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SOCIAL NEEDS AND INJUSTICE IN NIGERIA: AN APPRAISAL.

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Abstract
This study examines social needs and injustice in Nigeria. Nigeria has become a place where the land, money and wealth are shared among the nobles at the detriment of the poor. The oppression has become the food of the populace as the poor suffer in the hands of the rich. Since Nigeria gained independence and in 1960, tribalism, nepotism, corruption, insecurity, discrimination, rigging of elections gross injustice has dominated the economic, political, judicial, cultural, religious and ethnic lives and minds of many Nigerians. Despites very considerable government outlays from soaring revenues and a fast rate of economic growth, the majority of the population especially the local dwellers have benefited little or nothing as many people are living in poverty than before the oil boom started. It has been discovered that the level of social injustice currently prevailing in Nigeria is reaching alarming heights and citizens are beginning to feel the effect in the level of discontent amongst the citizenry as demonstrated by various uprising against the state such as the Boko Haram incidence, the Niger Delta Militancy, OPC and Bandits. The paper explores various forms of injustice in Nigeria, causes and its effect on social needs of the citizens. It also considers some suggestions as regards the way out of injustice in Nigeria. This research seeks to analyze how the impact of social injustice in the Nigeria state has led to the bigger problem of ethnic cleavages which has further prevented the country from attaining any meaningful development.

Key words: Social Institutions, Needs, Injustice, Appraisal, Nigeria.

Introduction

It is generally agreed that Nigeria as a nation is heavily blessed or endowed with enough resources to take good care of the social and basic needs of the citizens to moved her to the level of a developed nation. Nigeria as a nation is endowed with enough land for agricultural production and oil to make her citizens happy. As stated by Kor and Ahine (2005):

> The oil industry is perhaps one of the most and largest industry in the world today. Their operations cover a wide area as it facilitates an integrate chain, which including assessing the nature of the product, demand and international network of operating companies. The oil industry affects every country in today's modern world as oil is in the news every day. Oil has bestowed great financial power on its producers (p. 48-49).

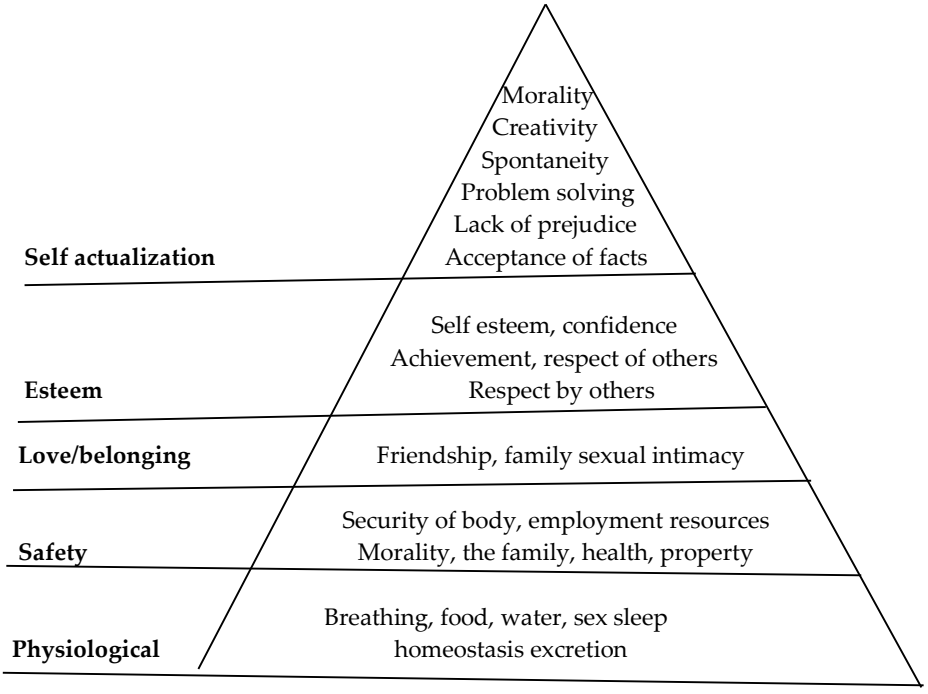
This picture shows a good face for Nigeria citizens, unfortunately, after 50 years of oil industry in the country, the low socio-economic development of the country persist even with the abundant material and human resources that it is blessed with. It is actually a thing of worry why a nation with such abundant blessing from God could be economically crippled,

politically toddles and socially incapacitated (Asogwa, 2008). It is an agreeable fact that, Nigerian nation is entangled in a web of atrocities and maladies such as: corruption, gross under-development, armed robbery, banditry, hooliganism, political violence, intolerance, political discord and other crimes of different magnitudes including injustice which is the order of the day.

Conceptual Clarification of Terms:

Social: According to the international Bible Society, the word social refers to that which is "concerning human relationships between people and society" (p. 650). For Hornby (2000), social is connected with "people living in communities of relations between people and community" (p. 818).

Needs: According to International Bible Society, need is referred to things that one must have -food, shelter, and clothing are basic needs (p. 452). To Smith (2005), man's needs are food, health, a roof over his head, hope and happiness", but not at the expense of or deprivation of others (p. 89). Smith (2005) in the words of Allan Boesak states that, ''God is glorified when the hungry are fed, the need clothed, and the homeless are given shelter, God is glorified when children are able to grow into healthy adults, and God is glorified when we use our resources to fight poverty, seek justice and love peace'' (p.90). Furthermore, Wikipedia (2011) give Maslow's theory on the hierarchy of needs.



From the interpretation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, represented as a pyramid with the more basic needs at the bottom, we discover that physiological needs are requirements for human survival and with physical needs relatively satisfied, the individuals needs take precedence and dominate behavour. This safety and security needs include, personal security, financial security, health and wellbeing and safety net against accidents illness and their adverse impacts.

Social Needs: Social needs may refer to things that are necessary for one to live a happy life in a community or state. Social needs may include food, shelter, clothing, good health care system, good water, good roads, security of life and properties and good environment are the literal requirements for human survival. If these requirements are not met, the human body simply cannot continue to function. Wikipedia (2011) states that, "Air, water and food are metabolic requirements for survival in all animals, including human. Clothing and shelter provide necessary protection from the esteem". Before we look at injustice let's briefly consider the term justice. Justice or social justice generally refers to the idea of creating a society or institution that is based on the principles of equality and solidarity. It is an institution that understands and values human rights, and that recognizes the dignity of every human being. Iwe (1985) sees justice as an ethical concept with immense social significance; this implies the notion of fairness, fair deal, moral integrity and righteousness in the dealings of men with one another and in the affairs and transaction of social life.

From this understanding Wikipedia (2011) looks at social injustice as "a concept relating to the claimed unfairness or injustice of a society in a division of rewards and burdens and other incidental inequalities". Social injustice arises when the distribution of advantages and disadvantages in a society aren't equal. Social injustice is caused by certain barriers that prevent full social justice. Some of the major barriers include: prejudice, discrimination, oppression, racism, casteism, classism, ableism, ageism, stereotyping and sexism,

Nigeria and its Social Problems:

National identity: Nigeria is a country born out of the amalgamation of the southern and northern Nigeria. Our nation is made up of a large number of ethnic groups with a lot of identity differences. So, Nigeria still struggles to have one identity because of the too-many identities already present in the country. With regards to the Nigerian situation, the Nigeria's socio-political conundrums stem from numerous complicated tides. Egharevba (2007) states that the "nation-state of Nigeria emerged out of political amalgamations of extremely diverse ethnic groups and class configurations brought together as a colonial necessity in 1914." In other words, Nigeria's problems are predicated on the partitioning of Africa by European at the Berlin conference. This conference left the continent with an illogical pattern of geographical distribution which also reflected on the amalgamation of Nigerian by the then colonial masters (Mentiki, 2002). Ammo (1997) sees the make-up of the Nigerian state as an embodying the merging of different people with different worldview that lacks a coherent and functional unity and is consequently fragile.

Corruption: According to Kunhiyop (2008), corruption is seen as a feature of African social, political and even religious life with disastrous consequences (p.164). The BBC also asserts that corruption is illegal everywhere in Africa, but everywhere it is woven deep into the fabric of everyday life. From the bottle of whisky slipped under the counter to speed a traveler's way through customs, to the president and ex-president living way beyond their declared means, it results in an assumption that no business will ever get done without a present changing hands. A high level of corruption has broken down the system meant to function and unify us as one. The corruption we are talking about here is not just the one practiced in governance. Corruption in Nigeria is very visible on every level, from the intricate part of the

government to the corners of the street. Oko (2018) sees corruption as another stumbling block for peace in Nigeria. He maintains that corruption retards the economic growth of the country. Corruption contributes so much to the increase in socio-economic crime. It has serious connection to drug trafficking, money laundering, illegal trade of arms and other forms of criminality. For Anozie (2008), it hinders the promotion of a person and makes societies less just and opens thereby threatening the security of the country.

Inequality: This is another major societal problem in Nigeria. Equality is not necessarily when people are equal in all things. However, in our society, this concept does not work. There are ethnic, gender inequality and inequality based on societal class. The human right of equality before the law is not in practice in Nigeria. This has led to injustice as the high class is favored in all things including job employment living the low class to suffer.

Poverty: For Donovan (2000), poverty is one of the greatest problems in Africa today, as many cities have large shanty town area filled with wretchedly poor people who lack many of the essentials basic to human life. More than seventy percent of Nigerians are living in poverty. Most Nigerians cannot afford to eat three good meals in a day. For some to eat at least one is a big problem. This is the root of more societal problems like crimes, diseases, high mortality rate, and other major issues.

Insecurity and insurgencies: There is a high level of insecurity in Nigeria. There are different insurgencies found in the country like the Bandits, Boko Haram insurgency, Fulani insurgency, militancy, widespread kidnappings, and many others. All these have a serious negative impact on *living conditions in the society. People live in fear due to the destruction of lives and properties among other things.*

The State of Injustice in Nigeria and its Effect on Social Needs

The level of social injustice currently prevailing in Nigeria is reaching alarming heights and Nigerians are beginning to feel the effect in the level of discontent amongst the citizenry as demonstrated by various uprising against the Nigeria state such as the Boko Haram incidence, the Niger Delta Militancy, Banditry and so on. Pat Utomi (2011) pointed out that:

> When you consider that Nigeria has a population of about 140 million people and a police force of 370,000 policemen it does not take a lot of thinking to come to the conclusion that Nigeria is severely under-policed particularly when the United Nations prescribes a ratio of 1 police man per 400 citizens but the sad aspect of this situation is that even as we are grossly under policed, the federal government tolerates a situation where 100,000 police men are detailed to guard privileged Nigerians who are connected to those in political power circles.

From this situation, one can see a clear picture of injustice done to the greater number of citizens. Who are now left with only 270,000 policemen to cater for demands of about 140 million Nigerians? So when we have 100,000 police men guarding about 100,000 "big men" it is a surprised that our security forces were caught unawares by the Boko Haram and Bandits incidence.

Pat Utomi (2011) further pointed out that,

> So when we read in the papers that robbers spent three hours robbing a bank without any resistance, we should understand that the reason behind this is that our police men are otherwise engaged in providing security for our "big men" leading to citizens taking to self policing as a reaction to the current states of insecurity existing in Nigeria.

Another instance of injustice is seen in the manner in which the federal houses spent the national resources at the expense of generality of the Nigeria population. Utomi (2011) stated that, it is a common knowledge that most of us live on less than a dollar a day, we are made to understand that over 853 billion naira has been expended on our National Assembly since 1999. It is even sadder to know that since 1999 our public universities have not seen the amount of money that has been budgeted to our legislators. How are universities lecturers meant to feel when they provide such vital services and individual legislator walks away with tens of millions each year even when their productivity is so low?

The situation painted above is just a tip of the iced berg especially considering that the IMF has recently reported that, 85% of Nigeria's resources are consume by 1% of her population, leaving the remaining 99% to share the balance of 15%. Utomi (2011) further stated that we need to prioritize how we spend our resources. Things that matter most should not be at the mercy of things that matter least. Before we spent 2 billion naira in Aso Rock villa, we should know that, there are thousands of people who dying because of lack of access to medical health care delivery. The Covid 19 pandemic has really revealed the state of Nigeria medical institution at various states and in Nigeria at large.

From the above the truth is that most Nigerians wallow in abject poverty because of injustices meted out on them by their fellow country men and women who stole/wasted our opportunities through corruption and inefficiency. This agrees with Onuegbu (2011) who maintained that,

> Painfully, each year the government in Nigeria continue to tell us how the economy of Nigeria is growing and yet we cannot see that growth in our homes on our meal tables and in the employment opportunities available for our graduates the fact still remains that women and without jobs or livelihoods really don't care if their economics grow at 3.5 or 10 percent per year it such growth leaves them behind and without protection.

What the citizens do care is whether their leaders and societies promote policies to provide jobs, and justice, bread and dignity, freedom to voice their needs, their hopes and their dreams and the space to forge practical solutions where they are not always squeezed. The reality is that, people commonly judge whether social the economy and polity are working for them through availability of social needs to satisfy their wants. Whether they have a job, or not the quality of life it permits, what happens when they have no work or cannot work? In so many ways the quality of work defines the quality of society. These social injustices are becoming so glaringly obvious to the common man on the street and this has led to a large spectrum of

our population to lose faith in Nigeria. This is what the federal government must address if she must progress.

Justice in Schools

Heads of some schools place illegal levies on school children and students; this is very common in most primary and secondary schools even when some states have declared free and compulsory education for all. When these in discriminates levies are paid, pupils and students gradually understand that such levies are never being utilized for their interest. Most Nigerian universities lack basic amenities like water, accommodation, food, and so on. The process of admission in most of our universities is characterized by injustice of one form or the other. if one is not from the same zone or tribe he/she stands the risk of losing out in the admission . On the other hand if one does bribe either in cash or kind he/she also stands the risk losing out in the admission. In some cases only the wards of the highly classed are considered. This is why Students with good grade in JAMB Exams roam about without admission. It is sad to hear that teachers in our public schools don't receive their entitlements promptly; even when they are promoted with letters their promotions are not practically effected. This is a very serious injustice in our educational system. The embezzlement of public funds by those in authority tends to be legalized in Nigeria. Schools, roads, hospitals and other social facilities are poorly maintained. The poor masses bear the direct brunt for they are the ones to be hospitalized in the public hospital where there are no adequate drugs. Their children are the ones to attend the public schools where the teachers are not devoted to their work because of the epileptic payment of salaries. (Umeanolue, 2018).

Injustice in the Church

The church is called to promote righteousness and justice as foundation for the throne of God (Ps.89:14) and in Jeremiah 23:5 we are told that the messiah who is the king will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. But its sometimes unfortunate that injustice is seen at the high places of the church. In some cases where transfer is practice, some workers or pastors are transferred to local places because of ethnic sentiments or one misunderstanding or other. Eze (2018) also states that in the church today "many have fallen away and joined the hypocritical and fanatical preaching of those whose leaders has their motives tainted with deceit" (p.80) they are looking for quick money. They go about preaching falsehood in order to gain adherents.

Injustice in Electioneering System

They are lots of injustice in our electioneering process. The internal democracy is brought into dust by some of the political parties and party leadership. The effect of this was clearly seen on what happen to APC in Zamfara state and Rivers state when they loosed their seat to other political parties in 2019 election because of failure to conduct free and fair primary elections. The independent national electoral commission (INEC) is sometimes not playing according to the rule. This was clearly seen on of issue of inconclusive election in Osun state which they robed senator Adeleke of his mandate. The apex court suppose to address the issue before it went ahead to give judgment on one judge that did not sign the record. In Rhodes-Vivour's judgment, He observed that Justice Peter Obiora did not sign a record to indicate that he was present at the tribunal on February 6, 2019.The court said its decision is that Justice Obiora did not sit on February 6. He went ahead to read a list of authorities to show the consequences

of Mr Obiora failing to sit on February sit at the tribunal. "A complaint that one of the judges did not sit and proceeded to deliver judgment is a serious matter," he said. "Failure of Obiora J. to sit on February 6 rendered the proceedings of that day a nullity and the entire judgment a nullity. It is a fundamental error" that "The absence of Obiora J to sit on that day made it impossible for the tribunal to render any judgment in the matter" ,Mr Rhodes-Vivour added that five members of the panel agreed with the judgment while two others disagreed with it. The actions cited above agree with Umeanolue (2018) that during elections, people who win are not the real winners, but the cleverest riggers. Unemployed youths are paid and used as thugs to manipulate elections. Human life is valued less than political goals just as the poor were equated with a pair of shoes in Amos' time'' (p.190).

Causes of Injustice in Nigeria

As started before, the level of injustice currently prevailing in Nigeria is reaching its apex. The causes of this situation may include:

Ethnic and Tribal Affiliation

Amongst the federating units in Nigeria, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba ethnic groups have always dominated national politics. Perhaps, this may be as a result of their greater numbers in population. Likewise their active involvement and participation in successive government, since Nigeria achieves independence in 1960 has given them precedence over other ethnic groups. Such domineering presence and control of what Nigerians chose to call the 'national cake' has always linked the other ethnic groups who are in the minority. According to Nworah (2017) "those minority groups feel left out in the scheme of things in Nigeria, a situation that has now bred distrust, fear and a sense of hopelessness, this invariably affects their sense of patriotism, likewise their national identity and psyche. Looking critically on the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari the issue of federal character principle is no longer taken into consideration the leader only seek the help of other regions when they need their votes and after election, there will be dumps and nobody trusted for appointed position.

Poor Value System among Nigerians:

Asogwa (2008) states that, "Unfortunately, negative values like acquisition of wealth and power by all available means, breeds greed, dishonesty and all other vices that have plagued the nation's leadership. Morality, which is the sense of right and wrong in human behaviour has been abandoned in our society" (p. 14). Recently the ICPC entered the office of the former senate member in the National Assembly and took the dialysis machine meant for general hospital in Akwa Ibom state and other facilities that was in his custody. This act has created in our people a sense of injustice that works against the common good of the generality of the citizens.

Poor Political Culture and Electoral Irregularities

The politics in Nigeria is done within the culture of God-fatherism which calls for a lot of irregularities in the electoral process. Those that are not qualified find themselves in position that they cannot maintain and in order to satisfy their "lord" who put them in the position of authority, they succumb to whatever thing they say thus creating a lot of injustice to other people and the country at large. Take for instance, in the case of the former governor of Lagos state Mr Amode, the man that put him in power wanted him to play according to his tune but

when he behave otherwise the party leader in the state (Alhaji Tinibu) vowed not to allow him to contest for the second term despise the cry of the masses across the party line, he said that Amode has performed well but he is not a good party man. Independent national electoral commissions are sometimes being influenced by politician and are not playing according to the rule.

Religion

Nigeria is multi-religious country, but it is unfortunate those who find themselves at the top of government or position of authority continue to manipulate religious sentiments for their own socio-economic interest, thus involving unnecessary discrimination between one religious group and another. This is a clear case of the Federal Republic of Nigeria trying to make a Ruga settlement a national issue in the country. Despite all the corruption and immorality in Nigerian society, people are pretending to be religious, observing religious duties as a matter of life and death as observed in the life of some Christian and Muslims in the country. Obiora (1998) avows that religion in Nigeria today is being used for selfish ends. He sees religion as a fast business that people are embarking on. Looking at many Christian churches today, there are not born out for pure motive of serving God but for self-aggrandizement. A close interaction with most Christians reveals that they believe in money rather than God as many of them are concerned with their business than God, they always strive after the way to accumulate more wealth for themselves, forgetting the demands of their relationship with God who is the foundation of all beings.

Unemployment

Greater number of Nigerian graduates is unemployed. This has created a high level of poverty in the country, at the Federal, State and Local levels because people are without means of livelihood, they turn to find any means to survive. This has also increased cases of injustice in government, schools and churches. We heard on many occasions from politician that they have created three to five million job for Nigerian populace yet the impact of this is not felt in our society. They are fond of telling lies to suit their evil intentions. The question still remain why are we experiencing insecurity on daily basics and the environment not safe for investment to thrive? The truth remains that they are not telling the citizens the truth about the state of unemployment in Nigeria..

A Way Forward

(1) The task of reducing injustice in the country is in the hand of religious authorities, to ensure that their members imbibe the true virtues of justice, fear of God, love and tolerance, which should enable them to overcome the primitive tendencies of narrow mindedness and unhealthy rivalry.

(2) The federal ministry of education with National University Commission (NUC) to make religious/moral instruction a general course for all first year students in higher institution of learning. The curriculum of the course should include among others, moral values, justice and tolerance, and brotherhood of all people.

(3) The constitution review committee should remove the law on multiparty system in the country's constitution and recommend for the two party systems, because multi-party system creates rooms for ethnic parties to spring up. Thus creating injustice in government operation.

(4) Removal of electoral irregularities in the electoral process.

For any country to move to a true democracy and true justice, it must allow the Independent National Electoral Commission to be truly independent. This will do away with all forms injustice in the electoral process that always bring into politics the practice of God- fatherism in Nigerian administration.

(5) The introduction of good governance system. Good governance system is exercising power in the best interest of the citizens. That is the economic and social resources of the country are managed for the benefit and common good of all. In such a situation the resources are allocated to benefit the people not a selected few as it is the case in Nigeria today.

Conclusion

In this work, we considered the issue of social needs and injustice in Nigeria. Social needs are consider being basic needs that enable one to live a happy life in the society. They are basic requirements for human survival. The paper states that because of injustice in the country these basic things are unable to reach all citizens. The paper call on all Nigerians to rise up and fight for social justice as there cannot be any sustainable peace, development without social justice. They should vote for candidates that they truly trust to address the challenges of injustice, in equality, poverty and unemployment. They should avoid the temptation of voting merely based on ethnic or religious sentiments. They should remember that no one but Nigerians can change Nigeria. They should display courage and determination in ending the evil of injustice in electoral system by ensuring that their votes count. This, we believe will signal to the political class and indeed the rest of the world that it is no longer business as usual in Nigeria.

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