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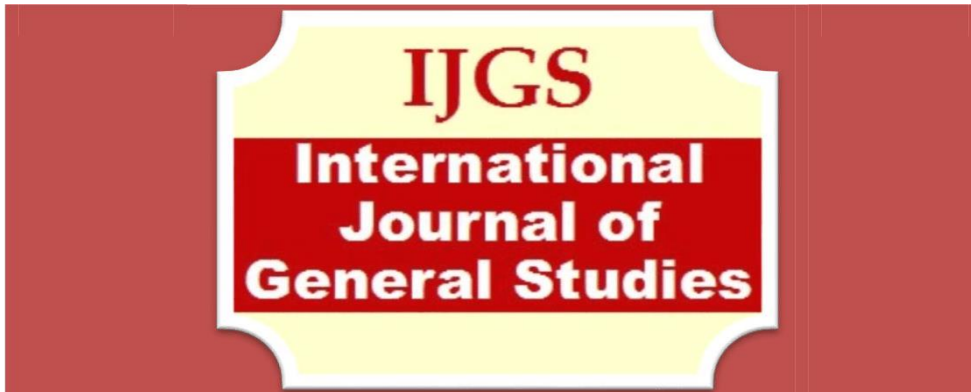
Ngangah O. Ngangah, LL.B, BL, LL.M

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Enhancing Internal Democracy in Nigerian Political Parties through Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms

By

Christian Osemuyi Oseghale

Abstract

Nigerian political parties have been plagued by internal rivalries and disputes, particularly over primary elections, resulting in a large number of court proceedings. This scenario not only strains the judiciary, but also weakens the parties' democratic values. The purpose of this paper is to argue that adopting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, instead of frequent recourse to the courts, will enhance internal democracy in Nigerian political parties. While the formal judicial process of litigation has shown some strength in resolving party disputes for internal democracy to reign, there is a growing agreement that this process has generally failed in delivering justice, healing wounds, facilitating voluntariness and reconciliation, and in ensuring direct participation of disputants in resolving their disputes – an option that not only reduces the time and cost of resolving the dispute but also fosters internal democracy. Congresses, party primaries, elections, and appointments constitute the most visible processes that have generated disputes and threatened party cohesion and governance in general. The paper identifies the lack of ideology and the absence of internal democracy as factors that predispose political parties to disputes. It argues that party disputes can be resolved through the deployment of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism which has been acknowledged as an effective means of resolving disputes or conflicts. The paper concludes that political party members, especially leaders of the parties, should focus more on internal party mechanisms to resolve conflicts that may arise from primaries, congress and general elections. It recommends that political parties and institutions should maintain openness, fairness, and inclusion in these processes to reduce intra-party wrangling and foster party cohesion and good governance.

Keywords: internal party democracy, intra-party conflicts, alternative dispute resolution, litigation, political party

Introduction

Internal democracy within political parties is crucial for ensuring fairness, transparency, and inclusiveness in the decision-making processes. It allows for the participation of party members in shaping policies, selecting candidates, and overall governance. Alternative dispute resolution (ADR),

as its name implies, denotes other methods and procedures outside of litigation in resolving disputes either as alternatives to the traditional dispute resolution mechanism (the court system) or supplementary to such mechanism. ADR is a way of settling disputes without litigation. Using ADR procedures such as Mediation, which involves a neutral third party assisting disputing parties to reach a mutually acceptable resolution, Arbitration, which involves a neutral arbitrator who listens to both sides and makes a binding decision to resolve the dispute, and Negotiation, involving direct discussions between the conflicting parties, can facilitate out-of-court settlement of disputes. Implementing arbitration mechanisms can provide a structured approach to settling conflicts. These mechanisms have the capacity to help avoid the acrimony that often accompanies extended trials and allows parties to understand each other's position and craft their solutions (Miller, 2016, p.1; Robert, 1998, p.1).

Arbitrations have been part of the traditional dispute resolution (TDR) method in Nigeria; Common Law rules on Arbitration are part of our Law. Arbitration Ordinance 16 of 1914 was an adaptation of the 1889 English Arbitration Act. According to Rhodes-Vivour (1999), the Arbitrations Ordinance was based on the English Arbitration Act of 1889 and applied to the whole country which was then being governed as a unitary state; when Nigeria became regionalized in 1954, and later federal, the ordinance became the respective laws of the regions and later the states.

Internal democracy in political parties, similarly recognized as intra-party democracy, is a democratic cultural practice within and among party members, which is the level and methods of including party members in decision-making and deliberation within the party structure. Intra-party democracy is usually known to cultivate voters' political competencies and produce more capable representatives who ensure that the party produces better policies and political programmes. Okhaide (2012, p. 58) states that "Political parties are indispensable institutions of democracy and democratic societies. It has been argued that sustainable democracy is not achievable without a viable political party system".

Many political parties in Nigeria find it very difficult to adopt an open system that will not only allow members of the party to participate in the decision-making but also give them the unrestricted opportunity to contest in elections under the party's platform. This kind of socio-political restriction and constraint has increasingly resulted in party wrangling, war of attrition, recrimination, acrimony, coordination dilemmas, and cross-carpeting in many Nigerian political parties (Ojukwu & Olaifa, 2011). These challenges thrown up by the lack of proper internal democracy across all political parties in Nigeria, which is a recipe for conflicts, is

what this paper seeks to interrogate. Available data indicate that introducing ADR as a standby mechanism will help in resolving intra-party conflicts in Nigerian political parties. The activities of political parties since 1999 (the advent of the fourth republic) shall be scrutinized, with special focus on political party primaries of 2022.

Litigation Challenges

Party primaries, congresses, elections, and appointments constitute the most visible processes that have generated disputes and threatened party cohesion and general governance. These procedures are crucial in molding the structure of political parties, selecting candidates for elections, electing party members to various organs of the party and filling government positions after every election. However, due to self-interest and godfatherism, differences frequently become problematic and spark conflicts inside political parties and across the political landscape (Uzochukwu & Atracta, 2022; Oseghale, 2020).

The delay and cost implication of the litigation processes that arise from these conflicts is a huge challenge, as they often bring to reality the maxim "justice delayed is justice denied." According to Oddiri (2004, p.1), "overtime, the process of litigation has become more and more time-consuming, expensive and cumbersome, upsurges in the number of cases in courts have led to congestion and delay in their resolution." These genuine concerns over cost and delay in litigation procedures coupled with increasing globalization have led to the emerging global search for a more flexible means of resolving conflict or dispute; hence, the re-emergence of ADR. Ontario Civil Justice Review (2015, p. 1) asserts that "No civilized society can remain stable without a mechanism whereby its members can resolve their disputes peacefully and, where necessary, in a binding fashion."

To ensure requisite high quality of justice and fair and impartial determination of matters coming before the courts, a strong and completely independent judiciary is essential. That would spur the judiciary to develop a streamlined more efficient structure and overall strategy for the civil justice system that would enable it to provide speedier service and maximize the utilization of public resources allocated to it. According to Warren E. Burger, a former chief justice of the United States, "A sense of confidence in the courts is essential to maintain the fabric of ordered liberty for a free people" (1970, p. 936). When justice is delayed, which is generally accepted as denial, solidarity and stability will be impeded and such society will hardly function. As an impetus to this position, Burger listed some harms delayed justice could inflict on society:

inefficiency and delayed justice will drain even a just judgment of its value; people who have long been exploited in the smaller transaction of daily life would conclude that the court cannot vindicate their rights and protect them from fraud and overreaching behaviour; and people would come to believe the law in the larger sense cannot fulfil the primary function of protecting them and families in their homes, at their work and in the public street (Burger, 1970). This is a recipe for conflicts the results of which can hardly be determined.

ADR is a method or mechanism put in place for the resolution of conflict outside of court litigation processes, and this process is always anchored by a neutral third party. Spangler (2003) said the term ADR is commonly used while referring to informal processes or method of dispute resolution where parties to the conflict meet with a professional third party who helps them to navigate out of their dispute in a way that is less formal and often more consensual, unlike what is obtainable in the courts. Lieberman and Henry (1986, p. 424) emphasized that "the ADR roster includes such well-known processes as arbitration, mediation, conciliation, and, perhaps, negotiation. These processes can be used to settle existing disputes or to prevent disputes from developing."

Fundamentally, alternative dispute resolution symbolizes all procedures of resolving conflict other than litigation or adjudication through the court's processes. ADR provides a viable opportunity to resolve disputes and conflicts through the utilization of processes that are best suited for a particular dispute or conflict. The salient beauty of ADR is that it is like a renaissance of Africa's traditional method of conflict resolution. Pre-colonial Africans relied heavily on the nitty-gritty negotiating for peace which was inherited from their forbears. For conflict to be resolved in traditional African society, and for harmonious and peaceful coexistence, the mechanism or processes of negotiation, mediation, arbitration, adjudication and reconciliation, based on the tripod of impartiality, neutrality and transparency, were strictly followed. Elaborating on this, Olaoba (2010, p. 23) said: "The nature of the principle of conflict resolution in indigenous African societies was anchored on flexibility and elasticity of the rules and guidelines of operation, the divine inspiration and the conceptualization of peace in the society."

ADR is an effort to provide an alternative to the adversarial nature of litigation that fosters a win-lose outcome; it is a system that has a human face and encourages joint problem-solving. Because of its contents, it is often referred to as Amicable Disputes Resolution or Appropriate Disputes Resolution. Olagunju (2014) opined that ADR hypothetically developed in the West, notably the USA. But in reality, any student of Traditional

African Dispute Resolution (TADR) or of various Asian and even Native American dispute resolution mechanisms will realize that ADR appropriates and leans profoundly on those various local practices of conflict resolution (Affrifah, 2015).

ADR Awareness in Nigeria

Nigeria as a member of the global community has keyed into this new phenomenon of embracing ADR as a veritable means of resolving conflicts, as more and more states in Nigeria have started experimenting with the ADR process programme, although some states called theirs "Multi-door Court House". This paper projects ADR as a solution to conflicts in Nigeria, and as a way out of the growing challenges confronting the litigation process of justice delivery, like cost, delay, cumbersomeness and increasing number of court cases. As the awareness of ADR in Nigeria continues to gain momentum, the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended has further given legal impetus to its use. Specifically, Section 19(d) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) 1999 provides for the settlement of disputes by Arbitration, Mediation, Conciliation, Negotiation and Adjudication. For the first time in Nigeria, Arbitration and other forms of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) are given constitutional backing as a means of settlement of disputes (Oddiri, 2004).

ADR reduces hostility and antagonism; but most importantly, it saves business relationships and encourages continued cordiality between the parties. Apart from the fact that businessmen and women now prefer private resolution of their disputes to exposure to the machinery available in the glare of the regular courts, there is the advantage that settlement through ADR avoids what can be best described as brinkmanship and acrimony, which often arise in litigation. These are made largely possible because the procedure provides greater room for compromise than litigation (Obi, 2018; Oddiri, 2004; Tajti, 2019).

Formation of Political Parties

From 1999 (when the then military Head of State, General Abdulsalm Abubakar, handed back power to civilians) to 2023, numerous political parties have been formed in Nigeria, as every group, social or cultural, wanted to metamorphose into a political party. The political parties became too numerous for citizens to keep count of, and the Nigerian political system, already bad-footed as a result of selfish and regional interests, became crippled and bastardized (Okhaide, 2012). Consequently, three political parties were initially registered. These were the People's

Democratic Party (PDP), the All People's Party (APP), and the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP). Later, the Alliance for Democracy (AD) was registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). There was a significant increase in the number of political parties in Nigeria (about 17 parties) by December 2002. Furthermore, additional three political parties were added by INEC between January and February 2006. Currently, under the present political dispensation, the number of registered political parties in Nigeria that participated in the 2019 general election was about 96. Of these number, two – the PDP and APC – are dominant. PDP was among the ones formed in 1999 and APC, formed in February 2013, was the result of an alliance of Nigeria's three biggest opposition parties, the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and a faction of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) (Ajulo, 2018).

However, in a bid to bring sanity into the electoral process, 74 political parties have had their registrations revoked by Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for failing to comply with the Constitution's standards for political parties. Sixteen (16) political parties that met the prerequisites for existence under section 225A of the 1999 Constitution remained registered by the Commission. Among them are the African Action Congress (AAC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), Accord Party (AP), Action Alliance (AA), African Democratic Congress (ADC), African Democratic Party (ADP), and Allied Peoples Movement (APM). Others are Labour Party (LP), New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP), National Rescue Movement (NRM), Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), Social Democratic Party (SDP), Young Progressives Party, and Zenith Labour Party (ZLP). Mahmood Yakubu, the chairman of INEC, announced at a press conference that one of the political parties, the Action Peoples Party (APP), filed a lawsuit and won an order preventing the Commission from deregistering it. The APP would remain registered pending the determination of the matter before the court, he said. A new political party, the Boot Party (BP), created by court order after the 2019 general election would also continue to operate (Kwen, 2020). Hence, as at 2023, there were 18 political parties registered in Nigeria that were qualified to contest the 2023 election.

Conflict and Intra-Party Democracy

At every congress and party primary of these numerous political parties in Nigeria, there is always an intra-party conflict that often lingers on in the courts, even after the main election has been conducted and the winner announced. Such was the case between PDP and Rotimi Amaechi who, at the end of an intraparty dispute, became the Governor-elect for River State

without contesting in the main election. Intraparty conflict is, especially, a common phenomenon among the major political parties, PDP, APC and ACN.

Before a country can be sanitized and developed, there must be several internal sanitation and development in the major political parties, one of which is likely to form the government. They have to perform several 'institutional guarantees' to effectively discharge what is expected of them in any democracy. Intra-party democracy is one of the institutional requirements for conducting election into various offices and political parties are among the institutions that carry out and actualize the democratic principles in any organized democratic society. To make intra-party democracy work, fairness is required. Conflict is likely wherever the performance of a public policy is biased in favour of a certain group (Aleyomi, (2013). Okhaide (2012:1) said "The conduct of a credible election has been hinged on many factors. One of them is a well-developed internal party democracy. This assertion underscores the quest for internal democracy among the various political parties in Nigeria."

The lack of or non-existence of an ideology, absence of internal democracy, incumbency factor, goal mismatch, godfatherism or neo-patrimonialism, politics of self-interest and winners takes all mentality in Nigeria politics, are some of the reasons why political parties, especially the biggest two (PDP and APC), experience frequent intra-party conflicts (Aleyomi, 2013; Akindele, 2011; Chukwuma & Ali, 2014; Yahaya & Ibrahim, 2015). As Olaniyan (2009, p. 51) observed, "party politics has adorned the toga of notoriety in Nigeria to the extent that its defining characteristics have been intrigues, bickering, backbiting, schisms and violence". It is in this context that scholars are interested in understanding the dynamics of intra-party conflicts with a view to developing a durable process of nurturing democratic ethics and values. Meanwhile, intra-party differences remain recurrent in different forms and at different stages in the process of democratization in Nigeria, constituting a barrier to the growth of democracy in the country (Ngwu & Ajah, 2022).

All political parties' constitutions include provisions for internal democracy, and the Federal Republic of Nigeria's constitution and the electoral act serve as guidelines for the political parties, making their registration such a requirement. Unfortunately, political parties have frequently failed to adhere to the procedure. The internal processes of Nigerian party politics are perforated with group wrangling, personality clashes, disaffection, distrust, decamping and assassination. When these happen, aggrieved party members resort to litigation as a means of addressing perceived irregularities committed by some party officials or

groups. Although each party has a conflict resolution mechanism that provided an alternative to the litigation process, members seldom use it to resolve disputes because they have no confidence in it. The tendency is for disputants to seek redress in court through the process of litigation. This is in spite of the fact that managing party disputes or conflicts through litigation and the instrumentality of election petitions tribunals sometimes drag on for years without any resolution. Sometimes, the seeming resolution of some of the issues gives rise to additional or multiple problems and creates bitterness and further conflicts (Okhaide, 2012; Oseghale, 2020; Oseghale & Adesiyon, 2021; Uzochukwu & Atracta, 2022).

Overview of Intra-Party Conflicts in Nigeria

The history of political party disputes or conflicts in Nigeria is a long one. This is because incidences of party disputes date back to the colonial era. For this discussion, however, our focus is on the intra-party disputes witnessed from 1999 to 2019; this period is significant because it represents the latest era of democratic rule after several years of military dictatorship. Some scholars (Chukwuma & Ali, 2014; Jinadu, 2001; Nwanegbo, Odigbo and Nnorom, 2014; Adenuga, et al., 2021; Yahaya, 2019) include the following among the major cases of internal crisis within Nigeria's political parties during this period: the Chief Sunday Awoniyi-led vs. Chief Edwin Ume-Ezeoke-led intra-party squabble of 2000; the Anambra State internal tussle between then Governor Chris Ngige and his godfather, Chief Chris Uba; the Imo State crisis that led to the defection of Senator Ifeanyi Ararume to Action Group of Nigeria; the Ogun State crisis that led to the defection of Senator Ibikunle Amosun to ANPP and later to ACN; the Ekiti State case that led to the defection of former Governor Segun Oni to ACN and later to PDP; the crisis in Ondo State that led to the defection of Governor Segun Mimiko to Labour Party and later back to PDP; the crisis in Abia State PDP that led to the defection of former Governor Orji Uzor Kalu to the Progressive Peoples Alliance, then back to PDP and now in APC and the Bayelsa State crisis that led to the defection of former Governor Timipre Silva to the All Progressive Congress.

Chukwuma & Ali (2014) note that the persistence of the internal crisis within the PDP and the subsequent defections of the aggrieved members, who call themselves the 'new PDP' and moved to the opposing party APC in 2013, is a culmination of the perennial subterranean wrangling in the party that stemmed from desperate ambitions, lack of ideological attachment to the party system, and crass partisan opportunism. This movement was led by Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, former Vice President;

Alhaji Abubakar Kawu Baraje, former acting national chairman of the party and Chief Olagunsoye Oyinlola, former Governor of Osun State and the then secretary of the party. Other prominent members who left PDP at that time include the Engineer Rabi'u Musa Kwakwanso, Governor of Kano State; Mr Chibuike Rotimi Amechi, Governor of Rivers State, Alhaji Ahmed Abdulfatah, Governor of Kwara State, Alhaji Murtala Nyako, former Governor of Adamawa State; Alhaji Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko, Governor of Sokoto State; Alhaji Sule Lamido, Governor of Jigawa State and Alhaji Babangida Aliyu, Governor of Niger State. And in 2017 the drama continued with Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, former Vice President, again moving from APC back to his former party PDP. Later on, APC had its own 'new APC' group that was led by Alhaji Galadima and they all again moved back to PDP. Prominent members of this group were Alhaji Aminu Waziri Tambuwal, Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso, Alhaji Abubakar Kawu Baraje, Chief Olagunsoye Oyinlola, Alhaji Ahmed Abdulfatah; they were later joined by the Senate President Bukola Saraki and Speaker of the House of Representative, Hon. Yakubu Dogara. As of 13th December 2018 the ruling APC was still ruffled by the aftermath of its primaries that had generated disputes in some states. Ogun and Imo States governors, for months, remained at loggerheads with the party National Chairman Adams Oshiomhole over the outcome of the party primaries held in those states (Adenuga, et al., 2021; Ngwu, & Ajah, 2022; Yahaya, 2019).

The 2023 general election has its fair share of intra-party conflicts, as APC's crisis was multifaceted, stemming from factors such as post-presidential primary election grievances, a crisis of trust/confidence among various tendencies within the party, and discontent in the Tinubu political camp. While the party's presidential primary was widely regarded as free, fair, and legitimate, post-primary election actions suggested that the outcome of the primary election raised some concerns. The petition brought by former Minister of State for Education, Honourable Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba, demanding the disqualification of Senator Bola Tinubu, who won the presidential primary, was a key signal of concern. Nwajiuba ran in the APC presidential primaries. The former Minister was thought to be acting out the script of certain factions inside the party hostile to Tinubu's candidacy. Even after its electoral win in the 2023 elections, nominating persons to fill available positions remained a contentious matter, as manifested in the debate over who would lead the 10th National Assembly (Obaraye, 2023).

The two major opposition parties, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the Labour Party (LP) were also facing crises characterised by leadership tussles, suspensions, expulsions and court cases. The crisis in the PDP had

its roots in the outcome of the party's presidential primary election, where Rivers State governor, Nyesom Wike, lost to the former vice-president, Atiku Abubakar. After the primary, Atiku picked Delta State governor, Ifeanyi Okowa, as his running mate for the 2023 presidential election, against the recommendation of a committee chaired by Benue State governor, Samuel Ortom, which reportedly recommended Wike as the PDP vice presidential candidate. The Rivers governor would later lead four other PDP governors to demand the resignation of the party's chairman, Iyorchia Ayu, as one of the conditions for backing Atiku's presidential ambition. The G5 governors rejected all measures taken to resolve the problem, including the resignation of the party's Board of Trustees (BoT) chairman, Walid Jibrin (Ufuoma, 2023; Obaraye, 2023).

Following the outcome of the general elections, Fayose was suspended by the PDP leadership. The PDP leadership, led by Ayu, also ordered Ortom to appear before a disciplinary committee. Ayu was suspended by his ward for anti-party activity. Justice W. I. Kpochi of the Benue State High Court ordered Ayu to stop posing as the party's chairman. The Labour Party (LP) was likewise in a similar situation after the general election. The crisis between Julius Abure and Lamidi Bashir Apapa over the party's national chairmanship position continued to shake the foundation of the party (Ufuoma, 2023; Obaraye, 2023).

The Role of ADR in Resolving Intra-Party Conflicts

It is duly recognized that justice can be found outside courts and that it can be reinforced by a variety of methods, structures, procedures, and by people that may have little, if anything, to do with courts or the court system (Sourdin, 2015). Law reform commission (2007, p. 9) states that "Access to justice should not only guarantee access to the court's system but also to adequate dispute resolution processes and forums to resolve disputes in a manner which best meets the goals of the parties involved in securing access to individualized justice."

There is evidence, from the literature reviewed, that the litigation process as an approach used in the management of political party disputes, has not been very effective. Distrust, bickering, decamping and unwarranted treatment of party members have continued to be a reoccurring decimal in party politics in Nigeria. This failure of the litigation process has created additional reasons for defection and in a few cases resulted in the creation or formation of a "political party within a political party", loss of lives, hates speeches, governance disruption, uncertainty, displacements and destruction of property. These are some of the aftermaths of many court judgments pertaining to intra-party disagreements. Hence the need for an

alternative approach and appropriate dispute resolution system that can at both intra and inter-party levels resolve conflicts so that its outcome ends in a flexible, friendly, timely and cost-effective manner where parties to the conflicts will have a win/win situation. This new strategy (ADR) is not only germane but very apt once litigation failures are juxtaposed with ADR outcomes (Obi, 2018; Tajti, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Dispute and conflict are used interchangeably, in this study, to connote a situation of disagreement as a result of incompatibility within a party or between parties. Realistic conflict theory and social conflict theory (SCT) were adopted as theoretical framework for this study. Realistic conflict theory was first developed by Muzafer Sherif (1954), an American psychologist who carried out the famous “Robbers Cave” study into group conflict. The theory is termed “Realist” because it proposes that conflict between groups isn't based on something irrational but on an actual need for resources. This theory provides a framework for proper understanding of the need to use Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and the norms of internal party democracy as effective mechanisms of resolving intra and inter-party disputes as these disagreements constitute what Donald Campbell called a social psychological model of intergroup conflict (Campbell, 1965, cited in Mutezo, 2015).

The skill with which Nigerian politicians struggle to power, typically for their self-interest, is the root cause of the apparent friction within and between all the political parties. The theory explains the feelings of bias and discrimination that accompany intergroup hostility and suggests that intergroup animosity might develop from competing aims and rivalry over scarce resources. Groups may compete over scarce resources like money, political influence, military protection, or social status that are either genuine or perceived to be scarce. The value of this idea, which undercuts the entirety of the realistic conflict theory, is questionable, specifically in terms of relations between groups in a broad societal framework. As is the case with many theories, this theory has also been questioned. The realistic conflict theory of intergroup behaviour has several flaws that should be recognized (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994), chief among them is the propensity to presume that conflict is always detrimental. Valentim (2010) asserts that it is apparent that groups with conflicts and significant ideological differences rarely make for harmonious relationships.

Social conflict theory (SCT) was also adopted for this study to complement Realist conflict theory. SCT has the potential to significantly improve internal democracy in Nigerian political parties through

alternative dispute resolution processes. It was therefore employed to investigate the article. Karl Marx and Max Weber developed this theory to better comprehend social conflict. Marx concentrated on class conflict in capitalist countries. Weber broadened conflict theory to encompass power struggles beyond economic class. According to SCT, society is characterized by numerous types of conflict that stem from social inequality and the battle for resources, power, and influence.

In the context of Nigerian political parties, where internal disputes are frequently caused by power struggles, a lack of openness, and unethical behaviour, social conflict theory might give insights into overcoming these difficulties. SCT offers a critical view of societal arrangements, emphasising the importance of competition, power dynamics, and class conflict in forming social structures. Understanding the root causes of internal conflicts within political parties via the lens of SCT allows stakeholders to build more effective alternative dispute resolution processes customised to the unique dynamics of any given system. Recognising that disputes may emerge as a result of unequal power distribution within party structures might, for example, lead to the establishment of mediation methods aimed at balancing power dynamics and promoting inclusion.

Methodology

The methodology used for this study was primarily qualitative, with data collected from secondary sources such as books, news publications, library articles, and online sources to aid in the explanation of concepts such as improving internal democracy in Nigeria's political parties through alternative dispute resolution processes. These publications were examined to generate information about specific cases of intra- and inter-party conflicts in Nigeria since 1999, and to extract points made by various authors who have written on the subject of internal democracy in Nigerian political parties and the use of ADR as a conflict-resolution mechanism.

Discussion

Resolving disputes is a crucial component of democracy. Democracy is a form of government that places a strong emphasis on the involvement and representation of the populace in decision-making. Conflicts are unavoidable in a diverse society with divergent interests and viewpoints. A democratic system's strength resides in its capacity to control and settle these disputes in amicable and appropriate ways. Party primaries, congresses, elections, and appointments are the most visible procedures that have caused disagreements and jeopardized party cohesiveness and

general governance processes in Nigeria.

During party primaries, members of a party vote in internal elections to select their candidates for general elections. Conflicts frequently emerge during primaries because of issues like allegations of unfairness, imposition of candidates, control of the party structure, and absence of transparency. These conflicts can weaken the unity of the party and divert attention from important governance issues by causing defections, party factions, and even legal battles. During party congresses, where party members gather to elect party officials, discuss party policies, and make decisions, disagreements over party leadership, allegations of manipulation, and the conduct of the congress may arise. Conflicts like these can divide parties and make it hard to make good decisions.

After an electoral victory, the appointment of individuals to various positions, including ministerial positions, board memberships, and other important roles, can also generate disputes. These disputes may arise due to issues such as favouritism, tribal or religious bias, lack of merit-based appointments, and allegations of corruption can strain party unity and erode public trust in the governance system. While disputes are unavoidable in any community, democracy provides a framework for handling and resolving them peacefully and productively. It develops the structures, procedures, and principles required to guarantee that conflicts are resolved democratically, promoting stability, inclusion, and development.

Conclusion

The challenges militating against internal party democracy in Nigeria, as we have indicated, arise mainly from conflicting interests among party members and lack of clear-cut ideology that is capable of binding party members together. This narrative that breeds conflicts and court cases has to change if Nigeria's democracy must thrive and further develop. While reinforcing the ideological foundation of the country's political parties is a long-term process, we can start changing the current spate of conflicts and litigations by adopting Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as a more favoured and more frequent way of resolving party conflicts. Conflict management is a fundamental aspect of democracy, which is a system of governance that emphasizes the participation and representation of the people in the decision-making process. It recognizes that in a diverse society with varying interests and perspectives, conflicts are inevitable, which makes adopting a mode of resolving them without acrimony very vital.

Therefore, political party members, especially leaders of the parties, should focus more on internal party mechanisms, especially ADR, in resolving all conflicts that may arise from primaries, congresses and general elections. The formal judicial process of litigation has not been able to pre-empt, mitigate or amicably resolve party disputes; rather, additional or multiple problems are further created, due to bitterness and renewed cyclical conflicts. Party formation, membership and operation involve human relationships and interactions that give rise to incompatibilities that make conflicts inevitable. Issues arising from incompatible relationships and perceived neglect or marginalization are usually complex issues that cannot be resolved by the win-or-lose nature of litigation. A more mutually fruitful way of resolving party disputes arising from such issues, and many others, is the deployment of Alternative Dispute Resolution options. ADR mechanism usually ends in win/win outcome for parties to conflicts because it is anchored on flexibility and elasticity of the rules and guidelines of operation and is always approved by the disputants themselves.

Recommendation

Political parties and institutions should maintain openness, fairness, and inclusion in their procedures to reduce conflict and foster party cohesiveness and good governance. Strengthening internal party democracy, fostering a fair playing field, and building effective dispute resolution systems will minimize disputes and improve Nigeria's overall governance processes.

Political parties in Nigeria should uphold the tenets of democracy and practise internal democracy to enable their leadership to emerge democratically, and to prevent the rising culture of political violence and assassination associated with political party activities.

Legal reforms can significantly reduce the pressure on the courts by making provisions which would facilitate adoption and use of ADR processes, such as arbitration within political parties, by the political parties.

Also, by offering training sessions and workshops to party members on dispute resolution procedures and the benefits of ADR, political parties can foster a culture of open conversation, compromise, and consensus-building. Embracing these guidelines and actively using ADR methods can help political parties to promote a more inclusive and transparent decision-making process, which would ultimately give rise to a more virile and stable democracy in Nigeria.

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About the Author: Dr Christian Osemuyi Oseghale (trustnigent1@gmail.com) is a lecturer in Caleb University, Imota Lagos, Nigeria. Orchid ID: 0009-0001-0276-0607.

African Shrines as Channels of Religious Communication in Traditional Religion

By

Francis Chuks Madukasi

Abstract

African shrines are basically channels of religious communication between the living and the spiritual world. In Africa, shrines may be purely in natural form, such as confluence of two rivers, forests, grooves, caves, rocks, mountains and trees, where it is believed that gods and spirits dwell therein. In African landscape, sacred places of this kind are the spiritual focal point of ritual activity. Man-made shrines vary in form; and whatever its form, shape or design, the shrine demonstrates its symbolic function as ritual crossroads or interlinks between two worlds. Also, they act as instruments of social unification. This paper examines how these shrines have become indigenous sacred temples of mortality that bind the Igbo communities in ritual symbology of brotherhood and serve as visible reminders of the covenant between the villagers and their gods in the belief that the deities will respond by sending down breeze of blessings upon them.

Keywords: African, ancestors, gods, shrines, sacred

Introduction

In the true sense of it, shrines are man-made creative art works filled with ritualistic objects. They are considered sacred because they were “carved from a log of wood and regarded as a symbol of the community” (Okafor, 1994:183). Nabofa (1994:12) states that African shrines perform dual functions that include religiously communicative and artistic functions,

and a typical example of this is the *Mbari* cult, which is currently neglected in Igbo tradition and hegemony in spite of its being an embodiment of religious communication and artistic symbols. According to Nabofa (1994:12), “artistic symbols are those which are used in art form for aesthetic purposes”. Buttressing this further with respect to *Mbari*, Nabofa notes:

Every *Mbari* cult is usually erected in a conspicuous place and near the shrine of the particular divinity in whose honour and gratification it is being established. It attracts a lot of audience from neighbouring towns and villages when the job is completed. It acts as the people’s information centre. When it is newly completed it acts as the community’s newsroom for several days and months. After a while it would remain as the people’s archives where they go to consult and obtain inspirations, ideas and information about many aspects of their religious thinking and practices. As Christians and Muslims obtain inspiration from their Holy Books: the Bible and the Quran respectively, likewise the traditional Igbo person receives inspiration and knowledge from the myriads of symbols that are replete in the *Mbari* cult (Nabofa, 1994:49-50).

Nabofa (1994:12) regrets that although shrines of African traditional religion are replete with artistic symbols, it is a pity that most of these are being neglected, pilfered out and smuggled into Europe and America. The observation of Chinua Achebe in this respect may be worthy of note:

The purposeful neglect of the painstakingly and devoutly accomplished *Mbari* house with all the art objects in them as soon as the primary mandate of their creation has been served, provides a significant insight into the Igbo aesthetic value as process rather than product. Process is motion while product is rest. When the product is preserved or venerated, the impulse to repeat the process is compromised. Therefore the Igbo choose to eliminate the product and retain the process so that every occasion and every generation will receive its own impulse and experience of creation. Interestingly this aesthetic disposition receives powerful endorsement from the tropical climate which provides an abundance of materials for making art, such as wood, as well as formidable agencies of dissolution, such as humidity and the termite. Visitors to Igboland are shocked to see that artifacts are rarely accorded any particular value on the basis of age alone (1984:ix).

Buttressing this kind of non-challant attitude towards such significant and symbolic African shrine [*Mbari* cult], Geoffery Parrinder observes:

The panorama of life is well illustrated in the *Mbari* ‘decorated’ houses which Igbo people of Nigeria have traditionally erected at

special times. These were temporary temples, built at the specific command of a god, but never repaired after construction and soon falling into disrepair. The central figure of such temples is *Ala*, the great Mother Goddess, the spirit of fertility, and guardian of the dead which as they are buried in the earth are said to be in her pocket. Some of the statues of *Ala* with a child in her arms have been compared to Italian Madonnas or the Egyptian Isis with her son Horus (1987:128).

The picture of total negligence and complete ruin Achebe and Parrinder are painting here calls for urgent reorganization and revitalization of all the indigenous African shrines and their associated artistic symbols; in Igboland, in particular, some communal shrines could serve the purpose of cultural integration and transmission of indigenous knowledge to posterity, irrespective of modern civilization, because such “exotic objects have been given value as art and culture” (Clifford, 1988:12). On this, Idigo (2001:180) warns: “Let me remind the Igbo nation that like the Christian religion, the Igbo traditional religion believes that life is a continuum. Our dead ancestors are not dead and gone. Their souls are living. Our pioneer fore-fathers are still living. We must overcome our shortcomings in order to attract their blessings. If we do not, the likelihood is that we shall continue to be haunted and disunited”. Affirming this assertion, Hakan Rydving (2004:101) exhorted the Igbo nation by advising them “to stand firm in their beliefs and not desert the customs of their ancestors”. Buttressing this further, Idigo (2001:178-179) argues that “the neglect of the historical knowledge is to a nation what the loss of memory is to human beings. The Igbos should therefore be prodded to take a renewed interest in their history in order to understand why they are in this current state”. This is because according to Achebe (1958:143) “our dead fathers are weeping because of the shameful sacrilege they are suffering and the abomination we have all seen with our eyes”. On a general note, in traditional religion of the Igbo people artistic symbols are invaluable resources encoded with learned pattern of behaviour, ideas, and beliefs shared among a people and socially transmitted from one generation to another (Sofola, 1973:ix). Put in another way:

Most African sculptures appear to have been associated with religion, which pervades most aspects of African life. The religious genres included, votive figures, which adorned shrines, reliquary figures, charms, figures, stools, used in initiation to the cults, the apparatus for divination, dance staff, musical instruments and a variety of other ritual paraphernalia (Bascom,1973:11).

Shrines as Ritualistic Centres

These shrines are the ones that have to do with where items or materials are kept and used to perform certain rituals or ceremonies especially for religious instruction and initiations. In that sense, Nabofa (1994:14) states that such shrines do not only serve communicative functions but are equally means of preserving knowledge as well as religious and historical occurrences; it is in this vein that ritualistic shrines are the most valuable means for passing on the tradition and culture of a people from generation to generation. Here, it is very imperative to remind ourselves of Carl Jung's (1979:93) observation that shrines as cultural ritualistic centres are "those that have been used to express eternal truths" and that are still used in many religions today. According to Nabofa (1994:12) "ritualistic centres" like African shrines "are sometimes used to instruct the devotee in certain principles... [sic]. Ritualistic symbols are those that are used either in a ritual itself or to evoke a ritual in the mind of the initiate".

Such shrines basically have gone through series of metamorphosis or transformations and even a long process of more or less conscious development, and have thus become collective images accepted by Western societies (Clifford, 1988:12). However, ritualistic African shrines, no matter how old and transformed or modified they may be, still retain much of their time honoured or original symbolic sacredness and numinosity or spell which can ultimately still evoke a deep emotional response in some of those who had acknowledged them (Nabofa, 1994:14). We often say that African traditional religion is primarily written everywhere (Metuh, 1987:12) and this is true because every traditional African community, like Aguleri, is replete with the shrines of "their religion and those who have eyes to see and ears to hear can symbolically experience and notice them in their cultural context" (Nabofa, 1994:14). According to Nabofa (1994:14) again, man's creative activities, actions, emotions and self-expressions are basically symbolic in themselves, but somehow they are based on symbols which are used to preserve trado-religious knowledge and the mythical history behind them. Nabofa (1994:14) further maintains that the physical images found in indigenous shrines and verbal expressions are also used to convey a religion's theology; other cultic elements basically portray or stand for something which has resulted from the creative activity of a particular geographical and cultural setting, like Aguleri community. More so, they not only communicate, but are equally significant tools or meduim for man to satisfy his quest and need to express himself and actually preserve and transmit the experience of the past to posterity (Nabofa, 1994:14).

Consequently, Nabofa (1994:14) further argues that shrines, especially

those connected with religious and cultural festivals, like the *Obugad* and *Otutunzu* shrines are connected to historical events like the coronation festival of the new elect of *Eze Nri*, are re-enacted and they are used to teach and to call to memory remembrance of historical and significant events and doctrine of the faith. He affirms that in this context such ritualistic and symbolic shrine is very significant in aiding, instructing and shaping the minds of the younger generations about the sect they belong to (Nabofa, 1994:14). Buttressing this further, Nabofa (1994:14) again asserts that in such festivals most cultic activities that feature prominently are sacred ritual activities during which some significant historical events that relate to the people's belief are re-enacted, reconstructed and revitalised. Analytically, to elucidate more on this, a young, palm fronds used during solidarity march for the King during the coronation festival in a traditional community like Aguleri carries so many religious and symbolic undertones; primarily, it symbolises sacredness in its entirety (Nabofa, 1994:54). We should take note of the fact that in Africa, and Nigeria in particular, one major aspect of Nollywood's contribution in all these is in the representation of religio-cultural rituals as a basic aspect of communalism (Uwah, 2010:87). This depicts the capability of film directors and producers to connect familiar symbolic language of these cultures into their film productions, especially to avail the experience of communal liminality (Animalu, 1990:46), cultural integration and nostalgic egalitarianism among the proximate audience – who are mainly Nigerians and Africans (Uwah, 2010:86).

Significance of African Shrines

It is on this note that De Heusch (1994:233) affirms that “there is no doubt that the river marks the border between two cosmic realms”, where the “spiritual power or powers” lay (Nabofa, 1994:15). Parrinder (1969:58) describes “such sacred place as the home of powerful spirits, whom their leader often represented as a great king who lives in an underwater palace with mermaids and mermen as his attendants. From time to time he tries to flood the earth, and in some stories there may be links with Asian tales of a primitive deluge”. As a point of emphasis, it is in this sacred shrine known as *Agbata Ezu na Omanbala* (the confluence of *Ezu* and *Omanbala* rivers) that Eri prepared and buried the covenant pot of clay called “*Ududu Eze*” which he handed over to Aguleri as the first son for the identification and coronation of kings among the Igbo speaking tribes in Nigeria (Eyisi, 2010:10). In fact, the coronation ritual ceremony of an Nri king would not be complete if ‘*Ududu Eze*’ is not handed over to the acclaimed king to be by the traditional ruler of Aguleri (Idigo, 2001:42). Nabofa (1994:55) describes such sacred or mythical pot as “the power house of power in the

home or community’’. This sacred or mythical pot called *Ududu Eze* would be idiomatically compared to a griot which is described as a musical accompaniment/object without which, no celebration or ritual would be complete (Babey, 1976:24).

As a point of emphasis, it is significant to mention here that the claim of Aguleri as the cradle of Igbo civilization (Isichei, 1980:2) and the head of the Igbo people is by virtue of being the first born of Eri, the father of the Igbos who at the death of his father, was given the scepter of authority to rule Eri settlement. Therefore, a centralized authority like Nri had no authority over settlement towns established by his offspring (Idigo, 2001:82). This sacred object which stands for authority, justice and leadership among the Igbo people serves as a binding force among the communities that constitute Eri kingdom to their common ancestor (Idigo, 2001:42).

These types of shrines serve also among the power points of expressing the believer’s sense of the sacred and the orderliness of the divine realities (Nabofa, 1994:45). Idowu (1969:128-130) describes such shrines as “primarily the face of the divinity. There the divinity is represented by the emblems which are regarded as sufficient reminders of his attributes”. Mary (2002:121) pragmatically and symbolically describes such sacred shrines as the “place where the heaven comes down to earth’’. Nabofa (1988:78) posits that such places are as “they are, as they were spots where the spiritual come down to the earthly, and the earthly is elevated to the spiritual’’. Mbiti (1975:144) argues that such places are not for common or careless use, because they are considered to be sacred or holy. Chidester (1992:10) explains that such a place is inhabited by the dead, a domestic space in which the ancestors reside or visit. He argues that in ancestral ritual, death is not a barrier between the living and the living dead who continue to interact and communicate with the descendants (Chidester, 1992:11). Olsen (2004:13) observes that something magical happens at such a sacred place that triggers an unconscious memory and to learn about the world of sacred place is to learn about ourselves. He affirms that such sacred places and intersections are the locations where humans first erected temples, pyramids, shrines, churches and cities (Olsen, 2004:13).

As Lovell (2002:23) has pointed out, “such territory or space is characterized both as a metaphysical domain and as a terrestrial entity. Deities are believed to dwell in another plane, but also need to have their presence manifested and anchored on earth in order for humans to propitiate them properly’’. Such sacred space, to use Reg Saner’s phrase, is “capturing” (1987:723). Weightman (1996:59) argues that “as sacred

places are created, an inner light outweighs outer darkness, and a spiritual journey commences”. Falola & Essien (2007:xiii) state that divine powers that radiate and exude from this kind of sacred place “creates a broad-based spiritual cesspool that provides other forms of spiritual protection”. Peters (2002:23) asserts that such sacred centres are believed to be where “many deities were understood to meet a variety of human needs and when some needs are met, the status quo is maintained; when other needs are met, there is a transformation of individuals and societies to new states of being”. Brown (2004:164) posits that such places are where traditional religious ties tend to compensate the communities like those ones that make up the Eri kingdom “through mediation for the loss of their contact with their ancestral home and with the built/support in religious rituals and cultural security of their extended brotherhood”. Ilesanmi (1996:2) argues that it cannot be denied that the entire community, including the 82% who are said to be Catholics, hold great ancestors like Eri in high esteem probably not as a deity, but purely as an ancestor of the community, a great grandfather of high dignity whose influence is still currently felt in the town politically, socially and religiously. In Igbo cosmological paradigm Eri’s sacred shrine *Obu-gad* is a symbol of brotherhood and unity among the Igbo communities. Ray (2000: 31) opines that “the shrine stands as a thing of pride both for the town and for the deity.... The shrine is thus a visible reminder of the covenant between the villagers and their gods”.

No wonder then that scholars like Falola (2003:147) posit that “the ruling dynasties in the various states forged relationships with one another by promoting brotherhood relations and the cordial relations among them were sometimes explained in affinal relationships”. No wonder Ray (2000:27) supports the notion that “shrines were, and still are, places of pilgrimage for members of the royal family and for descendants of palace officials”. Idigo (2001:177) regrettably comments that in those days, other Igbo communities come to Aguleri to offer sacrifices in the sacred temples to request for one favour or the other and that helped the family houses where most members have converted to denominations of Christianity” and to maintain the link with their root but since their massive conversion into Christianity, these activities became extinct, only Nri keeps to this norm.

Peters (2002:25) argues that “many traditional sacred centers are the centers for particular peoples in their particular geographical and historical circumstances...a sacred center today has to be the center of the entire expanding universe as well as the center of our own lives. That is a big stretch for some traditional ideas”. Kaplan (2000:122) asserts that such shrines are maintained today, even in “similar ancestral alters are still

maintained in the palace” (Blackmun, 1997:150). Nabofa (1994:45) argues that such “shrines in traditional Africa are connected with the homesteads. These are places where family religious activities are carried out. It is in such places that the traditional beliefs and culture are first transmitted to the notice of the young ones in the family”. Rowlands (1985:208) affirms that “the medicines used at the shrines are produced in the palace (sic); thus in original ritual boundaries which...served to coordinate rites of pollution removal at the palace for the chiefdom as a whole”.

According to Mary (2002:111), “this means giving territorial expression to the battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil, and as it were establishing Heaven on Earth”. She argues that as it is in traditional religion, like the whole Igbo religion, the efficacy of prayers requires the mediation and the annexation of a sacred space or shrine (Mary, 2002:111), which Akintola (1992:38) describes as the “shrine of mortality”. Akintola (1992:38) says that in the esoteric sense, it is simply the depository containing all the basic cult objects of religious veneration; and it is, in fact, the place where worship is offered, and devotions paid to the Deity, the Supreme Being of Creation.

Continuing with the argument, Akintola (1992:40) again stresses that “the shrine of mortality accordingly, in this process of spiritualization, that is, of moving man away from his sensuous nature into his bliss and eternity of spirit, is fitted into place as a continual reminder to the initiate that the spiritual nature he desires to acquire or rouse in himself, can be roused fully and effectively only after the philosophical death of his sensuous or carnal personality”. Reaffirming the spiritual value of this kind of sacred place, Ray (1993:268) asserts that prayers, offerings, and sacrifices therefore require the construction of sacred space, where the forces of the invisible ‘other’ world can be brought into this world and effectively controlled. Wosien (1992:23) affirms that such “sacred structure space, facilitates orientation; provides the framework for worship, and transform chaos into cosmos, thus making human life possible”. Nabofa (1994:45) comments that

such sacred places of worship provide geographical points of reference to religious beliefs and practices. They indicate the physical points of contact between the beings in the supra-sensible realm and those in the physical plane. Most of the shrines and sacred places in Africa are etioloical. They teach theological, historical and moral lessons. In most cases, the myth, legends and stories that are told around them have little or no historical foundations. Nevertheless, they are valuable resources for transmitting and concretizing religious concepts and lessons, in both time and space.

Insofar as this invisible energy web also correlates with known areas of anomalies in gravity and space-time, it has been postulated that different dimensions exist simultaneously and that an electromagnetic web of energy interlocks all things on this planet (Olsen, 2004:13). Jett (1995:41) affirms that

because of this power, which is dangerous or beneficent according to those property of one's approach, non initiates avoid sacred places, while those with the proper ritual knowledge – especially medicine men – may make pilgrimages to pray, to renew their ritual equipment and the efficacy of their prayers, to obtain medicinal plants, and to collect sanctified soil and water.

Traditional festivals overlap irrespective of their nature; every festival is preceded by ritualistic ceremonies and some festivals that are seemingly social have ritual underpinnings/sections in them and similarly, ritual festivals that are seemingly solemn and serious have social dimension too (Nti, 1990:3). But unlike the other sacred places in Aguleri which are strictly used for rituals and other festivals, the sacred place of *Obu-gad* is for “social and religious occasions”. This is because the excavation of *Ududueze* alongside the rituals involved in the coronation of Igbo kings are performed around the tomb of Eri the progenitor of Igbo race and the co-joined three mystical trees that symbolise the affinity of three brothers which comprised of (Aguleri, Nri and Arodi) situated at the shrine of *Obu-gad*. No wonder Igwah et al (2014) echoes that “*Obuga* is a place for spiritual re-dedication and the evocation of the proud ancestry of Eri descendants and *Ndi-Igbo* in general. It is a sacred place for royal empowerment and self-purification”.

These are the types of sacred places that are believed to be imbued with natural powers and they carry a potent aura of sacredness and religiosity in the minds of the people that recognize them to be the embodiment and epitome of their spiritual guardians simply because of the mythological and ritualistic embellishment that have surrounded them from time immemorial (Ejizu, 1986:2).

Conclusion

From the understanding of African shrines in Igbo cosmology, basically shrines are ancient ritual centres for keeping and binding the brotherhood of Igbo communities together because Eri is believed to be their great ancestor. In this wise, through the mediation of its symbolism and cultural ethos the ancient spiritual centre is so revered that it portrays Aguleri as the spiritual epicenter for the ritual convocation and reunification of other Igbo communities that make up the Igbo race through her ritualistic

endeavours. Summarily, it has been observed that shrines like the *Mbari* Cult, *Obu-gad*, the confluence of *Ezu* and *Omanbala* [*Agbata Ezu na Omanbala*] symbolically are places for spiritual re-dedication and the evocation of the proud ancestry of Eri descendants and *Ndi-Igbo* in general. It is a sacred place for royal empowerment, self purification and a touristic site for Africans in the diaspora. In summary, a shrine, whether it is a building, an object, a feature of nature, or the ritual community itself, is the necessary material foundation for the religious communication with spiritual reality in Igbo cosmology.

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About the Author: Dr Francis Chuks Madukasi is a lecturer in the Department of Religion & Human Relations, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State, Nigeria. *Email:* frankmakson@gmail.com.

Reflections on the Nigerian Public Service: Way Forward for Governance

By

Bukar Usman

Abstract

This is a lead paper delivered by Dr Bukar Usman, former permanent secretary in the presidency and current president of the Nigerian Folklore Society. The paper, which is an overview of the Nigerian civil service from colonial times to the present day, was delivered at a symposium organised by the Council of Retired Federal Permanent Secretaries (CORFEPS) of Nigeria to mark its maiden Annual Week, held at Rotunda, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja, on March 5-7, 2024. The author marked the distinctive character of the Nigerian Public Service by reckoning its performance during each of the country's political configuration as defined by the nature of the political system in place as well as by the nature of the selectors and/or commanding operatives of the system. He used the three systems of government under which the Nigerian public service had operated in post-colonial times as the basis for grouping and assessing its performance from 1960 to 2024. The paper, using vital performance indices, compared the culture of the Nigerian civil service in colonial and post-colonial times and concluded that the integrity of the application and observance of civil service practices and procedures that obtained during the colonial era had receded in post-colonial times, giving rise to serious public misgivings about the Nigerian Public Service. The paper recommended the following as some of the ways of moving the service forward: private-public partnership, adherence to universal principles of management, financial probity, reduction in the cost of governance, and conduct of free and fair elections.

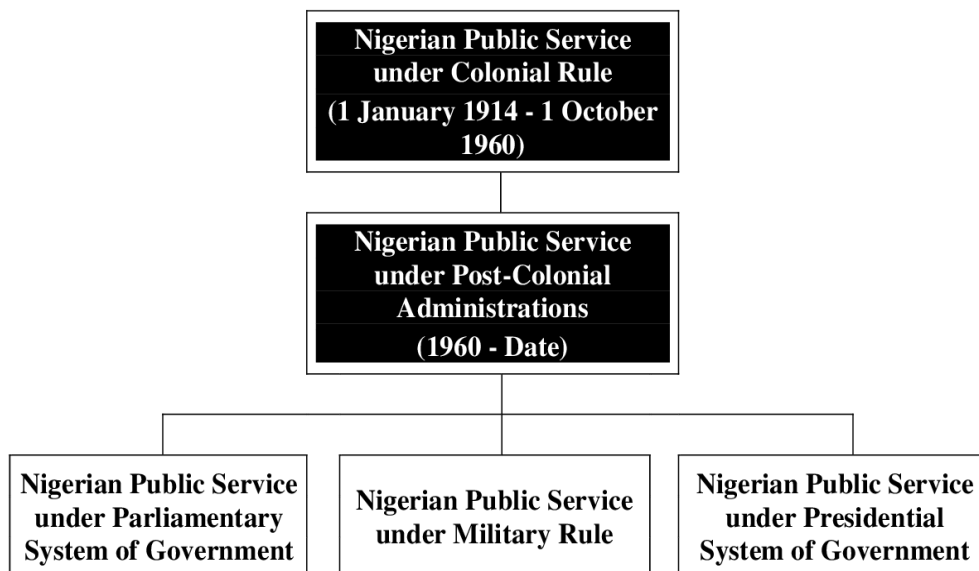
Keywords: Nigerian public service, governance, reflection, political system

Introduction

Broadly defined, the Nigerian Public Service embraces the structure and all posts for which financial provision is made in the government budget at all levels of governance –Federal, State and Local Governments. It includes the legislative houses, the courts, statutory commissions, public

corporations, the armed forces, the police and paramilitary services (Customs, Immigration, Prisons, Federal Road Safety Corps and the Civil Defence Corps). It also extends to companies and enterprises in which government has controlling shares. So, the Nigerian Public Service, in extensive terms, is the all-inclusive umbrella that covers the Nigerian Civil Service and all other services and undertakings that run or oversee Nigerian public affairs.

A complete reflection on the Nigerian Public Service should date back to the colonial service, the precursor of the post-colonial service. The post-colonial service has passed through several periods, each of which brought unique challenges to the service; in some cases, these phases redefined and reshaped the nature and quality of the service. Since a country's public service structure reflects or accommodates its political or governance system, the most periodic way of marking the distinctive character of the Nigerian Public Service in post-colonial times is to reckon its performance during each of the country's political configuration as defined by the nature of the political system in place as well as by the nature of the selectors and/or commanding operatives of the system. Hence, I intend to reflect on the structure, character and performance of the Nigerian Public Service under two broad political eras (colonial and post-colonial), taking into account its peculiar shape and reshaping under post-colonial era's different political systems, as reflected in the following graphic:



I regard 1914 as the take-off date of Nigerian colonial public service. One might have opted for 1886 (when the Royal Niger Company was chartered and mandated to exercise British imperial control over what later became Nigeria and other parts of West Africa following the Berlin Conference's allocation of "spheres of influence" in those territories to Britain in 1885)

or 1900 (when the Royal Niger Company transferred direct control over the territories to Britain). However, 1914 must override these earlier dates because that was the year Nigeria became a unified entity, geographically, politically and administratively, under British Governor-General Frederick Lugard.

The three systems of government under which the Nigerian public service had operated in post-colonial times should form the basis for grouping and assessing its performance during this period. This is because each of these governance systems (parliamentary, military, and presidential) affected the Nigerian public service structurally and administratively. Chronologically, only the parliamentary system had neat start and end dates. The other two systems were operated in an intermittent manner because of military coups that disrupted civilian administrations at different times between 1966 and 1999; no doubt, those irregularities were sources of notable instabilities for the Nigerian public service, as each governance phase had its peculiarities, beliefs and orientation that affected the nature and style of administration during each period. There was even a time when both systems seemed to have co-existed, with a military President at the helm of affairs at the federal level while elected civilians served as governors in the states. All of that had operational implications for the Nigerian public service.

Structural Changes

Nigerian public service during the colonial era was comparatively simple when compared with the intricate structure of the post-colonial era. Although territorially Nigeria remains virtually the same, less Bakassi, administratively it has been restructured. During the colonial era, we had Divisions, Provinces and Regions. This minimal structure was bequeathed to the country at independence in 1960.

Post-colonial structural changes began in 1967 when a 12-state structure replaced the colonial regional arrangement. Subsequent restructurings took place, and now we have 36 States grouped into 6 Zones, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and 774 Local Governments comprising 768 Local Government Areas and 6 Area Councils in the FCT. The three arms of government, the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary, are in place and fully functional with an expanded Foreign Service. Several agencies and institutions have been established over the years and all are geared towards providing service delivery to the people. The Nigerian Public Service is thus larger and has become much more complex than what it was in the colonial era.

A reflection on the Nigerian Public Service must therefore address its

characteristics and performance in its primary function of service delivery during the colonial and post-colonial eras. I will attempt to do so briefly.

Colonial Public Service

I was not a participant in the colonial era. However, I have heard and read of the practices prevailing in the Nigerian Public Service of that era. The impressions I gathered were that rules and procedures in governance were strictly observed with high level of predictability and accountability. Infractions were duly sanctioned and good conduct was rewarded. Privileges were assured and probity was high. Postal and other public services were efficiently rendered.

The prevailing culture of the Nigerian Public Service in the colonial era could be summarised as follows:

- There was wholehearted devotion to service delivery.
- Privileges were not only certain; they were also obtainable as and when due and without tears.
- Discipline was meted out promptly for any infraction and there was nowhere to hide, as there was no ethnic, religious or political consideration.
- Greed was not very visible nor was it openly exhibited. This was because in those days open exhibition of ill-gotten wealth by the public servant attracted immediate query and censor.
- There were tools, though unsophisticated, for service delivery; and officers were fully accountable for such tools put in their care.
- There was transparency in disbursement of funds and hardly did one hear of large sums of money circulating outside official accounting procedure.
- People generally believed in the integrity of the public servant who himself was competent and inspiring. People hardly complained of missing files and incidence of bribery.
- Even the road maintenance labourer was fully devoted and took pride in his job. That was why in those days you would see those maintaining public roads even in the remotest places.
- The much-talked about “due process” which is being revived today with fanfare was taken for granted in those “good old days”. May be what accounted for the relative integrity of the public servant in

those days was that the State took pains to fulfill its own obligations towards the officer. The public servant could even requisition an electric bulb from the Public Works Department (PWD) for his or her official quarters.

- Estacode was granted and dutifully accounted for.
- Effort was made at National Planning and serious attempt was equally made to achieve planned targets.
- Protocol was scrupulously observed at public functions and in appointments.

Post-Colonial Public Service

This era commenced from the Nigerian Independence in 1960 to date. I had been a participant from 1965 as a junior officer (3rd Class Clerk) and bowed out in 1999 as a senior officer. That period embraced parliamentary, military and presidential administrations. With all sense of modesty, I can speak with a fair amount of knowledge about the practices and procedures in the Nigerian Public Service of those periods. It is left for those in the Nigerian Public Service, post-1999, to state what currently obtains. Ultimately, though, what matters most is not how the Nigerian Public Service sees and appraises itself but, rather, the kind of public image it commands from the generality of Nigerians who, as the recipients of its service, are in the best position to judge it. Unfortunately, the image, at the moment, is not all that complimentary.

I testify that the culture and momentum in terms of practices and procedures obtainable in the Nigerian Public Service of the colonial era as described above were inherited and observed to a reasonable extent in the immediate post-colonial years. As a public officer occupying government apartment, I requisitioned an electric bulb from the Public Works Department (PWD) at Ikoyi, Lagos. For accountability, there were inventories of government properties in offices and government-owned premises. The lists hung up on the wall were regularly inspected and updated routinely with high sense of responsibility and accountability.

The General Orders (GO) and Financial Instructions (FI) as guides to general conduct and financial administration were there for induction of public officers at all levels and strictly applied. I witnessed, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as Dr Russel Aliyu Barau Dikko and Shettima Ali Monguno, as political heads of my ministry (Ministry of Mines and Power), dutifully and routinely retire their estacode (travel allowance) whenever they returned from overseas official engagements: they paid

back into government coffers any unspent amounts. It is quite apparent that the integrity of the application and observance of those practices and procedures had receded with time; hence, the present misgivings about the Nigerian Public Service.

Existing working relationship was worsened by two “earthquakes” or “hurricanes” which the military inflicted on the public service. They were the purge in the civil service in 1975 and the civil service reforms of 1988. While the purge destroyed the “security of tenure” hitherto enjoyed in the service, the reforms which reposed financial control in the political head of the ministry remains one of the root causes of the financial recklessness prevailing in the civil service in general. To rectify the damage, subsequent reviews restored some aspects, like the nomenclature of the “permanent secretary” and his status as the accounting officer. However, the reviews did not go far enough. It is maintained that not only the form but the content should have been restored as well.

Given the misgivings and going by public opinion, there is a long-standing and continuing serious concern about the performance of the Nigerian Public Service regarding the following areas or matters:

- Adequacy of Power Supply
- Provision of healthcare
- Pay as You Go (PAYG) pension administration
- Municipal Water Supply
- Management of the education sector
- Conduct of Elections
- Financial Management
- Public Safety
- Contract Awards
- Cost of Governance
- Foreign Influence
- General Deviations from Correct Conduct

Way Forward for Governance

Due to the complexity of Nigeria's governance issue, solutions to the problem are multifaceted, in terms of the diversity of the areas where critical changes are required and the challenge of putting in place the requisite administrative reorientation and attitudinal shift. I will address briefly some of the major concerns in order to stir our minds towards resolving them.

Private-Public Partnership: Although the greater responsibility for delivery of the badly-required public services falls on the shoulders of the Nigerian Public Service and, therefore, calls for serious reforms, it requires the involvement and contributions of other stakeholders in the society and these stakeholders should be seriously cultivated and continually engaged. They include the academia, labour unions, private sector, the media, professional societies, traditional and religious institutions, among other pillars of stability in the country.

A serious attempt was made at forging private-public partnership in the conception of Vision 2010. That effort, in spite of its laudable objectives, somehow fizzled out without producing any sustainable tangible achievement. That was due largely to a culture of lack of continuity and sustainability of policies and programmes in the Nigerian Public Service.

Adherence to Universal Principles of Management: Nostalgic about the "good old days", some people yearn for and advocate a return to the past practices, procedures and performances of the Nigerian Public Service and general conduct of public affairs. Others advocate a new constitution for the country. I do not share the view for a new constitution and have made my position clear in my publication, *Restructuring Nigeria: An Overview*. We have had several constitutions and I believe the existing one is workable given a change of attitude in conduct of public affairs. Besides much has changed in terms of the governmental structure and size of the population and it will be practically impossible to return to or replicate the past, exactly as it used to be. However, universal principles of management remain ever constant and I earnestly believe that if they are applied with all sincerity and seriousness in the Nigerian Public Service, they would have salutary positive results to the appreciation and applaud of all concerned.

Conduct of Elections: If only the conduct of the elections could be improved upon significantly and transparently, it would save time and resources that are otherwise dissipated in post-election acrimony and fight for legitimacy. It would also create a more conducive atmosphere to utilize

the long transition period provided in our electoral system to harmonise the policies and programmes of incoming and outgoing administrations with little or no anxiety. Induction and orientation of new public office holders could be undertaken on a timely basis and without much fuss.

Financial Probity: The subsisting arrangement in public financial management whereby one public agency commands the resources of the country and only doles out leftovers to be shared among the larger arms of government leaves much to be desired. Likewise, it is necessary to restrict government agencies to their core functions and disallow them from delving into other portfolios for which they are not professionally equipped to discharge. For sure, a general reform of financial management in the Nigerian Public Service would provide the resources to fund the much-needed critical infrastructure and services.

A word needs to be said about the situation of the Nigerian Public Service at the States and Local Government levels. The Governors seem to preside over the affairs of the States with little or no checks from the legislatures and the Local Governments are not functioning according to the intendment of the constitution. As a result, unlike the Native Authorities of the past, the Local Governments have virtually no impact on delivery of services to the people at the grassroots. They should be empowered financially and otherwise to do so to arrest the drift of the rural population to the urban areas with consequent social problems.

Conflict of Interest: As regards deviations from correct conduct, it is quite perceptible in the Nigerian Public Service that the spectre of “private interest” looms large to the detriment of “public interest”. This calls for restraint and a re-orientation of all involved in the governance of this country. The greater responsibility for ensuring this falls on the leadership at all levels in the Nigerian Public Service. They should lead by example in public and private life. Public officers should stand by the truth as their armour, and exhibit transparency and accountability in their conduct.

Dispensation of Justice: Much is expected of the courts, Code of Conduct Bureau and tribunals, EFCC and ICPC in the enforcement of the rules. Without conscientious and unbiased enforcement of the rules, disorder and violence reigns; as Aristotle said, “At his best, man is the noblest of all animals; separated from law and justice he is the worst.” Those entrusted with the dispensation of justice, in particular, should abide by the following legal dictums: “Justice should not only be done but it should be seen to be done”; “Justice delayed is justice denied”; and “Where politics enter the palace of justice, justice leaves by the back door”. Above all, our judges and other law enforcement officers should always remember the

legal Latin maxim, “*Salus populi est suprema lex*” – “The welfare of the people is the supreme law”.

Cost of Governance: Though presidential system of government may be inherently costly, the huge costs involved in running it in this country is partly our own making. Cost of governance needs to be seriously reviewed and drastically reduced by checking glaring cases of leakages through embezzlement, misappropriation and diversion of public funds. Government quarters have largely been done away with and other benefits and privileges monetised long ago. Unfortunately, the lifestyle of some high-level public officers tends to betray the wisdom and objectives of the earlier laudable measures instituted primarily to prune down the cost of governance. The National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission should function as intended and its recommendations respected.

Given the reality of globalisation, international engagement is unavoidable in governance. In that regard, memoranda should be prepared on cost implications of personnel and logistics before embarking on foreign trips. This would be of tremendous help in implementing cost-saving measures. Movement and official engagement of top-level members of government should be programmed for the year in advance, with exact financial implications that should not be altered unnecessarily.

In summary, the agenda for items requiring government attention may be short but critical as it includes looking into financial leakages in the oil industry and the maritime industry, perks of public officers, corruption, devolution of powers, review of the revenue sharing formula, and internal security.

Public Safety: Regarding public safety, it should be stressed that distant hoses can't put out local fire. Local knowledge and intelligence are vital in fighting crime. There should be no safe haven or ungoverned spaces for criminals to take refuge and mount daredevil raids on the society. Much should be done to prevent committal of crime in the first instance; to reassure the public and calm down nerves, there should be an improvement in the capacity of our security personnel to detect and foil crime, and to arrest and prosecute offenders immediately.

The framework for national security under our presidential system vests ultimate responsibility for maintaining national security in the president as an embodiment of national cohesion. All other bodies assist him in an advisory capacity. To ensure this, several avenues for interaction have been provided at all levels of governance.

The framework also provides for a Peace and Security Committee at the LGA level. The Committee is supposed to serve as early warning system so as to enable the appropriate government agencies take pre-emptive action. It is necessary for State Governments to ensure that these Committees are not only established but are functioning effectively.

Currently, the roles of the security-intelligence agencies of the Nigerian Public Service appear diffused. What is expected of them is to focus on their core functions as defined by law and cooperate with other agencies in discharging those functions.

Power Supply: Looking back at the celebration of the Golden Jubilee Independence Anniversary in 2010, I wrote a pamphlet *Dreams and Realities: Issues in Nigeria's Golden Jubilee Independence Anniversary*. Therein, among others, I noted that:

Some achievements are pretty obvious like the country remaining one after all the numerous squabbles Nigeria had gone through including a devastating civil war. It is a no mean achievement considering that other countries which are less diverse than Nigeria had broken up between the end of Nigeria's civil war and 2010...However, the internal dynamics of chronic malfunctioning of democratic institutions and systems, corruption, decline in shipping and rail transportation, poor urban and intercity transportation, extreme shortage of electricity and other basic amenities, especially when compared with the performance of less-endowed countries...reflect the depth of peoples' feelings and disappointments...

Regarding power supplies, I observed that: "Nigeria @ 50 has 4,000MW but needs, according to the Nigeria Energy Commission 50,000MW of electricity to realize Vision 20:2020 goals." I then asked, "If it took us 50 years to achieve 4,000MW, how is it possible to achieve 50,000MW in 10 years?" And now, fourteen years after, in 2024, we are still hovering around 5,000MW, if not actually the same 4,000MW figure we had in 2010. It is not difficult to see that little has changed, for we still have the same nationwide load-shedding that the unfulfilled promises and seemingly intensified efforts of past administrations had failed to curtail.

Sometime in early 1970s while serving in the Ministry of Mines and Power, we thought it wise to merge the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria (ECN) and the Niger Dam Authority (NDA) to form the National Electricity Power Authority (NEPA). That was meant to check the incessant bickering between the two entities over supply of power by NDA and non-payment by ECN. To give the needed boost to development of

our solid mineral resources to support our industries, such as the steel mills, the mines portfolio was also merged with petroleum to form the Ministry of Petroleum and Solid Mineral Resources.

To improve power supply, reform of the power sector continued, and NEPA later became Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN). Today, in its place, we have a multiplicity of entities in charge of power supply to various zones in the country. The current entities or components are: power Generating Companies (GenCos), power Distribution Companies (DisCos) and power Transmission Companies. Unfortunately, due to lack of gas to power the plants installed by the GenCos, insufficient transmission lines to carry the power supplies, and with several DisCos being under receivership, the problem of power supply is still overwhelming. This has been and remains a serious handicap to socio-economic development of the country.

Iron, Steel & Aluminium Development: Another serious handicap is Nigeria's failure to develop a functional iron and steel industry, which is considered to be the backbone of a nation's economy. It is lamentable that for upwards of 40 years since the Ajaokuta and associated mills in Jos, Katsina, Oshogbo, and Aladja were initiated and later privatised for assumed efficient management in the hands of the private sector, they are yet to take off for inexplicable reasons. Add to that the failure of the aluminum smelting plant at Ikot Abasi and the disappointing outcomes, in spite of several touch-and-go repositioning, of the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) at Kaduna, and some of the main obstacles to our industrial development become very obvious.

Mass Transportation: Rehabilitation of the rail lines appears to be at a standstill. However, it is noteworthy that construction work on the Kaduna-Kano and Kano-Maradi new railway projects is ongoing. When the two projects are completed, one may celebrate that the railways expansion programme is beginning to materialise. The Metro line in Lagos is being prepared for commissioning. A similar citywide railway network project for Port Harcourt has stalled, just like the uncompleted phase one of Abuja City light railway project.

Air Nigeria, launched with fanfare in the twilight of the last administration's tenure, is bogged down by controversy. And no where do we have functional water transportation we can be proud of. This has led many people to rely on rickety canoes that often capsize, causing the death of fellow citizens in various parts of the country. The concept of mass transit is virtually nil, despite our huge population and annual budgetary provisions for it.

Alien Domestic Policies: Some of the public resistance and misgivings to certain socio-economic and political policies and programmes being implemented by the Nigerian Public Service arose largely from the suspicion, not altogether unfounded, that they originated and were encouraged by some foreign bodies and interests that do not like to see our country grow and stand on its feet. It is on account of such suspicion that leading and notable personalities in the Nigerian Public Service of the past stood their ground and successfully resisted such policies and programmes in preference for substantially homegrown ones. They argued that they attended the same institutions and studied the same subjects as some of those that crafted those unwholesome policies and programmes that were recommended or even imposed on developing countries, including Nigeria. They further observed that some of the advanced countries that promoted such policies did not apply them in their countries on account of the negative consequences they would have on their people.

Conclusion

The Nigerian Public Service of the colonial era was not as large as the post-colonial service and did not command as much resources as we have today; yet, it was more effective in delivery of services. The challenge of the Nigerian Public Service now and in the future is essentially behavioural and calls for a change of attitude to the conduct and management of public affairs. The rules on the ground, some of which were fashioned since 1914 when Nigeria was created, are sufficient guidance. The challenges centre on compliance with and enforcement of the rules and this essentially rests on leadership at all levels of governance, particularly leadership at the topmost levels.

For sure, people's response to the implementation of policies and programmes, for which the Nigerian Public Service is primarily responsible, is the barometer for assessing the impact of governance. Unfortunately, at the moment, more negative than positive responses are coming from the populace. This should be a source of serious concern to all public servants.

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About the Author: Dr Bukar Usman (bukarusman@gmail.com) is the President of the Nigerian Folklore Society.

The Nexus between Igbo Traditional Belief System and Masquerade Act: A Pragmatic Analysis

By

Innocent C. Ngangah

Abstract

This paper explores the proposition that the traditional belief-system and masquerade act of the Igbo of south-eastern Nigeria is a demonstration of Charles Peirce's pragmatism. Pragmatism's central theme is that only practice or action can validate the veracity or meaningfulness of any thought or concept. In like manner, masquerade act or practice in Igbo land is, in many respects, a manifestation of the traditional belief system of the Igbo (also known as Ndi-Igbo). In other words, masquerade act in Igbo land correlates with and validates a key concept communally shared by Ndi-Igbo, thus fulfilling the ultimate goal of Peirce's pragmatism and the pragmatic maxim, namely, that the actual or potential consequence of a concept is the only true proof or validity of that concept.

Keywords: Charles Peirce, pragmatism, Igbo, masquerade act, belief system, culture

1. Introduction

Charles Sanders Peirce's pragmatism posits that a theory is a concept which has a practical effect or the possibility of a would-be practical effect. In other words, it stresses that there is a fundamental connection between thought and action. This paper explores the proposition that the traditional belief-system and masquerade act of Ndi-Igbo is a demonstration of Charles Peirce's pragmatism.

We need to state, in this introductory section, why a scholarly study of an aspect or aspects of a people's culture, such as the one we are conducting here, is a worthy and profitable enquiry. Culture has been defined as "the inner workings" of any given society. It governs the behaviour, attitudes and choices of the people. Societies function because of cultural norms

that shape the individuals in that society.

Pragmatism's central theme is that only practice or action can validate the veracity or meaningfulness of any thought or concept. In like manner, masquerade act or practice in Igbo land is, in many respects, a manifestation of the traditional belief system of Ndi-Igbo. In other words, masquerade act in Igbo land correlates with and validates a key concept communally shared by Ndi-Igbo, thus fulfilling the ultimate goal of Peirce's pragmatism and the pragmatic maxim, namely, that the actual or potential consequence of a concept is the only true proof or validity of that concept. Our analysis, in this paper, shall be conducted within this pragmatic framework.

2. Peirce's Pragmatism: An Overview

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839 – 1913) is generally acknowledged as the father of pragmatism because he was the first to formulate it as a tool of philosophical enquiry and explanation of meaning. Peirce was a man of various scientific and technological endowments who brought his broad-based background in the sciences, mathematics and his scholarly interest in the arts into philosophy, enriching it with his pioneering works in the classification of metaphysical systems, the philosophy of mind and self, logic, semiotics, and pragmatism. Our concern in this paper will restrict us to the latter.

Pragmatism was first proposed by Peirce as a principle and account of meaning in 1870 via his paper, "How to Make Your Ideas Clear"¹. The summary of his thesis is that action validates concept – there must be a practical end to any statement or concept before it can become meaningful. Otherwise, it is meaningless. In other words, the extent to which a proposition or ideology can satisfactorily work in practice is the extent of its theoretical validity. In effect, impractical ideas should not be accepted as valid ideas.

Peirce's thesis spurred a cross-continental movement after his more visible contemporary and Harvard professor, William James, took the idea to the centre stage of scholarly discourse in an address he delivered at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1894. In that paper², James became the first person to use the term "pragmatism" in print but ethically insisted that the term had been coined decades earlier by his close friend and reclusive philosopher, Charles Peirce.

Peirce himself identified Alexander Bain as his major source of influence. This is important because understanding what Bain had said, which Peirce found so influential, is critical in understanding Peirce's "pragmatic

maxim”, which we will discuss later in this paper. The key cornerstone of Peirce’s pragmatism is that belief is a disposition to act. This idea came from Bain. Charles Peirce:

In particular, he [Nicholas St. John Green] often urged the importance of applying Bain's definition of belief, as "that upon which a man is prepared to act." From this definition, pragmatism is scarce more than a corollary; so that I am disposed to think of him as the grandfather of pragmatism.³

Before Bain and Peirce, belief was deemed to be a merely “occurrent” thing – something that occurs in the mind without a necessary relationship with or validation in reality. Hume, for instance, defined belief, in the words of Engel, as “the particular vividness of an idea in the mind”.⁴ Cardinal Newman (1870) also saw belief as mere mental affirmation. This 14th century view remained dominant even in Peirce’s time.

However, in 1859, Alexander Bain, Peirce’s foremost influence, sowed the seed of correlation between thought and action. Drawing from his background in physiology and psychology, he asserted that

It will be readily admitted that the state of mind called belief is, in many cases, a concomittant of our activity. But I mean to go farther than this, and to affirm that belief has no meaning except in reference to our actions; the essence, or import of it is such as to place it under the region of the will (Bain 1859, p. 568).

This was the idea Peirce, breaking reality into grades of consciousness, formulated as pragmatism in 1873. In “How to Make Your Ideas Clear”, Peirce identified three grades of clarity.⁵ The first grade of clarity about a concept is to have a non-contemplative awareness or understanding of it. The proclivity of an adult citizen to register to vote in an election, for example, demonstrates his awareness of his democratic right to vote. No meditation was required before he reached this awareness. For this citizen to advance to Peirce’s second grade of clarity, he should be able to define the concept of democracy. The second grade of reality is the ability to clarify in a definitive way ones grasp of a given experience or concept.⁶ To fully demonstrate his understanding of the concept of reality our hypothetical citizen must elevate his understanding to Peirce’s third grade of reality, which he formulated as follows:

Consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then the whole of our conception of those effects is the whole of our conception of the object.⁷

This third grade of clarity is Peirce's pragmatic maxim. What the maxim purports is that one's understanding of a concept must go beyond his familiarization with it and his ability to state or define it to a practical demonstration of the consequences or effects of holding that belief or concept.

It is important to note that there is not simply a *causal* relationship between belief and consequence but an *actual* one. Peirce later revised the pragmatic maxim, taking its import beyond the actuality of proven effects to the "would-be" consequences of provable effects. By incorporating "would-bees", Peirce imbued the maxim with the architectonic capacity to accommodate his own brand of metaphysics and other positive strands from earlier philosophers. So, although the pragmatic maxim was conceived as a criterion of philosophical enquiry and as "a filter against empty metaphysical statements"⁸, it is "a method of reflexion, having for its purpose to render ideas clear"⁹ – not to abolish, as the logical positivists would wish, all forms of metaphysics.

So, there is room for practicable metaphysics within the armpit of pragmatism. Peirce's later formulation of his maxim ensured this. At his Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism in the early 1900s, Charles Peirce revised the original version of the pragmatic maxim to "allow any flight of imagination provided this imagination ultimately alights upon a possible practical effect". In the highly empirical earlier version of 1878, he had defined the "practical effects" of a belief or concept as "effects...upon our senses"¹⁰. He had simply emphasized actual or immediate effects. But in the later formulation, he expanded the maxim to also include possible or "would-be" events. Engel on the major differences between Peirce's early and later formulation of the pragmatic maxim:

Peirce's later pragmatism formulates the pragmatic meaning of concepts (or statements) in terms of subjunctive conditionals; his earlier account uses indicative conditionals... The strongly descriptive formulation of pragmatic meaning from the 1870's ran counter to Peirce's later prescriptivist view of inquiry as the self-controlled, scientific pursuit of concrete reasonableness. This further explains Peirce's adoption of subjunctive conditionals: they are more sensitive to the prescriptivism of inquiry...¹²

The "indicative conditional" of the earlier pragmatic maxim points out what *will* happen *when* certain concept-driven tests are carried out. But the later "subjunctive conditional" of the maxim projects into the future – it essentially hinges around what *would* happen *if* certain concept-driven events or tests take place, thereby expanding the logic to accommodate metaphysical propositions which bear the possibility of being scientifically

investigated and validated.

To conclude this section, it is important to note that the ultimate end of Peirce's pragmatism and the pragmatic maxim is to locate "the truth". In line with our current enquiry, one might ask, "How is Igbo masquerade act a pragmatic reflection of Igbo traditional belief system?" On a series of enquiries and findings, at what point would one say he has arrived at the truth? Peirce's take on the pragmatic truth:

The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all that who investigate is what we mean by the truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real.

And what should qualify for pragmatic investigation? Should pragmatism be concerned with the cosmological belief of the Igbos, a significant offshoot of which is Igbo masquerade act? Here is Peirce's response:

... pragmatism is, in itself...merely a method of ascertaining the meanings of hard words and of abstract concepts. All pragmatists of whatsoever stripe will cordially assent to that statement... this experimental method being itself nothing but a particular application of an older logical rule, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.'¹³

3. Igbo Traditional Belief System and Masquerade Act

The Igbo people's traditional belief-system is embodied in "Odinani".¹⁴ The *odinani* comprises their traditional religion and cultural practices:

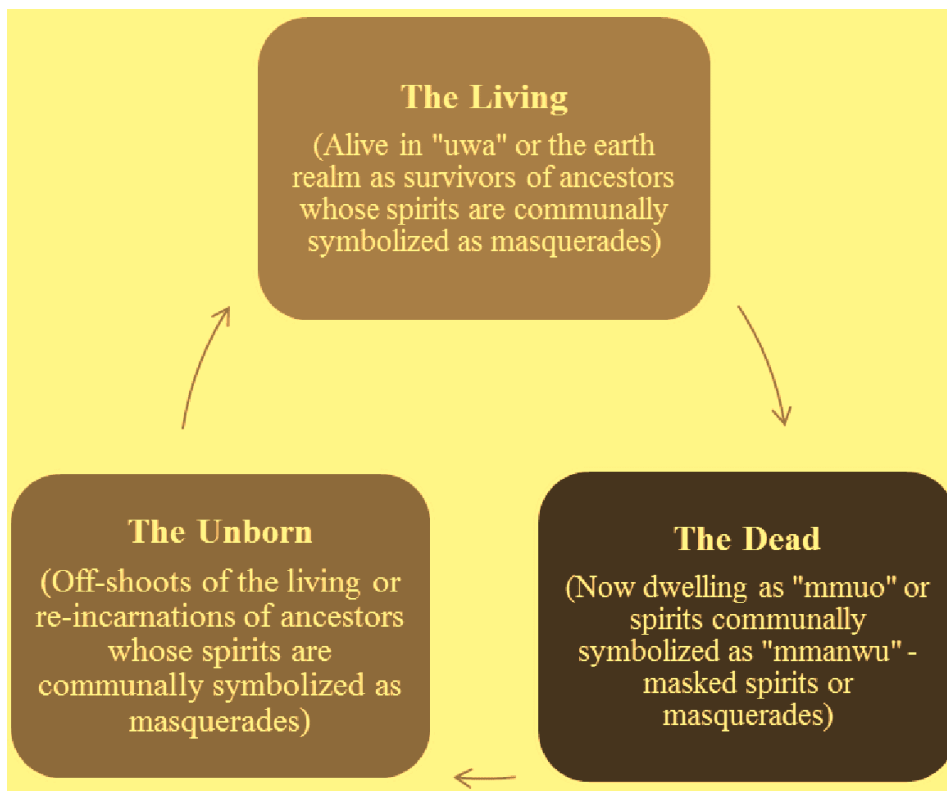
In Igbo mythology, which is part of their ancient religion, the supreme God is called Chukwu ("great spirit"); Chukwu created the world and everything in it and is associated with all things on Earth. Chukwu is a solar deity. To the ancient Igbo, the Cosmos was divided into four complex parts: creation, known as Okike; supernatural forces or deities called Alusi; Mmuo, which are spirits; and Uwa, the world.

Chukwu is the supreme deity in Odinani as he is the creator in their pantheon and the Igbo people believe that all things come from him and that everything on earth, heaven and the rest of the spiritual world is under his control.¹⁵

The Igbo believe that there is a link between supernatural and natural forces, between *uwa* and *mmuo*. Hence, there is no independent existence in the Igbo traditional belief-system. The living and the unborn are inextricably connected to the dead. This is reinforced by the Igbo belief in reincarnation and the Igbo practice of ancestral worship. Just as some Christians believe in the intercessory powers of saints, the Igbo, through ancestral worship, appease the ancestors and seek their intervention in the

affairs of the living and the unborn. Some children are believed to be reincarnated spirits of dead members of the family or extended family.

For the traditional Igbo, existence is essentially cyclical across the realms of the dead, the living and the unborn. And these three realms are connected in an active living sense. Indeed, it is believed that continuous spiritual exchanges daily take place among these realms, with the dead communing with the living who, in turn, commune with the unborn who, when need be, can directly commune with the dead. (See illustration below.)



One Igbo practice which re-enacts and reinforces this cyclical concept of existence is its masquerade act. In the traditional Igbo setting, the masquerade is so called because the masquerade symbolically masks the spirit of the dead in the land of the living, the living and the dead themselves being cyclically linked to the unborn (*see above illustration*). This is the critical connection, even though the entertainment value of some festival masquerades tends to play down this core cultural essence.

No matter the nature of the masquerade, no matter its cultural purpose or function, be it for entertainment, religious ritual, burial rites, ceremonial display, public announcement, satirical show, acrobatic display, social criticism, secret society rite, rites of passage induction, nocturnal invocation, or sheer theatrical performance, every masquerade in Igbo land

symbolises the spirit of the dead interfacing between the living and the unborn. For instance, a purely entertainment masquerade like the *agbogho mmuo* (maiden-like masquerade) “represent the spirits of deceased maidens and their mothers with masks symbolizing beauty”.¹⁶

How can this communion between the dead and the living, which masquerades symbolize, be explained?

The living-dead are what these masquerade/spirits embody. Igbo people believe that the dead never actually die; rather they remain in a "personal immortal state". They reside somewhere between the earthly world and the spiritual world. These living-dead are believed to be closely related to those of the village. Since men are masqueraders, they are buried within their homes so their spirits may be close to their families . . . The living-dead then return to the earthly world from time to time to offer spiritual advice. It is the living-dead, who the masquerade portrays.¹⁷

The disposition to enact a masquerade act in Igbo land springs directly from the Igbo people's belief that the masquerade symbolises the spirit of ancestors. A masquerade act is a habit of belief. It is a practical demonstration of the Igbo people's worldview regarding the nature of man as a being with an unbroken tripartite linkage. The masquerade act gives the spirit of the dead a practical expression by masking their presence in a bodily living way. This is in line with Peirce's description of pragmatism as “a sort of instinctive attraction for living facts”.¹⁸

Two things need to be pragmatically clarified here. One, we must distinguish the masquerade of the Igbo from any other kind of masquerade, such as the Halloween masquerades of the United States and the carnival masquerades of the Brazilians and sundry theatrical troupes across the world. Two, the masquerade act of the Igbo qualifies as a subject of this discussion because it is a direct consequence of the Igbo people's belief in the concept of the cyclical nature of existence as expressed in the unbroken communion between the living, the dead, and the unborn in the traditional Igbo community.

Applying the pragmatic maxim, discussed in the first part of this paper, a masquerade, from the Igbo perspective, can be clarified and distinguished from any other as follows: If, in Igbo land or anywhere else, an Igbo person imagines or sees a being robed to the extent that all or part of its body is covered with clothing or some other form of coverings, attachments, and/or enhancements aimed at alienating the being from the form or normal appearance or look of humans; and if this being wears a mask in public appearance or performance to create the effect of a non-

human or spirit being invoking in the mind of the viewer the Igbo triadic concept of the unborn, the living and the dead even as this being remains mute, makes utterances, ritualises, entertains, frightens, arouses awe or some other emotion in the onlooker, the being in question is a masquerade.

Any other masquerade outside the one distinguished above is not the subject of this paper as it is not a masquerade which results from the Igbo triadic concept of existence. This distinction remains valid in spite of the fact that this concept is not unique to the traditional Igbo society. It is a central theme in African traditional religions but not all African traditional societies conceptualize their masquerade act as the Igbo uniquely do.

Apart from identifying and distinguishing the Igbo masquerade, as we have done above, the second point regarding the masquerade act of the Igbo being a direct consequence of the Igbo cyclical notion of existence needs further clarification. We are treating this notion as a concept because from the pragmatic viewpoint that is what it is. According to Peirce

A concept is something having the mode of being of a general type which is, or may be made, the rational part of the purport of a word. A more precise or fuller definition cannot here be attempted... The method prescribed in the (pragmatic) maxim is to trace out (*as we did in the above definition of the Igbo masquerade*) in the imagination the conceivable practical consequences – that is, the consequences for deliberate, self-controlled conduct – of the affirmation or denial of the concept; and the assertion of the maxim is that herein lies the whole of the purport of the word, the entire concept.¹⁹ (*Brackets and italic mine.*)

The masquerade act for the Igbo is a concept-based habit of behaviour and what distinguishes a concept-driven behavioural habit from other habits is that it is active in the imagination. The Igbo masquerade act as a habit of belief enacts “an inseparable connection between rational cognition and rational purpose”. The relationship between masquerades and the spirits they relate to is a perspective in pragmatic realism. Unlike the nominalists who hold that only individuals are real, the pragmatic realist believes that relations are as real as the individuals or beings they objectify. And this brings us to Peirce’s concept of the pragmatic truth:

The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all ... who investigate, is what we mean by the truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real.²⁰

Below, in the concluding part of this paper, we will draw some interesting connections between Igbo masquerade act as a conceptual habit and key elements of Peirce’s pragmatist thesis.

4. The Pragmatic Connotations of Igbo Masquerade Act

The first pragmatic connotation of Igbo masquerade act is its demonstration of the pragmatist view that theory precedes and directs observation or action. It is only within the Igbo concept of the communion between the unborn, the living, and the dead that Igbo masquerade act makes fundamental meaning. This is precisely why masquerades are considered spirits, not human beings, and they are able to perform their sacred functions because of this perception.

Secondly, Igbo masquerade act exemplifies the place of practice in the validation of a word, thought, or concept which is the major goal of Peirce's pragmatic maxim (in its early and later forms). The Igbo, through their masquerade act, emphasize praxis, which is the desirable end of Peirce's pragmatic enquiry. Igbo masquerades objectify Peirce's view that beliefs are rules for action.

Thirdly, and as we have indicated in this paper, Peirce's pragmatism is helpful in the utilitarian conceptualization of Igbo masquerade experience. According to Kant's popular dictum, "intuitions without concepts are blind". Peirce would add, concepts without practice are meaningless. Igbo masquerade act is not self-justifying. Epistemic enquiry into the cultural import of masquerade acts is necessarily mediated by appropriate concepts and worldviews, one of which – the cyclical concept of existence of the Igbo – we have mentioned in this paper. And this researcher has found appropriate the investigation of Igbo masquerade act within the ambience of the pragmatism's concept of "use value".

Fourthly, Igbo masquerade act, in reflecting the cosmological viewpoint, instantiates pragmatism's nullification of the dualism between theory and practice. The act thus becomes a living concept: the concept gives birth to the act which becomes its symbolic reality. The masquerade performer, being a knower of the concept of the Igbo cyclical concept of existence, becomes at the same time an agent of what he knows through his masquerade act. The masquerade performer is an agent as well as a participant-observer of the communal ethos his act and art symbolise. Experimentally, he is a custodian of the culture but also the provoker of communally acceptable change of aspects of that same culture within the context of the experimental theory of knowledge (as opposed to the spectator theory of knowledge favoured by Peirce's pragmatism).

Igbo masquerade actors are, in this sense, explorers of the cultural landscape, not mere canvasses on which that world is reproduced. They mirror the image of the culture that gave them relevance while at the same

time, with the passage of time, altering that same image by the evolutionary impact of their creative and innovative expressions.

In conclusion, it is good to remind us of the philosophic import of this study. According to Douglas McDermid of Trent University, Canada,

Philosophy must become much less Platonist and less ... concerned ...with unearthing necessary and ahistorical normative foundations for our culture's practices. Once we understand our culture not as a static edifice but as an on-going conversation, the philosopher's official job description changes from foundation-layer to interpreter. In the absence of an Archimedean point, philosophy can only explore our practices and vocabularies from within; it can neither ground them on something external nor assess them for representational accuracy. Post-epistemological philosophy accordingly becomes the art of understanding; it explores the ways in which those voices which constitute that mutable conversation we call our culture—the voices of science, art, morality, religion, and the like—are related.²¹

And Peirce's pragmatism as a theory of meaning and tool of philosophical enquiry is helpful in understanding a crucial cultural reality such as the Igbo masquerade act.

Endnotes

1. The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, abbreviated as CP, drawn from *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, Vols. I-VI ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931-1935), Vols. VII-VIII ed. Arthur W. Burks (same publisher, 1958). In line with the scholarly convention, the volume number and paragraph number shall be noted.
2. William James' 1894 address, delivered at the University of California, Berkeley, was entitled, "Philosophical Conceptions and practical Results. Beyond crediting Peirce with coining the term, "pragmatism", James identified Peirce's work, "How to Make Your Ideas Clear", as the inspirational bible of the concept. Ironically, Peirce frowned at much of what James and other scholars who identified with his pragmatism, such as John Dewey and F.C.S Schiller, propagated in the name of his thesis. In later life, Peirce, in frustration and partly to incorporate his expansion of the thesis to include what he called "would-bes", rechristened his idea "pragmaticism".
3. Peirce, C.P 5.12, 1907

4. Engel, Pascal, “Belief as a Disposal to Act: Variations on a Pragmatist Theme”, Université Paris IV Sorbonne, Colloque Pragmatism, San Paulo, 2004, paru dans *Cognitio*, Centro de Estudios pragmaticos, Universidade Catolica de San Paulo, 2005.
5. Peirce was fond of triadic divisions. Some of his triadic characterizations include the three phenomenological categories – categories of firstness, secondness, and thirdness. His best known triadic formulation, however, is the semiotic one – that of icon, index, and symbol. The “trichotomy” which concerns us here is that of his three stages of clarity which culminated in the formulation of the pragmatic maxim.
6. The first two grades of clarity identified by Peirce bear clear influences by earlier nominalist philosophers, such as Kant, Leibniz, and Decartes.
7. Peirce 1878/1992, p. 132
8. Albert Atkin, University of Sheffield, IEP, April 20, 2005
9. From Peirce's Personal Interleaved Copy of the Century Dictionary, CP 5.13 n. 1, c. 1902)
10. Peirce 1992-94, vol. I, p. 131-132
11. Peirce 1992-94, vol. II, p. 235
12. Engel, Pascal, op. cit
13. “Pragmatism”, EP 2:400-401, 1907
14. Isichei, Elizabeth Allo (1997). *A History of African Societies to 1870*. Cambridge University Press Cambridge, UK. p. 512.
15. “Igbo People”, Wikipedia. See also Onwuejeogwu, M. Angulu (1975). *The Social Anthropology of Africa: An Introduction* (illustrated ed.). Heinemann. p. 179; and Basden, G.T.; John Ralph Willis (1912). *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*. Seeley, Service. p. 216.
16. See Picton, John (2008). "art, African". West Africa, Igbo: Britannica Online Encyclopedia.
17. Wikipedia, “Igbo mythology/Igbo culture”. See Onyeneke, Augustine. *The Dead Among The Living: Masquerades in Igbo Society*. Province of Nigeria: Holy Ghost Congregation, 1987.
18. Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism, CP 5.64, 1903

19. A Draft of a Review of Herbert Nichols's 'A Treatise on Cosmology', CP 8.191, c. 1904
20. Quoted in Engel, Pascal, "Belief as a Disposal to Act: Variations on a Pragmatist Theme", Université Paris IV Sorbonne, Colloque Pragmatism, San Paulo, 2004
21. McDermid, Douglas, IEP. Retrieved 2004.

About the Author: Prof. Innocent C. Ngangah (innochijinganga@gmail.com) is of the Department of Philosophy, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State, Nigeria.

The Role of Statistics and Sampling in Survey Research

Ihezie Okekwe

Abstract

This work titled, “The Role of Statistics and Sampling in Survey Research,” critically examines the place of statistics and sampling in survey research. The data collection was done through secondary sources. Our main objective was to interrogate the vital role played by the two concepts of statistics and sampling in survey research. Thomas Hobbes rightly asserted that lack of knowledge made the life of man “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short”. It is knowledge that makes the life of man in society worth living and statistics and sampling are two of the most important tools used by man to generate information necessary for him to make and implement rational decisions. Programmes and actions hinged on the outcome of statistical and carefully sampled survey research usually deliver predictable outcomes. This paper looks into the ways statistics and sampling in survey research can be utilized as tools of enquiry and information gathering.

Keywords: statistics, sampling, survey research

Introduction

The world is generally ruled by knowledge. Without knowledge man finds it difficult to live in the world. In fact, the life of man in the world would be akin to the picture painted by Thomas Hobbes who said that the lack of knowledge makes the life of man “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short” (2022).

In his quest for knowledge, man employs the method of research. According to Asika (1991), research implies the application of certain techniques of learning in particular areas requiring explanation or exposition. The process of acquiring knowledge involves certain techniques and these techniques are ordered. It is not a haphazard process but follows certain procedures. It is through the process of research that one acquires knowledge to solve his numerous problems confronting him in society.

The world is full of problems and man must apply his knowledge of

research in addressing the problems. Hence research is any organized inquiry that aims at providing information towards the solution of identified problems. It therefore follows from the above that the saying that any identified problem is half solved is very apt here. Research is a problem solving technique and it is useful to man in addressing issues confronting him in society.

This work adopts the analytical framework in this research and the major objective is to underscore the role of statistics and sampling in research. The work is divided into several parts. Part one is the Introduction. This is followed by meaning of concepts where the terms “statistics”, “sampling” and “survey research” are explained. Part three is on the role of statistics in survey research while part four deals with the role of sampling in survey research.

Meaning of Concepts

Statistics

Statistics is the mathematical science involved in the application of quantitative principles to the collection, analysis and presentation of numerical data. According to Dudge (2006), statistics is the study of the collection, analysis, interpretation, presentation and organization of data. As a result of the quantum of issues that needed to be studied, it becomes expedient to delineate all those issues into a “manageable“ category in order to arrive at conclusions that could stand the test of time. By making use of quantitative principles, information or data obtained would be reliable. And again reliability ensures that the conclusions arrived at would also be valid.

Furthermore, according to Obasi (2007), statistics is a discipline with far-reaching application in the social and behavioral sciences, and it is substantially concerned with the rule-governed translation of facts into numbers or numerals. In some cases, the use of symbols is equally applied in statistical manipulations or computations. It further involves the determination of relative quantitative attributes of patterned phenomenon and their use in forecasting the outcomes of definite processes, often on the basis of hypothesis or generalizations produced by the samples thereof (Obasi 2007).

It is because one cannot study the universe or the entire population that social scientists usually resort to the delineation of their study into “manageable” levels through the process of “sampling”. This work will delve shortly into the role of first Statistics and then Sampling in Survey Research with a view to finding their usefulness in survey research.

Sampling

Sampling is the method of selection of a unit for study. As I stated above, man needs to acquire knowledge in order to solve the numerous problems confronting him in society. And because there are a lot of problems and many issues requiring man's attention, and because man does not have enough time and resources to devote adequate attention to all these issues, there is the need to select a sample of the issues or people/things representative of the given issue or subject of enquiry for study. Sampling is a process used in statistical analysis in which a predetermined number of observations will be taken from a larger population. This definition presupposes that because of the limitation of time, resources and vastness of the universe (or entire population) needed to be studied, a sample (which is a part of the universe or a given population) is taken for study.

It must be posited at the onset that the methodology used to sample from a larger population will depend on the type of analysis being performed. There is the Simple Random Sampling method, among other types of sampling methods. When taking a sample from a larger population it is important to consider how the sample will be drawn. To get a representative sample, the sample must be drawn randomly and encompass the entire population. An example may be germane here. A lottery system could be used to determine the average age of students in a university by sampling 10% of the students from each faculty.

From the above, one can regard sampling as a method of studying a few selected items instead of the totality of given items or units. The small portion of the entire items or units selected for enquiry, study or analysis is called a Sample. The sum total of items of particular characteristics from where the sample is drawn is called the Population. Further examples will suffice. We can take a sample of rice to see whether the rice is well boiled or not. Or, we can check a sample of a given solution to know how much that given solution is concentrated. Thus, from the sample, we can infer about a Population.

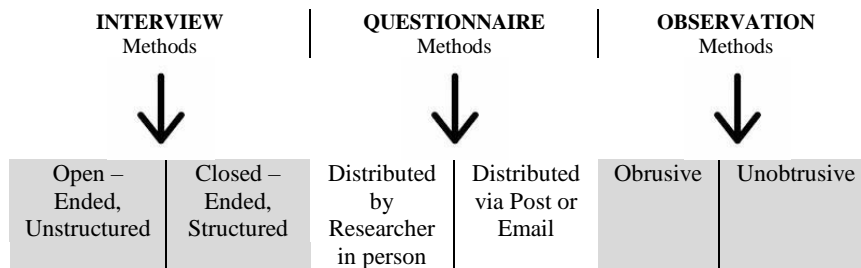
Survey Research

Survey Research is a method of research in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. Survey research can also be conceptualized as a method of sociological investigation that uses question-based or statistical survey to collect information about how people think or act. For example, a possible application of survey research to a context might involve looking at how effective the mass media is in

the formation of public opinion or in causing a shift in public opinion about a given matter.

In survey research, the sample selected is normally large while the variable(s) studied is (are) limited. When conducting a survey, the researcher utilizes certain instruments, like questionnaire, interviews and personal observations, to collect data. An example of survey research may be a research into the Incidence of Juvenile Delinquency in South Eastern Nigeria.

One can diagrammatically depict the tools to be employed in carrying out the above research thus:



For some social scientists, the survey method of research is limited to interviews and questionnaire while some others include a third which is observation. Generally, the survey method is used when we want to find out information about a person’s opinions, motivations, attitudes, behaviors, feelings, emotions or party political preferences.

Interview Techniques

Interview technique involves a verbal engagement between interviewer and interviewee in which the former tries to elicit information about particular situation or subject. It uses questionnaire but administered by the researcher or trained interviewers.

Types of interview method: There are two types of interview methods: open-ended and closed-ended Methods.

a. Open-Ended (Un-coded) Question: In un-coded questions, the respondent has the choice of expressing his views and opinions freely without any restrictions from the interviewer. This is also referred to as Unstructured Interview.

b. Closed-Ended (Coded) Method: This does not give the respondent the choice of expression, only allows him to respond in an expected or

standardized manner. This is also called Structured Interview.

Advantages of the Interview Technique: One of the Advantages is that it allows for greater proportion of the population to be investigated so the question of whether one is educated or not is not a barrier. Again, it makes for a much better sample of the population because most people will like to participate in discussion section.

Furthermore, the interviewee is able to cope with the problem of misunderstanding of the question because the interviewer is there to explain or elaborate on it.

Above all, it is a more effective way for revealing information about complex emotionally laded subject and for probing the sentiments behind an expressed opinion.

Finally, gestures of the interviewee can be rightly interpreted.

Disadvantages of the Interview Technique: According to Akuezulo et al (2003), the interview technique has some demerits. Apart from the fact that it is time consuming, it is one of the most difficult techniques to apply successfully. Above all, the danger of interview bias is very real and constant.

Questionnaire Method

The questionnaire method is a self-administered interview, so questions must be carefully designed and self-explanatory. This is because there is no interviewer or proctor to interpret the questions to the respondent.

Advantages of the Questionnaire Technique: First, it is relatively less expensive; may involve only travelling expenses. Closely related to the above is that it requires less skill than the interview technique.

Secondly, it can be administered to a large proportion of the population at the same time whereas interview technique has to deal with each person at a time. Furthermore, the questionnaire can be sent through post or email unlike the interview method.

More importantly, the impersonal nature of questionnaire, its

standardized question plus its standardized instruction for response allows for uniformity of measurement from one situation to the other.

Finally, it provides anonymity for the respondent, allows him to express his feelings and opinions without any inhibitions arising from the presence of an interviewer

Disadvantages of the Questionnaire Technique: The questionnaire method takes a lot of time and might get lost in transit. If mailed, sometimes they are not returned at all.

This technique can only be used with a population that is highly educated. Furthermore, it has low rate of return from respondents because they have nothing at stake.

Moreover, there is the possibility of the misinterpretation of the question especially when the questions are ambiguous.

Additionally, the validity of the questionnaire depends on the ability and the willingness of the respondent to provide the information requested.

Finally, it does not provide the researcher with sufficient opportunity for developing interest on the part of the respondent nor the rapport needed to permit him to ask questions of a personal or embarrassing nature.

Observational Method

This is used in eliciting information on the behavioral pattern of a group. It is usually used when other methods are impossible. Example is information about children or schizophrenic people

The observational method is divided into two types:

a. Unobtrusive Method: This is also referred to as non-participant observation: here the researcher does not take part in the group being studied.

b. Obtrusive Method: This is also called participant observation.

This is one of the best methods of eliciting information about the behaviour of the population / subject being studied. It involves direct action by the researcher. It is not a simple method but rather it involves a combination of techniques such as direct observation, participant interviewing, informant interviewing, archival study and actual

participation.

It involves a lot of stages:

1. Entry Point: The researcher decides on the group he wants to study and makes contact to be admitted. This is the most difficult stage.
2. Establishment of congenial relationship with the members of the group.
3. Compiling and analyzing data; this involves 3 sub-stages, namely:
 - i. Making mental notes about the observed situation.
 - ii. Jotting down the interactions with the subject.
 - iii. Writing your formal report or what is called log of observation.

Disadvantages of Observation Method: Since the Observation technique is designed to study the behaviour of the population or subject, it is impossible to provide opinion, feelings, motivations, fear, anxiety, future anticipation etc. Above all, it cannot deal with future behaviour or private behavior; for example, sexual activity and dreaming which are unfeasible or impossible to observe by the social scientist.

Moreover, there is the problem of bias which arises from two reasons. First the presence of the researcher may alter the behaviour of the subjects. Secondly, there is also the issue of subjective interpretation which the researcher might assign or impute to the observed situation – for instance, normative value. The disadvantages might however be overcome by the researcher cross-checking the various stages; by using ethnographic methods, this may be ameliorated.

The Role of Statistics in Survey Research

According to Montgomery et al (1994), the field of statistics deals with the collection, presentation, analysis and use of data to make decisions and solve problems. In fact, everyone both in professional careers and in everyday life through contact with newspapers, television and other media is presented with information in the form of data. We often need to draw some conclusions from the information in the data and so some understanding of statistics would be helpful to anyone.

From the above, therefore, a major role of statistics in survey research is that it ensures the collection, presentation, analysis and use of data to

make decisions and solve problems. It was strongly posited in the introduction of this work that man needs to apply his knowledge to solve his numerous problems. This knowledge is acquired through the process of research.

It was also mentioned in passing that survey research involves the process of one-on-one contact between the researcher and the population (universe) being studied. As a result of this, data generated from the exercise through statistics is more often than not very reliable. Hence, it is again safe to argue that another role of statistics in survey research is that it ensures the production of what one could describe as data that is “trustworthy”.

Closely related to the above is the question of validity. Here the question is, will this help answer the research question? (Yates et al 1994). According to Akuezuilo et al (2003), validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to be measuring. Thus a major role of statistics in survey research is validity. Since data obtained through survey research proves very successful when carefully carried out, the logical outcome is validity. This is a remarkable role played by statistics in survey research. So the first requirement of an experiment is that it is valid. Otherwise it is at best a waste of time and resources or misleading.

Efficiency is the next significant role of statistics in survey research. Is the experiment the correct size, making best use of resources? Surely, the use of experimental resources to get the most precise answer to the question being asked is not an absolute requirement but it is certainly desirable. Statistics (and statisticians) help to identify misleading abuses of data that may be portraying an inaccurate account of a situation.

Statistics is the science of learning from data and of measuring, controlling and communicating uncertainties; and it hereby provides the navigation essential for controlling the course of scientific and societal advances. This depicts that correct application of statistics helps through survey research to generate meaningful scientific discoveries and advancement; in this way, societal advancement and development, all things being equal, is maximized. There is then no doubt that man’s avowed claim as an agent of societal change and development is greatly realized and enhanced through the role played by statistics in survey research.

Finally, Kadituwakk (2010) observed that statistical methods and analysis are often used to communicate research findings and to support hypotheses and give credibility to research methodology and conclusions.

It is important for researchers and consumers of research to understand statistics so that they can be informed, and evaluate the credibility and usefulness of information and make appropriate decisions. Statistics plays a vital role in researches. For example, statistics can be used in data collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation. Use of statistics will guide researchers in research, for proper characterization, summarization, presentation and interpretation of the result of research, either to consider a sample or the whole population.

The Role of Sampling in Survey Research

Although sampling has been defined by many people, we need to note this definition by Obasi (2007) who defined sampling as:

the careful and systematic selection of a smaller number of units from a universe or general population such that in terms of characteristics the smaller is a proportionate representation of the latter and may therefore be an effective basis of a study from which generalization can be needed to cover the whole.

Another important role of sampling in survey research relates to its usefulness with respect to coverage, cost savings and its effect on response rates (Iannacchione 2011). In fact, on the issue of saving time and money, Obasi (2007) did not agree less. He argues thus: “Clearly then sampling is a means of saving time and money, averting excess scope or over-distension, maintaining a practical span of control, minimizing problems and negative contradictions with the environment and achieving speedy results.”

Before delving into the different types of sampling available to the researcher, it is instructive to highlight that sample facilitates the task facing the survey researcher by making it possible for him to study an acceptable population without indulging in the daunting task of studying the entire population or universe. This important role of sampling in survey research must not be lost because it would appear an effort in futility if the survey researcher is faced with unpleasant but challenging scenario of studying the whole universe.

Another role sampling plays in survey research is that it reduces considerably the element of bias in social science research. Because in

sampling one or more techniques may be combined the chances are that the issue of bias that may occur from the researcher's opinion, motive, attitude, etc., will be drastically reduced or eliminated altogether.

Through the use of sampling, researchers are able to generate primary data (as opposed to secondary data) which are highly regarded in social science research. For instance, a researcher who wants to study community development in Ukpok, headquarters of Nnewi South Local Government Area, must come in contact with the people he wants to study. This is different from library research which elicits only secondary data.

At this juncture, we look at the types of sampling technique social science researchers use. Broadly, there are two types of sampling, namely, probability sampling and non-probability sampling.

Under probability sampling, we have the following types:

1. Simple random sampling
2. Cluster (area) random sampling
3. Stratified random sampling

Under non-probability sampling there are:

1. Quota sampling
2. Accidental sampling
3. Purposive (or judgmental) sampling
4. Snow-ball sampling

The difference between non-probability sampling and probability sampling is that in the latter (that is probability), the researcher can specify the probability that each element of the population being studied are included in the sample. In other words, we can actually calculate that a particular unit of a particular element of the population being studied is included in the study.

On the other hand, in non-probability sampling, there is no way the researcher can determine that each or all of the elements of the population are included in the sample. However, the advantage of non-probability sample is simply a matter of convenience and economy. These advantages over-weigh the risk involved in ensuring that all elements of the population are included in the sample. This paper would have discussed the various types of sampling in greater detail but for lack of space.

Conclusion

Thus far, this work has been x-raying the role of statistics and sampling in survey research. The analysis points to the fact that these two variables have far-reaching effect on survey research. There is no doubt that the role played by these variables (of statistics and sampling) contribute greatly to the advancement of survey research and research generally. It also goes a long way in utilizing these variables for acquisition of knowledge and effectively applying research to advance the course of knowledge.

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About the Author: Ihezue Okekwe is of the Department of Political Science, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State, Nigeria.