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FROM EDITORIAL DESK

Ideal International Journal is one of the brainchildren of Igbo Scholars Forum born out of the zeal to get the young Igbo scholars together to start thinking like Igbo sons and daughters through paper publications, meetings and symposia. In fact, Igbo Scholars Forum was founded by Professor Onukwube Alexander Alfred Anedo and born at the launching of a festschrift in honour of their life patron, Professor Obed Muojekwu Anizoba (Ozonwa) of the Department of African & Asian Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria on the 15th day of December 2012. In his kind gesture, Prof O. M. Anizoba established a website <http://www.Igbocholarsforum.com.ng> (which they later upgraded to <https://www.biafuluIgbocholarsforum.com.ng>) and thereafter, migrated to <https://acjol.org> and making their works visible in the Google Scholars visibility site, for them to use in telling the world who the Igbo people are, about their life, what they believe in and their relationship with people and other cultures of the world outside theirs. Other journal outlets through which this Forum wants to let Igbo people and their culture out to the world are IgboScholars International Journal and Ekwe Jonal

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NATIONAL INTEREST IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: WHOSE INTEREST?

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Abstract

The concept of national interest is central to the study of international relations, often guiding the foreign policies of states. However, the question of "whose interest" national interest represents is a complex and contested issue. While traditionally framed as the collective interest of a nation-state, national interest can reflect the priorities of policy makers of a state, the leader of such state or dominant political, economic, or social groups within a society, rather than the population as a whole. This paper examines the competing perspectives on national interest, exploring how it is constructed, who defines it, and the extent to which it aligns with the broader public needs and aspirations. Through a review of realist, liberal, and constructivist theories, this paper argues that national interest is not a fixed or neutral concept but is shaped by power dynamics, ideological, and institutional structures. Secondary source of data collection and content analytical technique were deployed for the study. Findings reveal that in the formulation of national interest, the interest of the actors behind the formulation is prioritized. Understanding this is crucial for analysing both the motivations behind foreign policy decisions and their impact on global power relations.

Keywords: National-interest, Foreign policy, State, International relations

Introduction

The concept of national interest is central to the study of international relations (IR), serving as a guiding principle for the foreign policy decisions of nation-states. It encompasses the political, economic, military, and ideological goals that a state seeks to achieve on the global stage (Morgenthau, 1948). However, the question of whose interest is being represented when these goals are pursued is often more complex and contested. National interest is not a monolithic entity but rather a reflection of competing priorities within a state, shaped by various actors such as the political elite, economic stakeholders, military institutions, and civil society (Smith, 2000).

In International Relations, the concept of national interest refers to the goals and ambitions of a

nation-state, which guide its foreign policy. These interests typically encompass a wide range of elements, including economic prosperity, security, and ideological values. However, the question of 'whose interest' is being represented, is more complex and depends on the internal dynamics and political structure of the country.

Different theoretical perspectives offer contrasting views on how national interest is formulated. The realists argue that national interest is primarily driven by the pursuit of power and security in an anarchic international system (Morgenthau, 1948), while liberal theorists emphasise the role of domestic politics, public opinion, and international cooperation in shaping a nation's goals (Moravcsik, 1997). Moreover, in practice, national interest may often reflect the priorities of powerful elites or economic groups rather than the broader population (Cox, 1981). This raises critical questions about the inclusivity and legitimacy of national interest as a guiding concept in international relations, particularly when the interests of marginalised or less powerful groups are not adequately represented.

In the light of these complexities, understanding the topic "National Interest in International Relations: Whose Interest?", requires a deeper analysis of the internal and external actors that shape it, as well as the power dynamics that influence how it is articulated and pursued in the international system.

Statement of the Problem

The concept of national interest in international relations is central to the actions and decisions of states in the global arena. However, the definition of "whose interest" is being represented under this notion remains contentious and complex. National interest is often portrayed as a unified, singular objective of the state, prioritising security, economic welfare, and political stability. However, it tends to obscure the internal divisions within states, raising critical questions about whether the interests of a few elite groups or dominant political factions are presented as the interests of the entire nation (Morgenthau, 1948).

Moreover, the pursuit of national interest often leads to conflict with the principles of global justice, cooperation, and human rights, which further complicate the debate about whose interests are prioritised and represented in national interest of states. The problem arises when leaders or policymakers claim to act in the name of national interest, potentially side-lining marginalised or dissenting groups within their own states (Waltz, 1979). For instance, in many cases, national interests reflect the preferences of powerful economic or political elites rather than a broad-based, democratic consensus (Keohane, 1984).

In an increasingly interconnected world system, the notion of national interest has also expanded beyond territorial concerns to include international cooperation, trade agreements, and environmental policies. This raises further questions about the compatibility of national interests with transnational challenges like climate change, where the "interest" of the nation may be in conflict with global collective action (Mearsheimer, 2001). Therefore, the ambiguity in defining whose interest is being served complicates international relations theory and practice, leading to conflicts between state-centric policies and broader global interests.

Theoretical Framework

The concept of national interest is central to international relations (IR) and can be interpreted

differently depending on the theoretical perspective one adopts. Realist, liberal, Marxist and constructivist theories are adopted in this research to provide distinct lenses for a better understanding of whose interests are represented in foreign policy and how national interest is formed and pursued.

Realism

The theory of Realism in international relations is most commonly associated with Hans Morgenthau, who is considered one of its founding figures. Morgenthau formalised classical realism with his work *"Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace,"* published in 1948. In this seminal work, Morgenthau argues that international politics is governed by objective laws rooted in human nature, and that states act primarily in pursuit of power and self-interest.

The Realist perceives national interest as state-centric and power-oriented. Realism posits that the international system is anarchic, meaning that there is no overarching authority above states. In this view, the primary concern of states is their own survival, and national interest is defined in terms of power and security. From a realist perspective, national interest is largely understood as the interest of the state as a unified actor. Realists assume that states are rational actors that prioritise military strength, economic power, and strategic advantages over ideological or moral concerns. But, on whose Interest? For realists, the interests represented are those of the state itself, often viewed as an entity distinct from its citizens or internal groups. The assumption is that state leaders act in the national interest, which is predominantly defined as ensuring state security and maintaining or increasing power relative to other states. As Mearsheimer (2001) notes, "great powers are always searching for opportunities to gain power over their rivals" because they operate in an inherently competitive and insecure international system.

In addition, Morgenthau (1948), a key realist thinker, argues that "interest defined as power" is the guiding principle of international politics, and all states pursue this interest regardless of their domestic ideologies or leadership. For instance, during the Cold War, both the U.S. and the Soviet Union pursued policies [arms races, proxy wars, espionage] that aimed to maximise their relative power and ensure their security in an anarchic international system.

Liberalism

Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924), is credited with bringing liberal ideas into international relations through his promotion of the League of Nations and his Fourteen Points in 1918. Wilson believed that democracy, open diplomacy, free trade, and collective security could prevent war, laying the groundwork for modern liberal internationalism. However, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye in the 1970s and 1980s, developed neoliberal institutionalism, a theory that emphasises the role of international organisations and regimes in facilitating cooperation between states.

Liberalism perceives national interest as pluralistic and cooperative. Liberalism, by contrast, holds a more optimistic view of human nature and believes that states can achieve mutual gains through cooperation and international institutions. Liberals emphasise the importance of economic interdependence, international organisations, and democratic governance in shaping national interests. On 'whose interest?' national interest to liberalists, is often seen as a reflection of the preferences of multiple domestic actors, including political elites, interest groups, and the general public. Liberal theorists argue that in democratic states, national interest should ideally reflect the will of the people, particularly in societies where citizens have the ability to influence foreign

policy decisions through electoral processes.

Keohane (1984) suggests that institutions can help states overcome mistrust and facilitate cooperation, aligning national interest with broader international goals like peace, trade, and environmental protection. Nye (2004) expands the understanding of national interest beyond hard power, emphasising how states achieve their goals through attraction and persuasion, often aligning with liberal principles of cooperation and diplomacy. The creation of the United Nations and the European Union, among other international organisations, reflect a liberal interpretation of national interest. These institutions promote cooperation, suggesting that states' national interests can align with international norms and collective security arrangements.

Marxism

The Marxists' perception of national interest focuses on the interest of the dominant class that are in control of the state power and apparatus (see Marx and Engels (1848), Frank (1997), Ake (1982), Rodney (1972), Akpuru-Aja (1998). They believe that a state comprises two dominant but antagonistic classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariats who are in constant competition over who controls the institutions of the state leading to class war between them. *The Communist Manifesto* written and published by Marx and Engels in 1848 showcases how the interest of the two dominant classes constitute the national interest of the state, depending on who controls the state apparatus at any given time. The implication is that, for the Marxists, national interest of the state is not the interest of the totality of the people in the state but the interest of the dominant ruling class at the detriment of the conquered class through the instrumentality of the executive. Marx and Engel (1848) went on to describe the executive as "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie". The implication is that even within the bourgeois class, there is a committee who rules and whose immediate interest represents the interest of the whole and by extension, the interest of the state. Hence, the controversial nature of whose interest national interest serves keeps evolving in all the classes in the state.

Constructivism

Constructivism in international relations was primarily propounded by Alexander Wendt in 1992. His work challenged the dominance of realism and liberalism by emphasising the importance of social structures, shared ideas, and identities in shaping the behaviour of states. Other scholars, like Onuf (1998) and Finnemore (1996), also contributed to the development of constructivist theory.

The constructivists perceive national interest as being socially constructed. Constructivism argues that national interests are not fixed or solely determined by material factors like power or wealth. Instead, the constructivists believe that interests are shaped by social interactions, ideas, identities, and norms. National interest, from this view, is constructed through the ongoing dialogue between states and the broader international community, with attention to the historical, cultural, and ideational context in which foreign policy is made.

For constructivists, national interest is more fluid and can represent different social and political groups within a state, depending on how national identity and values are defined. They argue that the interests of a state are not predetermined but are shaped by its social context, including its leaders' perceptions, international norms, and the state's identity in the international system. As Wendt (1992) asserts, "anarchy is what states make of it," meaning that national interest is a product of intersubjective understandings rather than material necessity alone. In fact, the decision of some states to pursue nuclear disarmament or strong climate change policies can be understood

through the constructivist lens. For instance, states that perceive themselves as environmental leaders or global citizens may prioritise environmental protection as part of their national interest, even if it does not provide immediate material benefits.

Realists view national interest as focused on power and security, driven by the rational, unitary behaviour of states in an anarchic system. Liberals see national interest as shaped by domestic actors and international institutions, with cooperation and mutual benefits being central. Marxists see it as the interest of the dominant ruling class of the state. Constructivists argue that national interest is not fixed, but socially constructed, reflecting a state's identity, norms, and ideas.

The above theories highlight the different but relevant approaches to understand whose interests the 'so called' national interest is; by the virtue of the fact that, the state as an institution, does not act for itself but humans act on behalf of and in the name of the state in the formulation and pursuit of national interest. The question of "whose interest?" is therefore interpreted differently, with realists focusing on the state as a unitary actor, liberals considering pluralistic domestic influences, Marxists emphasising class interest while the constructivists lay emphasis on the role of social context and ideational factors in defining national interest.

Sources and Methodology

This research was carried out using secondary materials. This includes books, journal articles and internet materials. Content analysis and case study analysis, will be used to examine the discourse surrounding national interest. This will help identify patterns in how different actors frame national interest and whose interests are prioritised.

Review of Related Literature

In the course of the development of this research, a review of some related scholarly works, theories, and debates that have shaped the understanding of national interest, its role in international Relations (IR), and the contentious question of whose interest it serves is imperative. This review is organised around key themes bordering on the definition and evolution of national interest, theoretical approaches to national interest, and analysis that question whose interest is being represented in national interest.

The idea of national interest is foundational in the field of International Relations. It refers to the strategic goals and objectives a state seeks to achieve in the global arena to ensure its survival, security, and prosperity. Hans Morgenthau, a key figure in classical realism, posits that national interest is defined primarily in terms of power, as states exist in an anarchic international system where survival is the top priority (Morgenthau, 1948). For Morgenthau and other realists, national interest is objective and universally centres around the pursuit of power and security.

Later scholars challenged the static, power-centred view of national interest, arguing that it is dynamic and varies depending on domestic politics, leadership, and changing international circumstances (Rosenau, 1966). This opened the door to considering how the interests of different actors within a state such as political elites, corporations, or civil society might influence the formulation of national interest.

Different theoretical frameworks in IR offer varying interpretations of national interest. According to Realism, classical realists view national interest primarily in terms of power and security.

Neorealism, as advanced by Waltz (1979), refines this by focusing on the structure of the international system, where states are seen as rational actors pursuing their national interest based on their relative position in the global hierarchy. Liberal theorists, such as Keohane (1984), argue that national interest is not limited to power but also involves cooperation, institutions, and the promotion of economic interdependence. They emphasise that states can work together to achieve common interests, which may transcend narrow, power-based definitions of national interest. While, Wendt (1999), introduced a more interpretive approach, suggesting that national interests are socially constructed and shaped by identities, norms, and ideas. From this perspective, national interest is not a fixed, material objective but a fluid concept that evolves as state actors interact and reinterpret their roles on the world stage.

Marxist scholars and critical theorists challenge the notion that national interest is a neutral concept. They argue that it often reflects the interests of dominant economic or political elites rather than the general population. This approach emphasises how class structures, capitalist interests, and imperialism influence the formulation of national interest, as elites use it to justify policies that primarily benefit them (Cox, 1981). The Marxist view leads to the threshold of the contested nature of national interest with the cardinal question of whose interest?

One of the central debates in the study of national interest is whose interest is being represented. Scholars from various traditions have questioned whether national interest truly reflects the collective will of a nation or whether it is often the interest of a narrow group, such as political elites, economic actors, or military-industrial complexes giving rise to differing perspectives on the subject matter. The elite theory suggests that national interest is shaped and dominated by a small group of powerful individuals or institutions. The state, in this view, acts as an agent of elite interests rather than the public good. Mills (1956), explored this in his concept of the "power elite," highlighting how corporate, political, and military leaders in the U.S. shaped national policies to serve their own interests.

Democratic theorists on the other hand argue that national interest should ideally be shaped by the will of the people through democratic institutions. However, Chomsky (1999) and Moravcsik (1997) argue that public opinion is often manipulated or sidelined by powerful interest groups, making the concept of "national interest" highly contested. Pluralist theories, in the same vein, argue that national interest is the outcome of bargaining and negotiation among various interest groups within society. This implies a more democratic process but also acknowledges that some interests may still dominate others.

Feminist scholars challenge the gender-neutral assumptions of national interest, pointing out how foreign policy often ignores or marginalises women's perspectives. Cynthia Enloe (1989) argues that the formulation of national interest reflects patriarchal structures, privileging male-dominated institutions like the military while sidelining gender issues.

Postcolonial scholars, such as Said (1978) and Spivak (1988), critique how national interest has historically served imperial and neocolonial powers. They argue that national interest in Western countries often mask expansionist and exploitative policies, justified under the guise of security or economic development but designed to maintain control over former colonies or economically weaker states.

Mearsheimer (2001) and Ikenberry (2011) analysed U.S. foreign policy, arguing that national interest has often been defined in terms of maintaining global dominance and ensuring access to global markets. Mearsheimer, a realist, argues that the U.S. seeks to preserve its hegemony, while Gowan (1999) argues that U.S. foreign policy serves corporate interests, particularly the defense and energy sectors, which heavily influence decisions on military interventions.

In a related argument, in the context of the European Union, scholars debate how national interest is balanced against collective European goals. Moravcsik (1997) discusses how national interests are negotiated within the EU's institutional framework, where member states must reconcile their own objectives with regional policies. This has led to debates about sovereignty and whether national elites use European integration to advance their own political or economic agenda.

In the Global South, the concept of national interest is often framed in terms of resistance to foreign domination and economic development. However, critics argue that national interest in many developing countries is co-opted by ruling elites or authoritarian regimes to justify repression or enrich themselves. Gills (2000), highlights how foreign aid and development policies are frequently shaped by both external actors and domestic elites, leading to a distortion of national interest away from broader public needs.

The concept of national interest is central to international relations, but it remains deeply contested. Theoretical perspectives from realism, liberalism, constructivism, and critical theories offer diverse interpretations of what national interest means and whose interests it serves. As scholars have noted, national interest is often shaped by elites, powerful economic actors, or external forces, raising important questions about democratic control, inclusivity, and representation in global politics. Thus, exploring "whose interest" is being advanced in the name of the nation-state reveals significant power dynamics within and between states, necessitating a critical examination of how national interest is framed and pursued in international relations. None of the literature reviewed provides a wholesome answer to the problem of this present research but collectively provides invaluable information to the development of this present research.

National Interest in International Relations: Whose Interest?

The concept of national interest in international relations has long been invoked to justify the actions of states on the global stage. However, a critical examination of this concept reveals that what is often portrayed as the collective interest of a nation frequently reflects the personal, political, or economic interests of the ruling elites. Through an analysis of various case studies, this argument will be substantiated, drawing on empirical evidence and theoretical critiques. Specifically, the study makes references to U.S. foreign policy, authoritarian regimes in the Global South, and the European Union to show how national interest is often aligned with the leaders' interests.

U.S. Foreign Policy: National Interest or Elite Interests?

A classic example of how national interest is shaped by the interests of leaders and elites is in U.S. foreign policy. Many scholars argue that U.S. interventions abroad have been motivated less by the collective will of the American people and more by the interests of a powerful elite. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, in his 1961 farewell address, warned of the undue influence of the "military-industrial complex" on U.S. foreign policy. Mills (1956) further argues that a "power elite" consisting of corporate, military, and political leaders had significant control over the

formulation of national interest. These elites often shaped foreign policy to benefit defence contractors, oil companies, and other powerful industries.

Mearsheimer (2001) and other realist scholars have highlighted how U.S. military interventions, including in Iraq (2003), were justified under the guise of promoting national security and spreading democracy but were also deeply influenced by the interests of political leaders and corporate elites. Critics like Gowan (1999), argue that U.S. foreign policy reflects the interests of multinational corporations and defence contractors, which benefit from military engagements and control over foreign resources, such as oil. This demonstrates how national interest, as formulated by leaders, often aligns with the private interests of a select few.

The Iraq War in 2003 is one of the most significant examples of how the national interest can be co-opted by leaders to serve personal and political agenda. Officially, the Bush administration justified the war by claiming that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), which posed a threat to the U.S. and its allies. However, investigations later revealed that no such weapons existed. Hence, the war was largely motivated by strategic interests, including securing oil resources and projecting American power in the Middle East, which benefited U.S. corporations and the political ambitions of the Bush administration (Bacevich, 2008). In a similar vein, leaders like Vice President Dick Cheney had direct ties to the defence industry. Cheney had previously served as the CEO of Halliburton, a company that secured lucrative contracts during the Iraq War. This case illustrates how national interest, framed as a security imperative, was manipulated to serve the interests of political leaders and their corporate allies.

Furthermore, in many authoritarian regimes particularly in the global south, national interest is used as a rhetorical device to justify policies that primarily benefit the ruling elites, often at the expense of the broader population. In Zimbabwe, former President Robert Mugabe frequently invoked national interest to justify policies that consolidated his power and enriched his political allies. Mugabe's government framed land reform policies in the early 2000s as essential to redistributing wealth to the majority black population and rectifying colonial injustices. However, it was observed that the land reforms primarily benefited Mugabe's inner circle, with little economic improvement for the broader population (Bond, 2001). The policies resulted in economic collapse, widespread poverty, and food insecurity, but Mugabe continued to present his actions as serving the national interest of economic empowerment. Mugabe also used national interest rhetoric to suppress dissent, branding opposition parties and civil society groups as "Western puppets" who threatened Zimbabwe's sovereignty. In this context, national interest was manipulated to serve the political survival and economic interests of the ruling elite, not the nation at large.

In Syria, the Assad regime has similarly framed its brutal suppression of the 2011 uprising as a defence of national interest, claiming that it is fighting terrorism and preserving national unity. However, scholars like Steven Heydemann (2013), point out that the regime's actions have been driven primarily by a desire to maintain the Assad family's grip on power. The Syrian conflict, which has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths and the displacement of millions, is a stark example of how national interest rhetoric can be employed by authoritarian leaders to justify self-serving policies, including violent repression.

The European Union (EU) provides a complex example of how national interest is often negotiated and redefined by political elites, sometimes at odds with popular sentiment within member states.

During the Euro zone crisis (2009–2013), austerity policies were implemented across Southern European countries, including Greece, Spain, and Portugal. These policies were promoted by the political leaders of wealthier EU nations, such as Germany, and justified as necessary for the stability of the European and global economy. Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor, and European Central Bank leaders framed these austerity measures as being in the best interest of the entire EU. However, many scholars, including Blyth (2013), believe that these austerity policies primarily served the interests of Northern European banks and elites who wanted to protect their financial investments. The economic hardships endured by ordinary citizens in Southern Europe, including high unemployment rates and severe cuts to public services, suggest that the national interests being served were those of political elites and the financial sector, rather than the broader public.

The critiques of national interest as merely a reflection of elite interests are deeply rooted in Marxist and critical theories. Cox (1981), affirms that national interest is often formulated to serve the interests of ruling classes, particularly in capitalist societies. National interest, from this perspective, is a tool used by elites to justify policies that maintain their economic and political dominance. Chomsky (1999) extends this critique, arguing that in liberal democracies, national interest is often manipulated to serve the interests of the corporate and political elite. Chomsky contends that public opinion is manufactured through media and political discourse, creating the illusion of consensus around policies that primarily benefit a small group of the powerful.

Conclusion and recommendations

The concept of national interest in international relations is often portrayed as reflecting the collective will of a nation state. However, case studies from the U.S., Zimbabwe, Syria, and the European Union demonstrate that national interest frequently aligns with the personal, political, and economic interests of leaders and elites. Whether through military interventions, economic policies, or authoritarian repression, leaders craft national interest narratives to legitimise their actions, often at the expense of the broader population. Theoretical critiques from scholars like Cox (1981) and Chomsky (1999) further support the argument that national interest is, often, a reflection of elite interests than a genuine expression of the nation's well-being.

To address the elite capture of national interest in international relations, a range of strategies must be employed to ensure that foreign policy reflects the broader population's values and needs. These includes enhancing democratic oversight, reducing the influence of special interests, increasing civil society involvement, decentralizing decision-making, promoting ethical leadership, and redefining national interest in human-centric terms, among other essential steps. These recommendations aim to create a more inclusive, transparent, and accountable foreign policy process that truly serves the collective national interest, not just the narrow interests of the leaders who formulate it.

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LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

BY

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Abstract

This paper discusses the terms language and culture and appraises their roles in the achievement of National Identity. It looks at the problems facing Nigeria as a multi-lingual country with multiplicity of languages and cultures. The work further examines the impossibility the realization of the WAZOBIA project as a means of achieving language cohesion in the country. It probes into the modality for evolving a workable national language and eliminating distrust and the tendency to publicize the nation's linguistic phenomena. Is there any possibility of making linguistic behaviour effectively synchronize/grammar with societal behaviour in order to chart a smooth National course? It therefore upholds the use of the English language; the language of our colonial masters, only as an interim measure, for communication and general acceptability pending when a consensus and neutral language will be introduced for national identity. The paper encourages the sustenance of national symbols of identity like the National Identity Card, National Flag, common constitution and laws which will help foster unity among the multi-ethnic groups in the country.

Introduction

Language is a means through which a group of people organizes their experiences and thoughts. A growing child learns to order his thoughts and react to habits about his environment through language. Hornby, (1977) describes language as a human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, feelings and desires by means of system of sounds and sound symbols (p. 473).

Language is the pre-requisite for the accumulation and transmission of culture. Language

itself is part of culture. Culture is the total way of life of a people. This includes their tradition, environment, and how they harness it, their diet, music, dance, folklores, language and world view. Language is inseparable from culture and both of them make up the identity of a particular nation. Prah, (1993) (2006) states:

Language is the essential matrix and facilitator in the development and growth of culture as a process. It articulates the material transformations in the social process and mediates between humans in their relationship with nature... language registers culture and culture elaborates language. Language dialectically encodes and decodes; it constructs and deconstructs. Reality is its object and homosapiens, its object (p. 12).

When a language dies, a whole lot of experiences die with it. It represents an incredible loss of diversity, culture and identity for people across the country. Nigeria with its numerous language groups has been confronted with the problem of adopting a national language.

The facto National Policy on Languages (in Education): provides for:

- i) Mother-Tongue (MT) and/or language of the immediate community (LIC) as the language of initial literacy at the pre-primary and junior primary levels and of adult and non-formal education.
- ii) English the official language as the language of formal literacy, the bureaucracy, secondary and higher education, the law courts, etc.

The Policy advocates

- i) Multilingualism as the national goal
- ii) Recognizes English as the de facto official language in the bureaucracy and all tiers of formal education.
- iii) Treats Hausa Igbo and Yoruba as potential national languages which are to be developed and used as L1 and L2 all through the formal educational system.
- iv) All Nigerian languages as meaningful media of instruction in initial literacy, and in life-long and non-formal education.

However, none of the indigenous languages has been adopted as a national language, perhaps for fear of cultural assimilation.

This paper will among other things, x-ray how much language and culture have synergized to achieve National identity. It does this by throwing light on the concept of language and culture, nation and national identity, the role of language and culture in the life of a nation, language, culture and national identity; it finally makes recommendations for the nation to move ahead.

Language

Language is a social behaviour. Through language, the social tradition and norms of behaviour are transmitted and maintained. According to Sapir (1966), "Language is a purely, human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols" (p. 21). Language is a medium of communication between two people or a group of people.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica, (1975) defines language as an arbitrary system of vocal symbols by means of which human kind, as members of social group and participants in a culture interact and communicate (p. 642).

By inference, language is a phenomenon that is produced by man's vocal system for communication purposes. In Smith's (1969) assertion, "language is a learned, shared and arbitrary system of vocal symbols through which human beings in the same speech community or sub-

culture interact and hence communicate in terms of their common cultural experiences and expectations (p. 104). The above definition suggests that language as a learned phenomenon is peculiar to a particular speech community, or people that share the same culture.

Womack, (2001:154) as cited in Omego, (2007:169), defines language as “the human ability to encode culturally defined meanings in sound and to combine units of sound to generate infinite new meanings through the application of rules. The above definition lays emphasis not only on men’s unique ability to use language but also on the essence of rules in language use, for language is rule governed.

In the words of Aja Akpuru Aja (2008)

Language is the most important information and communication characteristics of all human beings. Language is power. Language is a weapon for cultural preservation. Only humans have spoken and written languages. True, other animals can communicate with sounds, gestures, touch and smell, but the meanings of these signals are fixed. Language consists of learned symbols or codes that represent something else... the most useful and flexible symbols remain written or spoken words. These words can be combined according to grammatical rules to express need, fear, vision, mission and security (p. 2).

It is glaring that language is for human beings. It makes use of symbols and codes and the words used in a language express cultural values and norms. For humans, language gives access to the social experience and accumulated knowledge of generations that have gone before, and projects into the future.

Njemanze, (2008), describes language as:

One of the fundamental primordial expressions of cultural differences is spoken language identifies and distinguishes a group of people that speak that language from other human races. Language has social relevance. It stands as the basis for social action; it facilitates inter-personal and inter-ethnic cooperation, this makes language part of man and culture.

Most languages operate in association with their own recurrent pattern which is meaningful to native speakers. These speakers have similar linguistic features like syntax, semantics, phonetics and phonology. They also do not operate in isolation but within a cultural setting. This affirms the fact that language is culture based and culture is language. Culture cannot survive without language, which is the only vehicle for cultural propagation and transmission. In the same vein, culture enriches language, thus both concepts are intrinsically connected.

Culture: A Conceptual Review

Culture is a totality of people’s way of life which runs through the activities of a people and differentiates them from other people. Hornby, (2000), defines culture as a way of life and social organization of a particular community or group, the beliefs and attitude about something that people in a particular group or organization share” (pg. 284).

Culture is embracing; it is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, law and other behaviours that man can acquire, as a member of a society.

According to Geertz (1975):

Culture is a network (transmitted historically) of meanings embedded in symbols, a system of ideas inherited and expressed in the form of symbols, by which means people communicate, perpetuate and stretch their knowledge concerning their attitude towards life. (pg. 89).

Culture is perceived as a way of life, encompassing all human efforts and achievements and the attitudes or behaviour at work. It manifests in a people's religion, language, philosophy, music, dance, drama, architecture, political organization, technology, education, values, knowledge system, legal or judicial organization, and morality (Anyanwu, U.D, 2006:2).

Culture is the prevailing techniques by which people maintain themselves within their environment. It therefore represents the pool of ideas, goals, means and products of man in society; serves as man's social conscience, and represents the basis of consensus within a given human community or social order. The way we behave in our relationships with other human beings in the society is governed and determined largely by our culture. In addition to the actual ways in which we behave, there are certain tendencies in us to feel and act in certain ways (attitude) to possess certain yardstick or measures of goodness and desirability (values); and to define worthy attainments (goals). These attitudes, values and goals are part of our culture. Culture is socially learned and shared. It is also handed down from generation to generation as a tradition. (Ofoegbu, 1982:212).

Every culture is dynamic, that is, to say that every culture changes and is not static. As a culture comes into contact with other cultures, and as it passes from one generation to another, it is modified through the addition of new modes of behaviours, and by discarding completely some patterns of thought and earlier accepted as ways of doing things. Culture goes together with socialization because it is through socialization that people learn about their culture; identifying themselves with the goals and aspirations of their society; acquire basic skills needed for maintaining themselves within their environment, and learn to relate to other cultures. Nigeria, as a multi-lingual country, is made up of diverse cultures.

Nation and National Identity

A nation has been described as "A country considered as a group of people with the same language, culture and history, who live in a particular area under one government. It is a large community of people associated with a particular territory, usually speaking a single language and usually having a political character or political aspiration. (Hornby, 2000:780).

National identity therefore refers to those central or general features which one can identify as being common to the whole nation or country or features that form the characteristics of a nation. Such features could either be linguistic or cultural.

National Identity is the sense of a nation as a cohesive whole, as represented by distinctive traditions, culture, language and politics. A person's national identity as his/her identity and sense of belonging to one state or to one nation, a feeling one shares with a group of people, regardless of one's legal citizenship status.

National identity is not an inborn trait, it results directly from the presence of elements from the "common points" in people's daily lives: national symbols, language, national colours, the nation's history national consciousness, blood ties, culture, music, cuisine, radio, television, etc (<https://en.m.wikipedia>).

The Role of Language and Culture in the Life of a Nation

From what has been written above, the important role of language and culture in the life of a nation and its people need not be over-emphasized. Culture remains the foundation for effective socialization. It could be in the form of citizenship training and education. Language on its part is a channel through which culture is communicated to the people. Language functions as a political weapon. No human society can exist without language and a people with identical language and culture command a lot of respect and influence on the scheme of things in the world, thus language is a symbol of social and national identity. Where people are unable to interact linguistically, chaos

will set in. This is the fundamental cause of all the ethnic clashes and other crises in Nigeria. Lack of or too little communication among the various groups causes distrust.

This paper subsequently appraises how far language and culture have been able to solve the problem of identity in Nigeria as a nation.

Language, Culture and National Identity

Language is the only factors that can make Nigerians come closer to one another as a people. Language is the soul, the pivot and the nucleus of people's culture. It is the centre and unifying force of cohesion, though for a multi-ethnic country as ours, different languages serve as the disintegrating force. Language would have served as a national identity for Nigeria, if not for her multi-lingual nature. People who contemplate making the English language a lingua-franca for Nigeria should know that a foreign language cannot be a nation's identity. It can only work among the elites, but not with the illiterate masses. On the other hand, if one of the three major languages, Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba is adopted, what happens to the minor ethnic groups?

Over the years, this issue has faced serious oppositions. An example is this excerpt from Newswatch Editorial (1989, Vol. 9 No. 12 P. 14).

Once more tempers ran high, especially among opponents of the three major languages. Many of them (Constituent Assembly members) numbering between 80 and 100 staged a walk-out symbolically protesting Aniagolu's biased handling of the language question...

This attitude has continued to bedevil the national language question, thus making the adoption of any of these indigenous languages as national language remains elusive. If one of the three major languages – Igbo, Hausa, or Yoruba is adopted, the problem still remains how the language will be taught in schools.

In the case of WAZOBIA, (the amalgam of the language of the three major ethnic groups), it is a linguistic fact that lexemes or graphology of a language must be peculiar to that language. Teachers have a lot of difficulties and challenges teaching languages that their graphology is formed from inter-language borrowing. The WAZOBIA language became the most cumbersome language in the whole world because it is a fusion of three language components. For one to use the language, one must have a mastery of Yoruba for WA, Hausa for ZO and Igbo for BIA. How many persons have that language competence in this country? Language and culture are veritable sources of National Identity for a nation that has one language and similar cultural attributes but such is difficult in Nigeria. A People's language is the people. Language is not just a system of symbols or codes for communication. It is an embodiment of people's culture, and a people's culture is their identity among the committee of nations. Therefore, language is the people's life-wire. Language does not only manifest in vocal sounds but also in Para-and meta-linguistic devices that derive from the culture of the people. Language is translated into a people's mode of dressing, the food they eat, their mode of greeting, even to how they laugh.

In the light of the foregoing, one cannot place a finger on what one has, as a people. Nigeria is an amorphous society, a boiling pot, an embodiment of all sorts of cultures, and it gives them no identity. The majority of Nigeria problems in her range from their multi-lingual status. In a situation where a society is monolingual, the problem of socio-linguistics is not much, as emphasis will be on conceptualizing the working of language in the nation. But in a multilingual society, the problem is multiple as the study goes beyond areas of conceptualization and focuses on how language can be used to resolve disparities that arise from the levels of behaviour and thought, and these are issues pertaining to culture.

Okere, (2006) states:

...it is an accident of history that the English language has become almost indispensable in Nigeria's national survival. It was the accident of history that made the British to impose their language, English on us. It was an accident of history that occasioned a multi-lingual situation in Nigeria via the amalgamation of the various ethnic groups. This resulted in the need to have a common language as a medium of expression in areas of education, commerce and politics. That was the bane of a colonized underdeveloped nation. It was an accident of history that the concept of existentialism made us see ourselves as Nigerians infested by power potentials and tussles between the major and minor ethnic groups; their languages were among the issues at stake (pg. 123)

Of course the languages that usually survive struggles are those whose lexical and structural scope do survive linguistically and accommodate the language demand of a medium of expression.

Conclusion and Recommendations

"No matter how much a short man gets angry, he cannot grow over night". Though Nigeria as a nation uses the language of her colonial masters, English, it cannot be said that English language has achieved the project of National Identity; rather it is used for national and international transactions, by the elites who are opportune to learn it. Such transactions can go with English language only in the interim. There is the need, therefore, to present something to the international community in order to be accepted. As our people say, "he, who does not take an article to the market, cannot determine the price of the product". Nigerians need to do their home work very well and in one accord too. There is need to negotiate language and this can only be possible if the existing language is replaced with a new one. A national language will foster not only national identity, but also reconciliatory ventures and national consciousness. The teaching of indigenous languages should be encouraged at all levels of education to give everyone the pride to belong to a common nation, Nigeria.

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SACRIFICE IN ISRAELITE VIS-À-VIS IGBO RELIGIONS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Many people especially the Igbo of South-east Nigeria view themselves as descendants of the Jews; hence there are striking similarities in the characteristics and outlook of the Igbo man and the Israelites. Some view the Igbo as the lost tribe of Israel. Some of these views are based on the similarities of certain Igbo cultural practices with those of the Jews like, circumcision, confinement and purification of women for a specified period after childbirth, naming of a child after specific events like rituals, puberty rites and so on. On the other hand, some hold that the Igbo came under Egyptian influences. These views may be true but doubtful since there are no existing, contemporary documented and convincing records to prove the claims, and no intensive or extensive study has been carried out on the issue. The aim of this study therefore is to examine the concept of sacrifice in Israelite and that of the Igbo religions, with a view to finding out the relationship between them, if any, and whether they have the same origin.

Concept of Sacrifice in Israelite Religion

By sacrifice we mean an offering at least partially destroyed on an altar in honour of a deity. It seemed that Israelites had one type of sacrifice in the desert, that is, when they left Egypt, namely the 'Passover'; this sacrifice continued when they settled in Palestine. But there are several types of sacrifices which they developed when they settled in the same land before they were taken into exile. These sacrifices are known as pre-exilic sacrifices. They include: the holocaust, communion, expiation sacrifices and cereal offering. Others include, the showbread offering, and perfume offering commonly called the incense, although incense was just one of the elements used in the mixture burned on the altar.

When they returned from exile, that is, post-exilic period, other types of sacrifices were developed. They include: Yom Kippur (feast of atonement or feast/day of expiation) (Lev. 23). Before the exile there used to be a Day of Atonement but after the exile there was annual Day of Atonement (Lev 16), Dedication of the temple (Days of renewal, 1Macc 4:59). This feast did not

mark the original dedication of the temple of Solomon but it marks rededication of the temple in the 2nd century B.C. It originated with the end of the persecution against the Jewish community by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, when his troop entered the temple on the 25th of Chislev and desecrated it, that is, in 167 B.C, in offering sacrifice to Zeus. Judas Maccabeus recaptured the temple and rededicated it and made it an annual celebration (Psalms 113-118: hymns of dedication). Another type of sacrifice developed during this period was feast of Purim. 2nd Maccabeus called it feast of Mordecai. Mordecai was a protagonist in the book of Esther. It is possible that the feast originated from Persia. It is also called 'Lots'. This is because Mordecai who could not pay homage to Ahasuerus was to be hanged by lot. The date of hanging was determined by lots on 15th of the 12th month of Adar, that is, February or March.

For purpose of this study, we take on three types of sacrifice, namely the holocaust, communion and expiatory. We shall begin by naming in Hebrew each type, that is, etymology of each of the sacrifices, followed by description of the rituals involved.

The Holocaust

In Hebrew, the words for the holocaust are *‘ôlāh* and *kalil*. *‘ôlāh* developed from the verb *‘Alah*, which is the verb “to ascend”. The holocaust was given this name because the victim of the holocaust literally went up in smoke. *Kalil* developed from the verb *kalal*, meaning “to complete”, “perfect”, “bring to an end”. It was given this name because the victim of the holocaust was completely burned. The characteristic feature of this sacrifice is that the entire victim is burnt and nothing is given back to the man who offers it or to the priest (De Vaux 1974).

The ritual is described in just two texts (Lev 1:1ff). According to this ritual, the victim had to be a male animal or bird. If it were an animal, it was normally a lamb, a he-goat, or an ox. Poor people preferred fowl generally, a turtle dove or a pigeon. The ritual is marked by the imposition of the hand on the head of the victim by the offerer; this symbolizes that it is being offered for the benefit of the offerer or in his name. Then, followed by slitting of the throat of the animal; the skinning of the animal; its dismembering, the sacrifice itself, that is, the burning of the victim. Everything including the intestine and the hooves or feet were first washed, then placed on the altar and then burnt. The offerer would collect the blood in a vessel which he would take to the priest at the altar, who pours the blood around the base of the altar.

When the victim was a bird, the offerer would not lay hands on it, nor would he cut its throat. Everything would be done on the altar by the priest. The offering was ‘whole’ because it was wholly burnt on the altar; it was a ‘fire offering’ because it was burnt; it was ‘pleasing odor’ because it was intended to be well pleasing to God.

These are the details we read in Leviticus. The entire book of Leviticus is generally assigned to priestly tradition, which represents the way the ritual was performed in Jerusalem, in the period right from the exile. Those returning from the exile followed the prescriptions given in the priestly account. But we must ask whether it was always performed in the same manner. There are a number of texts referring to the sacrifice, texts more ancient than Leviticus. It seemed that Israel began performing sacrifice soon after the people entered Canaan. Gideon performed one (Lev. 6:16-23) as did Samson’s father (Judges 13:15-25) and Samuel (1Sam 7:9-10, 10:3-8).

After seven centuries there must have been some changes in the ritual. When we read the texts referring to holocaust, we find that these individuals offered the holocaust, but there is absolutely no reference to the priest. Gideon performed the holocaust and the text does not mention the presence of a priest. Samson’s father as well, offered one without the presence of a priest. We have another text without reference to a priest (1Sam 6:14). Thus it is likely that the priest in earlier times was unnecessary because the original role of the priest was not to perform cultic rituals

(Agius 1997).

In the ancient Semitic world, priests were appointed to take care of the sanctuary and its furnishings. So it is possible that in earlier times, private individuals could perform the holocaust without involving the priest. It is not very likely that the absence of reference to a priest is a coincidence. In any case, what characterizes the holocaust is the consumption of the victim.

The Communion Sacrifice

There are two words used to describe this type of sacrifice. The first is *zebah*, which comes from the verb *zabab*, meaning 'to slaughter for sacrifice' or refers simply to 'the sacrifice offered'. The second term is *shelamim*, which is *shalom* in the plural, which is 'peace offering', *šelem* in Hebrew, or 'peace sacrifice'. This sacrifice used to be offered in order to continue or re-establish good relations between God and the offerer. It is also referred to as *zebah-shelamim*.

There were three types of communion sacrifice for three different reasons. There was the sacrifice of 'thanksgiving' or 'praise'. In Hebrew, it is called *todah*. It used to be offered to render thanks or to praise God for a grace or favour received. The second type was called the votive offering/sacrifice, which in Hebrew is called *neder*. It was the type of sacrifice one performed in fulfillment of a vow one had made. Thirdly, there was the voluntary or free-will offering. This was performed on one's own initiative, for any reason whatever. It is called *nedebah* in Hebrew. The ritual of this sacrifice is also described in Leviticus 3. Animals like bird were not allowed in this sacrifice. Victims may be male or female, and in voluntary or free-will sacrifice, a slightly blemished animal was allowed. The laying on the hands, slitting, skinning, dismembering, washing took place in exactly the same manner as in the holocaust (Lev 22:23).

What characterized this sacrifice was what happened to the victim. It used to be divided into three parts. One part was consumed by fire on the altar, specifically the best parts of the victim: the fat around the kidney, liver and tail. The ancient Semitic tradition looked upon fat as testimony to the vigor of one's life. That is why it was given back to God in sacrifice. The second part was given to the priest, specifically, the breast and the right leg. The rest of the victim was kept by the offerer.

In the case of *todah* (thanksgiving or praise) and *neder* (votive offering), this last part had to be consumed by the offerer and his family that day (Lev. 7:15). The *nedebah* (free-will) could be consumed the following day, and anything left over must be burnt on the third day (Lev. 7:16-17). The sacrifice of praise or thanksgiving is to be accompanied by an offering of unleavened cakes and unleavened bread. One of the cakes is a sample for Yahweh and reverts to the priest (De Vaux 1974).

Expiatory Sacrifice

This sacrifice comprises two kinds, the *ḥaṭṭa't* (sin, for sin) and the '*asham* (reparation for a moral crime committed). The purpose was to re-establish the covenant with God when it has been broken by the sin of man. We shall examine each of them below.

The ḥaṭṭa't (Sacrifice for sin)

This was not known before the exile except in the form of fines. The ritual for this sacrifice is described in Lev. 4. The type of victim used depended on the rank of the person who had sinned. A bull was to be offered for sin of the high priest, for his guilt defiled the entire people. A bull also was to be offered for the sin of the prince; a she-goat or sheep for the sin of private individual. The poor could offer two turtle doves or two pigeons. One of the birds was to be used as a sacrifice for sin and the other a holocaust. The poor could also make an offering instead of these animals.

When the sacrifice was offered for the high priest or for the whole community, there were three successive rites. The priest who is performing the sacrifice first collected the blood, entered into the holy place and there sprinkled the blood seven times against the veil which curtains off the holy of holies; next, he rubbed blood upon the corners of the altar of incense, when stood before the veil; thirdly, he poured out the rest of the blood at the foot of the altar of holocaust (De Vaux 1974).

It should be noted that these were the only animal sacrifices in which part of the victim was carried inside the temple building. When the sacrifice was offered for the sin of a private individual, the blood was put on the horns of the altar of holocaust and the rest poured out at its base. The internal fat as always was burned on the altar, and the flesh was eaten that same day by the priest within the holy place. The essential element was that the flesh which had become 'sin', should be taken away destroyed. However, if the sacrifice is on behalf of the community or the high priest, the priests were not allowed to eat any part of the victim. The remaining were carried outside the sanctuary and placed on the ash-heap. These sacrifices of sin took place on a particular solemnity on the Day of Atonement. Thus, the sin offering is a means by which the sin of man is taken away.

'Asham (Sacrifice of reparation)

The word means an offence and then the means by which the offence is righted, and finally, a sacrifice for reparation. The sacrificial code deals with this kind of offering more briefly (Lev. 5:14-26, 7:1-6), and there, it was stated that rites to be followed are the same as in sacrifice for sin (Lev. 7:7). However, this sacrifice was offered on behalf of private individual only, and as a result, the blood was never taken into the holy place, and the victim was never burned away from the sanctuary; secondly, the only victim prescribed was a ram; and thirdly, in some cases, the sacrifice was to be accompanied by the payment of a fine (Lev. 5:14-16; Nb 5:5-8).

When an individual infringed on the right of God or a man in a way that could be estimated monetarily, then the guilty person had to offer a ram for reparation, and restore to the priest who represents Yahweh, or to the wronged person the monetary equivalent of the damage, plus one fifth. However, this restitution did not form part of the sacrifice.

Sacrifice for sin is offered when a man sins inadvertently, that is un-purposely, against any commandment of Yahweh (Lev. 4:2) but the sacrifice for reparation is observed when somebody unwittingly, that is unwillingly, did something forbidden by the commandments of Yahweh (Lev. 5:17). However, the two sacrifices are prescribed for very similar cases.

Anyone who does not come forward as a witness in court when he ought to, or anyone who makes a declaration in court without consideration must offer *hatta't* (Lev. 5:4). Anyone who commits perjury must offer '*asham*' (Lev. 5:22, 24). Three sacrifices must be offered for the purification of a leper. They are an '*asham*', a *hatta't* and a holocaust (Lev. 14:10-32).

A Nazarite who has been defiled by touching a dead body must offer two turtle doves or pigeons, one for a *hatta't*, the other as a holocaust, and in addition, a lamb as an '*asham*' (Nb 6:9-12).

The Religious Significance of Sacrifice in Israelite Religion

Having dealt with sacrifice in Israelite religion as observed in ancient Israel, it seems relevant to pose the following questions: What was the purpose of sacrifice in Israelite religion? What was its religious significance among the Israelites? What place did it occupy in their conception of relationship between man and God?

Well, we can say that the predominant motive for sacrifice in Israelite religion is their

desire to receive something from God. However, they seemed to be retrospective in nature. They all seemed to have reference to an event in the immediate past which either being acknowledged in thanksgiving or in repentance.

Put succinctly, the purpose of sacrifice in Israel is to maintain good relationship with God, and to atone for sin(s) committed. It is the essential act of external worship and prayer acted symbolically, which expresses both interior feeling of the offerer and God's response to his prayer. The Israelites believe that sacrifice can exercise influence on celestial phenomenon, and that, it is commanded by God himself. This is the reason sacrifices were developed and performed in Israelite religion.

Concept of Sacrifice in Igbo Religion

Sacrifice plays an essential part in African traditional religion. Quarcoopome (1987) enumerated various types of sacrifices in West African traditional religion. They include, "human sacrifice, votive offering, meal and drink offering, gift or thank offering substitution sacrifice, propitiatory sacrifice, preventive and foundational sacrifices" (p. 89). In Igbo society, neither the culture nor the political system of the Igbo can be understood without reference to religion. Religion is the affair of the whole society. The norms and values of the society seen as ordained by the gods and the ancestors are the affairs of the whole society.

The Igbo recognizes that man is not the master of the world. There are superior powers, invisible spirits, the ancestors, and there are also human spirits of wicked deceased people. Quoting Father Jordan Arinze (1970), states, "Every Ibo (sic) believed that an invisible universe was in action all around him, and that his term of life was short if he happened to fall foul of its denizens. He felt that it was up to him therefore to propitiate them and to treat them with courtesy and deference, that was the fundamental reason why he had such a penchant for sacrifice in all its many forms" (p. 34).

Furthermore, Arinze (1970) groups the ends of Igbo sacrifice under four headings to include, expiation sacrifice to ward off molestation from unknown evil spirits, petition, and thanksgiving sacrifices (p. 34). The importance of sacrifice in Igbo religion is so conspicuous, hence in Arinze's statement, "Sacrifice is the soul of Ibo cult. If it is removed, Ibo traditional religion is almost emptied of its content" (Arinze 1970).

In discussing Igbo sacrifice, in this study, we would divide it into four types namely, expiatory or purification, exorcist, propitiatory and consecratory sacrifices.

Expiatory or Purification Sacrifice (*ḱpụ arụ*)

This type of sacrifice is offered to cleanse the pollution arising from a breach of sacred prohibitions of the earth mother (*Ala*). There are pollutions which the Igbo would call abominations because they threaten the community as a whole, for instance, murder. This is a major pollution. There are also minor pollutions which may affect only the offender and his immediate kindred, for instance, adultery. Purification of both pollutions is called *ḱpụ arụ* but the character of purification rites vary according to the gravity of the crime and the nature of the offence (Metuh, 1985).

Purification for minor pollution is performed by a diviner and or herbalist and things used are according to the prescription of the diviner. The diviner uses an egg and a chicken or a white fowl. He waves it round the culprit's head a number of times with some invocations of the ancestors and the earth goddess to forgive the culprit. The sacrificial victim is later thrown into an evil forest with the belief that the pollution has gone inside the egg (Nzeako, 1981).

Rite of purification for major abomination is performed by a special priest from Nri town. The ordinary victim is ram. The earth spirit and ancestors are invoked to forgive the culprit.

Sometimes the offender is required to say out his abomination aloud before the shrine and to smear his body with ashes. The Nri priest takes a greater part of the sacrificed ram together with a fat fee. Very few people, never the culprit, are allowed to eat of the rest of the ram. After this cleansing sacrifice the offender once more regains full association with others (Arinze, 1970).

Public expiatory sacrifice in an Igbo town or village used to assume special solemnity in the sacrifice of scapegoats. Talbot explains in Arinze (1970) how this type of sacrifice is performed. According to him, a town or a village could heap all its sins on a goat or cow and then offer it to a spirit. The advice of the diviner is indispensable before such a move. Some of these animals were first earmarked and then left to wonder in liberty. Others were tied and thrown into the forest. Arinze (1970) added that “human beings were used to remove the ills of the multitude in a few places such as Onitsha” (p. 37).

Exorcist Sacrifice (*!chụ Aja*)

This sacrifice is usually undertaken after a series of misfortune for which no natural explanations can be found, prolonged illness which has defied all cures or many deaths in a quick succession in a family. The step is to consult a diviner who would in most cases recommend this kind of sacrifice. The spirits to whom these sacrifices are offered are evil spirits of the dead – *akalogoli*. According to Metuh (1985) “The characteristic feature of this sacrifice is that it is altogether with joy” (p. 64). It is usually performed by a diviner or the head of the family as the case may be. Nzeako (1981) enumerated the sacrificial ingredients to include the less valuable things such as cowries, chickens, pieces of yams, lizards, eggs or egg-shells, kola nuts, pieces of cloth, fowls, miscarried young goats or cows” (p. 117). Basden (1966) observed that “no particular preparations are made for this sacrifice” (p. 224).

The offering demands no more space than a wooden platter, a fragment of a broken earthen pot, a boat shaped container woven from palm leaf tendril in which the person acting as the priest puts the despicable offering telling the evil spirits to eat and leave them alone. The container is dropped at the place prescribed by the diviner especially a junction. This sacrifice is offered to escape from the evil designs and activities of malignant spirits.

Propitiatory Sacrifice (*Imegha mmụọ*)

This sacrifice is usually undertaken to please a god or spirits. Offerings are made either to dispose the god or assist man to achieve some of his aspirations. It includes offerings made to ancestral cult annually during some festivals organized for them. Such festival is *alommụọ*. It is also offered to some idols according to the instruction of a diviner. The traditional Morning Prayer is included in this category because in it, there is element of sacrifice like offering of kola nut. Sacrifice for thanksgiving can be categorized under this.

The general thing is that this sacrifice is offered with joy. It is for the ancestor. The eldest in the family offers it. The blood of the victim is sprinkled on the cult while the flesh is cooked and eaten by all present. The priest of the deity is responsible for the sacrifice for that deity. This sacrifice is usually communal.

Consecratory Sacrifice (*Ido Nsọ*)

The Igbo had the practice of consecrating some animals to a deity alive. Such victims after the sacrificial ritual are allowed to wander around the neighbourhood or the premises of the god as its property (Metuh, 1985). In the past, this includes human beings whom after the ritual are called *osu* (outcast). The immolation or ritual killing of the victim is symbolically expressed by either making a deep cut on the animal to let some of the blood to drop on the altar, or slicing off a tiny bit of its body as a token offering to a deity. The scar thereafter remains as a mark, meaning that, it

is the property of the deity. The ceremony of dedication which takes place at the shrine is performed by the priests and titled men of the community. With the *ofò* (Detarium Senegalense), the victim is consecrated while the ancestors are invoked to receive the gift and protect him (Metuh, 1985).

This practice is still obtained in some part of Igbo land. For instance, in Ekwusigo, Ihiala, Nnewi South Local Governments, one can see some of the animals dedicated to a particular deity roaming the streets. *Ogwugwu Okija* is a vivid example of this practice. It has a number of goats, cows, fowls, and so on, belonging to it. Usually dead people who are believed to have been killed by the deity are also deposited there.

Religious Significance of Sacrifice in Igbo Religion

Sacrifice is an act of the virtue of religion. God created man and conserves him. He is the final end of man, reaching from end to end mightily and ordering all things sweetly. By sacrifice man acknowledges God's supreme dominion and excellence and offers him adoration (Arinze, 1970). The Igbo, therefore, offer sacrifice to expiate offences both major and minor; to ward off the wicked molestation of evil spirits; to make their manifold petitions and; to thank the good spirits and the ancestors and; in general, to show them subjection (Arinze, 1970).

Comparative analysis of the two religious societies and their sacrifices

In summarizing this work we would like to provide the answers for the reasons stated earlier as the aim of this topic, that is, to find out the relationship between sacrifices in Israelite and Igbo religions (if any) and whether they have the same origin.

Thus we cannot say that the concepts of sacrifice in the two religions are the same. This is because the Israelites explain the historical events with reference to primary cause, while the Igbo seek to explain the principle of cause and effect but only in regard to secondary causes.

Furthermore, certain differences can be noticed, depending on the different development of the societies and the influence of external factors on them. However, the concept of sacrifice can be seen in the two religions for it is (sacrifice) the principal act in the worship of the two religions (De vaux 1974; Arinze 1970).

There are different types of sacrifices in the two religions and they serve different purposes. However, the following sacrifices seem to be the same in the two religions: the holocaust, communion and expiatory sacrifices. In other words, these three types of sacrifices in Israelite religion seem to be similar to propitiatory, expiatory/purificatory and consecratory sacrifices obtained in Igbo religion. Though their sacrificial methods are different, their ends are the same. The sharp difference is exorcist sacrifice noticed in Igbo religion. Besides, expiatory sacrifice in Igbo religion seems to be different.

In Igbo religion, direct and indirect sacrifices are performed. Direct sacrifice takes the form of holocaust and communion respectively. It has four different types: *Igba mkpu Chukwu* (celebrating God's mound), *Aja Eze Enu* (sacrifice to God, king of heaven), *Iruma Chukwu* (installing the altar of God) and *Ikpala Chukwu Ugbo* (making a sacrificial boat for God on marriage). *Igba mkpu Chukwu* and *Aja Eze Enu* usually take the same method of sacrifice. Thus the sacrifices consist of libations of palm wine and liquefied white chalk poured on the altar of God, and the immolation of a goat. The shrine is smeared with the blood of the sacrifice, then the meat is cooked. Some is offered to God on the shrine and the remainder is eaten by the participants. While pouring the libation and making an offering of the food, the officiating priest also offers prayers for the welfare of the group, for a good harvest and for peace and prosperity within the community (Metuh, 1981). Both festivals take place twice in a year. These are before planting season and

during the harvests.

In *Iruma Chukwu* the victim of the sacrifice is the same as in *Aja eze enu*. In this sacrifice, the suspension of the offerings on a bamboo pole is preceded by a ritual in which the initiate prays with the phallic chalk for the health and prosperity of his family and village. Thus, one fowl is offered in the mid air to *Chukwu* while the other is killed and shared in a communal meal. Thereafter, the bamboo set up is taken down and replaced by another, this time planted between two planks of *ukwa* (bread fruit), iron wood, and each about four feet high. A white fowl, yams, an eagle's feather and so on, are tied to the bamboo pole for *Chukwu*. Then a castrated goat is offered up, along with a second white fowl. These are later slaughtered and shared in a communal meal.

Ikpalu Chukwu ugbotakes a different form. It was offered by a father on behalf of his daughter who was about to marry (Madu, 2004). The principal objects for the sacrifice include a cock, some tubers of yams and a boat-shaped container woven from palm fronds. Usually the officiating priest was the priest of earth deity of the place. The offerings put in the boat and the blood of the cock sprinkled over it while the priest prays to God to accept the offering, protect the bride-to-be and asks for offerings for the girl and her husband, long life and prosperity (Madu, 2004).

Direct sacrifice, in Igbo religion, is different from indirect sacrifice. Thus in indirect sacrifice, the offerings and the favour of God are sought through the means of the lesser divinities.

In holocaust sacrifice, the similar thing in the two religions is that the victim is entirely for God. God is directly involved as he is the absolute and ultimate recipient of the sacrifice. Propitiatory sacrifice in Igbo religion is also the same as communal sacrifice in Israelite religion hence the victim is shared among the priest, God, and the offerer. Part of the victim is also cooked and eaten by all present.

At this juncture, it should be noted that Israelite sacrifice did not begin as a highly, sophisticated and completely articulated ritual but as a simple, undifferentiated act which contained within itself the seeds of later development. Thus in Israel, before the time of Josiah, sacrifices were offered at different places or sanctuaries, which were rocks. Hezekiah made the first attempt to centralize worship which was carried further by Josiah. His idea triumphed in the end, for the community that returned from exile never had any sanctuary in Judah except the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem.

In Igbo religion, sacrifices are offered at the cult of different deities and other places outside the shrines as may be directed by the diviner. There is never a central sanctuary where the Igbo offer sacrifices together.

In Israelite religion, sacrifice was offered by the head of the family: Abraham (Gen. 22:13), Jacob (Gen. 31:54, 46:1). The institution of priesthood started in Mosaic period. Moses himself was a priest and prophet. Later, formal priesthood was established. At the command of God, Moses consecrated Aaron and his three sons to minister in the priestly office (Ex. 28:1). All subsequent priests were believed to be descendants of Aaron. These subsequent priests performed sacrificial function on behalf of the people.

The Igbo society believes in the priesthood of all heads of house-hold, lineage and clan. *Ozo* titled men are also priests in so far as they offer sacrifice and perform ritual function including praying to *Chukwu* (Great God) and to the ancestors. If the sacrifice is to be offered to a deity, the priest of that deity is responsible for the sacrifice. There are also priests who are professionals in offering sacrifices like the *Nri priests*. They are invited to offer expiatory sacrifices. There is never a single priest who offers sacrifice for the whole community or Igbo society.

Another important difference observed in this study is that while most of the Israelite sacrifices are retrospective in their main inspiration, those of the Igbo are forward-looking in so far

as they are designed to influence the course of future events.

Influence of External Factors

There are external factors on the sacrifice of the two religions. In the case of Israelites, the semi-nomadic life, desert experience, Canaanite religion, settled life of agriculture, religion of other surrounding nations and exilic experience influenced their sacrificial rituals, persons responsible for offering sacrifice, places of sacrifice, sacrificial victims and types of sacrifices.

In Igbo religion, the influence of the missionaries and colonial masters is noticed in terms of sacrificial victim and method. For instance, the use of human beings either killed or consecrated is reduced to barest minimum, if not eliminated.

The Motive of Sacrifice in the two Religions

We can say that the predominant motive is the people's desire to receive something from God or deity; thus, sacrifice is offered in order to maintain good relationship with God or the invisible being, a being that is greater than human beings. The two societies believe that sacrifice can exercise influence on celestial phenomenon. By sacrifice, the people acknowledge God's supreme dominion and excellence and offer him adoration.

Sacrifice for the two societies is the essential act of external worship and prayer acted symbolically which expresses both the interior feeling of the offerer and God's response to his prayer.

Conclusion

From observation in this study, one can see that there are striking similarities between sacrifices in the two religions as well as striking differences. But we should not make the mistake of understanding them to be of the same origin. However, in all religions the following elements can be found: the creed, that is, the belief; cult or liturgy, that is, worshiping/sacrificial system; norms or ethical principles and guidelines. One or more of these elements in one religion may complement with another religion.

Moreover, despite the differences in the two religions, there are striking elements of sacrifice in both religions, and indeed, in all religions. They include, the gift/consecration of human being to the deity; the homage of the subject to the deity; the expiation of offences; communion with the deity in the sacrificial banquet; life released from the victim, transmitted to the deity, and conferred upon the people gathered.

Finally, in spite of some similarities between the sacrifices in both religions, they do not have a common origin whatsoever. This submission can be proved when one examines the differences between them; for instance, the non availability of records to prove the origin of the Igbo; the geographical location of the two races, some cultural differences, including language and so on. These differences have become the barriers in concluding that the two religions have common origin.

Recommendations

In the course of this study, findings were made as articulated in the comparative analysis above. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are therefore made:

1. Notwithstanding the external factors that influence the Igbo sacrifice, the Igbo should revive the traditional priesthood of all heads of house-hold for sanctity.
2. One can become a priest in Igbo traditional society not only by training but also by ascribed

status like the *Ozọ* or family head and; by virtue of this status, one exercises a priestly role. This ascribed status should be encouraged in the contemporary Igbo society; hence every family head represents the family before the living and the dead; and as a mediator, it is his responsibility to pray for his family members for their progress, protection and other blessings.

3. The essence of sacrifice in every religion is to maintain a harmonious relationship between the visible and invisible and to see that man lives a balanced life with other elements in the universe (Okeke, 2012); therefore, the concept of sacrifice in traditional religions should not be misconstrued or relegated, rather, there should be a meeting point between Christianity and traditional religions in form of dialogue so as to study the sacrificial method of each religion, that way enculturation will be possible.
4. The Igbo should not shy away in recognizing the fact that they have no recorded history; therefore, effort must be made by the present Igbo scholars to dig out their identity and historical past, and this study has proved that the Israelite and Igbo societies do not have a common origin, though there are similarities in some of the sacrifices performed in both religions.

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FARMER-CATTLE HERDSMEN CONFLICTS: CAUSES, MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS ON AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM IN AYAMELUM LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This paper was born out of fear and anger; Anger over the resource-based conflict between farmers and cattle herdsman, which thereafter undermines the growth of agricultural system in Nigeria. Fear over the vandalization of crops and valuable properties of farmers by cattle that may escalate to war in totality, if not well managed. Sequel to this, the paper reviewed the various states that were prone to conflict, conflict itself as a concept and also the conflict between farmers and cattle herdsman and asserted that conflict could be manifested in various forms. The implications of conflicts on agricultural system were also reviewed and suggested the various ways in which such conflict could be resolved. However, analytical approach was used in this paper by discussing the studies of herder-farmer conflicts in various states that escalated and resulted in multiple deaths.

Keywords: farmers-cattle herdsman, conflicts, implications

Introduction

Agriculture still remains an important sector that employs over 70% of the Nigerian labour force and also serving as a potential vehicle for moving Nigeria economy towards development (Isa, 2013). Nigeria is a very diverse agro-ecology with different farming systems including pastoral farming, cereal, Root and tuber crop, tree crops, fishery among others. Conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in Nigeria have been in existence since the beginning of agriculture. Its decrease or increase in intensity among various states relies on economic and environmental factors prevailing in the place (Blench, 2010).

In Nigeria, conflict has become pervasive in occurrence to the extent that it affects all spheres of human life. The degree to which conflict affect a state may be different from another state. The conflicts between cattle herdsman and peasant farmers in Udenigida village of Nasarawa Local government caused a bloody war, which about 30 people died, many houses, crops and other valuable properties set ablaze (Isa, 2013). The cause of the conflicts was due to the destruction of rice farmland by cattle. Between 1996 and 2002, Bauchi state and Gombe state respectively recorded 28 and 112 death tolls caused by the conflict, between Fulani herdsman and farmers in the state (Ajuwon, 2009). However, large animal losses and crop damages were equally recorded in addition to other injuries inflicted on human, animals among others.

Another conflicts between farmers and Fulani rearers in Miga, Kaugana, Birni Kudu, Garki and Maigatari Local Government areas of Jigawa state claimed many lives, and properties that estimated to N1.56 billion (Isa, 2013). In 2002 pastoralists were driven out of Basa local government Kogi state after a bloody encounter with farmers. Between 1996 and 2002, another 49 cases of conflicts between farmers and pastoralists were reported in Kogi state (Ajuwon, 2004). In

the year 1999 plateau state and pastoral fulb were in conflict due to the eruption of the ethnic religious crises which led to driving many pastoralists out of their domain and killing of their cattle with chemicals. All these have produced adverse consequences in the destruction of villages, settlements, crops, irrigation facilities human beings and Animal lives therein (Ajuwon, 2004). In 2009, hundreds of pastoral Fulbe were expelled from Demboa Local government of Borno state as a result of the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen. However, the invasion of Tipo, Kisa, Samne, bangi Wurke and Gure communities in Lamurale local government area of Adamawa state by cattle rearers with guns left unconfirmed number of death and injured persons with over 2000 people rendered homeless due to the destruction of their village (New Nigerian, 2010).

With the available literature, there are a number of factors that provoke the escalation of conflicts in Nigeria; Religious and ethnic related issues which account for about 40% of conflict (b) land related conflict account for about 50% of the whole conflicts (New Nigerian 2010). Furthermore, the conflicts between arable crop farmers and cattle herdsmen have become common occurrence in many parts of Nigeria. The competition between these two agricultural land user groups has often turned into serious hostilities and social frictions (Ingawa, Ega and Eri harbor, 1999). In the South east zones of Nigeria, the conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen were reported to have claimed many lives and properties in Imo state (Ajuwon, 2004).

According to Blench (2010) there were sporadic incidents of conflict between the Mambila farmers and pastoralists as far back as 1923 when Fulbe allowed their cattle to trample on crops. The obstruction of Fulb movement around valleys led to the last culminating in burning down of Mamabila village among others. More so in Anambra State, it has been observed that between 1990-2014, the conflict between farmers and herdsmen in Ayamelum local government of Anambra State have claimed several lives, wounded over 100 people, destroyed many properties and caused displacement of pastoralists from their temporarily abode (Udemezue 2015).

The movement of Fulani pastoralists for pasture into various parts of Nigeria has been accompanied with attendant challenges and opportunities for both the farmers and pastoralists. However, the movement has brought about conflicts and wars to further emergence of the state of insecurity, political instability, social upheaval and social-economic quagmire. More so, the conflicts have demonstrated high potential to cause food crises and insecurity in rural communities where majority of the conflicts frequently occurred. It portends a grave consequence for rural development as well as imposing threat to various aspects of human life. In the light of this, it behooves this paper to appraise the degree of conflicts between the two parties (farmers-Fulani herdsmen) in Nigeria. In all, it is pertinent to know “The encroachment of Fulani herdsmen into the crop field of farmers is a call to war between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria. Their crop is their life, because to every farmer, life is worthless without his crop. Therefore, war is their next option when their source of existence is destroyed”.

Ayamelum Background

Ayamelum is a local government area in Anambra State with headquarters at Anaku. In the year 1996, Ayamelum was excised from Oyi Local Government Area in Anambra State to be a local government of its own. Since then till now, it is an existing local government endowed with a numerous natural resources (Onigbo, 2007). The local government is of eight communities; Omor, Anaku, Omasi, Igbakwu, umuerum, Umueje, Omasi and Ifite Ogwari. The strategic importance of Ayamelum is agricultural activities and other artisan culture that has started a long period of time. Formally, the people of Ayamelum were traditionally bounded, but now majority of the population are being transformed into Christianity as a result of Western education.

Agriculture is the main stay of Ayamelum economy, even though there are other mineral

resources available. In Ayamelum rainfall occurs seasonally with a short dry season which brings about changes in ecosystem and ugly relationships resulting in the conflict between the sedentary farmers and the nomadic pastoralists. Ayamelum has its boundary with the following local governments. In the North with Uzo Uwani local government in Enugu State, in the South with Anambra East Local Government in Anambra State, in the East with Awka North Local Government in Anambra State and in the West with Anambra West Local Government in Anambra State.

Conflict as a concept

The word “conflict” connotes different meanings to different people, but the truth remains that conflict cannot occur in a vacuum or isolation without being correlated with another predetermined factors. Therefore whichever way it is being defined two parties or more are involved at the detriment of societal development. According to long man Dictionary, (4th edition), conflict is defined as a state of disagreement or argument between people, groups, and countries among others. Obi, Ananti and Onwubike (2014) see conflict as a behaviour intended to obstruct the achievement of some other person’s goals. However, they linked it with negative features and situations which give rise to inefficiency, ineffectiveness or dysfunctional consequences. Therefore, conflict in agriculture can also have effect as ineffectiveness and decrease in productivity since the farmer are under the climate of fears and threats. Austin (1976) opined that since there is an interaction among individuals or groups, there is conflict within, conflict is a disagreement between two or more individuals or groups which each individual or group trying to gain acceptance of its view or objective over others. However, Hammed and Ayatuji (2002) were of the view that conflict could be a stepping stone for positive change if constructively handled.

In view of the above, Otite (2001) defines conflict as a way of settling problems originally from opposing interests and for the continuity of society. Conflict on its own is not necessarily good or bad but can be inevitable feature of organizational life which should be judged in terms of its effect on performance. According to Schmidt (1974) conflict on its own has merits and demerits. For positive outcome of conflict; people Forced to search for new approaches, there would be chance for people to test their capacities and a better idea would be produced. On the negative aspect, some people feel defeated and demeaned, the distance between people increased, climate of suspicious and mistrust developed and resistance developed instead of teamwork. With reference to the above synopsis on conflict, it is pertinent to note that conflict does not occur in isolation or a vacuum. It goes hand in hand with other factors which may be its facilitator. Therefore, conflict could be defined as the friction or disagreement between people, groups, and countries or states with different opinions or interest in which one group or individual is trying to gain the interest of his rivals. Thus, Agricultural conflict occurs when some farmers tend to gain interest at the expense of other farmers. But farmer- herdsman conflicts occur when Fulani herdsman feed their animals at the detriment of Farmers’ crop.

Implications of Conflict on Agriculture

The implications of conflicts on agricultural sector should not be over emphasized because they display consequent effects in all the spheres of agricultural field and even brought about fundamental problems with regard to food crisis in the prone areas.

Conflicts in Nigeria since the 1960s have fundamentally undermined the stability and development of Nigerian state and economy. The social, economic, and political tension created as a result of numeral escalations of violent conflict have raised fundamental national questions for survival of the Nigeria state (Elaiwu and Aknidele, (1996) in Isa (2013). However, once conflict

launches into agricultural system, issues set in farmers can lose focus on the result they supposed to achieve. Owing to this, it leads to agricultural between farmers and Fulani herdsmen which in return cause low productivity among farmers. Conflicts distort the economy and worsen income inequality of rural farmers. It is a big challenge which had eaten deep into every fabric of all facets of Agricultural production.

Moritz (2010) opined that farmers-herdsmen conflict did not only have direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of those involved but also disrupt and threaten the sustainability of agricultural and pastoral production in West Africa. On contrary, Rashid (2007) also saw conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers as something that undermines the impact of agricultural extension service delivery and innovative usage among farmers in Nigeria. A study conducted by Rashid (2007) shows that majority (77%.8%) of farmers in the study area perceived conflict as a loss while about (68.4%) of the herdsmen also saw it as a threat. This shows that both parties did not see conflict as an avenue to gain or progress in all ramifications. Between 1990-2014, the conflict between farmers and cattle herdsmen in Ayamelum local government Area, Anambra state Nigeria have claimed several lives, wounded over 100 people, destroyed many properties and also displaced a lot of pastoral from their temporary abode (Udemezue 2015). More so, a study conducted by (Udemezue 2015) shown that majority of the farmers perceived the effect of conflict as loss of crop yield, loss of soil fertility, environmental pollution, loss of income and farm destruction. Farmer-herdsmen conflict significantly had impact on agricultural production particularly on the farmers' household in Nigeria. As a result of this, farmers did not perceive it as an opportunity to gain rather they saw it as an impediment to rural development as well as being excruciating to their survivals. However, another research conducted by Rashid (2012) indicates that loss of material followed by loss of crop Yield (85%) household resources (23.5%) and stored products (23%) were more widespread consequence to conflicts among farmers in Kwara State. Daniel (2006) with his findings confirmed family instability and intense frustration among farmers as a negative consequence of farmer-herdsmen conflicts.

With respect to the above, it is pertinent to know that whatever the consequences may be, farmers and herdsmen suffered several negative socio-psychological consequences relating to their family lives, because whatever happens at work could automatically affect what happens at home. To support this, Potter (1995) opined that it is absolute impossible to find a frustrated person at work who is still energetic at home and these effect were farmers than herdsmen, probably due to the fact that farmers suffered more losses than herdsmen. All in all, conflict between crop farmers and cattle herdsmen over the use of agricultural land is still pervasive and has created grave consequences for rural development.

Approach to conflict management

When people with different goals and needs come together to perform a common task, conflict comes in people with different opinions and objectives tend to arrive at conflict once there is no compromise to one another. However, if conflict is not dealt with effectively it can break down the agricultural system thereafter, unresolved conflict leads to people losing insight on how to achieve goals, members soon begin to undermine each other, lack of respect to one another and erosion of faith in the work emerged (NIMC Staff Hand Book, 2013). To deal with this effectively, individuals must understand their conflict styles and know when and how to apply them when the situation occurs. According to Thamas and kilman (1970), the following styles should be adopted for conflict resolution by the people involved.

- (a) Competitive (b) Collaborative (c) Compromising (d) Accommodating (e) Avoiding

Competitive

People who tend towards a competitive style take a firm stand and know what they want. They usually operate from a position of power, drawn from things like position, rank, expertise or persuasive ability. This style can be useful when there is an emergency and a decision needs to be made fast, when the decision is unpopular, or when defending against someone who is trying to exploit the situation selfishly. The implication of this is that people may feel bruised, unsatisfied and resentful when used in less urgent situation.

Collaborative

People tending towards a collaborative style try to meet the needs of all people involved. These people can be highly assertive but unlike competitor, they cooperate effectively and acknowledge that everyone is important. This style is useful when you need to bring together a variety of viewpoints to get the best solution; when there have been previous conflicts in the group; or when the solution is too important for a simple trade-off.

Compromising

People who prefer a compromising style try to find a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone. Everyone is expected to give up something and the compromise himself or herself and also expects to relinquish something. Compromise is useful when the loss of conflict is higher than the cost of losing ground, when equal strength opponents are at a standstill and when there is a deadline looming.

Accommodating

This style indicates a willingness to meet the needs of others at the expense of the person's own needs. The accommodator often knows when to give in to others but can be persuaded to surrender a position even when it is not warranted. This person is not assertive but is highly cooperative. Accommodation is appropriate when the issues matter more to the other party, when peace is more valuable than winning or when you want to be in a position to collect this "favor" you gave. However, some people may not return favors and overall this approach is unlikely to give the best outcomes.

Avoiding

People tending towards this style seek to evade the conflict entirely. This style is typified by delegating controversial decision, accepting default decisions, and not wanting to hurt anyone's feelings. It can be appropriate when victory is impossible, when the controversy is trivial, or when someone else is in a better position to solve the problem. However, in many situations this is a weak and ineffective approach to take. Apart from this, it is obviously known that different conflicts have different style management, that is to say the rule applied for conflict A management may not be applied for conflict B management and so on because over a time, people's conflict management styles tend to mesh and a "right" way to solve conflict emerges (Thomas and Kilmann 1970) therefore, it is good to recognize when each style can be used effectively and make sure that people understand that different approaches may suit different solutions depending on the circumstance surrounding the conflicts. As a result of this, the following process can be used to resolve conflicts in an organization.

Set the scene: In this process people should know that conflict may be a mutual problem, which may be resolved through discussion and negotiation rather than through raw aggression. Therefore, a victim of the conflict should emphasize that his or her perception is necessary for

conflict resolution. However, it is advised that people should use active listening skills to ensure that they hear and understand other's positions and perception.

Gather Information: There you are trying to get to the underlying interests, needs and concerns. Ask for the other person's view point and confirm that you respect his or her opinion and need his or her cooperation to solve the problem.

Try to understand his or her motivations and goals and see how your actions may be affecting these. Also, try to understand the conflict in objective terms: is it affecting work performance? Damaging the delivery to the client? Disrupting team work? Hampering decision-making? etc. Be sure to focus on work issues and leave personalities out of the discussion.

Agree the problem: This sounds like an obvious step but often different underlying needs, interests and goals can cause people to perceive problems very differently. You will need to agree to the problems that you are trying to solve before you will find a mutually acceptable solution. Sometimes, different people will see different but interlocking problems, if you cannot reach a common perception of the problem, then at the very least you need to understand what the other person see as the problem.

Brain storming: Here a set of people with different opinions is gathered together to have a fair input about the prevailing conflict. Each and everyone were expected to make an input in generating solution to the conflicts.

Negotiate a Solution: In this case, both sides may better understand the position of the other, and a mutually satisfactory solution may be clear to all.

Furthermore, with respect to the available literature, Udemezue (2015) saw the following as the coping strategies for conflict resolution between farmers and cattle rearers in Ayamelum local government of Anambra State, Nigeria: use of early harvesting method by farmers, use of physical fight by the farmer, use of traditional rulers and application of supplementary occupation. However, involvement of dispute resolution institutions of police and courts of law was found to be very insignificant. The reason is that police are corrupt, detain people and delay case unduly without achieving the desired goal.

More so, Rashid (2007) identified three conflict resolution used by farmers and cattle herdsmen in Kwara State;

- a. Problem- oriented coping strategies such as: Increase farm size/ herd size, relocate farm/herd, multiple farm plots/herd splitting, early harvesting /stock disposal.
- b. Emotion-oriented coping strategies such as appeasement, pray for peace, Pretense, Vengeance, Used drugs/ alcohol.
- c. Social support coping strategies; help from union/Association, help from relations/friends, help from local leaders, sought litigation, help from government, Insurance policy, Bank credit , NGO support.

In view of the above, it is vertically clear that a lot of styles for conflict management were employed by different scholars but what matters is the way you understand the conflict and what you think could be the best solution at the moment irrespective of the styles. It is also pertinent to understand the above different styles, because once you understand them, you can use them to think about the most appropriate approach for the situation you are in. Therefore, you can also think about your own instinctive approach and learn how you need to change this if necessary.

Causes of Conflicts

Herder – Farmer conflict not only have a direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of those

involved but also disrupt and threaten the sustainability of agricultural and pastoral production in west Africa (Moritz, 2010). Therefore, it is unjust and unwise to ignore the proximate cause of the conflicts between farmers and herdsman because what we regard as local conflicts may escalate into real war. However, we need to know not just why friction begins, but also why and how conflicts between herders and farmers escalate into widespread violence. With the available literature, herders and farmers in many localities make their livelihood within the same geographical, political and socio-cultural conditions which may be characterized by the scarcity of resources and this gives rise to conflicts between farmers and herdsman. (Braukamper 2000).

In 2004, president Obasanjo of Nigeria declared State of emergency in central plateau state, when there were herder-farmer conflicts which more than 20,000 refugees fled to neighboring Cameroon and this articulated with ethnic, political and religious conflicts characterized the state (Morritz, 2010). In Ghana, crop damages have on numerous occasions resulted in widespread violence among farmer, youths and fulbe herders (Tonah, 2006).

Moritz (2010) identified many structural factors that contribute to the increasing incidence of conflict between herder and farmers as follows; Resource scarcity, decreasing interdependence of pastoral and agricultural economies, institutional failure to resolve conflicts and cultural differences between herders and farmers. However, Bassett (1988) saw drought and high cereal price as the proximate cause of the conflict between herders and farmers. In the same vein, Mitchell (1981) identified incompatibility as one of the causes of the conflicts between farmers and herders. Since the goals of both parties are incompatible, it is likely that they would compete with one another over natural resources, which thereafter result to escalation of conflicts. The influx of Fulani, the growth of their herds, and the expansion of cash crop production has led to greater competition over land between Grass field subsistence farmers and Fulani herders. According to Goheen (1996), gender is an important variable in herder-farmer conflicts in the Grass fields of Northwest Cameroon because subsistence farmers are primarily women and Fulani herders are men. In some parts of Cameroon, women have limited rights over land and because of this the fon and lineage chiefs receive tribute for allocating farm land to Fulani very close to women farm. As a result, women's work load increases and conflicts with herders are almost inevitable (Kum, 1983).

Theorists who study conflict escalation argue that not all escalation events are alike, therefore, we should not treat all herder-farmer conflict alike, rather, and there are general patterns on how conflicts metamorphose into widespread and violent engagements. These patterns of transformation can be found in who or what groups of people are involved in the actions they take, and in the stakes they hold or the goals they pursue during the conflict (Moritz 2010). Pruitt and Kim (2004) enumerated five-fold transformations that occur during conflict escalation;

- a. Shift from small to large (i.e increasing investment in the conflict)
- b. Shift from light to heavy tactics(from persuasion to violence)
- c. Shift from specific to general (from crop damage to ethic conflict)
- d. Shift from few to many (increase in the number of people involved in the conflict)
- e. Shifts in goals from doing well to wining to hurting the other party (from solving the problem to killing all opponents).

Conflict theorist have offered three general models for conflict escalation: contends- defender model, the conflict spiral model and the structural change model (Pruitt and Kim, 2004). Contender- defender model views conflicts in terms of the actions of one party (the contender) who seeks changes and the reactions of the other party (defender). Contender uses more of coercive strategies to attain his goals. The conflict spiral model focuses on the interaction between the two parties, in particular the vicious circle of actions and reactions of retaliation and deterrence. The

structural change model focuses on psychological changes that take place in the parties as conflict process. The psychological changes involve emotion, attitudes, perceptions and behavior of individuals, for example, the dehumanization and ... of other (Pruitt and Kim, 2004).

On the other hand, conflict theorists argue that parties do not seek to escalate the conflicts they have engaged in, escalation is instead usually an unintended consequence of conflict behavior and may occur inadvertently, step by step without the opponents having carefully considered the implications of their actions. (Kriesberg, 2007). However, this should not call for much argument, because it is obviously known that parties can escalate the conflict in which they have engaged in intentionally, because they know the possible consequences of the conflicts and tend working towards the achievement. It is not an unintended act of conflict behavior but a well planned act designed for the achievement of the desired goals.

A community that defeated by another community in a war years ago may later in future gather momentum and escalate conflicts with a strong confidence that their opponent must surrender. People in authority are much likely to escalate conflicts with their competitors who are not, because they have the supreme confidence that their rivals must be submitted to their authority and goals, since power is on their side. Therefore, parties can escalate the conflicts they have engaged in because the “consequences” serve as a road map and leading path for escalation of the conflicts. In 1954, Hindus and Muslims engaged in a serious conflict as a result of crop damage done by cattle (Moritz, 2010).

According to De Haan (2002), destruction of crops by cattle and other property (irrigation equipment and infrastructure) by the pastoralist are the main direct causes for conflicts cited by the farmers, whereas burning of range land and fadama and blockage of stock routes and water points by crop encroachment are important direct reasons cited by the pastoralists. He also noted that antagonistic perceptions and beliefs among farmers and herdsmen could compound conflict situation. Other perceived causes of farmer-herdsmen conflicts include: inequitable access to land, diminishing land resources, antagonistic value among user groups, policy contradictions and non-recognition of rights of indigenous people (Adisa, 2011). Whatever the causes of farmers-herdsmen conflicts are, it is good to know that the conflicts have been of great negative effect on human lives and agricultural development. Therefore, for both parties to conform with federal government’s agricultural transformation agenda they should eschew conflicts and embrace peace. In view of this, it is therefore pertinent to know that if the conflicts between farmers and cattle herdsmen are properly managed, it will exploit agriculture to ensure food security and also be a catalyst to move national economy towards a positive change. It can as well boost agriculture as a pivot for rural development.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper reviewed the various states in Nigeria that were affected by conflicts, the conflict itself as a concept and also the conflict between farmers and cattle herdsmen and found out that conflict could manifest in various forms. It looked into the implications of conflicts on agricultural system and suggested the different ways in which conflicts could be resolved. The paper, however, saw conflict as a loss or threat which has no positive implication to the parties involved; rather it imposes negative implications on them.

In view of this, this paper therefore recommends that those factors that cause or escalate conflicts must be seriously avoided and if perchance occur should be entrusted in the hands of the traditional rulers of the community involved. Government at all levels should handle conflict with their utmost capacity thereby enacting laws that will give cattle herdsmen right to land use in order to reduce insecurity and ameliorate the spate of conflict. Traditional method of conflict

management should be articulated with modern ones in order to stop further eruption of conflicts.

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UMUADA GUILD AS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOCIO-POLITICAL ORGANISATION IN IGBO SOCIETY: THE URUALLA EXPERIENCE

BY

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Abstract.

Women in traditional Igbo society are a force in political, legal and social issues. This is true of the Umuada Igbo who in the past and till date have remained a social institution of the Igbo society. They have also rendered invaluable services to the Igbo socio-political organization though the trend today is fast changing. This study was set to investigate the changing nature of the roles played by Umuada guild. To achieve this, a survey method was used and the researcher randomly selected and interviewed 50 women from Urualla ranging from 60 years and above and 59 years down to 20years. Cameras and tape recorders were used to collect the information needed and a review of related literature was also done. In the end, the researcher collected, analyzed and interpreted all the necessary information obtained. Findings reveal that women as Umuada constituted a control system on the exercise of power within these levels, the kindred, the village and the entire Urualla community. For instance, they could, by symbolic protest of leaving the village or sitting on the floor, signal that something wrong has been done and should be corrected. The researcher concluded by saying that the development of Urualla community politically, religiously, economically and socially in the present dispensation will depend much on how the Umuada work in harmony with other town unions and other arms of the community. It also suggests that there is still need for the empowerment and upliftment of Umuada in Urualla political organization.

Introduction

Long before the colonists arrived Africa, and even during and after colonialism, women have been a powerful part of the Igbo society. They are a force in political, legal and social issues. They have much more powers than was generally recognized by early authors. According to Arinze (1970), in Udeze, (2013):

Women can hold their powers not only by means of public demonstrations, group strikes, suicides, ridicule and refusal to cook for their husbands but also by their inherent vitality, courage, self reliance and a common organizational ability by which they present and protect their interests as the Umuada Guild.(p.4)

The word Umuada, which is a fraternity of daughters is a compound / collective noun formed from “umu” and “ada”. Ada means “daughter” and in some cases the first female child whereas “umu” as a generic plural prefix conveys the sense of many. Most naturally every Igbo woman or girl is “ada” though the word is generally used most often to refer to the daughter of a family. Ogbalu (n.d.) acknowledged that, “Ada is the name of every first born female of a woman. The institution is immemorial and prevails almost everywhere. Umuada as the members are called are women born in a particular town, married or unmarried”. (p.28). Continuing, he also affirmed that: “...those of them who have performed what maybe called a title are called Umuokpu”. In the

words of Isichei (1977), in Mbata (2009), “Umuada is the group also known as Umuokpu. They are made up of women born in the town and married within or outside, but in a less distant neighbouring town”. (p.74)

In Urualla community, Umuada means native daughters, the daughters of a common ancestor or daughters of the soil. It is a collection of all daughters of Urualla clan, kindred, village or town, whether old, young, single, married, separated or divorced. In a poetic form, Maduekwe (1979) beautifully described Umuada as “both married and unmarried daughters who have chairs in both their homes and their husband’s homes. They occupy positions and serve as both daughters of the soil in their ancestral land and wives in their husband’s places”. (p.12) He went further to illustrate their roles in their paternal homes both in times of joy and sorrows as well as their roles in their husbands places with their interests being uppermost in the hearts of their relatives for their care and protection. Agugu (2006) and Ajaeree (2003) both explained the concept of Umuada as married daughters of the soil. They also talked about how beautiful and well respected umuada are in their villages. There is nothing secret in Umuada and the union is open to all daughters from Urualla married or unmarried. It is also the right of every daughter of Urualla without exception to belong to Otu Umuada, (the society of daughters).

The Umuada constitute a very influential, social and political force. Ofomata (2002) acknowledged that, “Umuada Igbo represent a gender platform for cultural revival, rural development, integrated health care, advocacy, women empowerment and farming to feed their parents, brothers, relatives and children of their locality”. (pp.226-228). Umuada Urualla are a powerful socio-political set up as well as a functional forum for all Urualla daughters. Igbo women according to Ene (2007), “...have historically asserted themselves into Igbo life and culture with exciting gendered roles and identities for meaningful development to appreciate feminism in a world building of masculinism”.(p.5). In this sense, women in African Culture are subjugated to the lives of men. This is why Mbata (2009) reported that, “African Culture in general and the Nigerian Culture in particular are male dominated; hence the use of the Cliché, “It’s a man’s world in Africa”. (p.4). Concluding, Mbata (2009), still maintained that, “...the man sets the pace to be followed by the woman as far as culture is concerned”. (p.4). This niche was one of the reasons that aggravated the need for the women to bring themselves together and seek for solutions to their various needs. Umuada is therefore one of such forums where these women collectively get together to appreciate themselves and their culture as well as have solidarity for one another’s needs and aspirations. They play important roles in the social and judicial aspects of Igbo life. Generally, they are guided by the demands of social justice through arbitration and reconciliation which is the “paramount Igbo judicial principle”. (Ilogu, 1974, p.28). They always aim at restoring kinship relationship and the extended family solidarity.

Origin of Umuada.

These are daughters of the community married within or outside the community. They play important roles in the social and judicial aspects of the Igbo life. Generally, they are guided by the demands of social justice through arbitration and reconciliation which is the paramount Igbo judicial principle. They always aim at restoring kingship relationship and extended family solidarity. Ilogu, (1974:28). The Umuada guild emanated from the coming together of the married daughters of Urualla from their husbands homes to their birth places/homes to form a common front. When they got married, they thought it wise to look for an avenue whereby they will from time to time gather themselves for one need or the other and even for the sake of seeing and being with themselves as sisters to appreciate one another. Due to this, they formed the union in the olden days as a rallying point for meeting themselves for their common good and for the good of their

community. Since then the Umuada guild has remained till today. It is the inalienable right of every daughter of Urualla without exception to belong to Otu Umuada. As a group, Otu Umuada is a powerful socio-political setup in Igbo culture and a functional forum for females.

Formation and Recognition of Umuada.

This will be discussed in two phases:

Qualification for Membership: The membership of Umuada is the absolute right of every daughter/woman born in Urualla. Even if and when she marries outside the village or town, she remains 'ada' of her father's community. Ene (2007) supported this view and argued that, "...the membership of Umuada is conferred patrilineally; that is from the father's side of the family" (p.5). He went further to report that "...any woman who does not belong to the group is either an outsider or has been ostracized by her community for some abominable acts" (p.5). This shows that any married daughter/woman of Urualla town, no matter her age is automatically qualified to be a member of Umuada in her family, kindred or village level. She cannot belong to the Umuada group in her husband's place neither can she command the kind of respect/regard she has in her birth place where she is married. Agugu, (2006) reiterated this fact and contended that "... the Umuada's are highly regarded and respected in their birth places than in the places where they are married". In Urualla, where they are married, they are referred to as *alutaradi*". Ofoegbu (1982) also acknowledged the recognition of the Umuada (fraternity of daughters) and "frowns upon any pattern of authority which is not open to inquiry, to the free flow of information, and to individual rights of seeking knowledge and redress". (p.216)

Umuada Urualla are divided into categories. The town union group is the one that binds all Urualla married daughters/women no matter where they are married. The group concerns every married Ada Urualla both at home and abroad. At this level, they are divided into age grades of grades 1-10 such that every member's presence is felt and recognized in her group.

The next group is the village group which is a little bit smaller than the town group. Here also the age grade system is applied due to the large number of the women involved so that nobody is left out in all that they do.

Finally, there is the third group that is made up of the kindred and the family members depending on how large their numbers are. This is because some families are small while some are large. In cases where they are small, the Umuada only operate at the kindred level and where they are large, they form nuclear groups within their various families so as to take care of their needs at that level.

b) Formalization of membership:

In spite of the fact that one's status as a bonafide daughter of Urualla and most especially as a married woman qualifies one to be a member of the Umuada, one still has to formalize one's membership by registering officially. Every new member is expected to register by presenting some food items, drinks and in some cases money. The registration of every Nwada is done at all the levels (town, village and kindred), to enable the person franchise her rights in all umuada activities. Most times, their bi-monthly meetings especially at the town level are attended on representations from members selected from different villages and kindreds. For their annual gathering which is mostly once every year and on an agreed date/month, it is compulsory that every member should attend. Usually on that day, they are dressed in their uniforms and are seated in different canopies according to their age grades for easy identification and recognition.

In the past, Umuada had two groups (Christians and pagans). The pagan group was called "Ndi otu Nna". This group being the older and more dedicated members never agreed to most of the innovations brought in by Christianity. Then, they were the stronger group that never allowed

anything to come in between them and their belief. Today, they have all grown old and some of them are dead giving way and opportunity to the Christian group to take over. Umuada Urualla usually have their official meetings five times in a year with the sixth one as the annual get-together though they often convene meetings as the need arises. They choose their leaders mostly from the older members of the group who are very truthful, faithful and possess strong and good leadership qualities. The ones chosen are considered to have known more about the activities of the group and what is expected of them for their progress.

Functions of Umuada:

Umuada Urualla is historically known for their dignity, principles, strength, bravery, determination, courage and hard work for the up keep and growth of their town. They are unique and are highly distinguished in Mbanasaa clan in the Ideato North local government area of Imo State. They are also fearless, freedom fighters and cannot stand any injustice no matter the

situation. They create a forum for interaction amongst themselves and usually have a rallying point where matters affecting them are discussed and executed. In the olden days, there were no written records of their activities but they always remembered and acted accordingly on whatever decisions they agreed on. In the present dispensation, a good number of them are educated and they now have their activities recorded. They have bye laws that guide them in almost all their activities to avoid neglect and mistakes as the case may be. Ene (2007) has observed that, "Umuada is therefore a register of collective feminism through which Umunne and Umunna can symbolically form a binary human centered culturally and solidarity".(p.5). Njaka (1994) in provides a convincing description of the powers of Umuada in the following passage:

The Umuada do intrude in the affairs of the state and can impose sanctions which may include heavy fines, sit-ins, and other measures. Certainly the elders will go to great lengths to avoid a confrontation with the Umuada and this way the women do, indirectly exert a strong influence on the state of affairs. (p.123).

Several historical examples demonstrate the functions of Umuada. The Umuada were responsible for the Igbo women rebellion of 1929 and 1930 and the women's riot of 1957, which were widely recorded by Igbo historians. Abamonye, (1998, pp.109-132), in Okoro, (2012). In recent years Umuada has influenced the Igbo local politics by playing a strict role of what Njaka describes as "custodians of the constitutions". (p.123). They settle disputes between members and others especially their relations and in such matters, the men (Umunna) in the words of Ene (2007), "...take a back seat and abide by the rulings of Umuada". (p.6). They accord certain rights to their relations both in their happy and sorrowful times and frown at their brother's actions when they go to the police or law courts to settle their disputes. According to them, the money spent there can be utilized effectively for the interest of the family/community. Any of their brothers that disobey them is usually asked to pay a certain amount of money as penalty and must also withdraw the case from wherever he took it.

The usefulness of Umuada in the community cannot be compromised for any thing. Ogbalu (n.d.) agreed to this when he said that, "Umuada play important roles through their leaders in the recommendation of abolition or modification of customs, taboos, nature and performance of festivals, rituals and observances pertaining to women to the governing authorities (Ozo na otu Nze na Ozo elders)."(p.28). An example of this kind is how a widow mourns the death of her husband in the past. As a matter of detail, the primary interest of Umuada is to see that peace reigns in their places of birth. They want to see that their brothers and their wives together with their children are at peace with each other so that whenever they visit from their husbands places, they will meet

everybody well and happy.

Umuada are sometimes strict but fair in their interventions and enforcements. They come to make peace in marriages having problems within their lineage such that they deal with men that misbehave. They also teach the unfaithful and uncaring wives of their relative's lessons in a hard way. For example, if a man maltreats his wife and no one would stop him, Umuada will step in and stop him from doing so. On the other hand, if a woman married into the family becomes unruly, Umuada will intervene and resolve the matter even if it entails forcing the bad wife back to her fathers' house to retreat from the unruly act and make amends. In extreme cases, where their judgements/laws are not kept as decided, they can ostracize and even place a curse on an intractable member of the family. Sometimes also they can ostracize their member that did not keep to their rules and regulations only to be readmitted if she shows signs of remorse and pays the necessary penalty given for the offence committed.

As a group, they are decent and dynamic in their decisions and actions. They are great arbiters and because they come from their husbands' homes, they do not have to stay back in the community to face anyone on a regular basis. This affirms the reason why Isichei, (1977) argued that:

...they brought much pressure to bear on any bad things that were going on in the town, village or their family. Particularly they were charged with the affairs of the women in general, but they went far to make sure that women married into the town from other towns were conforming to the norms of the town. (p.74)

They disciplined the offending women through serious sanctions that ranged from seizure of property to the isolation of the culprit from their affairs. As mothers, sisters, wives and even widows, they were customarily called upon to determine ownership of economic trees and land boundaries in matters of land disputes. As daughters of the soil, they arbitrated disputes occurring in their paternal homes and exercised tremendous influence in the community. They are also very active in group politics. On this, Isichie (1977) also reported that:

they help the women folk support the wise decisions of the village assemblies. You know how effective the support of the women would be in the affairs of the town. You also might have heard of the role of Umuokpu as peace makers during warfare between us and any other town. (p.74).

A typical case in point was when a Parish priest in one of the catholic churches in Urualla was murdered; the Umuada went en mass for two days to rebel against the bastardly act by kneeling and going round the entire town praying for God's intervention. On the second day, they sat on the floor from morning till night at the Eze Urualla's palace to register their grief and for the Eze Urualla and his cabinet members to go all the way out to fish out and bring to book the people behind the evil act. For the two days, they all fasted too. At last, their actions yielded good fruits as it led to negotiations and discussions that resolved the case between the community where the Priest was born, the then Catholic Bishop of Orlu Diocese and the Urualla community. The action of the Umuada helped to bring to book some suspects that were not indigenes of Urualla thereby setting Urualla people free of the allegation.

In the past also, the Umuada Urualla performed various rites and sacrifices for the peace and progress of the town. They acted as the custodians of religious morality, and are responsible for the ritual cleansing (Ikpu aru) of their parental homes. They also performed purification and reincarnation rituals for their homes, other desecrated areas in the lineage and even the birth rites of their off springs. Nowadays, such things no longer exist.

Before the advent of Christianity, no Nwada of Urualla was buried outside her father's

home. No matter where she was married to, her corpse must be brought back to her father's home for burial. As there were no vehicles then, the corpse of a deceased Nwada was usually carried on the head by his relatives back to their paternal home for burial no matter the distance. Nowadays such practices have ceased to exist. It is expected that every 'nwada' attends the burial of her relative whether male or female except for the excused ones otherwise she will be fined. They act as support network for the lineage widows, conduct vigils and provide material support for the funerals of their lineage men.

In recent times, they play important roles during funerals. They go to their birth places for the burial of their dead relatives. They also visit their dead members' birth places to show their presence after the member's burial at her husband's home. In those days also, they stay there for about three to four days before going back to their respective homes. Presently, they disperse after the burial and return the following day to tidy up their activities but the immediate family members of the deceased stay back. Appendix II shows some pictures of a cross section of Umuada in full attendance in one of their brother's burial and the researcher interviewing and collecting information concerning them. Appendix III represents food items presented to them for entertainment at such gatherings. Of particular importance is the presentation of the waist of any animal (ukwu anu) slaughtered, whether cow or goat. This is an official right of Umuada as a tradition.

After the burial of any "nwa ada" in her husbands place, the children of the deceased usually go to visit the Umuada who are converged in their mother's place with food and drinks a day after the burial of their mother to appreciate them and to ascertain that they got home safely. This kind of visit is called 'Unu larukwara'. In those days also, a particular dish called 'oku akwu' was always prepared for Umuada at burials. 'Oku akwu' is a type of dish served in a 50cm basin usually yam porridge with big rounded dry fishes. The yams are prepared in full tubers without slicing and the round fishes not broken. The fish are arranged on top of the yams. Umuada also settle cases (if any) at such occasions.

In those days, they were so powerful and were highly dreaded that they often make the men or even the council of elders take actions contrary to the latter's wish. History has it that if they were seriously offended, they usually visit the offender's compound nude, and in some extreme cases they could go as far as defecating in the person's compound. Today, such things have ceased to exist. However, they now act as part of checks and balances in socio-political organizations to ensure that things are done right.

Umuada play important roles in the marriage of their relatives especially in their traditional marriages. In many cases, they act as middle persons, steering the assumed good guys from their husband's community to get married to the potentially good girls in their native community. They also play some advisory role to the Eze Urualla especially when they observe that the Eze is not handling his civic duties to the admiration of his subjects.

Umuada Urualla often embark on some physical developmental project. One of such projects is the ongoing town hall and library still under construction. Their source of fund is through levies and donations from good spirited members of the community. Some donations are also attracted from burial ceremonies especially from the burial ceremony of their deceased members. One of their major events during burial ceremonies is called 'nne m ezigbo nne day'. This is a day set aside specially for Umuada (general) to get-together for the burial rite of their member. The children and grandchildren of the deceased member are expected to donate food items, gifts and money to the union. Some relatives, friends and other well wishers of the deceased family also support the children by donating money to the union as the children and grand children dance at the ceremony. A particular percentage of the money realized at the end of the ceremony is

usually given to the immediate members of the bereaved family while the balance is shared amongst the other members that participated. In the case of the burial of their deceased male relative, the money realized during the Umuada dance is shared amongst themselves without giving any to the immediate family of the deceased. The gifts and money mentioned above are given to appreciate the Umuada as they dance around at the occasion. The occasion of (nne m ezigbo nne) is performed in general by Umuada to the children of their deceased member as a mark of their last respect to their fallen colleague. It is usually done two days after the burial of their member or on any other day after the burial that may be agreed to be convenient for both the children and the Umuada.

The Future of Umuada in the Present Day Time.

This paper has discussed extensively the issue of Umuada Igbo in general but with particular reference to Urualla town. It is therefore important to note here that what comes out clear from the explanation of this group of women is that they are women who have historically organised themselves into Igbo life and culture with useful gendered roles and identities for the development of their community. (Ilogu, 1975). To this, Ogbalu, observed that the women as Umuada have done so much in their various towns, villages and lineages such that some of their activities have been highly appreciated while some were abhorred. (1981). This is as a result of the modern faith-based formations, such as Christian mothers associations, different women groups, and other economic-driven setups, like ‘Otu isusu’, town unions of women wings etc, which have some what diluted the colour and vivacity of Umuada. The roles of migration and urbanization of people are not left out here as most women rarely visit their birth places not to talk of knowing what goes on there. This aggravated the opinion of Ohakim (2009) when he reiterated the importance of the roles of Umuada as “the protagonists of womens rights and experiences by collectively perpetuating the mens centered ideas”. (p.4). Some of the practical issues exhibited by the Umuada in the past which were frowned at are today being corrected since these same Umuada who are married somewhere else will one day face the same situation in their marital homes. Some of those issues were quite discriminatory and spiteful and so are no longer tenable in the present state of civilization of the society. Ajaeree, (2003) acknowledged that, “... most women who are strongly built in their faith no longer associate with them due to their greed, bad attributes, corrupt practices and fetish beliefs”.(p.84). However, there is still need for the Umuada union to still exist because in as much as some of their practices were abhorred, they still have something good to offer to their relatives, children and the society. Besides, most of those bad practices have stopped.

Some of the findings of this paper reveal that most communities especially Urualla town welcome and treat the children of Umuada very well. For instance, if the children of Umuada encounter difficulties, they and their families are welcomed in their mothers’ home/community as ‘umudiala/nwadiala’ (children/child of the citizen). They can stay for as long as they wish, and are encouraged and supported to return to their fathers’ community as soon as conditions permit. A typical example of such is the reception given to Okonkwo in Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* by his mother’s kinsmen in Mbanta when he and his family fled from his town to his mother’s town. Okonkwo was exiled for 7 years from his clan Umuofia to his mother’s place Mbanta because of the inadvertent crime he committed (manslaughter). His gun exploded and killed Ezeudu’s 16 year old son who was dancing during his father’s funeral. (Achebe, 1958, pp.89 & 93). As Nwadiala, (a child of their daughter) the people of Mbanta accommodated and helped Okonkwo and his entire household for those seven years before their return to their village Umuofia.

In a society where banking did not exist, the institution served the members in the words of Ogbalu (n.d.), as “...a bank for they continue to receive dividends each time a new member is

admitted till their death”. (p.28). However small a woman’s share might be, she is always hopeful of clearing some of her financial commitments through the shares she gets from the union that year. To her, it is usually a joy to hear that a new member is to be admitted and she makes much noise about it.

It is therefore a thing of joy to note that the concept of Umuada continues to exist. New formations emerge in some urban cities/towns and even in faraway places like America and Europe. Nowadays, the body seeks to elevate to national levels, the role Umuada Igbo play in their native families. The Umuada Urualla today is into micro credit-schemes to assist the women to set up small businesses to cater for themselves and their families. They periodically arrange prayer sessions for the peace, unity and progress of Urualla, organize seminars and workshops to train Urualla women in some small scale businesses and health care needs especially in areas of family planning and in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

They dialogue and suggest ways to ameliorate conflict resolution and mediation. They have helped to address the issue of greed, revenge, injustice and abuse of human dignity amongst themselves and their late relative’s wives. They have in particular helped to prevent and eliminate violence and some wicked acts on widows thereby making them feel relieved of the pain and burden inflicted by the death of their beloved ones. With these developments and some others not mentioned, there is every need for them to be supported, recognized, felt and respected so that their dreams and values which are for the good of Urualla town in particular and Igbo people in general will not be plunged into the abyss of annihilation.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

This paper cannot be concluded without mentioning the fact that the role of Umuada Urualla in the preservation and promotion of peace need not be over emphasized. When women rise and call the bluff of men, peace percolates. Where women rumble with the men, anarchy often rears its ugly head. Therefore women do not need anyone’s permission to organize themselves since they have been applauded for their giant steps to move forward ever. In doing so, they should be more redemptive than punitive since their aim is to achieve peace in their lineage.

They have also been identified as one of the strategic groups that can help the town for their vision projects. They wield substantial power and influence in Urualla community, as well as in the executive and legislative arms of the council of Urualla traditional elders and the Eze Urualla cabinet. With its great numerical strength, their presence, and strong networks at the villages, kindreds and families, the Umuada Urualla have the ability to mobilize their members and their children, for the up keep of the town which cuts across various socio-political and economic strata. It is this very network that they use in achieving all the laudable aims and objectives of their projects.

The paper therefore recommends that Umuada Urualla should be encouraged, supported and allowed to exist. They should continue to mobilize Urualla women for the interest of unity, peace and progress of Urualla. They should be encouraged to eliminate such harmful traditional practices that deter their progress in the fight for the development and progress of Urualla. Through their individual experiences, talents and exposures, they should be empowered to rise to high positions of religious, social and political authorities needed to challenge the present situation of the nation.

Finally, Umuada Urualla should be encouraged and supported in their projects and all other endeavours carried out for the good of Urualla town, the Umuada themselves and their children. With these and all other developments by the Umuada Urualla, Urualla people will experience peace, a healthy environment and an improved community ever.

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THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE IN TEACHING & LEARNING: AN APPRAISAL OF IGBO LANGUAGE

BY\

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Abstract

The use of language in the transmission of culture and cultural values of a people cannot be over emphasized. Language is a major means of identity. In a situation where a people face the threat of extinction of their language calls for immediate action. An appraisal of the state of the Igbo language, one of the major Nigerian languages is in focus here and the efforts of “Otu sụwakwa Igbo” (a society for the promotion of the speaking of the Igbo language) are reviewed. Language acquisition starts from birth and where this is neglected, the child loses focus; the problem of the Igbo child of today. A review of related literature was made and a survey method was used to collect data. Here structured questionnaires were constructed for those who are literate in Igbo language while oral interviews using the same questionnaires were used for illiterate ones. Responses were tape recorded and analyzed. It was found out that this group is one of the numerous groups in the business of promoting Igbo language and culture. Despite their efforts, the Igbo language still faces numerous problem and suggested solutions to these problems form the last part of this paper. If nothing is done to salvage this language, all the rich cultural heritage of a people will be lost.

Introduction:

Language is an arbitrary oral symbol by which social community interacts, communicates and expresses its ideas and values. In Nigeria; over 450 distinct tribes form the entire population. These ethnic groups have languages that distinguish them from another, thus making Nigeria a multilingual nation. Their different languages also form the basis of their uniqueness.

Recently, most indigenous or tribal languages in Nigeria are facing threat of extinction. The contact between Europeans and Nigerians brought about bilingualism – the use of more than one language in a single society. Initially, this seemed a welcomed development but as time goes on, its effect in indigenous Nigerian languages is evident. Most of these native languages are on the brink of collapse.

The foreign language (English language) is the official language in Nigeria. The position given to it; forces the natives to always speak English language, even in the absence of foreigner.

The loss of the indigenous language amounts to loss of identity and the people's cultural heritage. As such, this awareness needs to be created in the minds of the native speakers.

In Igbo land in Nigeria, Igbo language is one of the major indigenous languages. The speakers are gradually abandoning their God-given mother-tongue for the English language, during unofficial period and even in their private business with fellow Igbo. They need to know that their Lingua Franca should not take position of their native language in their homes. English language is a complimentary language to Igbo language.

Therefore, speakers of Igbo language should not allow it to go into extinction. This should be done by learning and teaching the Igbo child, the Igbo language. This is because, language acquisition starts from cradle. If it is not properly acquired or learnt, the implication is that Igbo race will at a time produce Igbo extraction without Igbo language and this is an anomaly and calls for urgent redress.

Language Acquisition and its implication

One of the greatest achievement of human beings stem from their ability to speak and entertain complex thoughts and to communicate them. Whatever that is done in life is conceived of as "the language spoken"

Children must master their language in order to be useful in their environment. Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, Bem, and Hilgard (1990:337) agreed with this assertion when they wrote thus:

....they must master all levels of language – not only the proper speech sounds, but also how these sounds are combined into thousands of words and how these words can be combined into sentences to express thoughts. It is a wonder that virtually all children in all cultures accomplish so much of this in a mere 4 to 5 years. What is perhaps even more amazing is that all children, regardless of their culture, seem to go through the same sequence of development...

The above statement implies that all children born are by nature mandated to acquire language. This language has to be importantly native before other languages for interaction.

Children acquire the three levels of language. It starts at the level of phonemes to the level of words and other morphemes and finally to the level of sentence units, or syntax. As these processes goes on, the child graduates from primitive words or sentences to complex words or sentence. The children learn language by imitating adults. As such, the child's way of thinking or behavior is influenced by the much language acquired and learned in his environment.

In order for an indigenous language to thrive, each new generation must acquire the language. Consequently, a language can virtually go extinct if one generation fails to learn it. Therefore, every language group must have a plan for transmitting the language from one generation to the next. This virtually should occur in the home or in a combination of other places. This will not happen without intensified effort because the languages of the colonizers tend to dominate and often must be learned in order for young people to become educated and find employment.

Igbo Language today:

Before the advent of British imperialism, Igbo language is the only language of communication amongst the native speakers. Time was when it was a thing of pride and gusto to speak Igbo language even amongst the neighbours of the Igbo. As a result of Western Education, by the British administration; the speaking of Igbo language shifted gradually to English language.

Currently, Igbo people hardly speak their language fluently without adulterating it with English Language. In the traditional Igbo society, learning was through informal education; the language used was Igbo. Love, respect, good morals were the order of the day. Ethics, norms and taboos of the society were highly observed.

Today, we live in an era driven by technology such as computers and other scientific machines. Science and technology therefore is being given priority attention by the government at all levels. The study of Igbo language and other seemingly arts subjects are not funded. It becomes a big challenge to the natives to inculcate the habit of speaking, writing and reading of Igbo language in their young ones. The weight of the indigenous language is now very light.

Communication in Igbo homes are done mainly in English now. The reason is that higher status functions are limited to English (powerful) language. When someone speaks Igbo even amongst its members; may be in schools, churches, or markets, he or she is looked at with disdain. This is a very unhealthy situation. For a language to survive, it must be used for a wide range of functions otherwise it begins to wither and die.

In schools, authorities do not allow students of Igbo extraction to speak Igbo language. This ban automatically makes it difficult for young ones to interact friendly with their fellow Igbo. Maduagwu (2008:6) has lamented on the gradual extinction of the Igbo language, urging the people and governments of the South-east states of Nigeria to rise to the challenge of protecting the Igbo language.

Aniche (2008:14) discovered that over the years, parents do not consciously ask children to reply in Igbo when asked questions, it affected their fluency in speaking the language thus dwindling their interest on the Igbo language. Ezife (2008:16) is equally worried about the dying situation of Igbo language. He complained about the attitudes of some of the Igbo in higher positions when their fellow Igbo visits them.

... I get amazed at times at the actions of some of our brothers who by all standards form the pillar of leadership of Ndigbo. Some are in positions of authority in this country and when their brothers visit them, they prefer speaking English Language. Where does this kind of attitude lead us? We the eyes of Ndigbo should first appreciate our language before others and instill that discipline and love for our language so that we shall be acceptable in the society...

This expression shows the degree of the fallen state of Igbo language and calls for urgent revival.

In the 'film industry' (the Nollywood) most of the actors and actresses are of Igbo extraction yet all the films are produced in English language with their themes plots and setting from Igbo life or world view. This is ridiculous as it does not help in the growth of Igbo language and culture. Even in academics, Igbo scholars find it difficult to write articles in Igbo language.

Recently, globalization has affected the life of the Igbo people that even their language sounds archaic to them.

“Otu Sụwakwa Igbo” and its efforts

“Otu Sụwakwa Igbo” is one of the crusaders of Igbo language revival. It is a society in the business of promoting the speaking of the Igbo language. This group has existed for over 9 years now; it started from Anambra State by Pita Ejiofor. The group created awareness in Anambra particularly and Igbo land in general on the threat of extinction of Igbo language. As its activities were yielding positive results, the group extended its arms to Imo State in 2007.

Increasing participants' understanding of language issues across the Igbo homeland,

identifying challenges to Igbo language preservations and developing policy recommendations for individuals' communities and governments to facilitate continued use of the Igbo language comprised the heart of the group's objectives.

Their first accomplishment was to force Imo State Ahiajoku (an annual lecture on Igbo values) to be delivered in Igbo. The group has held several conferences in 2009 up till date. Their various themes include:

- i. The problem of extinction of Igbo language, real or imaginary (2009)
- ii. Igbo teachers in the 21st century (2019) challenges prospects
- iii. Igbo language and music (2011)

The conferences held brought together over 500 diverse Igbo delegates – artists, students, leaders; Elders and teachers to discuss the language issues concerning Igbo today. In turn, delegates vigorously pursued these objectives by delivering researched presentations, consulting with elders, listening to speeches by guest language policy and planning specialists and above all, facilitated, focused dialogue between the members of “otu Sụwakwa Igbo” and participants.

“Otu Sụwakwa Igbo” has created awareness in radio and television programs and people are now aware of the dangers ahead concerning Igbo language. Also the group's alert concerning the threat of extinction has made it possible for some universities in the Eastern part of Nigeria like Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri to include Igbo language in their General studies unit. More universities and colleges of education are making plans to include Igbo language in their General Studies Unit.

The efforts of “Out Sụwakwa Igbo” signify the start of a vigorous and progressive understanding of the importance of the Igbo language amongst the speakers especially the young ones.

Nevertheless, many are yet to adhere to this clarion call by the group. Many young people are growing up without hearing their language spoken at home. Many are eager to learn their language but do not have enough opportunities to do so. This is because parents are interested in teaching their children to speak Igbo language. They prefer to speak English even at home.

Prospects of “Otu Sụwakwa Igbo”

As the group uses its muscle, one of the first priorities must be to ensure that young people have real opportunities to learn the Igbo language at all the stages of their schooling – Nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary.

The group is also proposing new measures that will encourage the use of Igbo language by companies doing business in Igbo land.

The “Otu Sụwakwa Igbo” is also in the business of promoting Igbo programmes in radio and television stations in Igbo land. That is to say that more creative production in the Igbo language will be available on air.

Furthermore, the “Otu Sụwakwa Igbo” amidst every other thing will maintain Igbo language where it is strong; revitalize it in places where shift has taken place. For example; Diasporas are encouraged to speak Igbo language in their home.

The society will continually hold workshops and conferences annually with elders, educators and students.

The “Otu Sụwakwa Igbo” is also in the business of enhancing children to use the remaining time with elders and learn their language, stories and ways.

Recommendations

Igbo language is a language that can be spoken anywhere, in any situation provided that we

take on the task with creativity and determination. As such efforts should be intensified in the following ways to promote and preserve Igbo language.

- i) Parents should take responsibility as the primary teachers of their own children in all aspects of Igbo culture and language.
- ii) Children should learn Igbo language before they learn English Language. Their early schooling should be in their mother tongue as stipulated in the language policy.
- iii) Inviting elders as regular visitor in schools to address students in Igbo language so as to encourage the students to speak like the elders in return.
- iv) All Igbo children should have access and opportunities to learn Igbo language in schools whether they are living in Igbo land or not.
- v) Make the Igbo language a mandatory secondary and tertiary school subject for all living in Igbo land.
- vi) Provide opportunities for Igbo and non-Igbo to learn about Igbo language, culture and history.
- vii) Develop exchange programmes for Igbo children to go and stay in a community where the Igbo language is spoken without adulteration in order to learn the standard Igbo language or a new Igbo dialect.
- viii) Provide job opportunities for Igbo graduates so as to encourage more people to study Igbo language in the university Igbo youths should pursue partnerships at multiple levels in order to achieve their language goals.
- ix) Foster positive attitudes in the population that subjects such as Maths and Sciences can also be taught in Igbo language.
- x) Pressure should be mounted on the governments to fund all initiatives that are in the business of promoting Igbo language.
- xi) The activities that promote Igbo language must be fun and cool
- xii) Pride in the Igbo language, culture and identity should be promoted within the Igbo language policy.
- xiii) Celebrate Igbo language week across border with activities and promotions. That is talking every opportunity to celebrate Igbo language.
- xiv) Produce a documentary about Igbo across the Igbo land to educate others.
- xv) The Igbo youths should make special commitment to learn Igbo language in their dialect fluently.
- xvi) Use Igbo language to label things in the homes, stores, schools, shops, and in the churches.

Conclusion:

The importance of indigenous language on the native speakers cannot be stressed beyond bounds. Igbo language as an indigenous language is the number one basis of identifying the people. Modern practices and their impact on the natives should not be allowed to erode the culture of the people especially their language. The efforts of Otu Suwakwa Igbo are imperative to this ill wind – indigenous language threat of extinction. The group has the mandate to make Igbo know that; their language is the most veritable communication strategy and weapon of the native speakers amongst themselves. The device with which to create, aspire, desire, feel, and express the wisdom of the people which form part of their culture.

Igbo youths should extend their desire to reconnect with Igbo language. Parents should as well develop a communication strategy in Igbo language (folktale) which will enable children grow deep in using the language. Survival of the language is a precedent to the people's survival.

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ASSESSMENT OF THE HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS' INTERVENTIONS IN THE NIGERIA CIVIL WAR: A FOCUS ON THE IGBO POPULATION

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Abstract

Humanitarian Intervention by organizations in the Nigerian Civil War was premised on the moral principle and the need to alleviate suffering among the distressed population. However, these altruistic interventions were, challenging and capable of negative and unintended results. This paper investigates the activities and roles of several humanitarian organizations that were in charge of relief operations in those areas ravaged by famine during the Nigerian Civil War. It will show that some of the humanitarian interventions were altruistic, contentious challenging and capable of negative and unintended consequences. Attempts have been made by humanitarian bodies to influence the behaviour of Biafran leadership through psychological and material support. The paper will look at legitimacy of humanitarian intervention. It will show that relief aid gave the regime legitimacy and thus strengthened it. The direct dealings of the United States with the secessionists in the area of humanitarian assistance were a very big boost. This work will also look at challenges and controversies surrounding the activities of World Council of Churches, the Red Cross, Holy Ghost Fathers, Cantos International, the Vatican etc.

Keywords: Humanitarian, Civil-war, Famine, Secession

Introduction

Adam Roberts define Humanitarian Intervention as military intervention in a state without the approval of its authorities, and with the purpose of preventing wide spread sufferings or death among the inhabitants.¹ although the concept of humanitarian intervention is vaguely defined and elusively broad. Roberts's definition refers to three of his essential characteristics which are at least in principle subject to a general consensus. First humanitarian intervention is armed because the employment of military force is its central feature. Second, it is an intervention because it entails sending military forces across the state borders without giving the state concerned an opportunity to object to this action. Third, the intervention is humanitarian because it is directed to prevent massive violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the state concerned.

Humanitarian Efforts in Biafra Camp

Humanitarian Intervention in Biafra can be said to be legitimate based on Thomas Aquinas doctrine of just war. The idea of legitimacy is multidisciplinary concept encompassing moral, philosophical political as well legal principle. Legitimacy is always a matter of assessment. The problem arises when legality and legitimacy come into conflict. Legitimacy is an inherently subjective concept so agreement is not always possible in what is legitimate and illegitimate. It is the circumstances not the concept that determines the quality of a particular action.

It is forty-one years since the independent State of Biafra collapsed ending one of the most audacious and activist leadership roles ever played by International and ecumenical churches.

The dimension of starvation in Nigerian Civil War is far greater than ordinary famine in underdeveloped areas. The mass deaths, that occurred in the war was the result of partly political and military factors that prevented the distribution even of food which were presently available.

In September 1968, International Committee of Red Cross reported that 8 -10,000 people were starving to death each day as a result of this war and that the situation was rapidly deteriorating.²

On October 31, 1968, a relief worker for the world council of churches reported that 25,000 people would die each day if war continued for another month. It means that if the present situation is allowed to continued, 60,000 people would have died by next summer.³

The Biafran case demonstrates the paralysis of existing International Institutions when it comes to mobilizing effective and swift relief.

Until recently, the conflict has commanded little public attention despite the fact that was already responsible for more deaths than has occurred in Vietnam and is causing the death of thousands of people each day through starvation. Mobilization of public opinion in past has been impeded by lack of readily available information about the details of conflict and its background. Much of the information deriving from Nigeria is contradictory and incomplete and access to objective first-hand sources is difficult. Most people lack adequate information on the causes of the war.

One of the greatest ironies caused by the Biafra war was the famine which inevitably occurred in Biafra, leading to the death of more than one million people due to starvation⁴. This was mainly caused by the fact that food was used as a weapon of war during the war. Nigerian military government-imposed blockades around Biafra effectively cutting off the secessionist states food supply with the hope of forcing them to raise a white flag.

The *Joint church aid*/ The Jesus Christ Airline Officially as it was called *Joint church aid* but pilots called it Jesus Airline. For nearly two years, The *Joint church aid* kept Biafran State alive, refusing to allow starvation to be used as weapon of war. It flew 5,314 extremely dangerous missions, carrying 60,000 tons of humanitarian aid that saved millions of lives.⁵

These daredevil pilots flew at night from the Island of Sao Tome into a tiny airstrip carried from the dense bush without lights, skimming blind over the trees at 2,000 feet to avoid the attacks of the enemy. At its peak, *Uli* airstrip won the busiest in Africa, handling up to 50 flights a night and each flight broke some international law.⁶

Each of the planes had the logo of *Joint church aid* - two fishes, one of the earliest symbols of

Christianity but each had its own name. The best known was *Canair relief* whose four super cronies were an integral part of JCA but there was also *Norchurchaid* from Europe and Holy ghost Airline run by the Irish Catholic Holy Ghost Fathers. This relief effort was all put together by a bunch of church people and humanitarian who refused to be bound by old mission, old diplomacy, old colonialism, the power of big oil and the secrecy of murderous bush wars.⁷

On January 12, 1970, the military head of state, General Odumegwu Ojukwu flew out of *Uli* on the last relief flight *Canair relief* made its first trip on January 23, 1969 and its final trip on January 11 1970.⁸ It completed 670 flights and delivered 11,000 tons of desperately needed food and medical supplies into the blockaded state of Biafra. Churches, relief groups and a few volunteer agencies including ecumenical alliance of Roman Catholic, protestant and Jewish organizations bombarded Ottawa and raised the flag of famine. From the beginning, Ted Johnson was at the center of it all; he carried out 10 harrowing and dangerous trips into Biafra.⁹

Four Canair relief crew members were killed when one of the super constellations crashed at *Uli*. A second plane was destroyed when it was bombed on the ground during the unloading of relief supplies for CARITAS and the world council of churches which ran more than 2,000 feeding centers.¹⁰ The Joint church aid lost 25 pilots and crew to Nigerian military government who were bent on enforcing the Biafran blockade. The Nigerian Military government of the day refused steadfastly to allow relief flights or any other form of humanitarian aid into Biafra.¹¹

Despite Joint church aids best effort, it is estimated that about 2 million Biafrans were starved to death. The world was shocked on stark pictures appeared for almost the first time on television screens of stick thin children with swollen bellies and sparse rust colored hair that symptomizes Kwashiorkor - protein deficiency that killed children in their thousands.

Biafra was a nightmare for the International Community, especially for Britain and France especially for the almost single-handed initiative of Ted Johnson, a Presbyterian leader in Canada. Johnson was unrelenting; he led a delegation of church leaders to Ottawa asking for help for starving Biafrans and was refused. The refusal to respond to appeal for assistance led to formation of Canair relief, supported without government money of any kind by Jewish leaders, the Roman Catholic Church and the major protestant denominations, the Presbyterian, United and Anglican Churches especially, the church leaders had to go back to government to ask for money or transport planes. On several occasions they were refused. Johnson and his team arrange for some MPs and some church minister to fly to Biafra on Canair relief on a fact-finding mission.¹²

Their reports, Canada and Biafran tragedy became a book and it recommended that Canada use its position to push the UN into negotiating a ceasefire, participate in relief operations and give money for humanitarian relief. The government of Canada and U Thant refused to accept their proposal.¹³ Canada eventually sent three Hercules planes as part of an international committee of the Red Cross relief effort. Not surprisingly two of the planes went to Lagos and one to Sao Tome. The government in Lagos impounded the two planes in Nigeria and ever allowed them to fly while the one in Sao Tome was sent back home after another International Committee on Red cross plane was shot down by the Nigerian government.

The attempt by Canadian government was concede an exercise in futility. The Toronto star editorial states that four weeks after being turned down by Ottawa, Canair relief bought a super

constellation for \$108,000 and in less than a month it had 28 flights into Biafra. By flying into Biafra, the ICRC and Canada argued that they would be "recognizing" the breakaway state, thus annoying the military government of Lagos. Ted Johnson argued that saving the lives of millions of men, women and children had a higher moral imperative than maintaining good diplomatic relations with Lagos whose soldiers were afraid that the national would split into many more parts than just Biafra.¹⁴

At the same time that Canada was maintaining its close posture with Nigeria, several other countries including Germany, Sweden and the U.S, refused to officially stand by and allow millions starve in Biafra. Nigerians heavily armed by Britain and Russia withheld food supplies openly stating that food was a legitimate weapon of war. As the Biafrans were pushed back from the best agricultural land into their aim barren heartland and on the crops and stores fell into the hands of the Nigerian soldiers starvation and famine appeared flapping their wings like the vultures that hovered over the feeding centre and refugee camps. Casualties were high among the civilians. Yet somehow Biafran morale remained high despite the fact that their military campaign had gone irretrievably wrong.

The Presbyterian Church played a unique role in trying to bring humanitarian aid to the suffering and a healing ministry to the whole desperate situation. In 1969, Ted Johnson outlined three lives of activity for the church.

1. Seek to maintain fellowship and support to our Christian brethren and particularly our fellow Presbyterians on both sides.
2. Engage in a vigorous role in relief work on both sides and.
3. Try to promote a peaceful settlement by maintaining contact and conversation on both sides with colleagues who are high in government responsibilities.

The real story of Biafra was told to Canadians by David MacDonald and Andrew Brewin, both Mps. The fact remains that Canadian government could not give relief funds to the church, so individuals raised some money. High protein food and milk, few drops of fish flown in Jesus Airline and Canai relief. They were getting three meals a week. The churches were occurred of manufacturing these horrendous images to raise funds to keep Ojukwu in power. But Jed Johnson insists that these images and millions were children were innocent victims of an international power play for political influence in Africa and a smuggle for control of one of the world's great oil reserves.

The courage of the Pilots, the Biafran relief workers who could unload a super constellation's 15 tons of aid in 20 minutes in the darkness, and the missionaries and medical staff who were inside Biafra, was incredible. There was an outright disregard for the law of war and basic principles of human rights during the war. Heinous crimes were perpetrated in gross violations of international standards. Life and property were destroyed and the necessary distinction as expected especially under international law of war between combatants and non-combatants were ignored.

The United States has maintained official neutrality, but in practice has tacitly supported the federal government, though contributing a reported 17 million dollars to the relief efforts of various private organizations. President Johnson announced in July that the U.S had no intention of interfering in the Nigerian's internal affairs". This has meant that the U.S is not willing to support an airlift organized by private organization that are not recognized for this purpose by the Nigerian government. On November 14, the Unites States offered to contribute 500,000 dollars to American

volunteer relief agencies to help charter a Hercules C - 130 transports to fly relief supplies into Biafra. Biafran authorities are dissatisfied with the Red Cross which they claim is both sluggish and overly responsive to the federal government demands. Private American countries contributed about 5 million dollars while American government spent 17 to 20 million 37 million dollars.¹⁵ The US brought pressure on both sides to cease fighting and urged foreign powers to contribute to relief. Some argue that US plans in Biafra have been passive and indifference.

Summary and Conclusion

The Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970), also known as the Biafran War, resulted in a humanitarian crisis, particularly affecting the Igbo population in the southeastern region. Humanitarian organizations played a crucial role in providing assistance during this tumultuous period. This summary examines the interventions of various NGOs and international bodies, focusing on their impact and challenges faced. Humanitarian organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)¹⁶, provided critical medical care, food, and shelter to those displaced by the conflict. These organizations aimed to address the immediate needs of the population, particularly as the war led to widespread famine and disease.

Despite their efforts, humanitarian organizations encountered significant challenges, including restrictions imposed by the Nigerian government, which sought to control the flow of aid. Access to affected areas was often limited, and there were reports of aid being diverted for military purposes. These challenges complicated the delivery of assistance and often hampered the effectiveness of humanitarian efforts. The interventions, although vital, were often insufficient to meet the overwhelming needs of the Igbo population. The combination of military blockade and famine led to an estimated two million deaths,¹⁷ with malnutrition and disease being prevalent. Despite the aid provided, the scale of suffering was immense, highlighting the limitations of external assistance in conflict situations.

The Biafran War highlighted the importance of timely and unimpeded humanitarian access in conflict zones. Lessons from this period have influenced the policies and operational strategies of humanitarian organizations in subsequent conflicts in Nigeria and beyond. The interventions of humanitarian organizations during the Nigerian Civil War were crucial in mitigating some of the suffering experienced by the Igbo population. However, significant challenges impeded their efforts, ultimately demonstrating the complexities of providing humanitarian aid in conflict situations. Understanding these dynamics is essential for improving future interventions in similar contexts.

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