's Frustration Aggression theory are used to explain why ethnic groups take to conflict against one another using the Nigeria-Biafra war as focal point.

In moral and political philosophy, the social contract is a theory or model that originated during the Age of Enlightenment and usually concerns the legitimacy of the authority of the State over the individual. Further, the theory asserts that individuals have agreed to surrender some of their freedom and submit to the authority of the leader in exchange for the protection of the remaining rights. Giving credence to this, Thomas Hobbes' defines contract as the mutual transferring of rights. In the State of nature, everyone has the right to everything – there are no limits to the right of natural liberty.

He further states:

The purpose of a government is to enforce law... whenever the government turns to favour the strong, over the weak, one might say that the government has exceeded its legitimate function.

Yes, the counter-coup of July 29, 1966 may be regarded as reaction to the first coup on January 15, 1966, but the question remains, is such reaction which was even termed “Pogroms” justifiable? Owing to this horrible experience, Achebe writes:

What terrified me about the massacre in Nigeria was this: if it was only a question of rioting in the streets and so on, that would be bad enough, but it could be experienced. It happens everywhere in the world. But in this particular case, a detailed plan for Mass killing was implemented by the government, the army, the police, the very people who were there to protect life and property... it was not just human nature, a case of somebody hating his neighbor and chopping off his head. It was something far more devastating because it was a premeditated plan that involved careful coordination awaiting only the right spark.

With the assassination of not only 185 Igbo officers in the Nigerian Army, but also 3,000 Igbo civilians, the Easterners felt the government had failed woefully in keeping her own part of the Social Contract and therefore in a bid to guarantee their security, secession was very crucial.

Ted Gurr's Relative Deprivation Theory offers an explanation based on ethnic groups' access to power and economic resources. With the creation of twelve States in 1967 by General Yakubu Gowon (which mainly was a plan to disarm the Easterners by keeping them afar from States that bore much oil) and subsequent sporadic killing of Igbo people, they felt deprived of both the right to life and belonging and for this reason, a breakup became imminent.

According to John Burton's Human Needs Theory, ethnic groups fight because they are denied not only their biological needs, but also psychological needs that relate to growth and development. These include peoples need for identity, recognition, participation and autonomy. The Nigeria-Biafra war broke out because the Eastern region felt unsafe and cheated and thus needed to break away from the Federation.

The Easterners were being frustrated with the high handedness and punitive acts of the Northern region and this got them aggrieved. On May 30, 1967, Ojukwu, citing varieties of malevolent acts directed at the mainly Igbo Easterners – such as the Pogrom that claimed over thirty thousand lives, the Federal Government's failure to ensure the safety of Easterners in the presence of organized genocide, and the direct incrimination of the government in the murder of its own citizens, proclaimed the independence of the Republic of Biafra from Nigeria, with the full backing of the Eastern House Constituent Assembly. These events confirm the Frustration Aggression Theory which asserts that aggression is the result of frustrating a person's or group of people's efforts to achieve a plan.

Conclusion

The denial of merit is a form of social injustice that can hurt not only the individual concerned, but also the entire society. The motive for the denial may be ethnic discrimination, sexism, bribery and corruption, among others. It is sufficient to state that whenever merit is set aside by prejudice or whatever origin, individual citizens as well as the nation itself are victimized. This study therefore concludes that ethnic resentment and tensions were the determinant factors of the Nigeria-Biafra war, which maybe, could have been resisted if only the issues bothering on competition and quest for political cum economic control and dominance of one ethnic group over the others were seriously looked into. Also, the war could have been averted if not for the prideful and egoistic show off between the leaders of both Biafra and Nigeria.

Be that as it may, the theories used in the study explained that the war broke out because the Nigerian government refused to keep to their own part of the Social Contract and this made the Easterners feel deprived of their needs and right to life. They were frustrated and aggrieved by the horrific treatment they got from the Northerners.

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Is Feminist Epistemology Possible? A Critique of Jane Duran's Theory

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Abstract

This work makes a critique of the possibility of Jane Duran's Feminist Epistemology. The idea of a feminist epistemology, specifically, Jane Duran's gynocentric model endangers our quest for truth in epistemology in a manner that makes a gross mistake of attempting to equate facts with values. It does assert a subtle political constraint on the method and conclusion of the findings of a researcher on grounds that such conclusion does not support the feminist perspective. This is the central problem this work sets to investigate. This study employing the method of content and critical analysis holds that, Duran's claim that the whole of traditional analytic epistemology is inherently a psychological, hyper-normative and and rocentric does not constitute sufficient grounds for the jettisoning of traditional analytic epistemology for a feminist epistemology. The findings reveal that Unarguably, Duran has significantly conscientized us on the peculiarities of women as also both the subject and object of knowledge. Also, she has drawn our attention to possibility of certain masculinist traits she claims exist in analytic epistemology. However, while Duran's model has contributed substantially to the problem of knowledge, it falls short of an ideal theory of knowledge, leaving room for further debate and exploration. Consequently, in making the critique of the possibility of a feminist epistemology in the light of Jane Duran's, we argued and maintained the conclusion that these purported claims do not constitute grounds for the substitution of analytic epistemology with her feminist epistemology. Thus, whether there is a way of knowing that pertains to women or men for that matter as epistemic agents, the common search for

truth and logical reasoning as dealt with in analytic epistemology still remains valid. Therefore, this study recommends exploring alternative models that will consider and accommodate both genders in her approach to the epistemic impasse created by Duran.

Keywords: Hyper-normative, Gynocentric, Feminist Epistemology, Traditional Epistemology

Introduction

Historically, and in different countries of the world, women have expressed their displeasure and dissatisfaction on matters bordering on their sexuality. Both in socio-political movements and within academic circles, they have articulated, in panoply of voices, their worries, demands and aspirations for justice (Walters 2005, p. 2). A significant hallmark of the second wave feminism is not essentially its vehement critique of theories and methodologies of both the natural and social sciences, but also its unrelenting quest for a feminist theory and even epistemology (Lazreg 1994, p. 45). This was due to the fact that feminist theorists claim to have found all theoretical frameworks and methods inadequate and ideologically masculinist in nature. Over the last decades feminist thinkers have advanced insightful critique of the economic, political and social beliefs and practices of a culture and society they perceive to be masculinist. There was less attention given to the underlying theories of knowledge and particularly, to the metaphysics that mirror and support patriarchal beliefs and practices. In addressing this problem, Sandra Harding and Merrill B. Hintikka, raised a fundamental question, “are there – can there be – distinctive feminist perspectives on epistemology, metaphysics, methodology and philosophy of science?” (Harding, S. and Hintikka, M. B. ed., 2004, p. ix). It is herein that Jane Duran attempted to articulate and delineate what a feminist account of knowledge is, that is a way of knowing that is peculiar to women. This is done in her work, titled, *Toward a Feminist Epistemology* (1991).

This study discusses Duran's attempt to establish the possibility of an elaborate feminist epistemology on the basis of her dissatisfaction and problem with traditional analytic epistemology as ideologically and rocentric in its nature. The paper investigates the conditions that prompted her agitation against analytic epistemology leading to the eventual proposal of her gynocentric model which she claims is a viable alternative to the inherent hyper idealistic, apsychological and and rocentrism of analytic epistemology. This study is divided into four subheadings. The first, Feminism and the Idea of a Feminist Epistemology shows how feminism both as a movement and discourse within academic circles necessitated and birthed feminist epistemology. The second, Duran's Dissatisfaction with Traditional Epistemology investigates precisely the conditions that promoted Duran's proposal of a feminist epistemology. Thirdly, The Possibility of a Feminist Epistemology discusses her idea of an epistemology grounded on a feminist theory. Lastly, we did a Critique of Duran's Feminist Epistemology; here we looked at her version of a feminist epistemology, its benefits, promises and challenges and the study ends with a Conclusion.

Feminism and the Idea of a Feminist Epistemology

What apparently began as an expression of dissatisfaction in the United States and Europe in the 60s and 70s both as a political movement and intellectual position committed to the quest for the liberation of women and an attempt to promote social, economic, cultural and political participation of women and to put an end to sexism in all its manifestations came to be known as feminism. Actually, the term feminism just like philosophy, clearly does not have a single definition acceptable to all feminist scholars. Rather there seem to be a crisscrossing of fundamental themes and concepts that cuts across many conceptions of feminism in spite of the scholar. The theme is essentially the claim that injustice is inherent in our society's structure, institutions and dynamics. Many of the feminist scholars part ways on the nature of what constitutes this injustice; this, thus, is what leads to a diverse spectrum of theories, scrutinies and engagements by feminists with the different branches of philosophy, movements or schools of thought within philosophy. Hence, we hear such nomenclatures as: feminist ecology, feminist empiricism, feminist epistemology, Marxist-feminism, feminist postmodernism, feminist sociology of knowledge, feminist standpoint theory, etc.

The basis of feminism's thesis is anchored on a neutralist ground. It proceeds with the belief that the human subject is a socially concrete and socially diverse being. Hence, the vast majority of feminists encourage suspicion of any sort of claim that propagates universalization. Certainly, the repudiation of universalization and an appeal for social specificity of the subject or object of knowledge is not a quintessential hallmark of feminism as many other theoretical perspectives equally places a premium on the socially concrete character of human beings as both the subject and object of knowledge. Rather, the uniqueness of feminism as a theory lies in its relentless attempt to draw our attention to the significance of gender and its ripple effect and dynamics in the diverse areas of human endeavours (Fricker and Hornsby 2000, p. 2). "The precise content of women's oppression varies for different women" (Stanley and Wise 1993, p.1). Consequent upon this, the variance in content of agitation among feminist the world over. Moreover, the analytic epistemology of the 20th century did provide a backdrop for the formulation and emergence of what is now known as naturalized epistemology (Duran 1991, p. 43). A framework that provided grounds upon which feminist epistemology launched attack on traditional epistemology and ventured into erecting its edifice of knowledge with special attention on the peculiarities of women both as subject and object of knowledge. Commenting on the emergence of naturalized epistemology and how it grants ground for the possibility of new theories and perspectives in epistemology, Richmond Campbell writes:

Almost three decades ago, W. V. Quine introduced the concept of naturalized epistemology by proposing that epistemologists should abandon their efforts to found the possibility of knowledge on first principles and should instead explain how knowledge is possible from within science. Though, other philosophers, such as Patricia Churchland and Hilary Kornblith, have followed Quine closely, still others, such as Alvin Goldman, Gilbert Harman, and Philip Kitcher, who also are drawn to mixing epistemology and science, have taken less radical approaches, seeing the theory of knowledge as incorporating scientific methods and results without being simply a part of science. Either way, the prospect of

combining epistemology and science has had widespread appeal (Campbell 1998, p. 1).

Essentially, feminist epistemology integrates into epistemology most of the theories and norms of feminism. Just like naturalized epistemology, it challenges traditional conceptions of knowledge. As traditionalists tend to explain the possibility of knowledge from a perspective external to science, value, and political interest. Feminist epistemologists on the other hand, seek to draw to our attention the ways and manner in which gender does and ought to influence our conceptions of knowledge, knowers, and practices of philosophical inquiry and justification of knowledge. Feminist epistemologists often consider science as an androcentric enterprise in its outlook and often sexist in methodology. "Therefore, explaining knowledge on the basis of science is likely to be problematic from a standpoint committed to the elimination of androcentrism and sexism" (Campbell 1998, p.2).

In the works of many feminist theorists such as; Jean Hampton, Elizabeth Lloyd, Susan Babbitt, Helen Longino, Elizabeth Potter, Susan Moller, Nancy Tuana, Naomi Scheman, Lynn Hankinson Nelson etc., we see a recurring emphasis on epistemology as situated knowledge. For these feminist epistemologists knowledge ought to reflect the peculiar perspective of the knower (Campbell 1998, p. 2). Duran points out that, works by Evelyn Fox Keller, Sandra Harding and Susan Bordo and others are both "broadly epistemological and straightforwardly feminist" (Duran 1991, p. 8). These feminist epistemologists predominantly have some underlying themes in common. In Duran's view, these themes include the following, that, "there is a masculinist, androcentric tradition that yields a hyper-normative, idealized, and stylistically aggressive mode of thought inherent in all of traditional epistemology" (Duran 1991, p. 8). These feminist epistemologists have taken up the task of identifying ways and manners by which dominant expressions of knowledge claims, whether in the form of conceptualization or practices, knowledge acquisition and justification of knowledge, places women and other minorities in a position of disadvantage. Hence, apart from drawing attention to these perceived injustices, they attempt to significantly reform the enterprise of epistemology to serve the interest of women and other minorities, by drawing to our consciousness the perceived misrepresentation and under representation of women as subject and object of knowledge.

Duran's Dissatisfaction with Traditional Epistemology

A proper reflection on feminism and its numerous derivatives: feminist ecology, feminist empiricism, Marxist-feminism, feminist postmodernism, feminist sociology of knowledge, feminist standpoint theory, feminist epistemology, etc., would reveal that its philosophy and theories are largely and essentially reactionary. The entire spectrum of feminist theories is a reaction to the perceived ideological gender bias inherent in discourses in the various fields of human knowledge. In philosophy, feminist epistemologists argue that this ideological gender bias fails to accord equal status to women and other minorities as knowers with unique peculiarities. In fact, considering the multiplicity of voices engaged in discourses on feminist epistemology, some scholars are of the view that in order to capture this plurality of perspectives, it should be aptly referred to as feminist's epistemologies. Moreover, feminist

epistemologists place a premium on plurality, and this value on plurality is basically a product of the perceived homogenous and hegemonic features of traditional epistemology. Jane Duran, in her *Toward a Feminist Epistemology* (1991) lends her voice to the multiplicity of feminist voices, that argues that, the predominant practices of epistemology disadvantages women. Many of the feminist theorists have specific reason(s) for their reaction and the unique perspective from which they individually look at the perceived injustices faced by women. This in turn shapes their proposal of how this problem could be addressed. What precisely is the cause of Duran's dissatisfaction with traditional epistemology? In the chapter one of her work, titled, *Analytic Theory of Knowledge*, Duran opens the paragraph with the following lines: "Any assertion about the normative and hyper-idealized nature of contemporary analytic epistemology requires some support" (Duran 1991, p. 19). These lines are in themselves not conclusive of Duran's challenge with traditional analytic epistemology but a pointer towards the part her argument in expression of her dissatisfaction with traditional epistemology intends to toll. This normative nature of analytic epistemology Duran claims is expressed mainly through its detailed epistemic analysis of problems of knowledge and knowledge assumption. In tracing the historical roots of epistemology as a subfield of philosophy, she posits that epistemology is as old as the Platonic Dialogues but the present status or advancement made in epistemology as it is today, she avers, is largely due to the modern era; that is, the post-Cartesian period and partly also due to the 20th century that have witnessed more narrowly defined epistemological question. She gives the question of the fourth condition for knowledge as an example of this. Duran armed with Bertrand Russell's, *A History of Western Philosophy*, begins the task of showing the problem of the epistemic tradition of philosophy. She References Russell on the Cartesian architectural quest for indubitable knowledge and his eventual arrival at *cogito ergo sum*; thereby drawing attention to the subjectivity of certain knowledge as highlighted by Russell when following the logical expression of Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*. This, Duran's claim has been at the heart of contemporary epistemology.

Duran begins with *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, by Russell, in tracing some of the major epistemological theories and their influence on her Feminist Epistemology. She is of the view that the work foreshadows a good deal of the history of 20th century epistemology (Duran 1991, p. 21). She made effort to show that from the works of Descartes and even Russell's Logical Atomism that there is a "desire to place empirical knowledge on a footing equal to nonempirical or deductively ascertainable knowledge" (Duran 1991, p. 23). This situation in epistemology according to Duran manifest itself in the 20th century analytic quest, "and this was ushered in partly by Russell's attempt to establish a basis of irrefutability for sense-based contentions, beginning with the deployment of logically proper names" (Duran 1991, p. 23). It is this Russell's perspective that Duran blames for the moves amongst professional epistemologist to give "a tighter and narrower account of knowledge, or claims to knowledge derived through the senses" (Duran 1991, p. 23).

Furthermore, Duran in the subsection she titled, *Sense-Data Views: Normative Theories of Privileged Access*, argues that the sense-data theorists, in an attempt to obtain epistemic certainty subserviently sacrificed most of what would pass for an adequate ontology, "and in the process did, indeed, begin to encompass their own destruction" (Duran 1991, p. 25). From the stand point of necessary and sufficient conditions for knowledge in approaching the

question of knowledge a thought held by American philosophers; Duran in reaction to the atomistic view and sense-data view, by the Austrian objections, points out that this brought about an attempt to tackle the conditions for knowledge from the perspective of analytically “tight necessary and sufficient conditions” (Duran 1991, p. 26). Duran held that this new standpoint ended up placing all cases of knowledge, “whether empirically derived or not, on the same footing” (Duran 1991, p. 26).

Another aspect of epistemology discussed by Duran is American Analytic Epistemology; precisely Edmund Gettier's classical reaction to the traditional epistemological conception of knowledge as justified true belief. She examined Gettier's reaction to an extent and advanced her arguments about the nature of 20th century epistemology on the basis of her analysis of Gettier's reaction. Duran points out in her observation of Gettier's analysis of Tripartite view of knowledge and counter reactions to Gettier, that, no reference whatsoever was made to the human cognitive process. In her words:

What sorts of facts about cognitive and neural functioning are relevant?
One wants to inquire why it is that elements of memory storage, retrieval from memory, sensory retention of images, capacity for inferring logical structure, and other sorts of cognitive capacities –all relevant to the sorts of examples utilized –are never referred to in the theories of relevant counterexamples? (Duran 1991, pp. 29-30).

From her observation, she reveals that epistemological theories had originated in a sheer a psychological manner and have held on to this a psychological character from the 60s and 70s. This a psychological character of epistemological theory became a cause of concern amongst epistemologists and forms the needed grounds for “another important move in theory of knowledge” (Duran 1991, p. 30).

Duran in the subsection titled, *A Naturalized Theory of Knowledge* tries to expose the roots of naturalized epistemology. She sums it thus:

The causal theories at least alluded, however briefly, to cognitive processes, and the nature of the theories themselves with their emphasis on material-world relations between objects that might come to the attention of the epistemic agent through the use of the senses lent itself to further reference to the actual functioning of intellectual and cognitive faculties. In addition, the late 1960s and early 1970s saw an enormous rise in the development of what came to be known as 'cognitive science' the intersection of areas such as psychology, linguistics, artificial intelligence, computer simulation, and computer science itself (Duran 1991, p. 35).

In spite of little or no response to these developments in the aforementioned fields by philosophers to the materials generated in these new frontiers of knowledge, “it was clear from the outset that the material was immediately relevant to issues in philosophy of mind” (Duran 1991, p. 35). Duran goes on to show the rise and need for naturalized epistemology particularly

as a precursor to her idea of feminist theory of knowledge. The rise and advance of cognitive science was not entirely embraced by epistemologist such as Goldman, but by the 70s, Duran noted that things began to change. Works by Hilary Kornblith *Beyond Foundationalism and Coherence Theory* and Quine's *Epistemology Naturalized* had apparently begun to suggest the need for a replacement of epistemology by natural and social sciences. Subsequently, a new wave that generally did not call for a replacement of epistemology but the recognition of epistemology that works and that explicitly relates to the possibility of knowledge acquisition began to surface. Duran contends that naturalized epistemology is less androcentric and certainly less normative. She used *Beyond Foundationalism and Coherence Theory* (1980) a work by Hilary Kornblith, and tried to show as argued by Kornblith that, "the question of whether or not the actual cognitive functioning of agents could be relevant to epistemology as practiced by professional philosophers" (Duran 1991, p. 36) leads to an a psychologistic approach to epistemology; this, she thinks is a mistake. Duran further takes on Foundationalism and Coherentism challenging them as theories that are a psychological in nature. That is, that they fail to tell us anything about the functioning of epistemic agents, "and each theoretical stance may be thought of as a recommendation for the way in which epistemic agents should perform the task of justification, if that task of justification were to be performed ideally. But human agents seldom perform epistemic tasks in an ideal manner" (Duran 1991, p. 40). Therefore, it is on the basis of these perceived inadequacies that Duran proceeded to propose the project of a feminist epistemology.

The Possibility of a Feminist Epistemology

In an attempt to establish her account of feminist epistemology, Duran admits that there has been a multidisciplinary endeavour among scholars across sociology, psychology and political science to articulately delineate what a feminist account of knowledge is; that is, a way of knowing that is peculiar to women. This has attracted the attention of some epistemologists too; particularly, within the feminist tradition a number of attempts have been made by certain philosophers towards establishing grounds as forerunners of the idea of a feminist epistemology. Some scholars who within the framework of naturalized epistemology have made a case for a feminist epistemology include Evelyn Fox Keller, Sandra Harding and Susan Bordo, among others. Their works are admittedly both broadly epistemological and straightforwardly feminist. However, Jane Duran incorporating the advanced and contemporary subfields of analytic epistemology, feminist theory and philosophy of science births *Toward a Feminist Epistemology* (1991). It is believed that her work is the first to distinctly and elaborately put forth a supportable epistemology required for the delineation of a feminist theory of knowledge.

In chapter four of her work, titled, *Toward a Feminist Epistemology*, Duran made an ingenious attempt to develop a rigorous naturalized feminist epistemology based on strands of theory taken from each of the first three aforementioned feminist theorists. By way of proper clarification on what she meant by feminist epistemology Duran made a conceptual delineation of her view thus:

An overview of what has come to be known as 'feminist epistemology' inevitably omits or leaves out a great deal of material, since the scope of feminist epistemology is so large; nevertheless, it is feminist epistemology, as it has been constructed in approximately the last decade, that is of crucial importance for the intersection of naturalized and gynocentric strands that I hope to create here (1991, p. 103).

Duran argues that, the mere fact that analytic epistemology has been, in its major constructions, an androcentric method should not mean that it cannot be reconstructed and used for feminist purposes and that analytic philosophy is a tool that can be employed for feminist purposes. Duran proposed to create a feminist theory of knowledge by employing one or more of the strands of naturalized epistemology on grounds that these strands of theory are "already less distanced, less normative, and less idealized than many of the moves in analytic epistemology that preceded them, and they seem to lend themselves much more easily to the feminist project" (Duran 1991, p. 106). In her view, feminist epistemology maintains the claim that the special perspective of women is an epistemic perspective that yields its own theory of knowledge and ontology.

The crux of Duran's feminism is directly tied into much of the work in naturalized epistemology that reminds us that current work in cognitive science emphasizes the fact that knowledge cannot be divorced from context. In other words, cognitive science stresses the fact that for all knowers—male or female, adult or child—the actual modes of cognizing and coming-to-knowledge are heavily reliant on context. She argues that the contextual nature of knowledge and the interactional pattern of knowledge acquisition are thus two areas that have been emphasized in feminist theory and that are ripe for expansion in a theoretically rigorous direction under the pull of naturalized analytic epistemology. Duran further draws attention to the physiological and cognitive procession of informing as unique to females thus:

The emphasis on the bodiness of feminist theory is also an emphasis on the senses. Whether it is female sensitivity to pain, to cyclical changes, or other hormonal capacities particular to females, it is clear that the feminine modes of knowing that have been described in the literature are related to bodily functioning in a way that the classic androcentric theory is not. Now here the fact that the pull is toward the senses rather than away from the senses provides fertile ground for further theorization. As Goldman has documented, recent work in cognitive theory emphasizing perception, visualization capacities, and even auditory and tactile discrimination. It is, of course, completely true that the work cited by those, interested in cognitive theory is intended to be applicable to all humans. But until the recent moves in naturalized epistemology, only feminist theory seemed to have any interest at all in trying to integrate an account of sensory awareness into its epistemology (1991, pp. 113-114).

With emphasis on contextualization, communicative awareness, and bodily awareness Duran proceeds to develop some relatively unrefined lines of theory with regard to epistemic justification of feminist epistemology. It is on this grounds that she addressed at length the

feminist concerns that an and rocentric method cannot fully articulate a woman-centered epistemology.

Duran aims at establishing a framework or model for epistemic justification that would be simultaneously naturalized and gynocentric. Thus, in achieving this, she employed materials from contemporary research areas such as naturalized epistemology, philosophy of mind and philosophical psychology. She drew a model of epistemic justification contending that it is both gynocentric and naturalized. She also consistently maintained the feminist concern that an and rocentric method cannot adequately articulate a woman-centered epistemology. Commenting on the gynocentric model she explained that we need to understand the gynocentric outlook as connected and not distanced from the fundamental grounding of epistemology, knowledge acquisition and epistemic justification. She writes:

As feminists, we desire a gynocentric model of epistemic justification that is applicable cross-culturally and that, perhaps more importantly, enlightens our view of the multifarious ways in which women live, work, and communicate. In addition, we need a fleshing out of the role of nonverbal communication, since it is crucially important from a gynocentric point of view (Duran 1991, p. 178).

For Duran, what is meant by feminist epistemology or feminist epistemics is a model that is not only grounded on inherently female practice or pragma but that is also applicable to women across and inter-culturally. Duran emphasized the importance of nonverbal means of communication and the sensitivity of the female to such communication in general. Thus, she clearly stated that her model “allows for acquisition of knowledge, or justification of knowledge claims, to be accomplished on the basis of informal input that is both verbal and nonverbal, straightforward and nuanced, articulable and only somewhat expressed” (Duran 1991, p. 184). It is an upshot of Duran's gynocentric model that knowledge acquisition, that is, epistemic justification is a context and culture-related process. Thus, it is due to this process of knowledge acquisition that makes Duran's model applicable to all contexts and cultures (Duran 1991, p. 185). This gives the gynocentric model fluidity not found in nonnaturalized models and also makes it profoundly relevant to that particular critical area of contemporary feminist theory that deals with the pluralistic nature of women's voices. The gynocentric model is anchored on her *Context Communicative and Principle* (CCP). The model provides the basis upon which any choice made in knowledge acquisition will be largely determined by context. She admitted that CCP implies a thoroughgoing relativism, and it cuts across both interculturality and intra-culturally (Duran 1991, p. 197). Most importantly, CCP is also applicable to most sorts of situations that do not call for the extremely normative and distanced view of the and rocentric theorists. Furthermore, she believed that CCP is applicable to children and also adults in non-western culture. With regards to the nexus between nonverbal communication, sexuality and CCP, Duran asserts that nonverbal, gestural communication is erotically connected to the feminine accounts of knowledge. To explain the foregoing, Duran appealed to Object-Relations Theory. The product of the Object-Relations theory is based on the claim that males experience intimacy with females as a powerful, nonverbal form of merging

and to some extent, regression. On the other hand, females' experience of male-female intimacy has learned over time to associate intimacy with both verbal and nonverbal of feelings and emotions. This assumption from the foregoing brings to us the idea that almost all our accounts of sexual relations are essentially androcentric even the ones inspired by women. Hence, Duran perceives androcentrism overwhelmingly in both sexuality and in the acquisition of knowledge. This is termed androcentrism because the separation of the knower from the known is strongly emphasized. This type of knowing is problematic because it misses the point of connectedness that is typical of female intimacy (Duran 1991, p. 190).

Consequently, Duran's gynocentric epistemology is conceived as an epistemological model that merges knowledge with the object, while gynocentric eroticism is typically characterized by an intentionality directed towards the other person coupled with the desire to know the other person as a true person. The relationship gynocentrism has with CCP is that what is constitutive of epistemic justification such as genuine questioning and sceptical doubt are not likely to occur in sexual contexts, even though they cannot be avoided in nonverbal contexts.

A Critique of Duran's Feminist Epistemology

The contribution of Jane Duran cannot be underestimated first, to the discourse of feminism, to the domain of socio-political philosophy and sociology and secondly, to epistemology. Her contribution to epistemology is certainly not without an audacious courage that challenges the entire analytic tradition not merely as inherently inadequate but as tending towards androcentrism. It does amount to a form of epistemic injustice that the history of epistemology has been tried by Duran and found wanting of the charge of been inconsiderately androcentric and as psychological. Like men, women are epistemic agents, and both subject and object of knowledge. To deny or disregard their peculiarities of knowledge acquisition on grounds that it does not essentially measure up to the hyper-idealized normative model of traditional analytic epistemology as highlighted by Duran would be unfair. Consequently, Duran's proposal of the Contextualistic and Communicative Principle (CCP) in establishing grounds for the fluidity of her gynocentric model created much room for an approach to understanding the process of knowledge acquisition from a sociological ground. The CCP model depends on the notions of coherence, context, and interpersonal communication (Duran 1991, p. 134). This, therefore, brought about the recognition of the environmental and social conditions of the knower as essential factors worthy of consideration in epistemic justification. Duran apparently draws our consciousness to the fact that the process of knowing does not in any way happen in a vacuum. On the contrary, she emphasizes the intricacies of the process and the social environmental factors that shapes the process of knowledge acquisition. However, the whole idea of a feminist epistemology appears strange and challenges the entire edifice of traditional analytic epistemology as we know it. What are the problems inherent in the idea of feminist epistemology specifically as proposed by Duran?

Firstly, we need to understand the essential tasks of epistemology as a branch of philosophy. Epistemology is concerned with a variety of questions about knowledge and related topics. "The task of epistemology, is to clarify what the conception of knowledge involves, how it is applied, and to explain why it has the features it does" (Rescher 2003, p. 12). The first and primary approach to epistemology is the rule-giving or principle-stating approach, hence, its

normative outlook. Explaining the normative nature of epistemology, Alvin I Goldman says this: "epistemology is often concerned with rationality and irrationality, with justification and the absence of justification, with warranted and unwarranted belief. Now 'rational' and 'irrational', 'justified' and 'unjustified', 'warranted' and 'unwarranted' are all evaluative or normative expressions" (Goldman 1985, p. 35). With the overt repudiation of traditional analytic epistemology as not only and rocentric but as hyper-idealized and a psycholocial Duran obviously calls for a naturalized process to epistemology. In fact, it is fair to assert that her feminist epistemology or the entire panoply of feminist epistemologies are anchored on naturalized epistemology. Especially, "advances made in recent years in merging lines of research in the cognitive sciences with epistemology" (Duran 1991, p. 43). It is the appeal to psychology in addressing epistemological questions or attempt to reconnect epistemology with psychology that shakes the foundation of epistemology as a normative branch of philosophy. However, Duran fails to establish how such connection should be made. She is yet to clarify just how precisely such links should be established and most importantly, the problem of the possible impact her approach would have on the direction of epistemology.

Secondly, the major challenge with Duran's gynocentric model is that it creates much allowance for relativism given its overt emphasis on contextualism as seen in the Contextualist and Communicative Principle (CCP). She believes that objectivity as pursued by analytic philosopher would imply narrowing the grounds of what qualifies as knowledge or epistemic justification in order to meet the rigid idealized normative standard. Moreover, her gynocentric model that emphasizes the CCP largely adopts material from recent empirical data from cognitive science and psychology that makes it nearly impossible to see a clear-cut demarcation between epistemology and psychology. In fact, it could be argued that Duran does not mind the jettisoning of epistemology for the adoption of the findings of cognitive sciences which in itself is a ceaseless stream ever-new discovery.

Thirdly, considering Duran's analysis of analytic epistemology and her dissatisfaction with it as a tradition that is inherently and rocentric, a psychological and hyper-normative, one would have expected her to jettison the analytic epistemology, but she never did. In fact, she calls for a reconstruction of analytic epistemology. She did admit the possibility of feminist epistemology landing in a conundrum particularly, when feminist philosophers attempt to employ the very methods and materials, they have dubbed and rocentric. Often utilizing such methods and materials as the most useful tools for developing new lines in advancement of their theory. This singular act proves the indispensability of analytic epistemology if not to feminist epistemology, to discourses pertaining to foundationalism in epistemology. Therefore, for feminist epistemology to be taken seriously as a theory it needs such foundation.

Finally, if we grant that there is actually a way of knowing that is peculiar to women as epistemic agents in their own right as Duran argues with support from contemporary findings in the field of cognitive science, does this constitute grounds for her dissatisfaction and claim that analytic epistemology is and rocentric? Is analytic epistemology that is essentially normative not necessary for epistemology? How do we then proceed in seeking truth, establishing logical reasoning and maintaining standards of what shall constitute grounds for justification of our knowledge claim? The challenge with Duran's feminist epistemology is that it seems to jeopardize our quest for truth in epistemology in such a manner that it makes a gross

mistake of equating facts with values. Hence, it often asserts political constraints on the conclusions of our findings both because it does not favour the feminist perspective and promotes its values and ideology. The quest for knowledge ought to be objective and not subject to the sentiments of the feminist perspective because what is truth ought not to be gender sensitive, at least epistemologically speaking. Facts remains fact and values value, the attempt to mix these have plunged epistemology into a congeries of contradictory and irreconcilable perceptive in our common quest for truth and knowledge.

Conclusion

The idea of a feminist epistemology as proposed by Jane Duran has significantly drawn our attention to the peculiarities of women as both subject and object of knowledge. Her dissatisfaction and reaction to analytic epistemology birthed her gynocentric model. No doubt, she did a beautiful job in drawing our attention to the estranged situation of women as epistemic agents. This paper admits and appreciates the attention drawn to these seemingly masculinist tendencies inherent in traditional epistemology. However, the critique maintains that the idea of a feminist epistemology might land us in a conflation of facts with values. The quest for truth and the justificatory conditions or standards in epistemology as a normative discipline would be negatively hampered with, with the consideration of the congeries of feminist perspectives like that of Duran.

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An Onomastics Exploration of Relationship Names in Ibibio

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Abstract

The objectives of this research are to appraise and document relationship names in Ibibio as well as examine the cultural relevance of these variables to the Ibibio society. Basing this study on Sapir Whorf theory which addresses the intertwining nature of language and culture, this research analyses relationship names that are appreciated and the ones that are rejected within the Ibibio society. The data for this study were elicited intuitively and from secondary sources; the analysis was done descriptively. The Ibibio language has relationship names which express what the people see as sacrosanct practices, but abominable registers such as bestiality, lesbianism, homosexuality, and others are not captured in the language lexicon. The reason being that, these unholy practices are seen as eccentric as well as taboos and anyone caught in the very act is punished accordingly. This research has identified six (6) groups of relationship names and their meaning in Ibibio language. The result of this research shows that affiliations such *asimaan* (kinsman), *ayenyin* (grandchild), *ukod* (in-law), or *asenawo* (visitor) are the most delicate of all the relationships in Ibibio land. The value and fragile nature of the above relationships have been prescribed by the ancestors and the reason why they attached so much importance to these relationships than others is divine. This study recommends that the onomastic exploration of other aspects of Ibibio culture that have not been investigated should be examined by scholars for the purpose of preserving our cultural heritage for posterity.

Keywords: Relationship names. Ibibio culture, Ibibio language, Register.

Introduction

Onomastics is a broad field of learning that studies different components of naming and the likes. It is an inexhaustible field of study that promotes and preserves the various features and nuances associated with human and non-human naming systems. Over the years, different fields of study including sociology, anthropology, arts/humanities, among others have gone into investigating the structures, typologies, etymologies, literature, and the significance of most indigenous names for the purpose of ascertaining their cultural, economic, religious, political, scientific, as well as their educational relevance to the literate and the non-literate society. Name as well as the naming system of a given locality is interwoven with the people norms and cultural values. They are heterogeneity relationship names whose pragmatic relevance broadens far beyond their primary usage.

Name is a form of ligament that keeps a relationship alive. It gives an existing relationship worth and value that the society accords it; such that, even when the relationship goes sore the name that existed during such relationship stands as an evidence. Hence, name is a stamp or a seal of an existing relationship. It would not be out of place to say that, where there is a relationship, naming is inevitable. Bariki (2009) agrees to the fact that African names have a lot of historical, socio-cultural semantic, ethnopragmatic and semiotic load that make them multifunctional communication tools.

Since names are complex form of traditions; its multifariousness is captured differently in different contexts and situations of human endeavours/experiences. It is worthy of note that an icon or element of a culture can represent or express several meanings depending on the context, forum, personality, and other incomprehensible traits that are beyond human imagination. Therefore, the study of human and non-human names and their intricacies are inexhaustible by any standard of investigation. The objective of this study is to document relationship names, examine the sociocultural significance of relationshipnames and also ascertain why certain relationship names are not captured in the language lexicon of the people.

Some taboos and abominable acts are so detested in Ibibio land to the point that the people do not have indigenous names for them. They can only explain what these concepts mean as it is shown in table (7) but they do not have name tags for these relationship affiliation in Ibibio. It is clear that these obnoxious relationship acts are becoming popular because of the advancement of science and technology. The idea that most scientific and technological concepts have been captured in Ibibio language lexicon and these obnoxious relationship acts have not be captured, means that the older generation did not approve these abominable practices and the new generation of Ibibio populace also frown at this unholy acts and that is why these relationship acts are not named like other relationship acts.

Who are the Ibibio?

The Ibibio people are very religious. Their traditional elements anchor on beliefs, norms, value, and ethic. There is no belief on any philosophy that does not regard the norms of the people. Nothing is of value to the Ibibio people if it does not suit the ethical standard of the

society. Hence the four traditional elements are interwoven and acculturate to all Ibibio indigenes. They recognized the existence of the supreme being, divinities, spirits, and ancestors. These beings are accorded due respect and worship regularly in order to keep enjoying their mutual support, benevolence, and commitment Ukpog (2007).

The Ibibio language is prompt in capturing fairly the socio-cultural, religious, political, and economic beliefs, norms, value and ethics of the people. Ibibio is spoken by about six million people following 2012 census. The Ibibio speaking people is classified into six sub-groups which are Eastern or Proper Ibibio, Western Ibibio or Anaañ, Northern Ibibio or Eniong, Southern Ibibio, Delta Ibibio, Andoni-Ibeno, Riverain Ibibio or Efik (Forde and Jones, 1950:67 in Ekong (2001). Majority of the Ibibio speakers live in Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. The language is the medium of communication in commerce, religion, second language for education and the judiciary.

What Constitutes Relationship Names in Ibibio

Relationship names are mostly names used to describe an affiliation and affinity that a person has with another. It is a well-known and accepted norm in Ibibio culture. Most of the relationship names are used as personal names. Evidence of this is found in most literary works written by Iwaketok such as Ikp??ñIfonno (2019), IdñAkpanadiama (2023) and Adiaha Udo (2025). Relationship names are culture specific and language generic which means, they are culturally base. The words that form the inventory of this register are often novel, not loanwords (Ekong, 2001). Essien (1986:30) penned that Ibibio names “reflect not only the practices that arises from the religion and philosophy but also from the religious and philosophical ideas accepted by the people”. The act of given names to relationship that existed between two or more persons among the Ibibio is as old as the people themselves. **Although, there is no collaboration between the Ibibio relationship names and their meaning,** the fact remains that when an affiliation between two or more is recognized, a name is designated to such and the practice is culturally recognized in the society. This goes on to explain the fact that any affiliation or relationship between two or more persons that is not captured in the language register is most likely not applauded norm in Ibibio land. Few among such affiliations are Lesbianism, homosexuality, gay marriage, incest, bestiality, and others. It is not that these practices were not or are not observed by some unscrupulous elements in Ibibio society but, the reality remains that anyone caught in any of these acts faces the full wrath of the community where they reside. And because the people do not welcome these abominable acts, they are no indigenous names identified with these kind of relationship acts to the best of my knowledge. The truth remains that these unrecognised affiliations are taboos and are detrimental to the spirit of the land.

The significance of this research to Ibibio culture and the language is in agreement with what Sapir Whorf asserts that the language of a people is conditioned by the culture of the people. In other words, the language of a people expresses the regular and irregular, present and past experiences of the people as well as project the future expansion as they interact with other ethnic groups. Relationship names set to reveal intrigues beliefs and value of the Ibibio society.

In Ibibio traditional setting, some relationships are very fragile than others and in order not to incur the wrath of the gods, the people tread with caution in such kinship. Ekong (2001:130) acknowledges that “the traditional Ibibio ... was organized around intrinsic fear of the unknown. Hence most deviant behaviours and occurrence were generally regarded as sinful or sacrilegious and likely to invoke the wrath of the gods on the people either in the form of famine, pestilence, and disease, natural disasters, death or a combination of these.” Thus, any harm done against an imaan (kinsman), ayɲnyen (grandchild), ukod (in-law), or asenawo (one's visit) were regarded as very demeaning act. Any culprit found inflicting any kind of harm to any of these fellows was punished severely. Rejecting a grandchild request or talking harshly to him/her attracted an instant punishment from the gods. Grandchildren were and are still seen as gift and their position in any family is not to be contested for. The reason being that during war or fracas between communities; grandchildren were or are used to champion peace and harmony to disagreeing communities.

Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This research adopted a qualitative research approach. The data were elicited from secondary sources namely textbooks, internet, journals. Six groups of relationship names in a tabulated form has be presented in this study. Each table takes care of a particular relationship name as identified in the language.

The Neo-Whorfianism is adopted for this research. This theory is a new and revised version of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis of 1929. Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis comprises two concepts which are linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity. Linguistic determinism is a stronger version of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis which states that language determines the way we think, while linguistic relativity the weaker version of the hypothesis argues that the differences recorded in a language are not established in any other language. It further explains that differences in languages affect the comprehension process of most concepts. This notion had been turned down by many researchers on the bases that culture is a universal phenomenon and linguistics has expression limitation and barrier because of ecological factor (Brown, 1957). Others postulate that language(s) is/are created based on need and so what a language does not express cannot affect the assimilation process of concepts. The Neo-Whorfianism has come to take care of the inadequacies of earlier linguistic relativity. This revised model is birthed by a comparative linguist Stephen C. Levinson who avers that “human spatial thinking is quite heavily influenced by culture and more specifically by language” (Levinson, 2003, p. 18). Heremodelled the idea that culture influences the thought pattern of people, but does not determine people's world view of the concepts that they do not have in their native language. The discussion of this study settles around linguistic relativity. Certain phenomenon happening around the world had been programmed before the existence of man. While some cultures experience civilization early, others had theirs quite late. Also, many relationship phenomena are yet to be recognized in most African grammar log even when these phenomena have gotten wide acceptance and codification in most languages of other continents of the world. The understanding is that most of the relationship experiences are strange and unacceptable to some societies. And so most languages and cultures are yet to have native name to these concepts even though they might understand the idea behind the concepts. This

research finds the argument in this hypothesis viable to support the discussion of this investigation. In this paper, we explicate why some relationship names are readily captured in the language lexicon and others are not.

Analysis of Data and Discussion

This section focuses on the data analysis to explicate the cultural belief on relationship names in Ibibio land. The relationship includes:

Table 1: Blood/Family Relationship name

S/N	Ibibio	Gloss
1	Ayakka	Any close or distant relations
2	Ayineka-eteawodeen	Uncle
3	Ayineka-eka awoañwaan	Aunt
4	Ayinayen-eka (awodeen)	Nephew
5	Ayinayen-eka (awoanwaan)	Niece
6	Ayinayen-eka	Cousin (from my maternal side)
7	Ayinayen-ekaete	Cousin (from my paternal side)
8	Ayinete	step brother/sister
9	Ayineka	Sibling
10	Añwaan	wife or sister-in-law
11	Ayin	One's child
12	Ete	Father
13	Eka	Mother
14	Ebe	husband or in-law
15	Ekam	Grandmother
16	Etebom	Grandfather
17	Ekaete	Mother of one's father
18	Eteeka	Father of one's mother

This form of relationship names are given to people who have blood affinity within the family. In Ibibio land, every member of the family is in a relationship with one another, and so there are assigned nomenclature useful and needful to differentiate one family relationship from another. *Ebe* (Husband) and *añwaan* (wife) are the first family relationship that brings about other family members within the family and the society at large. *Ete* (father) and *eka* (mother) come after *ayñ* (child) or *ndit?* (children) have been brought into the family. I can say that these are primary members of any family. Just like *ete*(father) and *eka* (mother); *etubom* (grandfather) and *ekam* (grandmother) are relationships established after *ebe* (Husband) and *añwaan* (wife) procreate, and they give their parents *ayñyen* (grandchild) or *ndito-ayñyen/ndit?-ayñ* (grandchildren) respectively. *Ayineka-ete-awodeen* (uncle), *ayineka-ekaawoañwaan* (aunt), *ayinayñ-eka-awodeen* (nephew), *ayinayñ-eka-awoanwaan* (niece), among others presented, come after a child or children have been brought into a family union and the family becomes expanded.

Theoretically, this shows that Ibibio recognizes and approves these family kinships and the people are very familiar with the privileges and benefits of the kinships and their names within the bloodline.

Table 2: Marriage Relationship names

S/N	Ibibio	Gloss
1	Ayinebe	Foster child of the husband
2	Ayinañwaan	Foster child of the wife
3	Añwaanete	Step mother
4	Ebe eka	Step father
5	Ete ebe	Father-in-law of the husband
6	Ete añwaan	Father-in-law of the wife
7	Eka ebe	Mother-in-law of the husband
8	Eka añwaan	Mother-in-law of the wife
9	Ukod	In-law
10	Imaan	Kinship
11	Añwaanufib	Co-wife
12	Awo mmebe / Awo mmeañwaan	A relative from the husband/wife side
13	Nditgete	Step brothers/sisters

The names in this category emanates from marriage relationship. There are also blood-related names. When a man or woman gets married in Ibibio as well as other cultures of the world, he or she acquires a new statue and relationship. Marital relationships are well recognised in Ibibio with the names that portray the affinity. *Ebe* (husband) and *añwaan* (wife) are the first marital relationship names in Ibibio marriages. *Ete-ebe* (father-in-law of the husband) and *ete-añwaan* (father-in-law of the wife), *eka-ebe* (mother -in-law of the husband), and (mother-in-law of the wife), *añwaan-ufib* (co-wife), and others come after a marital union has been formed between the *ebe* (husband) and *añwaan* (wife). Relatives from the husband and the wife sides know themselves as *ukod* (in-law). Marriage relationships are greatly valued and respected in Ibibio land.

Theoretically, marriage relationship (names) are greatly endeared, honoured and accounted for in Ibibio language. It is observed that culture influences our sense of judgement. The Ibibio people value marriage relationship because the custom of the people accord any relationship that emanates from marriage dignity and honour.

Table 3: Business Relationship names

S/N	Ibibio	Gloss
1	Awoitie-utom/ndubeghe	Colleague/business partner
2	Awoudua mmi	Customer/my business partner
3	Udeb	Buyer
4	Andinyam/Anyamudua	Seller
5	Anie/Andiniendubeghe	Business owner
6	Awo isañ	Debtor
7	Awoutom	Labourer

Business relationship names are used to describe or address office-mate, business partners, co-trader or co-marketer and customers/clients who relates in doing one business transaction or the other and they are very few in Ibibio.

In table (3), using the Neo-Whorfianism, It could be observed that Ibibio language lexicon has relationship names that describe the various people that take part in different business transactions. Although the business relationship names in the language may be few compare to what is found in other languages like English; however, there is an evidence that the Ibibio accept and do also get involve in commerce and other endeavours.

Table 4: Relationship names within the Community

S/N	Ibibio	Gloss
1	Awoiɗaḽḽnnyin	my village person
2	Awoufɔkḽḽnnyin	Extended family relation
3	Awoekpəkḽḽnnyin	Extended family relation
4	Abɔɔḽḽ-ufɔk	Head of one's extended family
5	Abɔɔḽḽḽkparawa	Youth leader
6	Eka ibaan	Women leader
7	Ete id?ḽ	Village head
8	Abɔɔḽḽikpaisonḽ	Clan head
9	Ikaan	Ancestors
10	Aku/ḽkuku	Priest/priests
11	Amanaisoḽ	Indigene
12	Asenawo	Visitor
13	Ukod	In-law
14	Mboḽḽoidoḽ	Neighbour
15	Ndem	Deity
16	Mbia mfa	Soothsayers
17	Mbiaibɔk	Native doctors

Relationship names within the community are nomenclatures employed to express the connection that people within the community have. *Awoiɗaḽḽnnyin* (my town/village person), simply means the speaker and the addressee are from the same village/community. *Awoufɔkḽḽnnyin* means a member of my extended family. This kind of relationship comes by blood. *Ab??ḽḽ-ufɔk* is a recognizable extended family leader; the eldest male of the family who takes care of the family deity and maintain peace and order within the extender family. It is a statutory leadership position recognised by government. In the current political era, *Ab??ḽḽḽkparawa* (Youth leader) and *Eka ibaan* (Women leader - commonly known as woman leader) have become a very lucrative political position sought after by most male youth and women in the community. They opt for these positions so as to become relevant in government by using their office to draw the attention of the government of the day to the needs of the people that they represent. A person is elected into either of these offices depending on his/her commitment and dedication to his/her people and the approval of the government. These offices are also statutory.

In Ibibio community, both the physical and spiritual affinities are also recognised. Different deities, ancestors, custodians of customary rule of laws like the - village head, clan head, seers and native doctors have been fully captured in the language lexicon and their responsibilities in governance are well known and appreciated by the people.

Theoretically, it is observed that relationship names within the community exist in Ibibio culture. These names portray the type of communality that exist among the Ibibio people and the fact that in Ibibio society, an individual is not expected to live in isolation nor suffer alone. A person has different people to relate with both physically and spiritually as he or she has need of them. There is an Ibibio adage that says “*Ndāñndianaawoasekopufk idemawo*” (A neighbour perceives his neighbour's body adour)”, that is to say that a neighbour is of great value in Ibibio tradition.

Table 5: Relationship names by Association

S/N	Ibibio	Gloss
1	Awoufok-Abasi (nnyin)	our church member
2	ikod mmi	My followers
3	Ayineka (ke Abasi)	My brother or sister in Christ
4	Mbed mmi	My disciples
5	Ufan (mmi)	(My) friend
6	Awo itieutom	A colleague
7	Amammi	My lover
8	Awonneme mmi	My gossipmate
9	Ayinufoknwedmmi	My schoolmate
10	Ayinuf?k	House help
11	Awoutom mmi	(My) employee
12	Awoatāñ	A member of one's compound
13	Asenawo/asenawoinuaesion	A visitor
14	Koko	Ones namesake
15	Awoidem	Ones acquaintance
16	Awo nnyin	a member of one unit/party
17	Awoinaa	Sex mate
18	Awombre mmi	My playmate
19	Awonsañā/nsañā mmi	Acquaintance
20	Ub?kudom	A confidant
21	edoñ mmi	My sheep

Names in this category emanates from common association like business, play, friendship, church fellowship, and others. People who share fellowship or have involvement with one another in places like the church, office, school, organization addresses their colleagues, schoolmates, clients, follower, visitors etc. with names that depict their involvement. These names are meant to clearly express the purpose of their involvements. A pastor can address his follower as *ed?ñ mmi* (my sheep). This shows that the addressee is his subject. A leader in Ibibio society can address his subjects as *mbed mmi* (my disciple). This kind of relationship name is peculiar to religious setting than to any other group. *Awombre mmi* (My playmate) is often used

by footballers in Akwa Ibom to refer to their colleagues. Other folks in Ibibio used the same name to address any person they know who is not their close acquaintance. Children or young people often refer to their play mate as *ufan mmi* (my friend).

Theoretically, it is observed that relationship names by association are names given to portray the type of association that the Ibibio people are involve in, and their meaning explain the purposes of such relationships.

Table 6: Relationship names by Age

S/N	Ibibio	Gloss
1	Akpoñka	Age mate
2	Nta	Peer
3	Da	Peer
4	Da awo	That person

Names in this table depicts rapport between people of the same age grade. The names also portray closeness and familiarity, no seriousness or offence is attached to this category of name tags when use by peers. Sometimes *Da* is used as nickname by some peers and even husband and wife. These are commonly used among young and adult folks who are peers in Ibibio community. Also, *Da* is used with *awo* to mean “that person”. *Da awo* is often used to refer to somebody or draw the attention of an addressee whose name is not known to the speaker.

Theoretically, this type of relationship names has been attested for in Ibibio language lexicon and culture.

Table 7: Odd Relationship Names

S/N	Ibibio	Gloss
1	Ewaanaete ye ayin/ndit?	Incest
2	Ewaanaawo ye unam	Bestiality
3	Ewaanainaaawodeenanieghe ye em?em?awodeen	Gay marriage
4	Ewaanainaaawoñwaananieghe ye em?em?awoñwaan	Lesbianism
5	Ndōawodeen ye awodeen	Same sex marriage
6	Ewaanainaaawoanieghe ye awokeet?kini	Hookup
7	Ewaanaufankeatummeiwaad	Boy/girl friend

The names presented in table (9) above are names that portray sexual relationship that are not captured in the Ibibio language lexicon. These type of relationships are seen as abominable acts in the land. The language only provides explanation for these kinds of relationship, no single term(s)/nomenclature(s) are assigned to these forms of affinity in Ibibio as it is with other relationship names presented above. The people frown at persons found to indulge in any of the above sexual relationship. It is against the spirit of the land. This study has discovered that these abominable acts had existed in the Ibibio community secretly long time ago, and most times, the culprits were punished secretly also.

Theoretically, this group of sexual relationship names are abominable and detested by the spirit of the land. No indigenous name is assigned to any of these sexual relationship acts. This means that the culture of the people plays a vitale role in determining what the language of the people communicate and how it is communicated.

Conclusion

The essence of this study was to document relationship names. The study has brought to limelight the inventory of almost all the relationship names in Ibibio and has explicated the cultural significance of Ibibio relationship names. It also explained why some relationship names are not captured in Ibibio language such as bestiality, incest, lesbianism, same sex marriage, and hookup and supported by Neo-Whorfanism theory that language elasticity is defined by the cultural accommodation and acceptability.

Seven groups of relationship names have been identified in this study. The most delicate of these affiliations are: *imaan* (kinsmen), *ayeny?n* (grandchild), *ukod* (in-law), and *asenawo* (visitor). It is not that other relationships are not valued, but the important and fragility nature of the above relationships had been prescribed by the ancestors and the reason why they attached so much importance to these relationships than others is unknown. Also, out of the seven groups of relationship names identified in this study, six groups are relationship names that the people value and accept. The seventh category has the odd relationship acts that the Ibibio culture frown at as well as punish anyone found to practice any of them.

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Assessing the Effectiveness of Mobile Self-Service Technologies on Customer Satisfaction in Digital Marketing

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Abstract

The widespread adoption of mobile devices has led to a shift in customer behavior with increased expectations for convenient and personalized experiences. Mobile self-service technologies have emerged as a key strategy for digital marketers to meet these expectations. However, the effectiveness of these technologies in enhancing customer satisfaction remains unclear. Hence, this study aimed to assess the impact of mobile self-service technologies on customer satisfaction in digital marketing on a universally applicable scale. A qualitative method of critical analysis of the existing literature's approach was employed. The findings indicated that mobile self-service technologies have a positive impact on customer satisfaction, with significant improvements in convenience, and speed of service. Furthermore, the study showed the importance of ease of use and seamless integration with other channels which contributed to existing literature by providing novel insights into the role of mobile self-service technologies in digital marketing. The study has a significant implication for marketing practitioners seeking to optimize customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study finally provided a new direction for marketers to enhance customer satisfaction and drive business success through its recommendations.

Keywords: Digital, Marketing, Self-Service, Customer Satisfaction, Care, Effectiveness, Ease, Technologies

Introduction

The proliferation of mobile self-service technologies henceforth, (MSS) has fundamentally transformed the world of digital marketing and redefined how businesses interact with their customers. MSS, which includes applications such as mobile banking apps, retail shopping platforms, and AI-driven chatbots, have become important to modern consumer experiences. According to Parasuraman *et al.* (2005, p. 17), "self-service technologies empower customers by

enabling them to perform tasks traditionally handled by service providers". This empowerment is particularly pronounced in the digital era, where mobile devices serve as the primary interface for accessing services. The integration of MSS into digital marketing strategies has led to significant shifts in customer expectations, emphasizing convenience, speed, and personalization. However, despite the widespread adoption of these technologies, there remains a critical gap in understanding how MSS influence customer satisfaction which serves as a cornerstone of successful marketing initiatives.

Customer satisfaction reflects the extent to which a product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations (Oliver, 1980). In the context of digital marketing, MSS are often lauded for their potential to enhance satisfaction through features such as 24/7 availability, ease of use, and tailored recommendations. Gao *et al.* (2015, p. 312) argues that "the effectiveness of MSS in enhancing customer satisfaction depends on the degree of user engagement and perceived value". This study seeks to address a fundamental gap by systematically assessing the effectiveness of MSS on customer satisfaction within the digital marketing domain since "the shift toward digital channels has necessitated a deeper understanding of how technology-mediated interactions impact customer outcomes" (Verhoef *et al.* (2015, p. 47).

While MSS offer numerous advantages, it also presents challenges, such as technical glitches, privacy concerns, and the absence of human interaction, all of which can undermine customer satisfaction but not affecting the focus of the study since the primary objective of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of MSS in enhancing customer satisfaction. Specifically, the study would seek to determine how MSS influence key dimensions of satisfaction, such as usability, responsiveness, and personalization. To achieve this goal, several critical questions can be posed such as: how do MSS influence customer satisfaction across different demographic segments? What role does perceived ease of use play in shaping customer attitudes toward MSS? What challenges exist in implementing MSS effectively, and how can these challenges be mitigated?

Conceptual Clarifications

Mobile Self-Service: (MSS) enables customers to interact with businesses independently and efficiently. MSS encompass a range of tools and platforms such as mobile applications, chatbots, and mobile-optimized websites, designed to facilitate seamless service delivery. Parasuraman *et al.* (2005, p. 213) indicates that "self-service technologies empower customers by allowing them to perform tasks traditionally handled by human service providers". These technologies are characterized by their accessibility, convenience, and ability to provide real-time solutions to customer needs. Mobile banking apps for instance, allow users to check balances, transfer funds, and pay bills without requiring direct intervention from bank staff. Similarly, e-commerce platforms like Amazon infuse chatbots to assist customers with inquiries about products or order statuses.

Customer Satisfaction: This serves as a critical metric for evaluating the effectiveness of MSS and other digital marketing initiatives. Customer satisfaction is here defined as "a judgment that a product or service provides a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment" (Oliver, 1980, p. 460). This is typically measured using tools such as surveys, Net Promoter Scores (NPS), and customer feedback forms. Despite variations in measurement techniques, all

approaches aim to capture the extent to which customer expectations are met or exceeded. Lemon and Verhoef (2016,p. 203) note that, "customer satisfaction is not merely an outcome but a dynamic process influenced by multiple touchpoints throughout the customer journey".

Digital Technology: Digital channels include social media, email marketing, and search engine optimization used in creating a satisfying customer experience. For example, a retail app might use push notifications to alert customers about promotions, while at the same time making social media ads to reinforce brand messaging. Similarly, MSS can complement traditional marketing efforts by providing additional touchpoints for customer engagement. For Lemon and Verhoef (2016,p. 203), "the synergy between MSS and other digital tools is essential for maximizing the impact of marketing initiatives".

Literature Review

Self-service technologies have a profound impact on customer service across industries, with mobile self-service technologies as a dominant force in the digital marketing landscape. The evolution of self-service technologies represents a significant paradigm over the past several decades. Meuter *et al.* (2000,p. 50) defines them as "technological interfaces that enable customers to produce a service independent of direct service employee involvement". This foundational definition established the conceptual framework for understanding how technology-mediated interactions began reshaping customer service experiences.

Bateson (1985, p. 67) makes the point that "self-service technology adoption in banking established critical precedents for customer acceptance of technology-mediated service". The transition from stationary kiosks to mobile platforms marks a critical evolutionary milestone and Curran and Meuter (2005,p. 103) observed that, "the adoption of self-service technologies reflects a gradual shift from employee-assisted service to increasingly autonomous customer participation, culminating in the ultimate portability offered by mobile devices". The smartphone revolution fundamentally transformed self-service capabilities. Again, Wang *et al.* (2012, p. 172) avers that, "the introduction of smartphones created an unprecedented opportunity for service providers to deliver self-service options directly into consumers' hands, untethered from fixed locations or desktop computers".

E-commerce platforms have been particularly influential in advancing mobile self-service technologies prompting Huang and Rust (2017, p. 43) to state that, "e-commerce pioneers established critical benchmarks for self-service functionality that subsequently influenced mobile application development across industries" as online retailers pioneered features like product search, recommendation engines, and self-guided troubleshooting that became standard expectations in mobile self-service applications especially in the financial services. The progression toward mobile self-service has accelerated significantly in recent years leading Blutet *et al.* (2021,p. 215) to point out that, "the penetration of mobile self-service technologies has increased exponentially, with adoption rates growing from 17% in 2012 to over 76% by 2020 across developed economies with the COVID-19 pandemic serving as a powerful accelerant for MSS adoption.

Mobile self-service technologies have profoundly influenced customer behavior across multiple dimensions. Gelbrich and Sattler (2014,p. 58) found out that "self-service technologies fundamentally alter the psychology of service interactions by transferring agency to the

customer and redefining the boundaries of service responsibility". This transfer of control creates both opportunities and challenges for managing customer satisfaction. Customer engagement with brands has been significantly affected by MSS implementation. MSS appears to influence customer satisfaction through multiple psychological mechanisms. Lee and Yang (2013,p. 201) identified key satisfaction drivers, noting that "perceived control emerges as the strongest predictor of satisfaction with mobile self-service technologies, followed by perceived efficiency and compatibility with existing technology habits".

The concept of value co-creation has emerged as central to understanding MSS effectiveness. Vargo and Lusch (2016,p. 18) argued that "mobile self-service technologies represent the ultimate expression of service-dominant logic, wherein customers actively participate in value creation through technology-mediated resource integration" as customers who successfully navigate MSS experiences perceive greater value not just from service outcomes but from the participation process itself. Despite significant potential benefits, implementing mobile self-service technologies presents substantial challenges. Technical limitations remain a persistent concern. User adoption represent another critical challenge. Trust concerns present particularly significant barriers for MSS implementation. The digital divide continues to present equity challenges for MSS implementation.

Employee resistance can significantly impede successful MSS implementation. This resistance can manifest in subtle undermining of self-service options during customer interactions, creating inconsistent service experiences. Cultural factors also present additional implementation challenges just as Lee *et al.* (2013,p. 83) notes that, "collectivist cultures demonstrate significantly different adoption patterns and usage preferences for mobile self-service technologies compared to individualist cultures, with greater emphasis on social influence and perceived compatibility with group norms". These cultural differences necessitate the adaptation of both implementation strategies and interface designs across markets. Technical complexity and feature overload also represent significant design challenges that needs to be mitigated.

Despite the extensive literature on mobile self-service technologies, significant research gaps remain as "existing research predominantly employs cross-sectional designs that capture momentary satisfaction rather than evolving relationship effects, creating significant gaps in understanding long-term loyalty impacts" (Klaus and Maklan2013,p. 229). This methodological limitation creates uncertainty about sustained effectiveness as studies on MSS recovery strategies remains underdeveloped. Given the documented importance of recovery quality for overall satisfaction, this represents a critical research opportunity.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinnings of this study are precipitated in two prominent frameworks which are the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Service-Dominant Logic (SDL). These theories provide a solid foundation for understanding how mobile self-service technologies (MSS) influence customer satisfaction within the context of digital marketing. TAM was developed by Davis (1989) and is a widely used model that explains user acceptance and adoption of technology based on perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. Accordingly. Davis (1989,p. 320), "perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are the primary

determinants of users' intentions to adopt a technology". SDL on the other hand, was introduced by Vargo and Lusch (2004), with the focus shifting from product-centric to service-centric perspectives, emphasizing the co-creation of value between businesses and customers. Vargo and Lusch (2004, p. 10) argue that "service is the fundamental basis of exchange, and value is co-created through interactions between providers and customers". Both theories offer valuable insights into the mechanisms through which MSS can enhance customer satisfaction, from different angles. While TAM focuses on individual perceptions and behavioral intentions, SDL focuses on the collaborative nature of value creation facilitated by MSS.

Methodology

This study employs the qualitative method with critical analysis as its primary methodological approach to assessing how mobile self-service technologies (MSS) can influence customer satisfaction in digital marketing. This systematic approach allows for evaluating existing research, identifying underlying assumptions, and synthesizing diverse perspectives. The approach is particularly appropriate because MSS spans across multiple disciplines including marketing, information systems, consumer behavior, and service management, allowing for the integration of these diverse knowledge for a comprehensive understanding.

Consequently, critical analysis provides tools for the logical examination of contradictions, identifying contextual factors while explaining diverse outcomes, and developing more theoretical understanding. This moves beyond simplistic assessments of whether MSS "works" to sophisticated analyses of when, how, and for whom these technologies enhance satisfaction. Additionally, the rapid changes of these technologies create methodological challenges for traditional empirical approaches, while critical analysis offers flexibility in integrating insights from studies across different technological milieu, identifying sustainable principles while acknowledging contextual differences. Critical Analysis has four dimensions with conceptual dimension examining how MSS and customer satisfaction are conceptualized across studies, identifying variations in definitions, assumptions, and measures to contextualize contradictory findings and identify integration opportunities.

The contextual dimension examines how research settings influence findings, analyzing industry settings, cultural contexts, technological platforms, customer segments, and temporal factors to identify boundary conditions. The methodological dimension evaluates approaches used in existing research, assessing designs, sampling strategies, measurement approaches, and validity considerations to identify reliable findings and methodological advancement opportunities. Finally, the theoretical dimension examines frameworks employed to understand relationships between MSS and customer satisfaction, assessing explanatory mechanisms and theoretical integration.

Mobile Self-Service and the Challenge of Customer Satisfaction

Mobile self-service technologies (MSS) offer a range of benefits that contribute to customer satisfaction, yet their implementation is fraught with challenges that businesses must overcome to ensure positive outcomes. Among the most significant advantages of MSS are convenience, personalization, and efficiency, which collectively enhance the customer

experience. However, usability problems, the absence of human interaction, and privacy concerns often hinder the realization of these benefits. Striking a balance between automation and personalization should be seen as a critical strategy for overcoming these challenges and maximizing customer satisfaction.

The convenience afforded by MSS is a primary driver of customer satisfaction, as it enables users to access services at their discretion without being constrained by time or location. According to Collier and Bienstock (2006, p. 183), "the ability to perform tasks independently and on-demand significantly enhances the perceived value of self-service technologies". For instance, mobile banking apps allow customers to check account balances, transfer funds, or pay bills at any given time thus, eliminating the need to visit physical branches or wait for business hours. Similarly, retail apps provide users with the flexibility to browse products, make purchases, and track orders from their mobile devices. This level of accessibility not only saves time but also empowers customers to take control of their interactions with businesses.

Convenience is further enhanced by features such as push notifications and real-time updates, which keep users informed about relevant activities or promotions. Corroborating this, Trainor *et al.* (2014, p. 75) holds that, "real-time communication through mobile platforms fosters a sense of immediacy and responsiveness that aligns with modern customer expectations". Personalization represents a key benefit of MSS, as a business enabler towards tailoring experiences to individual preferences and behaviors. Through the use of data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI), MSS delivers highly relevant content and recommendations that sits well with customers. Kumar *et al.* (2019, p. 145) makes the point that, "personalization not only improves customer satisfaction but also drives higher levels of loyalty and repeat purchases". In addition to product recommendations, MSS can customize user interfaces based on individual preferences, such as font size adjustments or language settings.

Efficiency is another critical benefit of MSS, as it streamlines processes and reduces the time required to complete tasks. MSS minimize human error and accelerates service delivery, leading to faster resolutions for customers. Chatbots for instance, integrated into MSS can handle common inquiries, such as order status updates or troubleshooting steps, without requiring human intervention. This is why it is accepted that "automation reduces operational costs while simultaneously improving service speed and accuracy" (Wang *et al.* 2018, p. 312). This dual impact benefits both businesses and customers, as streamlined operations translate into cost savings that can be reinvested into enhancing service quality. Efficiency is further enhanced by features such as one-click payments and biometric authentication, which simplify transactions and improve security.

Despite these advantages, achieving customer satisfaction through MSS is complicated by several challenges such as usability problems often arising when MSS fail to meet user expectations in terms of design, functionality, or performance. Poorly designed interfaces, slow loading times, or confusing navigation can frustrate users and diminish their overall experience. For example, an app that requires multiple steps to complete a simple task may discourage users from engaging with it, leading to dissatisfaction. Furthermore, technical

glitches, such as crashes or connectivity issues, can disrupt service delivery and erode trust.

The lack of human touch is another significant challenge associated with MSS, as it can create a sense of detachment. While automation offers numerous benefits, it often fails to replicate the empathy and understanding provided by human interactions. This is why, "the absence of interpersonal connections can undermine customer satisfaction, particularly in situations requiring emotional support or complex problem-solving" (Parasuraman and Grewal, 2016, p. 230). A chatbot may struggle to address diverse queries or resolve complaints effectively, leaving customers feeling unheard or undervalued. To mitigate this issue, businesses can integrate hybrid models that combines automation with human oversight.

Privacy concerns represent another challenge that can impede customer satisfaction with MSS. The collection and use of personal data raises questions about security and transparency, particularly in the light of increasing awareness about data breaches and misuse. For MSS to be effective, businesses must adopt robust security measures, such as encryption and multi-factor authentication, to safeguarding customer information. Transparency is equally important, as users must understand how their data is collected, stored, and utilized. Furthermore, businesses should prioritize compliance with regulations in order to demonstrate their commitment to protecting customer privacy.

Balancing automation and personalization is crucial for addressing the challenges associated with MSS so as to optimize customer satisfaction. While automation enhances efficiency and scalability, enabling businesses to serve large volumes of customers simultaneously, excessive reliance on automation can alienate users who seek personalized attention and human interaction. Conversely, overemphasizing personalization without leveraging automation risks inefficiencies and inconsistent service delivery. For example, MSS can use AI to analyze customer behavior and preferences, then apply these insights to tailor interactions while retaining the option for human intervention when necessary. This balance ensures that customers receive efficient and relevant service without sacrificing the warmth and empathy of human connections.

Another strategy for balancing automation and personalization involves leveraging customer feedback to refine MSS. By seeking input through surveys, reviews, or direct communication, businesses can gain valuable insights into user preferences and pain points. For instance, if users express dissatisfaction with a particular feature, businesses can prioritize enhancements to address these concerns. Similarly, feedback can inform decisions about which tasks to automate and which to delegate to human agents, ensuring that MSS remain aligned with customer needs. Incorporating gamification elements into MSS represents another innovative approach to balancing automation and personalization. Gamification involves using game-like features, such as rewards, badges, and leader boards, to engage users and incentivize desired behaviors.

Findings and Discussion

The findings of this study so far reveal significant insights into the effectiveness of mobile self-service technologies (MSS) in enhancing customer satisfaction within the realm of digital marketing. MSS is noted to positively influence customer satisfaction through attributes such as convenience, personalization, and efficiency, though challenges related to usability, privacy

concerns, and the lack of human interaction persist but not insurmountable. Also, the implications of these results for businesses and marketers underscore the importance of adopting strategic approaches to optimizing MSS implementation.

Among the primary findings is the strong correlation between MSS features and customer satisfaction metrics. It is not in doubt that MSS significantly enhance convenience by enabling users to access services anytime and anywhere. For instance, Collier and Bienstock (2006, p. 182) notes that "the ability to perform tasks independently and on-demand enhances the perceived value of self-service technologies". Also, the integration of real-time notifications and updates further amplifies convenience, bringing about a sense of immediacy and responsiveness. Personalization emerged as another critical factor driving customer satisfaction, with participants expressing a clearer preference for MSS that adapt to individual preferences and behaviors. Expectedly, proactive service delivery where MSS anticipate customer needs and provides pre-emptive solutions will further enhance satisfaction.

Efficiency is another key dimension where MSS impact on customer satisfaction. Automation features, such as chatbots and one-click payment systems, streamlined processes and reduced the time required to complete tasks. Ostrom *et al.* (2015:95) identified usability issues as a major barrier to the adoption of self-service technologies, stating that "poorly designed interfaces can frustrate users and erode trust". While the benefits of MSS are evident, several challenges that hinder their effectiveness in achieving customer satisfaction are not absent. Usability problems remain a persistent issue, with users frequently having difficulties in navigating complex interfaces or completing tasks efficiently. This is why businesses that failed to address these concerns risked alienating customers and undermining satisfaction. Finally, the absence of human touch was identified as a critical limitation, particularly in scenarios requiring emotional support or complex problem-solving.

The implications of these findings for digital marketing practices are substantial, with actionable insights for businesses and marketers seeking to optimize MSS. First, the study underscores the importance of prioritizing usability and design to ensure that MSS are accessible and intuitive. Businesses should then invest in user-centered design principles, conducting extensive testing to identify and address pain points. Second, the findings highlight the need for robust data protection measures to build trust and alleviate privacy concerns. Transparency in data collection and usage, coupled with compliance with regulations, can enhance customer confidence and loyalty.

Evaluation

The use of validated scales, such as the Net Promoter Score (NPS) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) ensures the validity of the qualitative insights providing an interesting perspective on user challenges and preferences. The intersection of MSS with broader trends in digital marketing, such as sustainability and social responsibility is fundamental to achieving optimal customer satisfaction since MSS promote eco-friendly behaviors, such as paperless billing or carbon footprint tracking. MSS have shown measurable impacts on convenience, personalization, and efficiency, which aligns with the theoretical

frameworks employed in the study.

The study's significance lies in its contribution to both academic understanding and practical applications, providing a foundation for businesses to refine their digital strategies. Businesses need to adopt actionable strategies aimed at improving MSS and enhancing customer satisfaction. This is where the prioritization of usability testing has to be improved upon. Nielsen (2012, p. 45) reasoning along this line emphasized that, "user-centered design principles are essential for creating intuitive and accessible interfaces". Businesses that conducts rigorous usability evaluations to identify pain points and optimize navigation, ensures that MSS cater to diverse user needs.

In the instance that incorporating features like voice-activated commands or simplified checkout processes can reduce friction and improve overall satisfaction hence, "personalization fosters emotional connections and drives repeat engagement" (Kumar *et al.* 2021, p. 78). Retail apps, can be used for predictive algorithms to anticipate customer preferences and suggest relevant products, thereby enhancing relevance and satisfaction.

Businesses should adopt hybrid models that balance automation with human oversight. While chatbots and automated systems are good at handling routine enquiries, complex issues often require human interface. Parasuraman and Grewal (2020,p. 112) are of the view that, "a dual approach ensures efficiency without sacrificing the human touch". Live agents as part of MSS workflows will allow businesses to provide timely and empathetic support when needed, bridging the gap between speed and personalization.

Furthermore, staying abreast with emerging trends and technologies, such as augmented reality (AR) and blockchain, should be able to position businesses at the forefront of innovation as the rapid evolution of technology promises to expand the capabilities of MSS, enabling more sophisticated and immersive experiences. Though as consumers increasingly prioritize ethical consumption, businesses must consider how MSS can contribute to sustainable practices. The idea of inclusivity and accessibility in MSS design should be able to address disparities in technological adoption. catering for underserved populations, such as individuals with disabilities or rural communities thereby promoting social equity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The future of MSS in digital marketing rest on the ability of businesses to adapt to dynamic customer expectations and technological advancements. This requires a proactive approach to innovation and continuous monitoring of industry trends, and a commitment to best ethical practices with regards to customer self-service experience. Because we live in a digital age, it is important to mote that customer retainership is predicated on customer's satisfaction. To this end, the following are the recommendations that will ensure customer satisfaction and by extension retainership:

- i. Business should be customer-centric in their approaches
- ii. Business should ensure to have an easy to use MSS for their customers
- iii. Businesses should be prompt at handling customer's complaints
- iv. There should be room for customers who require human interface
- v. Businesses should operate on the highest ethical principles with regards to the privacy of

- their customers. And lastly,
- vi. Businesses should be empathetic in their overall online engagements policies with their customers reflecting in their self-service interface.

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Existentialism, Kidnapping, and the Absurdity of Freedom: A Critical Consideration of the Nigerian Situation

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Abstract

Freedom is one of the core principles of existentialism. Existentialism asserts that human beings are free and so responsible for shaping their own existence. However, this freedom often leads to encounters with absurdity, the realization that life lacks inherent meaning. Sartre for instance opines that humans are absolutely free. This means that every human person is free to carry out any action, whether right or wrong. Kidnapping is a social phenomenon that poses a threat to the freedom of the other person on the one hand, and on the other hand an expression of (acting as one wills). The other person is denied of his freedom by being stripped of freedom and inherent dignity thus reducing that individual to a mere object. This paper attempts to examine the complex connection of freedom and existential absurdity in kidnapping in Nigeria. This will be achieved through the analysis of the works of key existentialists such as Soren Kierkegaard, Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger. The paper will adopt conceptual analysis as its methodology.

Keywords: Kidnapping, Existentialism, Freedom, Absurdity, Responsibility.

Introduction

Kidnapping is a menace that is rapidly becoming a threat to the existential well-being of the society. In the Nigerian society, kidnapping is rapidly invading the social space and so threatening the freedom of Nigerians. The rate at which kidnapping occurs and the outrageous ransom demands, is alarming. The paper explores the link between kidnapping and existentialism.

The concept of freedom is central to existentialist philosophy, with existentialists like Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus analyzing its implications for human existence. Existentialism proposes that humans are free beings who are capable of making choices. The problem, however, with this postulation is the lack of balance between human freedom and the freedom manifested through kidnapping. From an existentialist viewpoint, freedom is a central

concept, emphasizing personal choice and responsibility. However, this freedom is often accompanied by absurdity, or the lack of inherent meaning in life. Kidnappers most likely act on the basis of their freedom and by so doing infringe on the freedom of others. The act of kidnapping is a threat to human freedom based on the fact that it involves one individual stripping other people of their autonomy and freedom by force.

This paper examines kidnapping in the light of how it deprives people of their freedom and the chance to make a meaning out of their lives. It considers the kidnapper's exercise of distorted freedom, and discusses how the absurdity of freedom and how the clash of interest between the freedom of the kidnapper and kidnapped plays out. In this wise, the individual's pursuit of freedom results in another's loss of autonomy. By examining the motive behind kidnapping and the impacts it has on the society, this analysis aims to uncover the negative effects of human behaviour and the contradictions that arise in situations where freedom is constrained or restricted by force and where human beings desire and are entitled to it.

Existentialism and the Concept of Freedom

Existentialism is a philosophical movement that is essentially concerned with individual existence. Elijah Akinbode defines it as a philosophical movement that seeks to study man and the nature of his existence. It is basically concerned with the existence of humans, what it means to live a meaningful life and also the relationship that exists among human beings. Existentialists inquire into the existence, nature, the purpose of life for an individual, and their relationship with others. Humans are believed to be free beings who are capable of making decisions and choices that help them actualize their essence.

Freedom is a basic theme in existentialism and it has, over time, been misconstrued. According to Webber, "existentialism is the ethical theory that we ought to treat the freedom at the core of human existence as intrinsically valuable and the foundation of all other values. It is grounded in a theory of what it is to be human that Sartre summarised in the slogan 'existence precedes essence'." Existentialism has been argued to be a philosophy that gives credence to immoral behaviour based on its emphasis on freedom. Williams McBride holds that,

...Marcel and a number of other Catholic writers and religious conservatives more generally, first in France and then in the world at large, to denounce it (existentialism) with such vehemence. They recognized the appeal it had for young people and saw it as both contributing to and reflective of their moral decline. To the use by French critics of such epithets as "diabolical," "satanic," and "luciferian" by Marcel, Jeanne Mercier (whose accusation, that existentialism had forgotten what an infant's smile is like,.

This is one of the reasons some proponents of existentialism dissociate from the appellation 'existentialist'. Young people of those times who were involved in all manner of vices often referred to themselves as existentialists who have freedom to act as they wished. Jean Paul Sartre, a major proponent of existentialism, opines that existentialism

[H]as been reproached as an invitation to people to dwell in quietism of despair. For if every way to a solution is barred, one would have to regard any action in this world as entirely ineffective, and one would arrive finally at a contemplative philosophy. Moreover, since contemplation is a luxury, this would be only another bourgeois philosophy. This is, especially, the reproach made by the Communists. From another quarter we are reproached for having underlined all that is ignominious in the human situation, for depicting what is mean, sordid or base to the neglect of certain things that possess charm and beauty and belong to the brighter side of human nature: for example, according to the Catholic critic, Mlle. Mercier, we forget how an infant smiles. Both from this side and from the other we are also reproached for leaving out of account the solidarity of mankind and considering man in isolation. And this, say the Communists, is because we base our doctrine upon pure subjectivity upon the Cartesian "I think": which is the moment in which solitary man attains to himself; a position from which it is impossible to regain solidarity with other men who exist outside of the self. The ego cannot reach them through the cogito. From the Christian side, we are reproached as people who deny the reality and seriousness of human affairs.

The concept of freedom, as a principle of existentialism, has been wrongly interpreted; hence, it is wrongly associated with immorality, vices, denial of reality and non-seriousness about life. This raises a number of questions such as: Is freedom as postulated by existentialists a license for immoral living? Is it the case that freedom gives an individual the right to behave the way they want? Is freedom a license to vices and criminal acts? It is important to discuss freedom as postulated by existentialists in order to have a clear picture of what freedom really entails.

Existentialism and the notion of Freedom

Existentialism as a school of thought in philosophy has two divisions: theistic existentialism and non-theistic existentialism. The implication of this is that the concept of freedom as postulated by both divisions may be slightly different. Golan Dastagir holds that

Existentialist thinkers are primarily divided into two groups: theistic and non-theistic. Kierkegaard, as he approaches his existentialist views, is consistently claimed to have fallen in the former group, while Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) whose thought is founded on the non-existence of God as implying the non-existence of a pre-assigned value, falls within the latter.

Kierkegaard, who belongs to the theistic group, holds that human beings are free. However, their freedom is not absolute. For Kierkegaard, God is the root cause of human freedom and so the destinies of human beings have been predetermined by God. Accordingly, the decisions they make on the assumption of free choice is, simply, what God has pre-ordained. This means that human beings simply choose what God wants them to choose. This

raises the question as to whether or not they can, actually, be said to be free. Nevertheless, if the actions of human beings are already pre-ordained, one cannot meaningfully make sense of the notion of freedom in whatever they do. Kierkegaard's conception of freedom is absolutely religious because for him, god is the only guarantor of freedom. The implication of this is that human beings cannot be held responsible for their actions because whatever they do has already been predetermined by God.

Jean Paul Sartre is a major proponent of atheistic existentialism. Sartre, unlike Kierkegaard, believes that God does not exist. The implication of this is that human beings are free beings whose actions are, in the strict sense, products of their choices. Sartre defines existentialism as a doctrine that does render human life possible; a doctrine, also, which affirms that every truth and every action implies both an environment and a human subjectivity. Human beings cannot lay claims to the control of their actions by external forces, because they are free beings. Akinbode explains that "for Sartre, there is no God, no objective system of values, and no essence (except for the ones we create for ourselves). Sartre believes that man exists and must create his essence and values for himself because he has freedom." Sartre believes that the world is void and meaningless, it is human beings who have the responsibility to make meaning out of life. And this is possible because they are free to make choices. Sartre, in his book, *Existentialism and Humanism*, holds that human beings are condemned to be free; this is because once thrown into the world, they are saddled with taking responsibility for everything that they do. It means that there was no essence before an individual is born, it is when he or she is born that he or she makes a meaning of his or her life. Hence the saying, existence precedes essence.

It is pertinent to note that existentialists place much emphasis on responsibility as much as they do on freedom. Sartre defines "responsibility" as "the consciousness of being the incontestable author of an event or of an object." So responsibility is that consciousness that an individual has that "he is the one by whom it happens that there is a world." Responsibility in this sense means that the individual is laden with the consequences of their freely chosen actions. Also, whatever an individual makes out of his or her existence is their responsibility; the result of the actions they took. Sartre, in explaining the principle of existentialism, states the first effect of freedom, which is that,

...man is responsible for what he is. Thus, the first effect of existentialism is that it puts every man in possession of himself as he is, and places the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his own shoulders. And, when we say that man is responsible for himself, we do not mean that he is responsible only for his own individuality, but that he is responsible for all men.

Sartre explains that an individual is responsible for how he or she turns out, and not just that alone but also responsible to others. It means that before an individual carries out an act, he or she is to consider the effect of that act on others because he or she is also responsible for them. Heidegger also contends that "Dasein always understands itself in terms of its existence in terms of a possibility of itself: to be itself or not itself. Dasein has either chosen these possibilities

itself, or got itself into them, or grown up in them already. Only the particular Dasein decides its existence, whether it does so by taking hold or by neglecting." Dasein is a word Heidegger used to describe an individual who understands his existence and working towards making a meaning out of his existence. For Kaufmann individuals are free to make choices, "to choose between this and that is at the same time to affirm the value of that which is chosen, for we are unable to choose the worse." An individual is free yet in making choices the interest of others is essential. Hence, Orji and Egberongbe hold that "complete freedom includes complete accountability for real human existence."

In spite of the responsibility attached to the freedom of individuals, Sartre's position on no moral standard seems to undermine the doctrine of principle of responsibility. Sartre was against the idea of government serving the needs of citizens due to the belief that there are no moral standards. Sartre holds that, "You are free, therefore choose that is to say, invent. No rule of general morality can show you what you ought to do: no signs are vouchsafed in this world." This means that for Sartre, human beings are responsible for making or deciding what counts as good or bad, as there are no universal moral principles. Lawhead opines that

Nietzsche is unique among moral theorists in that he does not exhort you to accept his vision of morality. In fact this is impossible, because everyone, by virtue of their temperament, is inescapably either a master type or a slave type. The eagle cannot cease to be an eagle, and a lamb cannot aspire to be an eagle. Some are irredeemably destined to be "sheep," "little gray people," and "shallow ponds. Thus, Nietzsche's moral wisdom is not addressed to all humanity, but only to those in whom it strikes a resonate chord. He is calling forth the noble types to break through the windows of the petty morality that enclose them and to find their wings and let their spirits soar.

Individuals, by virtue of the fact that they are free, are the sole determiners of their morality. Having moral standards set by others is believed to be a threat to human freedom. How, then do we prevent the creation of moral rules that are detrimental to the society by free human beings? For instance, an individual may justify kidnapping on the basis that he is free to decide what is right and that kidnapping is right. Does it mean that anything and everything goes?

Responsibility, as one of the core themes of existentialism, can be used in controlling the excesses of human freedom. The fact that an individual will be held responsible for their actions and also the consciousness that they are responsible to others, will help curtail excesses that may arise from the expression of their freedom. This shows that existentialism is not a philosophy that encourages blaming others for how one's life turns out.

Over time, people who are involved in moral vices such as kidnapping, robbery, trafficking and so on often blame the society, government or other factors for their actions. This is common in Nigeria as there is the constant apportionment of blames to God, government, family, friends, foes, witches and wizards for lack of employment and many other existential challenges to justify the numerous vices prevalent in the country. The principle of freedom and moral responsibility as postulated by existentialists, shows that human beings should bear the consequences of their actions, as reflected in the choices they make. A person who decides to

become a kidnapper did not become one becomes they were destined or predetermined to be, but by free choice. For this reason such a person must be ready to take responsibility for his or her actions.

The individual is a member of a society who does not exist in isolation. They coexist with other individuals in the society. According to Sartre, there are two kinds of individuals in existence; beings-in-themselves and beings-for-themselves. Beings-in-themselves are nonconscious beings that is inanimate objects in the world, while Being-for-themselves are conscious beings who are also conscious of the existence of other beings. Animals and plants and inanimate objects cannot be held responsible for their actions because they do not have freedom, humans on the other hand are free beings who can be held responsible for their actions. Hence Olatunji Oyeshile holds that "We do not hold animals and machines responsible for their actions because we know that they lack the freedom to do otherwise. Animals and machines are not said to be guilty or innocent. They respond to stimuli, in the case of animals, while machines are subject to mechanical manipulations." Animals and inanimate objects lack consciousness, humans on the other hand are conscious beings who are aware of their existence and that of others too. An individual does not exist in isolation, their existence presuppose the existence of others. This will mean that a life lived in isolation or without the consideration of others is, living in bad faith as Sartre puts it. Sartre opines that individuals ought to be considerate of the freedom of others always in their interactions due to the fact that the freedom of an individual is reliant on that of another. It means that in pursuing one's freedom, one is compelled to consider that of others too. When an individual acts outside of this, they are restricting their freedom and living in bad faith.

Camus shows the complex relationship between freedom, responsibility and the interconnectedness of humans using the image of Mersault. Lui notes that for Camus,

[A] person's freedom is not simply self-expression, but rather needs to be achieved based on respect for others and social responsibility. Neglecting responsibility, although it may seem like freedom has been gained in the short term, can lead people into a non free situation in the long run. This is because onl when people take on our responsibilities can people truly establish connections with others and society, and gain true freedom.

It implies that freedom is not an isolated subject whereby an individual acts for self-gratification. Freedom is achieved through relationship with others and so when an individual decides to avoid responsibility by cutting off connection with people, they are indirectly losing true freedom. Living in isolation to avoid responsibility is not freedom, it is absurdity or bad faith. Hence, Liu contends that

it can be argued that true freedom is not achieved by avoiding responsibility, but by bravely facing responsibility and sincerely establishing connections with others. Every choice has its own freedom and limitations, and true freedom lies in how people find their place in this world, how people take on our responsibilities, and how people establish connections with others.

It means that, for Camus, true freedom is achieved when there is a relationship between individuals in the society and when all parties involved take responsibility for their actions. Sartre in like manner holds that

...in so far as I am the instrument of possibilities which are not my possibilities, whose pure presence beyond my being I cannot even glimpse, and which deny my transcendence in order to constitute me as a means to ends of which I am ignorant I am in danger. This danger is not an accident but the permanent structure of my being-for-others.

Sartre acknowledged the existence of others which must be identified at all times and this seems to limit the freedom of the individual. He went further to say, "If there is an Other, whatever or whoever he may be; whatever may be his relations with me, and without his acting upon me in any way except by the pure upsurge of his being then I have an outside, I have a nature. My original fall is the existence of the Other." This shows that, for Sartre, the existence of others is important in the realisation and actualisation of the essence of an individual. It is safe to say that according to Sartre, the freedom of an individual recognises the freedom of others and so an individual is to act in such a way that they put into consideration the freedom of others.

Each one wants the other to love him but does not take into account the fact that to love is to want to be loved and that thus by wanting the other to love him, he only wants the other to want to be loved in turn. Thus love relations are a system of indefinite reference analogous to the pure 'reflection-reflected' of consciousness (...).'

Sartre in the same vein holds that

The other is indispensable to my existence, and equally so to any knowledge I can have of myself. Under these conditions, the intimate discovery of myself is at the same time the revelation of the other as a freedom which confronts mine, and which cannot think or will without doing so either for or against me. Thus, at once, we find ourselves in a world which is, let us say, that of "inter-subjectivity." It is in this world that man has to decide what he is and what others are.

The implication of this is that, the freedom of an individual does not mean that they can act as they so desire without considering others. Acting in this manner is acting behind one's self. Simone de Beauvoir rightly expresses this idea thus, "To will oneself free is also to will others free." The freedom of one, presupposes the freedom of another. It is important to note that intersubjectivity does not in any way undermine the subjectivity of humans. It is a way of ensuring that human beings actualise the meaning of their existence.

Martin Buber's usage of the "I-Thou" relationship affirms that an individual becomes a whole person only when they consider others as humans too. It means that an individual who considers others as humans as he or she is, will not rob, steal, kidnap or even murder others.

Daniel Adekeye in like manner holds that authenticity and freedom is achieved when an individual relates with others in the society and also regards them not as means to an end, but end in themselves. Oyeshile also contends that "As Daseins, both at the individual and ethnic group levels, survival is only possible if and only if we recognize the importance of others not as mere objects standing in the way of achieving our goal of survival, but as ends in themselves who are not only important but also inevitable and inescapable in the realization of our goal of survival and freedom."

The Phenomenon of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Insecurity is one of the major challenges Nigeria is faced with and it includes Boko Haram Insurgence, banditry and kidnapping. Kidnapping is gradually on the increase in Nigeria. Before now, kidnapping was not a regular occurrence in Nigeria, however the narrative is rapidly changing. Ezinwa Vincent defines kidnapping as "the act of forceful abduction, enslavement and seizure of a person by a criminal or criminals to demand for the release of the person by payment of ransom from one's relation, friends, family members or government." It involves forcibly taking the freedom of another in exchange for ransom. Saminu and Shuaibu opine that kidnapping "forces citizens to avoid traveling by road while living in fear at home." The increase in the rate of kidnapping in Nigeria today determines the movement of people, places they can go to and the means to get there. This has put a lot of Nigerians in constant fear and panic. There is the need for urgent interventions to address this challenge. Kidnapping is not only a threat to the security of Nigerians, as it affects the economic development of Nigeria as well. It is "the unlawful imprisonment of a person against their will, including transporting the victim to an unknown area challenging to locate or identify." Kidnapping is scaring potential investors and foreign business partners and tourists who want to invest in the economy of Nigeria. Kelechi Ani and Eugene Nweke also define kidnapping as "act of taking a person or group of person into captivity in order to achieve a defined aim. The act places a victim on hostage for the purpose of using the abducted to attain a goal." This means that kidnapping involves two parties; the kidnapper who is the oppressor and the victim who is the prey.

In Nigeria, kidnapping is a common phenomenon. It began more in the South- south region, precisely in the Niger Delta area but has since become a country-wide phenomenon. The Niger Delta region being the oil bearing region of the country paid the first price. Militants started off by kidnapping workers and top officials of the oil companies in the region and then demand for ransom in exchange for their release. This later spread to other regions, particularly urban areas. An example of kidnapping is the abduction of over 250 school girls by the Boko Haram terrorist group in Chibok, Bornu state. Justice Ngwama reported that in December 2019, 512 cases of kidnapping was recorded by the police affairs minister, from January 2008 - June 2009, 353 were recorded. He further provides the statistics which "indicates that Abia State led the pack with a total of 110 kidnapping incidents: Imo: 58,109 arrests, 41 prosecution and one is dead, Delta recorded 44 kidnap cases, 43 releases, 27 arrests, 31 prosecuted and one death, and Akwa Ibom recorded 40 kidnap cases, 418 arrests and 11 prosecutions. The report added that between July/September 2008 and July 2009, millions of Naira was lost to kidnappers. N. Okwuwada notes that in "January 1 and July 29, 2022, the nation of Nigeria saw 2,840 episodes

of insecurity, resulting in at least 7,222 deaths and 3,823 kidnappings. The kidnapping of 250 students at a girls' secondary school in Chibok, Borno State, in 2014."

These are just a fraction of the reported cases in Nigeria. Kidnapping is of different forms: the non-violent, violent and gendered kidnapping. The violent kidnap is one in which the victim suffers all forms of physical torture, harm and sometimes death in order to get the family to pay a ransom. Non-violent, on the other hand, is one in which the victim suffers no physical harm, pain or death. Gendered kidnapping "involves those abductions where adult females and small children feature mostly. This is sometimes done to attract sympathy or easy delivery of ransom. In most cases, victims in this category are violently treated." Kidnapping poses a serious threat to the lives of Nigerians seeing that it can happen anywhere. It can occur in a school (like the case of the Chibok girls), church, mosque, roadside, house to house, in mass and so on.

One may be moved to ask why people are involved in kidnapping. Why would one seek to forcibly take away the freedom of another? Various causes have been given to be responsible for kidnapping, ranging from unemployment, poverty, political gains and so on. According to Okwuwada, "The threat of kidnapping in Nigeria are surrounded by several ideas of causation; while some others contend that it is caused by factors like unemployment, resource control agitation, and religious fanaticism, others conclude that it is political, while some point to the 'get rich quick mentality' among the youth." Aside from the aforementioned causes, loss of value is also a reason why people engage in kidnapping. The society is gradually losing its culture of respect and love for human lives and replacing it with material possession. O. Onovo contends that the increase in crimes in Nigeria is as a result of the celebration of fraudsters on the basis of their wealth. In like manner Ngwama noted that "Celebrating people of questionable character is an indictment on the societal and moral value which such rulers should represent... one of the obvious reasons which encourages kidnapping to thrive, is that people who celebrate such criminals end up encouraging them to do more." It implies that if the society goes back to upholding its values such as hard work, respect for human lives, dignity, friendliness as against the hype on material possession, there will be a decrease in crimes, especially kidnapping.

The Absurdity of Freedom and Kidnapping in Nigeria

Freedom is an essential part of human beings. Without it, it becomes impossible for individual to make meaning out of life. Kidnapping strips the individual of his freedom and this imposes a contradiction to the concept of freedom as proposed by the existentialists. Sartre, for instance, holds that human beings are condemned to be free. If this is the case, why would one deprive another of his or her freedom? It means that kidnapping reveals the contradiction between the theoretical freedom existentialists propose and the stark reality of their physical constraint. The kidnapper may say that they are free and so can act as they choose, even if it is detrimental to others. It is important to note that though the concept of absolute freedom as proposed by Sartre is problematic. According to Oyeshile, "Sartre's talks about the total freedom of man. He believes that man is a being who acts unhindered by any factor. He holds that consciousness is a creation which is beyond freedom. In any given situation man is free to choose. For instance, an imprisoned person is free to shout and make attempts to escape from

his imprisonment.”

This will mean that a kidnapper has the freedom to act as he or she pleases and the victim also has the freedom to cry for help. The last case is dicey, in the sense that in crying for help, there is the possibility of the kidnapper(s) killing him or her. The point, however, is that existentialism does not advocate or justify crimes. The problem is with the postulation of absolute freedom. Human beings truly are free, but it is not the case that they possess absolute freedom. According to Awolowo, the kind of freedom proposed by Sartre is only possible theoretically and not realizable in any human society. The implication of this is that absolute freedom is an illusion.

Having established that absolute freedom is an illusion, it is pertinent to state that freedom, responsibility, and interpersonal relationships, as proposed by the existentialists, contravenes kidnapping. Sartre notes that the freedom of an individual presupposes full responsibility for his actions. It implies that freedom and responsibility are connected, asserting that human beings, in every situation, are free to make choices and must bear the full weight of the consequences. It implies that a person who decides to go into kidnapping is making deliberate decisions that align with their conception of freedom, and so cannot evade the responsibility that follows these actions. So kidnappers using the excuse of exercising their freedom must also be ready to face the moral and legal responsibility that comes with their actions.

Kidnappers represent the perverse expression of freedom where one person's freedom is exercised at the expense of another's. This is what is referred to as the absurdity of freedom. So, the action of the kidnapper can be considered as an inauthentic and negative expression of freedom. As noted earlier, freedom is connected to authenticity, in which an individual is conscious of his or her freedom and also that of others in the society. Kidnappers, in their pursuit of power or financial gain, might claim they are exercising their freedom, but this freedom lacks authenticity. Freedom allows for an individual to treat others as an end not a means to an end. Kidnappers, instead of facing their societal circumstances with integrity or seeking ethical means to improve their lives, reject moral responsibility in favour of a path that harms others and deprive others of their freedom. Their freedom, rather than being an authentic expression of self, becomes a distorted rejection of the ethical implications of true freedom.

It means that freedom as expressed by kidnappers is non-freedom according to Camus, because it is self-centered and disregards the freedom of others. Every human being is free to make choices and make meaning out of life. Kidnapping however strips the individual of their freedom and the opportunity of making meaning out of life and actualising their destiny. Every human being is free. No one is freer than the other. It means that no one has the right to seize or take away the freedom of another. In exercising one's freedom, therefore, one need to take cognizance of the freedoms of others too. Sartre contends that in choosing for oneself, one is also choosing of others. However, if the action one chooses for oneself has a negative effect for, or on others, such an action deserves to be thoroughly reconsidered and revised. The phenomenon of kidnapping, which implicates the interface or the relationship between the individual and the other, reveals the absurdity of freedom which means one thing for the kidnapper and another for the victims.

How Kidnapping Became a Culture in Nigeria

It is good at this juncture to briefly examine how the practice of kidnapping became sadly an established culture in Nigeria. The causes of kidnapping in Nigeria can be classified into some simple parts: Socio-economic, ideological/Religious among others. The practice most unfortunately has not only led to international embarrassment for Nigeria, it has also brought about an air of insecurity around the country.

Socio-Economic: Kidnapping as earlier mentioned began in the Niger-Delta region and soon became a national phenomenon for many reasons. Being the oil-rich part of the country hosting many big oil companies, the region has had its own fair share of poverty and environmental destruction without much being done by government to address the situation. This has led to a lot of frustration of the able-bodied men of the region who are so poor and cannot farm and fish because their land has been destroyed by the oil companies. They therefore began to kidnap the foreign nationals working for the different oil companies for ransom. The truth of the matter is, if you create poverty and a misery by abandoning a people to their plight, some people must pay the price for it.

Religious/ Ideological: In the northern part of Nigeria, it is not surprising too that kidnapping began with the rise of the various religious sects and terrorist groups Boko Haram being one of them. They wear the toga of religion but they are full of the ideology of hatred for other religions. What they do these days has no affinity to religion as they also kidnap fellow moslems. What they do borders on pure criminality for ransom. The kind of kidnapping going on in the north today is for money making purposes and a clear demonstration of wickedness to humanity. What was seen as taking its source from the Islamic religion has permeated the entire country. There are nomads and herdsmen who are kidnapping for ransom all over the country today. The Sahel region and the crisis around it has worsened the whole kidnapping phenomenon in Nigeria.

Without any doubt, this practice has implications for the general stability of Nigeria. It is a ticking time bomb that must be attended to in league with other neighbouring countries in the sub-region otherwise it could result into an unbelievable cataclysm.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, this paper has attempted to discuss the phenomenon of kidnapping in the light of the existentialist notion of freedom. It unveils the absurdity and the ambivalence of the notion of freedom, which necessarily implicates an interface between the individual and the other and also reveals that the notion means different things to each party. It is important to note that freedom, as postulated by the existentialists, is different from that which is exhibited by kidnappers. Existentialism advocates for freedom of an individual and responsibility in relation to others in the society. While kidnappers demonstrate a distorted freedom that brings about the loss of freedom of others. The act of kidnapping therefore reflects the absurdity of human existence, where freedom can paradoxically lead to both liberation and oppression. The existential analysis of kidnapping not only exposes the dark realities of human behaviour but also forces us to confront the negative and absurd dimension of freedom. This paper therefore underlines, through the lenses of existentialism, the absurdity that lies in the phenomenon of freedom in relation to kidnapping.

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The Ala Deity and Eco-spirituality of Igbo Traditional Religion: A Historical Approach

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Abstract

In African Traditional Religion, there is the belief in the Supernatural Being (God Almighty). This belief is also accompanied with other belief systems which form the structure of African Traditional Religion. These other beliefs include: belief in; divinities, spirits, ancestors, and magic and medicine. It is under the belief in divinities that 'Ala' deity belongs. 'Ala' commonly means 'land' in Igbo language, otherwise, popularly known as the earth goddess. The problem that bothers this research is that African traditional religion has been viewed by many people as polytheism, where many gods are worshipped without considering differing ecological variations in the belief to various spiritual beings by people of divergent geographical settings. 'Ala' deity for instance, and particularly, is recognized by the Igbo of South East Nigeria only, and is only worshipped in Igbo land, by Igbo people. More so, all these other deities, divinities, spirits, ancestors, etceteraetera serve as intermediaries to Supreme God whom they call *Chukwuokike*. The article aims at addressing the problem associated with generalizing African peoples' spiritual ecology, without paying reasonable attention to independent environmental attachment to particular spiritual being with special interest on 'Ala' / 'Ani' deity which is specifically recognized by Igbo people, installed and worshipped by Igbo people in Igbo ecological settings. It has been discovered that other Africans could be aware of 'Ala' deity, but could only be installed and worshipped in Igbo land. It recommends among other things that the Igbo should be proud anywhere to express the relevance of 'Ala' deity. The research adopts historical method. Data were gotten from primary and secondary sources. Data are analyzed with phenomenological and descriptive styles of data analysis.

Introduction

Human beings are geographically identified to certain socio-cultural lives, philosophy, and thoughts. These identities are characterized with religious beliefs and spiritual attachments, which in most cases influence to a large extent, the cultural practices of the settlers of a particular ecological environment. Among the Africans, religion, beliefs and spiritualities take virtually, or almost every part of their lives. Leonard in (Ugwu, 2014 p.9) points thus: "They (Igbo) are a truly religious people of who it can be said as it has been said about the Hindus that they eat religiously, dress religiously..." (Mbiti, 1969 p.1) adds that: "Africans are notoriously religious". Whatever happens to a typical African man has its peculiar religious interpretation(s). This has motivated the introduction of many gods, deities, divinities, etcetera to take charge of respective strata of African man's endeavours. Hence, there are: the god of the sun, earth goddess, spirit of divination and medicine, the spirit of the dead and living dead (ancestorhood – ancestors and ancestresses, marine spirit, etcetera).

In the history of South-Eastern geo-political zone of Nigeria, the environment is spiritually and commonly influenced by the special spiritual attachment to belief in the *Ala* Deity that is the earth goddess. Though, there are other spiritual regards to other spiritualities of the water, trees, caves, graves, grooves, rocks, mountains and hills, etcetera, but the *Ala* or *Ani* deity's regard acquires significant spiritual status anchored on the belief that every man walks, works and grows whatever he eats from the land *Ala/Ani*. The Igbo of the South-East Nigeria portray the earth – deity as the custodian of justice and truth in a way that if one appears suspicious in any case, he or she is bound to remove any foot wear he or she wears in giving verbal account of the matter on the floor. In the worship of most spiritual beings in the South-East of Nigerian ecology, worshippers are bound to pull off their foot wears in respect to the spirit being and as a signal to be truthful and committed to the order of worship.

The issue that constitutes the need to run this research centres on the problem that African traditional religion is concluded by many people including some Africans as a polytheistic religion where many gods are worshipped or venerated generally as Africans without considering divergent ecological differences in the belief to various spiritual beings by different people of divergent geographical settings. For example, the *Ala/Ani* deity is particularly recognized by the Igbo people of the South East only. *Ala/Ani* deity can be recognized but can never be worship outside Igbo land. More so, the deity is only worshipped in Igbo land and recognized by the Igbo people of the South East, Nigeria. Again, every African environment perceives other spirits, deities, divinities, etcetera as intermediaries to the Supreme Being/God. Therefore, their belief system is focused on the Supreme God (Creator God) *Chukwuokike* in Igbo language. The paper aims at addressing the problem associated with centralizing African peoples' spiritual ecology without serious attention to independent environmental attachment to particular spiritual being, with special interest on the *Ala/Ani* deity as a deity specifically recognized by the Igbo people, and installed or worshipped only in Igbo ecological settings. It is found in this research, that other continents, Africans, Nigerians, ethnicities, etcetera can be aware of the *Ala/Ani* deity, but it is worshipped specifically in Igboland, and recognized or regarded by the Igbo alone as their environmental deity and spirituality. It is therefore recommended among other things that the Igbo particularly the Igbo traditional religious worshippers should always be proud to express the relevance of the *Ala/Ani* deity wherever

they go even though it is only worshipped in Igbo land. They should always alert the younger generation on the link between the *Ala/Ani* deity and Igbo culture and tradition which influences the name given to culture by the Igbo as *Omenani/Omenala* and tradition as *Odinani/Odinala*. The paper uses historical approach or methodology. Data were collected from both primary sources, basically, through oral interview, and secondary sources, for example, text books, journals, internet materials, etcetera.

Conceptualization of Terms

The terms that are given some explanations are *Ala/Ani*, African/Igbo Traditional Religion, Igbo, and Ecology. The name *Ala/Ani* is a word that is traceable to Igbo origin. It is an Igbo language which could be translated in English language as “Land” or “Earth”. The spiritual regard given to Land or Earth in the Igbo ecology gave rise to idea of divinizing the Land/Earth - *Ala/Ani* (in Igbo language) with a peculiar divine significance that it forms one of the major divinities worshipped by the Igbo people. (Ugwu, 2004 p.39) explains thus:

There are different categories of divinities. First among the list are the primordial or arch divinities. They are believed to be the divinities of heaven since they were with the Supreme Being from the creation of the universe, and they usually participated in the creative work. Their origin are unknown. These include: (a) Earth goddess – *Ala* (b) Sun-god – *Anyanwu*, (c) *Orisa – nla* – the Yoruba god of purity. Other divinities are categorized into natural and human forms.

In the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria, ecological zone, the *Ala/Ani* is highly placed alongside the Sun-god i.e. *Anyanwu* in Igbo language. For the Yoruba as explained by Ugwu above, the *Orisa-nla* is peculiar to the Yoruba ecological zone in the highest rating order of divinities at least in Nigeria. But the interest of this paper is on *Ala/Ani* divinity. (Onah, 2004 p.78) discusses divinity thus:

They are believed of be those spiritual beings which exist but owe their existence to the Supreme Being, or at least having been caused to exist. In most of the cases they are non-human spirits; nevertheless, some powerful ancestors whose cults have been efficacious have been deified such are regarded as deified ancestors. These ancestors are connotatively referred to as hero gods as distinct from nature gods which can emanate or take stock from/in natural phenomena.

Divinity/deity is a spiritual concept that places spiritual status to being higher than man. African Traditional Religion has been defined by many scholars in the field. (Awolalu, 1976 p.275) defines African traditional religion as:

... the indigenous religion of the Africans. It is the religion that has been handed down from generation to generation by the forebears of present generation of Africans. It is not a fossil religion (a thing of the past) but a

religion that Africans today have made theirs by living it and practicing it. This is a religion that has no written literature, yet, it is “written” everywhere for those who care to see and read. It is largely written in the people's myths, folktales... it is a religion whose historical founder is neither known nor worshipped...

In explaining Igbo Traditional Religion, (Ekwunife, 2003 p.1) in a similar vein defines Igbo traditional religion as:

Those living institutionalized religious beliefs and practices which are rooted in the past Igbo religious culture; a religion that was transmitted to the present overt and covert votaries by successive Igbo forebears mainly through oral traditions (myths and folktales songs and dances, liturgies, rituals, proverbs, pithy sayings and names) sacred institutions like sacred specialists and persons, initiation rites, festivals, sacred spaces and objects and religious works of art; a religion which is slowly but constantly updated by each generation in the light of new religious experiences through the dialectical process of continuities and discontinuities.

The definitions given to African cum Igbo traditional religion agree to the fact that it is indigenous religion own by Africans/Igbo. The religion is neither foreign nor imported. Igbo as part of the concepts given explanations in this research is an ethnic group in Nigeria. They are the major settlers in the South-East geo political region. (Nwankwo, 2007 p.1) identifies the Igbo thus:

The Igbo group occupies the South eastern triangle of the modern Nigerian nation. They constitute one of the three single largest cultural group in Nigeria. The other two of the West. Their land is located roughly between latitude 5 and 7 degrees north of the equator, and longitude 6 and 8 degrees east of the Greenwich. As the dominant culture group in the East, they inhabit the five states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. They equally constitute sizeable portions of Delta and Rivers States with strong spilt over in Edo and Kogi states.

This is exactly the ecological coverage of the Igbo people of Nigeria. Ecology could be viewed as both geographical and biological terms. That means that it deals with the study of living organisms and their physical environment. (Haekel, 1904 p.1) defines ecology as: “The scientific study of the processes influencing the distribution and abundance of organisms, the interactions among organisms, and the interactions between organisms and the transformation and flux of energy and matter”. Therefore, ecological spirituality of the *Ala* of the Igbo of South East deals with how the spiritual relationship attached to *Ala* by the Igbo people of the zone influences their interaction within their environment.

Structure of *Ala/Ani* Divinity among the Igbo of the South East, Nigeria

In African traditional religion, five basic belief systems form its structure. They include: the belief in God (the Supreme Being – Supernatural Almighty), the belief in divinities, the belief in spirits, the belief in ancestors, and the belief in magic and medicine. On the belief in God, African traditional religionists make a clear identification and attributes to the highest spiritual personality to Him (God) obviously in the names ascribed or accorded to Him by Africans., (Ugwu, 2004 p.32), points that: “The principal God of the Igbo is “*Chineke*”, or “*Chukwu*”. The first means the Creator God while the second means Great God. Among the Nsukka people, the name “*Ezechitoke*” is frequently used for the Supreme Being. It means the King Spirit that is the Creator”. As pointed by Ugwu, the people of the Western part of the Igbo land especially the Agbaja and Anambra neighbours call Him “*Ezechukwu Okike Obioma*”. It equally means, the King, Creator and Kind-hearted Spirit. In African ecological environment, different cultural groups and settings call Him different names. For example, the Yoruba call Him “*Olodumare*”, the Tiv call Him “*Aondo*”, we hear such names as “*Ngetwo*” given to Him by the people of Sierra Leone, etcetera. Theophoric names given to Africans portray the belief in God – the Supreme Being. For the Igbo, such names are: “*Chukwuagozie*” – God has blessed, “*Chukwuebuka*” – God is great, “*Chiamaka*” – God is too good, etcetera. (Gbenda, 1997 p.28) adds that God is expressed metaphorically in anthropomorphic terms thus: “God as father, God as Mother e.g. Matriarchal societies like Ovambo, Southern Nuba, etcetera, conceive or speak of God as mother – God as having big eyes that see everything. God as having large ears that hear everything, God as King”. Different people from various African ecosystem perceive God as Supreme Being.

The next in the structural order of African traditional belief system is, the belief in divinities. African religious adherents believe that there is invisible world occupied by the Supreme Being and His subordinating spiritual agents like divinities, spirits, etcetera. Divinities share the qualities of the Supreme Being as the emissaries of God. This is an equivalent of John 14:9 which states thus: “Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how says thou then, shew us the Father”. In this part of the bible, Jesus stresses that He shares close relevance and status with God the Father. More so, they are in the precision of God the Holy Spirit, but in African traditional religion, there are numerous spirits associated with and to the Supreme Being/God. It is in this belief in divinities that the major variable and essence of this paper is centred. The divinities are categorized into major and minor divinities. Among the most popular divinities at least in Nigerian traditional religious worshippers or adherents' psyche are: the Earth goddess – *Ala*, Sun-god – *Anyanwu*, and *Orisa-nla* – Yoruba god of purity. These divinities are graded as major divinities because they are in most cases believed to be divinities of heaven since they were with the Supreme Being from the creation and also participated in the creative work (Ugwu, 2004 p.16). This means that they assume divine creation status as creation associates of the Supreme Being (God). Other divinities which are taken as associated to natural and human forms are the next category of divinities. While nature divinities are attached to natural objects and forces, the heroes/heroines, etcetera, are those in human form. Nature spirits include: *Efa*, the market days, gods of agricultural products, etcetera.

There is also the belief in spirits. The categories of spirits in African traditional religion are: ghost spirits, *Ogbanje*, (born-to-die), spirits of witches and wizards, etcetera. The Africans believe in ancestors and ancestresses. They form the fourth structure of African traditional religion. The people call them the “living dead”. It is believed that African dead forebears who lived worthy and successful lives and were honoured with befitting burial and funeral are qualified to be accorded the honour as ancestors and ancestresses. This class of dead people are believed to be alive in the land of the living, and protect the interests and welfare of their living relations on the physical world from the spiritual world. The last but not the least, is the belief in magic and medicine. For Africans, everything in the world, has its religious interpretation(s). Therefore, the physical is inseparable from the spiritual. (Onunwa, 1990 p.80) expresses that:

Both the spiritual and physical realms of the universe are believed to work in a consistent harmony and are subject to an ordered systems and rhythm... the whole essence of man's religious rituals is to keep the system in a consistent harmony (to maintain the *balance*). It is in magic and medicine that the missing part of the complex whole (that is religious) which keeps the system in consistent harmony is consummated.

The belief in magic and medicine is concentrated on the conviction that there are pivotal spiritual forces or supernatural powers in the world that can be tapped and manipulated or controlled by man to maintain the *balance* in the system.

The structure of *Ala* or *Ani* divinity of the Igbo of the South East Nigerian ecological setting is built with mainly, these structural components of the African traditional religion. Most of these components if not all of them are installed in the shrine of earth goddess(es) in Igbo land. Since every supernatural or spiritual components of African/Igbo traditional religion operates in association or relationship with one another, the *Ala* or *Ani* deity or divinity is supported with other spiritual allies. They include: Supreme God – *Chukwuokike*, the Sun god – *Onu-anyanwu*, Ancestral spirit – *Ndichie/Ndihe*, and the spirit of Magic and Medicine – *Agwu* spirit. Each of these structural components of *Ala* or *Ani* has special or peculiar roles or status it plays or acquires. Therefore, *Ala* or *Ani* divinity defines the paramount to its existence and efficacy.

The *Ala* or *Ani* divinity of the Igbo is principally honoured in a special shrine most often owned by the entire village. It is always difficult to have more than one earth goddess – *Ala* divinity in a village in Igbo land. Chief Priest Nwannebuiké Udeh (personal communication, 9 December, 2020) expressed the surprises he witnessed in his emergence as the present Chief Priest of Aniaka Umuaji Aguobu-Owa Village earth goddess. He explained that series of divinations were done within and outside the community and the Local Government Area of Aguobu-Owa community and Ezeagu Local Government Area of Enugu State respectively by more than fourteen diviners. Yet, it consistently fell on him amidst six contestants even though he was not contesting. As a driver with his own registered bus with ENTRACO – Enugu State Transport Company, he was very much comfortable with his daily returns, and was not interested in coming back home to serve as a Chief Priest to any deity or otherwise. He explained that after emerging as the Chief Priest of Aniaka Umuaji Aguobu-Owa Earth goddess, he continued with his transport business, but the deity from divination and belief kept

disturbing his life by way of unhealthy living and minor accidents. But at a time, he said, he decided to obey the revelations of the divination and came down home to reside and take care of the divinity. Afterward, in an interval of six months, worshippers from far and near started coming to the shrine in search of solutions for their troubling problems and challenges. At the eighth month, a worshipper donated a brand new CG motorcycle to him in appreciation to the intervention the Aniaka earth goddess has made to his decades family problem. Mr. Celestine Agiya, one of the messengers of the Aniaka Umuaji Aguobu-Owa Earth goddess (personal communication, 29 December, 2020) confirmed what the Chief Priest attested but added that in a year and four months, another worshipper from a far has given the Chief Priest a 4 Runner Jeep in appreciation to the benevolence of the earth goddess *Ala/Ani* in his business. Mr. Kenneth Eneje (personal communication, 20 January, 2021) also adds that new structure/building is being raised in the shrine by a benefitted worshipper. It is worthy to note here that in most communities or villages in Igboland, Chief Priests of most earth goddesses *Ala/Ani* always hail from a particular kindred or family lineage. Though, for the case of Aniaka Umuaji Aguobu-Owa, in occasion of vacancy (that is at the death of the presiding Chief Priest), people from other kindreds or family lineages do contest, but none has succeeded in succeeding the office in the process of real divination.

In continuation with the structure of the *Ala* divinity, it is believed in Igbo land, that the physical cannot be separated from the spiritual. Therefore, human beings in their physical environment face a lot of problems and challenges. It could be issues with economy, politics or governance, social activities, health, etcetera. It is on this basis that the Earth goddess – *Ala/Ani* is surrounded with both sun-god *Anyanwu* divinity, the Supreme God representative – *Chukwuokike*, Ancestors spirit – *Ndichie/Ndihe* and the spirit of Magic and Medicine/divination (*Agwu*) are installed in the *Ala* shrine in most Igbo communities. These spirit beings have their individual mini shrines installed in the premises of the *Ala* deity. The paraphrenia used by the *Ala* divinity around Igboland include: consecrated *Ofo* – *Detarium Microcarpa*, *Ogu* (*Elaeis Guieensis* – That is the ritualized fresh palm frond, stones, main wooden gong – *Ikoro/Okpoto*, minor wooden gong-*ekwe*, metal gong-*ogene*, chairs, clothes, animal skulls, animal tails, traditional caps – *Okpu* – *Onunwanze*, traditional flutes, pottery materials, etcetera. Presently, the food and animals acceptable for sacrifices and worship in Earth goddesses – *Ala* shrines among the Igbo include: local or semi local breed cock or hen. Broiler is not acceptable Mr. Cletus Okolomma (personal communication 7 September, 2013). Yam (*Dioscrea*) is mainly used (not water – yam *Mbana*), *Inu/Ighu*, in place of cassava products, palm wine *Nkwu-enu* not raffia wine (*Ngwo*), beer can be used; malt and soft drinks are not acceptable. Mr. Christopher Okechi (personal communication, 2 June, 2021) states that goats are acceptable, ram, and cow. In the words of Mr. Christopher, sheep is not acceptable for sacrifice at the *Ala/Ani* shrine, offering and worship in the shrines of *Ala* divinity are virtual round South-East traditional religious settings. In most cases, *Ala* – Earth goddess have special animal for example, vulture – *Neophronmonachus* that delivers its messages to individuals, families, villages, communities. *Ala* also has diviners and foot (human) messengers. Let us look at the roles of the *Ala* and other spiritual beings surrounding the *Ala* – Earth goddess structure.

Roles of *Ala* – Earth Goddess and Other Spirit Beings in Its Shrine

Earth goddess – *Ala* services and handles divergent human, environmental as well as societal problems and challenges. People approach the divinity on occasions of festivities death, sickness, political issues, wealth/economy, and talent, societal disorder (plague, draught, etcetera) – wars and conflicts, spiritual challenges, tittle-taking etcetera. On the social and festival functions of earth goddess – *Ala* among the Nsukka, Northern – Igbo ecology is examined by (Onah, 2004 p.83) as it affects divinity festival of *Anumuje* of Adani people thus:

By the beginning of planting season, usually a date chosen in April, a popular period of festival is devoted in honour of the goddess. It is referred to as the *Anumuje* festival. It may be time and space consuming to enumerate all that is involved economically and socially during the feast. But suffice it to know that 'married daughters' of Adani are expected to come home for the feast. The feast is also a way of reminding the people of the role of *Anumuje* as mother, source of water, source of survival in hard times and source of fertility both for human beings and crops.

Anumuje is an *Ala*-Earthgoddess divinity among Adani people of the Northern Igbo ecological area. She is a mother-goddess acknowledged by the people for her roles as source of certain means of sustainability for the people. (Ekwunife, 2003 p.43) also emphasizes on the rituals observed by the Aguleri people of Anambra State at the appearance of every moon in the Igbo thirteen months lunar/annual calendar. The *Ala* divinity is consulted in these moon appearances for confirmations.

On occasions of draught and other social calamities, the *Ala* divinity is normally approached for solution. People also visit the *Ala* shrines on cases of premature and abnormal deaths in the view of Mr. Thomas Umeh (personal communication, 7th March, 2021). The *Ala* divinity is always consulted during political contest. Some politicians visit Chief Priests of *Ala* divinity to know their fate. During political crisis *Ala* deity can be approached to resolve issues between opponents. *Ala* deity is offered sacrifices for successful title taking. On economic/wealth and destiny complications, rituals and sacrifices can be offered to the '*Ala*' for stability. During health challenges, while medication is ongoing, *Ala* deity is always committed with the role of adjusting the spiritual realm to stabilize the bodily or physical disorder. These functions of *Ala* divinity are actualized on the principle of division of labour among the mini deities' shrines built in the *Ala* shrine.

When problems relating to health occur, the '*agwu*'-spirit of magic, medicine and divination arises to its office. (Madu, 1997 p.135) asserts that: "There is equally the recognition of the power of magic and medicine. In magic, man manipulates the spirit beings for his advantages and can also use magical medicine to change the cause of events. It is pertinent to emphasize here, that independent medicine, magic, and divination experts as herbalists, magician's diviners, and medicines-men (*dibias*) have their own '*agwu*' installed for them in their various homes. These people operate in both negative and positive ways, but it is the *Ala* divinity's mini shrine for *agwu*'s spirit that is assigned to define and punish or bless traditional medical and magical practitioners. (Asiegbu, 2006 p.25) observes thus:

The role of the *dibia* in this realm requires expertise. Further, the possibility of a person discharging effectively the numerous functions of *dibia* institution has given rise to the confusion in the terms and functions of the different kinds of *dibia*. As a result, we shall distinguish between the various types of *dibia*. No clear-cut boundary may, however, be drawn because their functions overlap. It is worth noting that however reputable a *dibia* may be, the effectiveness of his services depends on several factors: (1) *Chukwu*- the chief source of life....

The mini shrine installed for God-*Chukwu-Chukwuokike* at the *Ala* divinity shrine in collaboration with the *agwu* spirit shrine determine the effectiveness of that *dibia*'s magical or medicine. Mume in (Madu, 2004 p.27) concludes that: "... each specialized in different cures, ranging from physical cures to mystical ones, one can appreciate the fact that in Igbo Religion, there is a nexus between divination, healing by the use of herbal medicine depending on the type of sickness, and the ritual healing through the use of sacrifice". Some of these ritual healings are performed and influenced by the *Ala* divinity or deity. (Adibe, 2006 p.32) stresses thus:

Ala deity and ancestors worship play important role in medicine preparation. The *Ala* deity is invoked in some occasions as the deity who make the growth of medicine possible. But much often the particular deity whose potency is sought is given the invocation.

The ancestors are called upon as the original producers and inventors of medicines. *Ogwu* is believed to be handed over from ancestral knowledge and skill (Onwuejeogwu, 1997 p.81) in (Adibe, 2006 p.32). Adibe and Onwuejeogwu make it clear that both *Ala* divinity or deity, the *agwu* /*ogwu* spirit and the ancestral spirit unite or collaborate in dispensing and tackling health and health related issues.

Among the Igbo, economic life is not mere human search to be wealthy. (Adibe, 2008 p.235), (Awolalu and Dopamu, 1979 p.92-94) in (Adibe, 2008 p.235) observe thus:

The Igbo people regards *Ala* divinity as a mother and a goddess is very close to their existence and through whom all they possess are possible. Without her gifts in the Igbo belief system, all would be lost. Thus sacrifices are offered to her before planting, at the first fruits and at the full harvest...

Adibe emphasizes on the view of Awolalu and Doparmu that they noted the priest of *Ala*, that is *Ezeala* plays a major role during communal worship of *Ala*, and during yam festivals. It is worthy to stress here that new yam festival appears to be the most central festival, and the *Ala* divinity receives great consent and sacrifices during, before and after the new yam festival in Igboland. Apart from the new yam festival there are also many traditional festivals in different parts of Igboland in which the *Ala* divinity is offered sacrifices. (Adibe, 2008 p.135) views thus:

The priest of *Amadioha* also has some roles to play in Igbo economic life as *Amadioha* divinity is believed to send rain and provides fertility for all economic advancement. The Igbo people believe that the devotees of *Agwu* deity are enriched by him... Hence, it is the divinity of the Igbo artist, wood sculptors, and blacksmiths. All Igbo craftsmanship like singing, dancing and *dibias*, and diviners of all grades have *Agwu* as their patron deity. *Agwu* deity is a deity of Igbo professionalism. Thus Igbo people give unreserved homage to *Ala*, *Amadioha*, and *Agwu* as sources of their wealth.

It is important to understand here, that even though the *agwu* deity is concerned with magic, medicine and divination, it is also believed among the Igbo of South East ecological Zone that *agwu* is a spirit that can cause and harmonize mental disorder. Therefore, it comes into play in the economic wellbeing; in the sense that it organizes human psychology to enable him attain the intelligence that would assist him in acquisition of wealth. More so, *Amadioha* is partner to *Anyanwu*-Sun-god because of their celestial unity. They are incharge of rain sun, moon, thunder etcetera, which are necessarily important to rainmakers for their professional engagements. Despite their economic roles, they collaboratively play some other roles in the traditional Igbo man's life.

Generally, *Ala* deity plays socio-religious role. In ordinary times, the *Ala* divinity is worshipped for continuous communication with the Supreme Being. Mr. Osmund Anike (personal Communication, 9 February, 2021) explained that in Igbo traditional ecosystem, noises of certain animals at certain days and times of the day always call for religious/spiritual enquiry into the unseen world. In matters of these nature families within the ecological vicinities make sure they confirm the omen of such animals' or animal's appearance(s). In this case, it is always the diviner of the *Ala* divinity that is assigned to confirm the cause(s) for the appearance(s) of such animal(s). In a very normal circumstance where the society do not witness any serious problem or challenges for a whole year, the community calls for celebrations and thanksgiving to God at the *Ala* deity's shrine while individual adherents go to their various homes and extend the same celebration. These religious activities take off from earth-goddess' shrine to keep the people's relationship with God unstained. The normal religious roles of the *Ala* deity are mainly directed to the *Chukwuokike* and ancestral mini-shrines in the earth goddess' main shrine. In marriage, war, etcetera, the *Ofo* of the earth goddess is ritualized for confirmation of the marriage, and war victory respectively. At war, some communities carry the *Ofo/Ikenga* of the earth goddess- *Ala* to the war front for victory. In fact, the religious history of the Igbo of South-East shows that *Ala*-earthgoddess divinity is immensely taken to a very great esteem, though the nature of this research would not permit a well-developed historical and intensive record of *Ala* deity in the Igbo eco-spirituality. Therefore, we pause here for recommendations and conclusion.

Recommendations

1. Other foreign religions (Christianity and Islam) in Igbo environment do not regard the African traditional religion let alone the earthgoddess-*Ala*. Having seen the roles and values attached to *Ala* deity, the Igbo Christians and others should stop condemning this belief system.
2. Igbo religious objects should be preserved for historical importance.
3. The Igbo traditional worshippers should always be proud of *Ala* and their religion.
4. Reasonable number of the young generation of Igbo environment should be encouraged to practice and promote traditional regard for *Ala* and Igbo traditional religion.
5. The moral education and value built in Igbo belief system in the worship of *Ala* should be promoted.

Conclusion

The existence of *Ala* divinity is peculiar and special for the people of the South –East ecological environment. The divinity is always owned and installed under a village or community's custody. The divinity has sophisticated structural being that accommodates other spirits including the representative spirit of the Supreme Being-*Chukwuokike*.

The *Ala* divinity is believed to undertake a lot of functions for the Igbo and even beyond. Her roles range from religious importance to social, political, economic, health, etcetera. *Ala* deity has historical value to the people that the ancestors and ancestress who died centuries ago assume enviable spiritual status associated to the *Ala* shrine. In fact, there are tendencies that these present and future generations of Igboland will promote the belief in *Ala* beyond the present state of the divinity.

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Interview

1. Chief Priest Nwannebuike Udeh, Enugu State, Chief Priest, 50 years, 9/12/2020
2. Mr. Celestine Agiya, Enugu State, Farmer/Spiritual Messenger, 61 years, 29/12/2020
3. Mr. Kenneth Eneje, Enugu State, Miner, 50 years, 20/1/2021
4. Cletus Okolomma, Anambra State, farmer, 71 years 7/9/2013
5. Mr. Christopher Okechi, Abia State, Masson, 51 years, 2/6/2021
6. Mr. Osmund Anieke, Anambra State, Carpenter, 70 years, 9/2/2021
7. Mr. Thomas Umeh, Ebony State, farmer. 76 years 7/3/2021

An Appraisal of Poverty and Moral Decision Making

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Abstract

This work aimed at elucidating the moral implications of poverty in decision making. Poverty has been a persistent challenge worldwide. Primarily, it is a reality that depicts lack of food, clothes, education and other basic amenities. The deprivation of these basic resources often leads to denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity, and of course lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in the society. This subject has been a major socio-political and economical issue in the world and that has brought suffering and crippling effects on over millions of people experiencing it. The focus on this subject overtime has been mainly on the socio-political and socio-economic effects on the society without paying much attention to the moral dimension of the problem. This work analyzed the concept of poverty from a holistic point of view and narrowed down to the moral perspective on the moral choices made by individuals living in poverty. The paper adopted the exposition and critical analysis method in its discussion of the subject. The paper discovered that in whatever form poverty is present in human life has the tendency to not just influence opportunities and choices but constitutes a fundamental predicament to moral decisions. The paper concluded that we have a collective responsibility to keep society safe by deliberately and intentionally minimizing the impact of poverty in the society because of its devastating impact on moral decisions and consequently, on the moral health of the society.

Introduction

Poverty has been a major socio-political and economic problem which has presented one of the most urgent moral challenges facing humanity. Throughout the world, millions of people are suffering from poverty and its creeping effects on human beings cannot be underestimated. "Fifty-six percent of the world's population is currently poor: 1,2 billion live on less than \$1 a day and 2.8 billion live on \$2 a day" according to Narayan (265). Poverty has been called "the world's most ruthless killer and the greatest cause of suffering on earth" according to Gordon (74). The effect poverty has on human being are so drastic that it has merited the attention of various government, states and nations. The effect of poverty in the society, and on humanity at large is very dangerous because it can turn a man into a beast. Poverty at an extreme stage can twist man's struggle to be directed only to one meaningful drive; drive to survive by any means regardless of the consequences to others or the society. As a way of preventing such rage which could have dangerous effects on the society, governments have tried to intervene by introducing some welfare programs so as to eradicate poverty in the society. However, it is arguable that this socio-political approach towards eradicating or managing the rate of poverty is plausible but not a sustainable approach based on the fact that the effects of poverty though evident in our socio-political sphere, is more impactful psychologically. As such, it is ideal to approach poverty from a psychological perspective which focuses on the person involve, rather than approaching it only from a socio-political and economical perspective which focuses on its effects on the society. As a result, psychologists posit that poverty determines the psychological behavior of a poor person. It affects how the person think, which in turn affects the person's worldview as well as the person's moral choices.

The moral Implication of decisions made by a person affected by poverty which is influenced by the person's world view is the focus of this paper. To achieve this, it will be of great importance to briefly clarify some key concepts such as morality and poverty.

What is Morality?

Morality is the derivative of the word "Moral". Etymologically, the word "Morality" is derived from the Latin word *Moral* it as which means "manner", "character" or "behavior". In the view of Ozumba (106), morality is commonly seen as "beliefs or ideas about what is right and wrong and about how people should behave". (Ozumba, Pg.106). Gregory (35) in line with this sees morality as "what in fact people believe to be right or wrong, or how they in fact act".

Morality has to do with the rightness or behavior or action of an individual. It is principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behaviour. Hornby (1006) defined morality as "principles concerning right and wrong or good and bad behavior" (9 edition:1006). Esikot and Oke gave a detailed definition of morality thus:

Morality is a system or body of rules, particularly prohibitions and prescriptions which guide and regulate human actions. Morality is a system of social direction and control, and of practical reasons for the required conduct (Pg. 47-48).

To this end, morality of a class would have to do with the right beliefs and behaviour or principles approved and recommended for the class in question. We can on this basis define morality as "the right or acceptable behavior pattern of an individual or in private life (Where individual morality or private morality is in question) or of society or in a public life (where social morality or public morality is in question)" according to Esikot and Oke(4). To this end, we can talk about private morality and public morality. Private morality has to do with moral judgement of a person as a moral agent while public morality has to do with the rules regulating an office, function or group that an individual as a moral agent is expected to follow as a member of a group or in the discharge of an assigned task or responsibility.

What is Poverty?

The word "poverty" is derived from the Latin word "pauper" which means poor. It has series of meanings, linked through a series of resemblances, as it can be viewed from multidimensional elements like region, era, geographical condition, circumstances and many more. However, different notions of poverty has been analysed such that circumstances which applies in one sense do not necessarily apply in others. Poverty is multidimensional and we shall look at the relevant ones briefly.

Poverty as a Material Concept

The first group of definitions concern poverty as a material concept. People are poor because they do not have something they need, or because they lack the resources to get the things they need. Here, poverty is a state or condition in which a person or community lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living. Poverty-stricken people and families might go without proper housing, clean water, healthy food, and medical attention. It is the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. But we see every day that poverty entails more than the lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihood. "Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion, as well as the lack of participation in decision-making" (2022: online).

A Pattern of Deprivation

Not every need can be said to be equivalent to poverty, and there are several interpretations of what makes up poverty. Some interpretations emphasize certain kinds of need, like hunger and homelessness, as particularly important. Some emphasize the seriousness of the deprivations that are experienced: food and shelter are often seen as more important than entertainments and transport (though there may still be grounds to consider people who are deprived of entertainments and transport as 'poor'). According to Spicker (48), "the duration of circumstances is potentially important: a person can be homeless because of a natural disaster, but still be able to command sufficient resources to ensure that needs are met, and met rapidly." Poverty generally refers not just to deprivation, but to deprivation experienced over a period of time Spicker (46). Duration is important, because temporary deprivations (like those experienced by the victims of catastrophes) are not enough to constitute 'poverty'. Poverty is defined, then, on the existence of a pattern of deprivation, rather than by the deprivation itself.

Limited Resources

Needs are closely linked to resources; every need is a need for something. Poverty can be taken to refer to circumstances in which people lack the income, wealth or resources to acquire or consume the things which they need. Booth (35) wrote that "The 'poor' are those whose means may be sufficient, but are barely sufficient, for decent independent life; the 'very poor', those whose means are insufficient according to the usual standard of life in this country." If poverty is defined primarily in terms of need, a need which was not caused by limited resources would be sufficient to make someone poor; if poverty is only a result of limited resources, it would not.

Mental Poverty

This is simply a state of possessing an impoverished mindset, a condition in which one is unable to think his way through self-actualization because he feels trapped, helpless, and uninspired. It goes on to be a system of poor thinking where one may have everything they need to lead a comfortable wonderful life, but they nonetheless focus on the negative. A refusal to change, to try and learn new and better ways of not only thinking but also putting thoughts into action. The idea of poverty here as a mental state does not fit in with the materialistic concepts of poverty, however, this notion argues that if poverty were understood differently, we would not only focus on the struggle against material poverty but strive for a mental examination and reformation. Therefore, this definition amounts to expounding that one should rather pursue 'moral-dignity', rather than a continuous aim form materialistic struggle.

In a nutshell, poverty refers to a condition that causes its victims through lack of economic resources to live a life in which they cannot fully participate in a range of activities expressive of their nature as human beings. But the crucial point to note is that whether poverty is viewed as a material concept, as patterns of deprivation or mental, the cumulative impact in decision making cannot be overemphasized.

Effects of Poverty on Decision Making

Poverty can have profound effects on decision-making processes, influencing various aspects of an individual's life. In this exploration, we will delve into the multifaceted ways in which poverty shapes decision making.

1. Limited Cognitive Bandwidth:

Living in poverty often imposes chronic stressors, reducing available cognitive bandwidth for decision-making. The constant struggle for basic needs can overwhelm mental resources, affecting attention, memory, and other functions.

2. Short Term Focus:

Poverty can lead to a focus on immediate needs, making long-term planning and decision-making more challenging. This may result in prioritizing urgent, short-term concerns over strategic, future-oriented choices.

3. Limited Educational Opportunities:

Economic constraints can limit access to quality education, affecting cognitive development and problem-solving skills. This, in turn, can impact the ability to make informed decisions later in life. Poor educational outcomes can contribute to the perpetuation of poverty across generations, creating a cycle that hinders upward social mobility and decision-making opportunities.

4. Limited Access to Healthcare:

Poverty often restricts access to healthcare, affecting both physical and mental health. Health-related decisions may be compromised due to financial constraints, leading to long-term consequences.

5. Nutritional Challenges:

Economic hardships can result in inadequate nutrition, impacting cognitive development, energy levels, and overall well-being. These factors can influence decision-making in various domains.

6. Limited Social Capital:

Poverty can lead to social isolation and a lack of access to social networks that provide valuable information and support for decision-making. Networking and community resources may be limited. Individuals in poverty may face social stigma and discrimination, affecting their self-esteem and confidence. This can influence decisions related to seeking opportunities, education, and social interactions.

7. Limited Economic Agency:

Poverty often restricts economic agency, limiting choices in employment, housing, and overall financial well-being. The necessity to focus on survival can constrain the ability to make decisions that contribute to long-term stability. Poverty can also lead to debt and financial stress, affecting decision-making around budgeting, investment, and future planning.

8. Mental Health Challenges:

Poverty is associated with higher rates of mental health issues, including depression and anxiety. Mental health can significantly impact decision-making, affecting risk perception and resilience. Individuals in poverty may resort to short-term coping mechanisms, such as impulsive decision-making or risky behaviors, as a response to stress and uncertainty.

9. Structural Barriers:

Addressing the implications of poverty on decision-making requires addressing structural barriers, including systemic inequalities in education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Implementing robust social safety nets can provide a buffer against the cognitive and economic impacts of poverty, allowing individuals to make more informed and strategic decisions.

10. Limited Access to Employment:

Poor people are often inadequately qualified to be considered for better jobs. One reason might be that "they do not have access to value education as means to obtain a better job" according to Willcocks (19). This might be a less common reason today than decades ago. More common reasons for poor people's lack of skills are that "they often find access to education difficult, as the costs involved are too high, the distance too far to travel, or the quality of facilities or teachers available to them, inadequate" in the view of Wilson & Ramphela (144).

Moral Implications of Poverty in Decision Making

Exploring the moral implications of poverty in decision-making is a complex and multifaceted task. Poverty, a pervasive global issue, extends beyond economic constraints to impact various aspects of individuals' lives, influencing their choices and opportunities.

It is true that people living in poverty often face daily struggle for survival. The need to meet basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing can override moral principles and considerations even in less extreme cases. Research has shown that poverty can make people more likely to engage in corrupt practices such as taking bribe, embezzling funds and so on. Lack of essential resources can lead to a sense of desperation. When individuals are struggling to make ends meet, some may resort to choices which shouldn't be on the table as worthy of consideration in moments of decision. This engagement in immoral behaviors like crimes create more problems for some of the poor people in the community as "Poor people may lose some of the few material assets they have and so be further disempowered from engaging in entrepreneurial activities aimed at improving their lives" according to May (18). Their quality of life can be reduced by high levels of fear and distrust, which also "erodes social cohesion and co-operation" in the words of May (257). As a result of illegal activities, Narayan (60) states that "the household and often the wider community must face the fear and anxiety that these means of coping bring in their wake". When these feelings of insecurity combine with the frustrations poor people experience in their desperate circumstances, this often leads to various forms of abuse and violent crimes. It is significant to note that "poor communities suffer more from interpersonal crimes, like assault, rape, and child abuse than from property crimes" according to May (130). Immoral activities like; internet fraud, prostitution, arm robbery, thuggery, stealing, are considered an alternative income source so as to achieve basic needs.

Again, that poverty significantly influences opportunities and choices is not debatable. Individuals living in poverty may not have access to the same opportunity as their more affluent counterparts. This can limit their ability to make moral choices as they may not have the means or opportunities to do so. Individuals living in poverty are less likely to have access to resources that promote moral developments such as quality education and opportunities for community services. Limited access to quality education places individuals in impoverished condition in a disadvantage of making appropriate, immediate and long term decisions because of the lack of necessary tools for consistent rational and moral decision. Poverty can also limit a person's exposure to positive role models and environment that foster moral decisions making. Without these resources individuals may not have the necessary tools to make inform decisions or develop a strong moral compass. This limited access to opportunities affects the confidence of those living in poverty. People living in poverty often see themselves as

less able to learn new skills and succeed at tasks. They are also less likely to perceive that their actions will affect how their lives turn out because the future is less significant to them than their present lives. For them there is no future outside their present life. This has important consequences in the sense that the less people feel that their actions matter, the less likely they are to make choices aligned to achieving future goals. This raises question on the moral principles of equality. If the poor does not have equal opportunity with the non-poor, how then do we measure the moral principle of equality? Is it based on class disparities?

From the social perspective, the stigma and discrimination that poverty carries has the potentiality of affecting self-esteem and confidence. Living in poverty is associated with feeling excluded from society, which may explain its link to increased levels of aggression. Stigmatization, and loss of self-worth and self-esteem can negatively impact relationships as this can lead to lack of trust in others and a decrease commitment to moral behavior. Poverty can undermine a person's sense of social connectedness and lead to a diminished sense of responsibilities for others. Social disadvantage can create a sense of isolation and disconnection from society, which can make it more difficult for individuals to see the importance of moral behavior. For instance, if you don't feel like you are a part of a community or that you have a stake in the society, it can be hard to see the value adhering to moral principles.

The more social disadvantaged people are as a result of poverty, interpersonal relationship suffers. Human relationships of all kinds are crucial to develop the strong social aspects of our nature as human beings. We morally require human beings to engage in mutually beneficial relationships of different kinds. Poverty can have a devastating impact on interpersonal and family relationships. The dangerous mix of stress about inadequate resources for the satisfaction of needs and the negative self-image formed from feelings of personal powerlessness can wreak havoc on interpersonal and social relationships. Patriarchal gender relations can become particularly strained when families suffer from poverty. In patriarchal marriages women take full responsibility for managing and executing household duties, while men make decisions concerning household income. Poor women's unpaid work of household maintenance takes up most of their time and energy, leaving them exhausted. Consequently, they are "unable to take proper care of their children, to engage in activities to generate income or to utilize opportunities for education or self-improvement" according to May (80).

It becomes difficult for a poor person to keep a good interpersonal relationship with people because of the fact that they are occupied with stress of making ends meet for themselves. Non-poor people find it difficult to keep a good relationship with poor people because relationship is believed to be intentional with expectations. When individuals don't have strong social networks, they may not have the support they need to make moral choices. Having people you can rely on and turn to for guidance is important for maintaining a strong moral compass.

Evaluation and Conclusion

Poverty have strong impact on people's decision making as well as their moral disposition. The effects of poverty on decision-making are profound and interconnected as it affects every aspect of the individual's survival. Poverty erodes the moral values of people as desperation to make a living gives them an incentive to be immoral. As poor people's bodies are often their only asset which must be protected. Poor people may argue that morally acceptable methods of

earning a living did not work for them, they followed the rules of society in vain and therefore, they are in a position where making a living through immoral means becomes a serious option. They may maintain that they do not have the material means to continue living a moral life. In this way poverty becomes an instigator of moral decay. Moral decay that is caused by desperate poor people in an attempt to survive can never be effectively checked unless the fundamental motivation which is poverty is eliminated. There is a close relationship or intimate circle between poverty and immoral behaviors (which signifies the poverty of reasonableness or morality). This immoral behavior is in line with World Bank research *Ending Poverty* in 2022 maintains that desperation and hunger sometimes force poor people to "anti-social and illegal activities" that included "to steal, drink, take drugs, sell sex, abandon their children, commit suicide, or trade in children.

Once the moral decay of people sets off by contravening fundamental moral values for the sake of survival, the issue is whether they will stop in time before becoming serious criminals inflicting much greater harm on other people. That is to say that if immoral behaviour leads to financial success and social power, it might become so much more difficult to return to a moral lifestyle rather than slipping even deeper into immoral and criminal behaviour. This situation is compounded in a society where the wealth is considered more important than the source of wealth. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing effective strategies to alleviate poverty and empower individuals to make choices that contribute to their long-term well-being. However, it is pertinent to understand that it is not all poor people that are involved in moral decay, or immoral behaviors and actions, just as being rich is not a sign of sainthood. Some poor persons still prefer a good name and integrity above any consideration of wealth.

Conclusively, it is factual that poverty have a very high effects on one's values. It has the capacity to transform a noble man to a beast and inflict disaster on a society especially when the morality of those in poverty have decay. On this note, it is essential to remember that poverty may not be extremely deterministic in the sense that an individual can uphold high moral standard despite being poor. Also, it is worth noting that not all non-poor (wealthy) people behave morally. The point of emphasis is that poverty affects the kinds of choices and decisions people make, which in turn affects how they live. Moral decisions are likely more to be compromised in the face of brute poverty and such moral compromise have devastating short and long time effect on everyone. One way, therefore, of keeping society safe from a moral perspective is to endeavor to keep poverty away as much as is humanly possible. On this task, we have a collective responsibility to enhance society's moral health.

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