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THE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE INTERVENTION OF JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE COMMISSION IN THE FCT

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ABSTRACT

The social welfare intervention of Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) faces a number of challenges but it has prospects though. The Commission has been working towards promoting social justice and peace in the FCT, but has encountered difficulties in implementing their initiatives. One of the main challenges has been securing adequate funding to support their programs and projects. Additionally, there have been logistical challenges in reaching all areas of the FCT and delivering their services effectively. Despite these challenges, there is great potential for the Commission to have a positive impact on the social welfare of the region. With continued support and collaboration from the community and relevant stakeholders, the Commission can successfully address these challenges and make significant progress in their mission. Overall, the social welfare intervention of Justice, Development and Peace Commission in the FCT shows promise for improving social welfare and promoting justice in the region.

Keywords: Challenges, Prospects, Social Welfare Intervention, JDPC, FCT.

Introduction

The participation of social welfare in contemporary societal issues and difficulties is a prominent subject of discussion. Non-governmental organisations and other social welfare entities are essential to social welfare efforts. As the government is obligated to serve its citizens, it is responsible for supervising social welfare services. Nevertheless, this has demonstrated to be unsustainable as the government alone is incapable of fulfilling these requirements, particularly in developing economies. This disparity has compelled religious organisations, NGOs, and various social welfare service providers to spearhead comprehensive social welfare intervention initiatives (Ekpe, 2011).

Faith-based organisations (FBOs) promote economic, social, cultural, and political advancement globally. FBOs assist the government and corporate sector in developing human potential and social capital, hence fostering social cohesion and integration across diverse domains. Many Sub-Saharan African countries are destitute, and both the government and private sector are unable to deliver social services. The corporate sector assists the government in social collaboration, whilst faith-based organisations offer social welfare initiatives to enhance quality of life (Fauzia, 2013).

The Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), a prominent Nigerian faith-based organisation, executes social welfare initiatives to enhance development and living conditions. Christianity has advocated for global peace, enhancement of life, and social order for the collective good. Alawode (2016) asserts that the church's social services contribute to societal development.

In response to high poverty levels in isolated FCT areas, JDPC initiated a social welfare intervention program. Data from the National Bureau of Statistics indicates an increase in poverty levels in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory. The poverty rates in the FCT from 2010 to 2018 were 43.4%, 44.7%, 47.1%, 47.9%, 49.3%, 49.9%, 52.3%, 58.6%, and 73.1%. This statistical analysis indicates that poverty in the FCT has been increasing exponentially, corroborating JDPC's social welfare intervention project among rural inhabitants, where Abuja has the highest population of impoverished individuals.

The National Poverty Profile Report also contrasted poverty rates in Abuja, FCT. It shown that poverty increased by 1.3% to 6.3% from 2010 to 2018, however it escalated by 7.1% to 10.3% from 2018 to 2024, indicating a more severe decline. This baseline was established based on the purchasing power of essential goods and services in Nigeria's FCT, the standard of living, the prevalence of formal education, employment rates in Abuja, and other economic indicators that prompted JDPC's social welfare intervention initiative among rural FCT residents.

The organisation advocates for literacy, scholarships, and high-quality education. Education enables communities to disrupt the cycle of poverty and enhance their socioeconomic standing (Edmond, 2017). The JDPC's expertise in human rights and advocacy has assisted several individuals in pursuing justice. These initiatives have heightened human rights awareness, diminished abuses, and assisted disadvantaged populations. JDPC microfinance initiatives offer modest financial assistance to enterprises. These loans assist borrowers in expanding their enterprises, revenue, and means of subsistence. These are some JDPC social welfare interventions in rural FCT.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to assess the social welfare intervention of Justice, Development and Peace Commission in the FCT from 2018 -2024. However, the specific objectives of the study are:

i. Are there challenges faced by the Justice, Development and Peace Commission in its social welfare intervention program in the FCT?
ii. Are there possible solutions to the identified for challenges of the social welfare intervention programmes of the Justice, Development and Peace Commission in the FCT?

Challenges of JDPC Social Welfare Intervention in the FCT

NGOs and FBOs are various non-profit entities that perform many tasks. The focus can range from humanitarian and rural development to helping local startups. These sectors had many institutional development constraints (Rath, 2019: Abanyam, 2005). Recent recommendations and declarations have addressed NGOs and FBOs' institutional problems, but mobilising the necessary action has been difficult due to practical and structural constraints (UNECA, 2000).

The Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) faces several problems in implementing its social welfare intervention in rural FCT areas:

Lack of Funds and/or Difficulties to get Funds: JDPC struggles to find adequate, consistent funding. They struggle with donor access and financial constraints. JDPC lacks resources (administration and experience), trust, fund raising, and donor recognition, according to Bromideh (2018). JDPC may not be able to mobilise resources locally, therefore they wait for international donors. Donors may change priorities and stop funding

Over Dependence on External Finance and Assistance: Competition among NGOs and FBOs like JDPC in underdeveloped countries for external financing severely reduces their capacity and commitment to mobilise joint action and reach consensus on common issues for autonomous development (Abanyam, 2005). Many debate whether local NGOs and FBOs like JDPC have been successful in producing resources locally and relying less on outside success. These NGOs and FBOs (JDPC) are universally criticised for not being self-sufficient and relying on easy resources. These have eroded the legitimacy of these organisations as indigenous entities and made them appear to be donor agents.

Absence of Effective Networking: The FBOs like JDPC lack effective networks to speak for them, coordinate their activities, represent their interests, and advocate for their position on important issues, which hinders their ability to make collective demands (Abanyam, 2005). Due to poor network with pairs, FBOs like JDPC may not disclose what they are doing for a community, which could duplicate efforts, cause conflicts over how to solve a problem in a region, and prevent them from learning best practices from other FBOs (Alonso, 2017).

Lack of Good Governance and Mismanagement of Funds: Most FBOs do not have a board. One of the main reasons is the difficulty to attract board members without paying them or providing them some benefits (Alonso, 2017). Having a board is simply the best way to achieve good level of governance. Conversely, there is a significant number of FBOs that does not have a good understanding of governance and does not think governance is relevant for their organizations (Alonso, 2017).

Systemic Challenge: As JDPC has to compete for funds with other FBOs, his strips them of much-needed autonomy. Current FBO culture has been critically described as follows: "They are apolitical, professional, accountable to foreigners, and often very large and wealthy relative to other civil society actors" (Stiles, 2002). The FBOs frequently become captive clients who have to undertake whatever the foreign donor decides to finance. In such circumstances, the needs of the poor can become secondary to the need of the FBO to survive.

Prospects of JDPC Social Welfare Intervention in the FCT

All social actors must confront poverty since the government has failed. The Catholic Church's position becomes important. Nigeria might use the Catholic Church's social teachings and actions due to its authority. Indeed, the Catholic Church, like other Christian denominations, follows Jesus Christ's teachings, which plainly address poverty. Besides spiritually feeding the poor, the Roman Catholic Church provides their physical needs.

In recent years, the church has helped the poor and disadvantaged. As Jesus Christ identified and cared for the poor, the church seeks to end hunger, suffering, oppression, ignorance, institutionalised injustice, and hatred, which spring from human avarice. Church aid for the needy is part of its global purpose.

According to (Oborji, 2015), the Church's care for the poor is in its own nature as it continues Christ's redeeming work of giving integral redemption to men and women. The divine command to love one's neighbour underpins it. A two-pronged poverty relief project of the Nigerian Catholic Church strengthens this aspect of its global vocation. The church's teaching apostolate and pastoral care for the impoverished are the two.

Faith-Based Development Theory

Faith-based philosophy integrates religion and spirituality with psychology, education, and social work. This theory posits that faith can influence an individual's worldview, decision-making, and overall well-being. The faith-based theory elucidates the influence of spiritual beliefs on human behaviour and society through the analysis of faith and empirical evidence (Ilesanmi, 1997).

Faith-based development theory underscores the role of religious institutions in community development and welfare. This article examines the proponents, claims, detractors, and application of the idea in relation to the Justice Development and Peace Commission's social welfare intervention.

Faith-based theory elucidates spirituality in human behaviour, education, and social work. Practitioners can address spiritual well-being more comprehensively by recognising the influence of faith on individuals' lives. Incorporating faith into professional practices poses challenges and ethical dilemmas that require resolution. As society progresses, discourse on faith-based theories will be crucial for understanding human complexity.

Research Design

This research employed a mixed-methods design to analyse specific respondents (interviewees) regarding critical questions related to the study's focus on the Justice Development and Peace Commission and social welfare interventions in the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. The research design employed three primary methods of data collection: questionnaires and observations. It employed standardised questions to evaluate and confirm the trustworthiness of the items.

Data Analysis Techniques

This study used both descriptive and inferential statistics. Specifically, the descriptive statistics include percentage, frequency table and mean, while the inferential statistics will be the multiple regression analysis.

What challenges does JDPC face in implementing its social welfare intervention in the FCT?

Variables	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Remark
Limited resources	167 (35.4%)	158 (33.5%)	24 (5.1%)	67 (14.2%)	56 (11.9%)	3.4	Accepted

Lack of government support	184 (40.0%)	135 (28.6%)	54 (11.4%)	47 (9.9%)	52 (11.0%)	3.4	Accepted
Inadequate infrastructure	194 (41.1%)	183 (38.8%)	18 (3.8%)	47 (9.9%)	30 (6.3%)	3.3	Accepted
Cultural and social barriers	177 (37.5%)	172 (36.4%)	34 (7.2%)	57 (12.1%)	32 (6.8%)	3.6	Accepted
Others	179 (37.9%)	168 (35.6%)	43 (9.1%)	57 (12.1%)	26 (5.5%)	3.6	Accepted
Average Overall Mean						3.4	

Sources: Field Survey (2024)

The table above presents data on what challenges does JDPC face in implementing its social welfare intervention in rural communities of the FCT. These challenges were categorized as limited resources, lack of government support, inadequate infrastructure, cultural and social barriers, among others. The mean derivation in the table above shows that all variables were accepted with an average overall mean of 3.4, which is to say that JDPC has a lot of challenges it is passing through which has made it very hard for it to achieve most of its goals and objectives.

What strategies does JDPC use to ensure the sustainability of its social welfare intervention in the FCT?

Variables	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Remark**
Community ownership	294 (62.3%)	138 (29.2%)	12 (2.5%)	16 (3.4%)	12 (2.5%)	4.5	Accepted
Capacity building	164 (34.7%)	155 (32.8%)	63 (13.3%)	41 (8.7%)	49 (10.4%)	3.3	Accepted
Partnership with local organization	218 (46.2%)	184 (39.0%)	14 (3.0%)	26 (5.5%)	30 (6.4%)	4.2	Accepted
Fundraising and resources mobilization	169(35.8)	163(34.5%)	58(12.3%)	27(5.7%)	55(11.7%)	3.5	Accepted
Average Overall Mean						4.3	

Sources: Field Survey (2024)

Table 4.29 presents data on what strategies does JDPC need to apply to ensure sustainability of its social welfare intervention in the FCT. The study listed some challenges in the variables which were all accepted in the mean derivation; the listed or suggested strategies are: community ownership, capacity building, partnership with local organizations, and

fundraising and resources mobilization. The average overall mean on the subject matter indicated a high mean of 4.3 indicating that almost of the respondents were of the view that each of the listed strategies should be applied in achieving sustainability for the JDPC social welfare intervention in rural communities in the FCT.

Discussion and Findings

This section discusses the results from the data analysis carried out in the preceding section. Several issues were examined in this study as they relate to JDPC social welfare intervention across rural dwellers in FCT – Abuja. The study found the following

i. The study identified challenges and constraints encountered by JDPC in her social welfare intervention in the FCT. Majority of the respondents are not aware of the challenges being faced by JDPC in the cause of carrying out JDPC's social welfare intervention scheme in the FCT. This discovery was made based on the percentage of respondents response as 40% which is the majority opinion in this context claimed that they are not aware of the challenges being faced by JDPC that must have hindered its effectiveness in carrying out its social welfare intervention in the FCT; though, 34.4% of the respondents thinks that the challenges by the JDPC in trying to carry out its social welfare intervention may be very severe due to the herculean hurdles that may have to go through in their intervention programmes. The study discovered that lack of adequate or sufficient funding and personnel are the major challenges being faced by JDPC in trying to carry out its social welfare intervention in rural areas of the FCT. As poverty increases geometrically in the rural FCT with heightened inflation too, increased funds does not always translate to improved impacts as the gains of more funding is eroded by inflation and increased demands. This claim of lack of adequate funds and personnel was backed by majority of the respondents as 48.7% thinks improved funding can help in solving the challenges being faced by JDPC in carrying its social welfare intervention in rural areas of the FCT, while 42.1% feels lack of personnel is the main challenge being faced by JDPC.

ii. While JDPC is engaged in social welfare intervention in the FCT, the study discovered that the organization is also being with its own challenges, and these challenges were identified with the aim of resolving them as doing so will help in its sustainability and growth. In the same light, if the organization fails to tackle its problems, it may not be able to continue its complimentary efforts towards assisting the community and less privileged individuals in rural communities situated within the FCT, Abuja.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study focused on analysing the nature and operations of the JDPC's social welfare interventions, particularly regarding its activities and programs aimed at rural residents of the FCT. This led to a further investigation of the impact of the various social welfare interventions conducted by the JDPC in the FCT. The study concluded that the JDPC has made significant efforts and adopted effective approaches in addressing the social welfare issues faced by rural inhabitants in the FCT.

The study investigated the primary challenges encountered by the JDPC in executing its social welfare interventions in rural areas of the FCT, concluding that the principal obstacles include

inadequate funding, insufficient manpower, and a necessity for enhanced strategic partnerships and collaboration. Consequently, recommended solutions to alleviate these challenges include securing adequate funding and augmenting manpower levels, among others.

Recommendations

Having considered the challenges and prospects of the social welfare intervention of JDPC in rural areas of the FCT, the study made the following recommendations:

1. The challenges by the staff and management of the organization in the course of carrying out its social welfare intervention programs needs to be properly addressed and solution arrived at for the sustainability of the existence of the organization and its interventionist programs.
2. Each challenge identified should be treated on its merit, and the most workable solutions should be proffered for a better output in future. This is because applying a quick identification and solution process where there are identified challenges within the organization will help in its sustenance and growth

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