

**AFRICAN YOUTHS ON MISSIONS FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES FOUNDATION ADVOCACY THROUGH
CAPACITY BUILDING AND HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL
JUSTICE IN NIGERIA 2015-2024**

IFEGWULIVINGRICH PRINCE EZEIKPE, PHD, LL.B
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE,
RHEMA UNIVERSITY NIGERIA, ABA
livingrichpe@gmail.com (08064058040)
orcid.org/0009-0006-4057-166X

Abstract

Human Rights are inalienable rights bestowed upon Man for the simple reason of being human being. These rights are to be promoted and protected in all States that are Signatories to the human Rights Charter. Nigeria being a Signatory to the Charter, pledged to promote, protect and preserve human Rights by granting justice when that rights is infringed upon. However, fears abound that Human Rights in Nigeria are far from being respected, and given justice to when violated, and is little or less advocated for in the first instance. Concerned about this, the paper studied African youths on Missions' Human Rights Advocacy through Communication and Social Justice in Nigeria 2015-2024. The study: (1) examines the extent to which Human Rights is advocated for in Nigeria (2) investigates the importance of advocacy for human rights and social justice in Nigeria (3) determines the level of social justice awarded to those whose fundamental rights are violated in Nigeria. The UN Human Rights Theory and the John Rawls' theory of Social Justice guided the research. The study adopted a mixed of documentary and quantitative methods of data collection and content analysis. Findings revealed a low level advocacy for human rights in Nigeria resulting in low level human rights awareness. Social injustice and inequality abound in Nigeria resulting in series of restiveness. The paper concludes that it is impossible for a State to survive under gross infringement of the rights that foster development, and recommends imbibing the doctrine of equal liberties and opportunities, and intervention studies

Keywords: Human Rights, Social Justice, Communication, Advocacy, Nigeria

Introduction

Human Rights are inalienable rights bestowed upon Man for the simple reason of being a human being. The United Nations Charter on Human Rights, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights- UDHR 1948, designated the rights as 'Fundamental' and 'Universal', to which all Signatory States have obligation to both respect, uphold, promote, protect, and preserve and granting justice to Victims, when the rights are infringed upon. This ground-breaking instrument set out human rights as rights due for Universal protection, including, the right to life, the right to liberty, the right to dignity of the human person, rights to freedom of speech, thought, expression, security, and freedom from cruel treatment.

Human rights advocacy and social justice are intricately connected, with human rights providing a framework for promoting human dignity, well-being, and empowerment. By accepting to be a Signatory to the United Nations (UN) Charter on Human rights, Nigeria, pledged to be guided by the instrument, to promote, protect and preserve human rights and granting justice to Victims when the rights are infringed upon. However, fears abound that Human Rights are far from being respected in Nigeria, with the heavily, pronounced and prevalent extra-judicial killings occurring in the State almost daily (Ifegwu-Livingrich, 2018, Human Rights Watch, 2020), enforced disappearances of innocent citizens, torture and ill-treatment of people by government agencies (Human Rights Watch, 2020, Amnesty International, 2022), restriction of the freedom of speech, expression, and assembly, violence against women and girls, plus the ever increasing corruption and impunity (Freedom House, 2022, UN Women, 2020, Transparency International, 2022), couple with the fact that Victims are far from being given justice to, when their rights are violated. Concerned about this, the paper studied African youths on Missions for Persons with Disabilities Human Rights Advocacy through Capacity building and Social Justice in Nigeria 2015-2024. The study specifically:(1) examines the extent to which Human Rights is advocated for in Nigeria (2) investigates the importance of advocacy for human rights and social justice in Nigeria (3) determines the level of social justice awarded to those whose fundamental rights are violated in Nigeria. The UN Human Rights Theory and the John Rawls' theory of Social Justice guided the research. The study adopted a mixed of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and content analysis.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of human rights and social justice in Nigeria appears to be as just complex and multifaceted requiring immediate attention. Despite several efforts by human rights bodies, the State continues to loom in multiple human rights violations and social injustice resulting in worrisomely enormous restiveness occurring in rather regular basis in the Country. The question bothers on why the constant lack of respect for human rights, whether the mechanism adopted by human rights advocates lacks in the ability to cause effect or there are such challenges that beat imagination or that human rights and social justice is insignificant to Nigeria?

Research Questions

The study is poised to answer the questions:

1. To what extent is human rights advocated for in Nigeria?
2. What is the importance of the advocacy for human rights and Social Justice in Nigeria?
3. What is the level of Social Justice awarded to Human Rights Victims in Nigeria?

Objectives of the study

The study sets out to:

1. Examine the extent to which Human Rights is advocated for in Nigeria
2. Investigate the importance of advocacy for Human Rights and Social Justice in Nigeria
3. Determine the level of Social Justice awarded Victims of human rights abuse in Nigeria

Significance of the study

Theoretically, this study contributes to the body of knowledge on human rights advocacy and social justice in Nigeria by providing in-depth understanding of human rights, the extent to which human rights and social justice have been advocated for, its awareness and advocacy in Nigeria, identifying the challenges facing human rights and social justice, the advocates, as well as identifying existing advocacy medium cum strategies adopted in Nigeria with view to identifying possible advocacy alternative. Practically, the study provides recommendations for human rights awareness and advocacy promoters which in turn will be useful for Nigeria's lawmakers and other Civil Society organisations and

stakeholders as the methods and strategies to promoting human rights awareness and advocacy in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The advocacy for human rights and social justice are intricately connected, with human rights providing a framework for the promotion of the dignity of the human person, the well-being as well as human empowerment. The theoretical framework adopted in this study is based on various theories and concepts to provide for a comprehensive understanding of advocacy for human rights and social justice in Nigeria. They include:

Human Rights Theory:

Human Rights theory is built on the believe that all human beings are born free and equal both in dignity and in rights (United Nations, 1948). Apparently, this theory has its root in the principles of universality, indivisibility, inalienability, and interdependence of human rights (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993). These rights are to be protected, promoted, preserved and respected by signatory States, are to be referred to as fundamental rights, which must be accorded all human beings equally and freely, irrespective of nationality, ethnicity, colour, age, gender, state of origin (UDHR, 1948).

The John Rawls' Social Justice Theory

The John Rawls' theory of social justice places emphasis on the importance of promoting fairness, equality, and justice in the society (Rawls, 1971). This theory builds on the principles of distributive justice. It is aimed at reducing inequality and to promote social and economic justice.

Advocacy theory

Advocacy theory places emphasis on the importance of promoting and protecting human rights through advocacy and activism (bob, 2005). The theory is really premised on the principles of empowerment, participation, and accountability (Gaventa, 2006).

It is noteworthy that the key concepts of the theories adopted in this study are human rights, social justice and advocacy (United Nations, 1948, Rawls, 1971, Bob, 2005). These theories provide a comprehensive understanding of advocacy for human rights and social justice. These theories highlight the importance of promoting and protecting human

rights through advocacy and engagement, and are therefore considered most appropriate for this study.

Literature Review

The study reviews the variables in the study:

Human Rights:

Human Rights are as old as Human beings. It has a very long and evolving history, covering years of human existence on earth. These rights started with the right to obey the instructions of the Creator and spanned to giving names to other creatures; and whatsoever Adam called them that were the name thereof (Genesis, 2 verses 19-20). In his deep belief on human rights, as granted by nature, Hugo Grotius (1583-1648), explains that certain rights are inherent to man naturally, notwithstanding the position of Positive law. He listed the certain rights, to include, the rights to life, freedom from Slavery, right to self-defense, and protection of Civilians, and noted that,

The right to life must be protected as fundamental. Humans have inherent freedom. Individuals have the right to self-defense against unjust attacks, and sparing Civilians in War, is a precursor to present day humanitarian law.

Spanning through Ancient Civilisation, Ishay (2004) observes that human rights was in the Code of Hammurabi, Babylonian Law, in 1754, establishing that human beings are endowed with rights that must be respected and deserve social justice. Explaining human rights from Ancient Greek and Roman law, spanning from 500 BCE – 500CE, Ishay (2004) describes human rights as including rights, justice and equity given to human beings by nature.

Taking it from the contemporary era (1945 CE to present), the United Nations defines human rights as fundamental rights and freedoms inherent to every individual, regardless of nationality, ethnic origin, gender, age, language, religious inclination, or any other status. These rights have Universal Status, and are inalienable, and indivisible. These rights are basic, and all human being are entitled to them for the reason of being human (UDHR, 1948).

In his “Long Walk to Freedom”, Nelson Mandela (1918-2013), is of the view that Human Rights are those Rights that are Fundamental to humanity. He noted that, to deny people their rights is to challenge their very humanity. Human rights are those rights inherent in Man,

inalienable, and apply to people equally, and whose violation must be treated as Crime against humanity (Power, 1970-Present).

In his summary of the meaning of human rights in the contemporary time, Abiodun (2013) believes that human rights are claims both individuals and groups have made on society. These claims have found appearance in impartial law at both the national and international levels, and serve as a means of measuring the conditions of human existence, outside of which it will be difficult for human being to enjoy living. He noted that,

Human rights, as a concept, have gained tremendous appeal and significance in our world of pluralism, diversity and inter-dependence because human rights are inalienable rights. The adoption of human rights, as fundamental rights by the United Nations through the Universal Declaration of human rights has made available a strong foundation for added development and globalization of human rights plus the significant attempts being made by the United Nations in formulating and consolidating human rights standards (International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights- ICESCR, 1966)

Discussing the categories of human rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights-UDHR (1948), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights- ICCPR (1966), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights-ICESCR (1966) classified human rights into: Civil and Political Rights: These encompass, right to Life, liberty, and Security, Freedom of Speech, thought, and expression, Freedom from torture and Cruel treatment, Right to fair trial and justice, Right to participate in government; Economic, Social and Cultural Rights-rights covers, right to Education, right to healthcare, right to Work and fair Compensation, right to Social Security and Assistance, right to Cultural identity, and Social and Collective Rights - right to Self-determination, right to development, right to Peace and Security, right to a Safe Environment, right to Cultural Heritage

This paper is of the view that human rights, both before the common era (BCE) and the common era (CE) are rights bestowed upon human beings from creation and that cannot be separated from human beings, because there are the very meaning of human beings, which trying to take them away from man will amount to challenging humans' very humanity. These rights are bestowed upon human beings for the simple reason that they are human beings. Human Rights include those essences in man whose influence has continued to shape laws, nationally,

Internationally, Politically, and paved the path for Social justice advocacies. Human Rights have Universal application, and to ensure the dignity of the human person, these rights must be respected, protected, and promoted, even as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights- UDHR 1948.

Social Justice

The concept of social justice is deeply rooted in the principles of equality, fairness, and human rights. Rawls (1971) see social justice as the fair distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges within a society. It points to the promotion of fairness, equality, and justice in society, with a focus on reducing inequality and promotion of social and economic justice. In corroboration, Sen(2009) agrees that Social Justice refers to the promotion of equality, fairness and human rights. It is that justice that aims at promoting and protecting human rights in a State (Oxfam, 2020).

Human Rights Advocacy

In its General Assembly, while clarifying on human rights and advocacy, the United Nations (1948) pointed out that human rights are the fundamental rights and freedoms that every individual is entitled to for the simple reason of being human, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender, or any other status. Human rights advocacy is the act of promoting and protecting human rights through activism, lobbying, and other forms of advocacy (Bob, 2005).

In its discussion on the criticality of human rights advocacy, Amnesty International (2020) pointed out that human rights advocacy is critical in promoting and protecting human rights not just in Nigeria but also globally. Cohen (2019) observes that human rights advocacy can take various forms including lobbying, campaigning, even litigation.

Existing Medium of Human Rights Advocacy

On the medium of human rights advocacy employed by past authorities, Tufekci (2017), Herman and Chomsi (2002), Freire (1970) observed three unique media of human rights advocacy adopted by human rights advocates:

1. **Social Media:** Tufekci (2017) pointed out that media has become a critical tool for human rights advocacy, giving room for advocates to reach a broader audience and mobilise support.
2. **Traditional Media:** Herman and Chomsky (2002) noted that traditional media such as newspaper and television are also

employed by human rights advocates to raise awareness and mobilize support.

3. Community-based initiatives: It is the opinion of Freire (1970) that community-based initiatives such as community organizing and activism are also employed by human rights advocates to promote human rights and social justice.

Existing Medium of Social Justice Advocacy in Nigeria

Extant literature on existing medium of social justice advocacy points Community Organizing, Policy advocacy, and art and Cultural activism.

1. Community Organising: Alinsky (1971) argued that Community organizing is critical medium employed by social justice and human rights to advance the cause of social justice in the Nigerian State
2. Policy advocacy: Jenkins (2006) strongly argued that Policy advocacy is also adopted by Social Justice and human rights advocates to push for respect for human rights and award of justice to victims.
3. Art and cultural activism: Duncombe (2002) concluded that art and cultural engagement have been tools in the hands of Social justice advocates, in the furtherance of social justice and human rights.

Existing Strategies for Human Rights Advocacy

Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Projects-SERAP (2020), Nigerian Human Rights Commission- NHRC (2020), Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative- WRAPA (2020), Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism- PTCIJ (2020), Amnesty International (2020) have pointed to not less than five strategies adopted by human rights advocates to push for the protection of human rights in Nigeria:

1. Litigation: The likes of Femi Falana, adopt litigation as their safest strategy to challenge human rights violations in Nigeria, and holds perpetrators accountable. To evidence this fact, the socio-economic Rights and Accountability Projects has filed very many lawsuits against the Nigerian government to challenge human rights infringement, including the rights to education and health care services in the country (SERAP, 2020).
2. Advocacy and Lobbying: It has been argued that Human rights advocates in Nigeria have always made use of advocacy and lobbying as a strategy to influence policy and legislative changes.

The Nigerian human rights Commission has advocated for the passage of the National Human Rights Commission (Amendment) Act, which seeks to strengthen the commission's powers to investigate and prosecute human rights abuses (NHRC, 2020).

3. **Community Mobilization and Engagement:** WRAPA (2020) explained that advocacy for human rights have been carried out in Nigeria through Community mobilization and engagement as a strategy to raise awareness and promote human rights at the grassroots level. For example how Women's rights advancement and protection alternative (WRAPA) has mobilized women in rural communities to advocate for their rights and challenge discriminatory practices against women.
4. **Media and Public Awareness:** The Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (2020) is certain that human rights advocates have used extensively the Media and public awareness in their struggle to promote human rights. For example, the Premium Times Centre for investigative Journalism has made use of investigative journalism to expose human rights abuses and thereby hold perpetrators accountable for the acts.
5. **International Advocacy and Solidarity:** The likes of Osai Ojigho have employed international advocacy and solidarity to mobilize international support and pressure the Nigerian government to respect human rights. Again, for example, the Amnesty International Nigeria has partnered with international Organisations to campaign against human rights violation in Nigeria and to pressure the Nigerian government to respect human rights (Amnesty International, 2020).

Advocacy Efforts in Nigeria

Following the review above, it can be deduced that Human rights advocacy groups in Nigeria have made significant push to promote and protect human rights and enthrone social justice in Nigeria between 2015 and 2024. These efforts cannot be said to have gone without some positive outcomes, especially when considered that some of the advocacy strategies adopted, example, providing trainings for security agencies, organized protests, petitions, lobbying, and others paved the path and influenced the government to actions such as:

- Approving a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights in April 2023 which is a significant step towards promoting business and human rights in the State

- Adopting in January 14 2024 a National Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights 2024-2028. This plan outlines government's commitments to promoting and protecting human rights in the Country
- The passage of legislation that promotes human rights, such as the Violence Against persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015

Notwithstanding these creations issues of human rights violations and social injustices keep increasing daily as evidenced by series of practical human rights violations and social injustices perpetrated particularly by the Nigerian security forces without awarding remedy to the victims. Ifegwu-livingrich (2018), Amnesty International (2022) decried the vicious manner in which human rights and social justice is violated by government agencies, and laments that, it hurts the most as the perpetrators of human rights violations and social injustice in Nigeria are the very people instituted to protect and safeguard lives and property.

Challenges of Human Rights Advocacy in Nigeria

Advocacy for Human Rights is critical to promoting, protecting and preserving human rights in Nigeria (Amnesty International, 2020). Unfortunately, human rights advocacy is confronted with a lot of challenges. Amnesty International (2020), International Council on Human Rights Policy- ICHRP (2018), Ifegwu-livingrich (2018), United Nations Development Programme-UNDP (2019), are in consensus that human rights advocacy in Nigeria faces huge challenges, especially from the Nigerian government and its agencies. These challenges include:

- **Government Repression:** Government repression is a key challenge confronting human rights advocacy in Nigeria. (Amnesty International, 2020) This is evidenced in several arrests, detention, and harassment by government security forces.
- **Social and Cultural Barriers:** Social and Cultural barriers are also main challenge human rights advocacy is confronted with in Nigeria (UNDP, 2019). Several complex social and cultural norm and values hinder the free flow of advocacy on human rights, to curb this advocates need to navigate them in order to effectively promote human rights in the Country.
- **Limited Resources:** Limited resources are a serious challenging facing human rights advocacy in Nigeria (International Council on Human Rights Policy, 2018). Human rights groups in Nigeria often lack the resources needed to effectively advocate for human rights in the State.

- **Restriction of freedom of expression:** The Nigerian government constantly been accused of restricting freedom of expression, including the arrest and detention of journalists and activists (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2020)
- **Intimidation and harassment:** Human rights defenders have regularly been intimidated and harassed including, facing death threats and physical attacks in Nigeria (Front line Defenders, 2020)

Challenges confronting Social Justice in Nigeria

Social justice is critical to promoting and protecting human rights (Oxfam, 2020) unfortunately, social justice faces enormous challenges in Nigeria, including:

- **Corruption;** The government of Nigeria and other non-state actors have constantly accused of diverting public fund for personal use (Transparency International, 2020). This embezzlement is usually unaccounted for.
- **Inequality:** In Nigeria the wealthy elite control a disproportionate amount of the wealth of the Country (Oxfam, 2020)
- **Poverty:** In Nigeria, Poverty is a main issue over 80 Million people live below \$1.90 a day (World Bank, 2020).

Gap in literature: While the scholarly brilliance of the authorities reviewed in this study is very well commendable both in their ability to stress on the existing human rights and social justice medium of advocacy, it was however discovered that they unwittingly failed to examine that advocacy through capacity building will go a long way advancing the push for human rights and social justice awareness and engagement in Nigeria, this is the contribution this study seeks to make. Apparently, focusing advocacy on just human rights issues, such as freedom of expression, torture or indignity of the human person, unlawful killings and others are as general, there is a need for more specific and in-depth advocacy on specific human rights issues, such as, advocacy through capacity building particularly for persons with disabilities (herein after referred to as Disability rights), as this will focus on the right to access government sponsored education, skill acquisitions, healthcare, employment, and others. Advocacy through capacity building, opens the door to specific women's rights issues such as, female genital mutilation, child marriage, and need for access to reproductive healthcare services.

Empirical Verification: Human rights violations and social injustice in Nigeria

In his work on extra-judicial killings and political crisis in Nigeria's fourth republic, Ifegwu-livingrich (2018) argued that cases of human rights violations and social injustice by the Nigerian internal law enforcement and security system abound (Amnesty International, 2022). Evidence indicates that their engagement in incidents often exacerbates the situation. The Nigeria Watch Database in 2014 showed how the Nigerian security forces caused fatalities in 59% of the lethal incidents where they intervened. Unfortunately, the more the Nigerian security forces intervened in cases the more peoples' human rights are violated, and the more social injustice plays out (AFENO, 2014). In corroboration, Omeiza (2016) observed that the Nigerian security agents, particularly the Police commit so much extra-judicial killings on constant bases. In 2016 alone, the Nigerian Police recorded over 40 extra judicial killings in the country.

Scholars have also argued that human rights violations and social injustice is always a sign of main defect within a society. Anytime the State is the perpetrator, the act directly violates the duty of the State to protect its Citizens' rights, right to life and others. This is indication of a grave structural problem within a government (Observer, 2016).

Recounting the log of abuses of the right to life, by Nigerian security, Ifegwu-livingrich (2018), noted that between 2015 and 2017 alone the Nigerian joint security engaged in seriously heinous human rights violations void of remedy for families of victims, including: Onitsha Massacre 2015, Aba Massacre 2016, Aba-Portharcourt Road Massacre 2016, Afara-Ukwulboku Massacre 2017. Stone (2007) in an in-depth study on human rights violations in Nigeria discovered that, the Nigerian Police alone Violates the right to life of Nigerian people up to hundreds per year, and, in recent years, it has been thousands lives deprived of the right to life beside other rights deprived them. Most of the illegal killings by security officials were not reported to the National Human rights Commission (NHRC).

MORE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Human Rights Violations in Nigeria 2015-2024 reveal also the following recorded abuses:

Violation of rights to freedom of expression

In 2023 the Nigerian national Broadcasting Commission (NBC) fined 25 media outlets for their coverage of the 2023 general elections. In the same 2023 Chude Franklin Nnamdi was arrested for criticizing the governor of Anambra state on social media (Amnesty International, 2023). These acts of government amount to violation of human rights to freedom of expression and the press.

Unlawful Killings and Torture

In 2023, Mr. OnyekachiIbe was shot dead by a police officer for refusing to pay a bribe (Amnesty International, 2023). In the same 2023, MalamFaizAbdullahi died in police custody after being tortured during interrogation

Enforced Disappearances

In 2022MaduabuchObinwa was abducted by the Nigerian security agents and his fate remains unknown (Amnesty International, 2023) till date. In 2021ObioraAbgasmalo was abducted by gunmen and his fate remains unknown (Amnesty International, 2023).

Violence against Women and Girls

In 2024 over 200 school girls were kidnapped by Boko Haram fighters in Borno state. In 2023 cases of rape and murder were reported, including the rape of an eight-month's pregnant woman

Economic and Social Rights violation

In 2024 Economic reforms introduced in 2023 led to high inflation resulting in cost of living crisis. In 2023 the removal of the fuel subsidy led to a sheer rise in food prices and the cost of living.

The physical evidence of human rights violations and social injustice as stated above is just a representation of the various human rights violations in Nigeria between 2015 and 2024. The numbers are far from being exhaustive but only give an indication of the scope of the problem, for which there is need for alternative advocacy outlet in the country.

Methodology

Methodology refers to the systematic and scientific approach employed to carry out a research (Creswell, 2014). Thus this section covers research design, study area, population of the study, sample size, sampling

techniques, instrument for data collection, sources of data collection, validity of research instrument, reliability of the instrument, administration of the instrument, method of data analysis and decision rule.

Research Design: Research design refers the plan and structure of the research study (Bryman, 2016, Babbie, 2016). It is noteworthy that a well-designed methodology and research design are crucial to guarantee the validity and reliability of the research findings (Trochim, 2006).

The study, therefore, adopts a mixed-methods research design, namely, the combination of qualitative (documentary) and quantitative (Survey) methods of data collection, with thematic and content methods of analysis.

Qualitative Research Design: Documentary method was used to review and gather information from secondary data, including, existing literature, and official documents of the United Nations on Human rights abuse in Nigeria, documents from human rights organisations, documents from government agencies, Journals, books, and other sources. The survey and findings of extant literature on the issue under discuss was reviewed and found relevant for adoption into this research as part of the quantitative research of this study. Issues related to human rights and social justice was also reviewed, and made findings, as discussed in the latter part of this study.

Quantitative (Survey) Research Design: The choice of this design is help to identify attributes of a large population from a group of individuals. The design was suitable for the study as the study sought to examine subject matters using select media outlet in Nigeria as a case.

Population of the Study: This consisted of One hundred and thirty (138) Staff of selected Organizations in Nigeria. This was carried out in select organization in Nigeria. The choice of this study area was informed by its being the location in focus.

The select Organizations for this study are groups that have established reputation in the subject of the study. They carry out regular activities on the subject of this study and generate a mouth- watering responses.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques: based on the inability of the researcher to effectively study the whole Staff strength (Population) of the Organization, a representative number was chosen as the sample size population- One hundred and thirty staff was used as the sample size. 116

questionnaires were retrieved from the 138 questionnaires while the remaining 22 questionnaires were lost.

Sources of Data Collection: Data were collected from primary and secondary sources, primary data were obtained through questionnaires and personal interviews with both management and senior staff of select human rights and social justice advocates in Nigeria. This method was adopted to enable detailed and independent information not covered by questionnaires to be expressed by the respondents. Secondary data were obtained from published reports, journals, official documents, books, internets articles, and others. For analytical comparison of facts and proper compilation of facts and figures, survey of existing documents was considered important.

Instrument of Data Collection: Data were collected through questionnaires, carefully designed and administered to the respondents, and through personal interviews. On the whole, the questionnaires constituted the major instrument for data collection. The questionnaire contains sections A and B. section A contains personal information about the respondents. Section B is the main body of the questionnaire. This sections Seventeen (17) close ended questions through which the opinions of the respondents were expressed. The responses were measured by means of a four (4) category rating system (CRS), as follows:

Four Category Rating Systems

SA	Strongly	60
A	Agree	40
D	Disagree	10
SD	Strongly Disagree	6

Validity of Research Instrument: The validity of the research instrument was assessed by experts in the faculty of the Social Sciences, Department of Political Science, Rhema University Nigeria. Aba. These experts assessed the relevance of each item in relation to the objectives of the study, the research questions and variables to be tested, as well as the comprehensibility of each item in relation to the cognitive level of the respondents. They validated the instrument by effecting necessary corrections, examining the contents and ascertaining clarification of ideas as well as the appropriateness of the items.

Reliability of the Instrument: To determine the reliability of the instrument used in the study, the corrected questionnaire was administered randomly on selected staff of select Organizations in Nigeria. Tins approach was repeated with the same group after a two months period and the result obtained from the first and second pre-test were consistent therefore, the instrument is reliable.

Administration of the Instrument: The questionnaires were administered by the researcher to the respondents during official hours at the offices. The exercise was carried out with the assistant of the head of operations of the organizations, which in turn helped in enhancing the return rate of above 70%.

Method of Data Analysis: Tables and simple percentage was used as technique of analyzing the research questions. Responses from the questionnaires were analyzed using the descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage.

Ethical Consideration

The study adopted anonymity form of consideration in the online survey, in which participants were assured of anonymity to encourage them to be free to their honest ideas, opinions and experiences about human rights and social justice system in Nigeria 2015-2024.

RESULTS

Table 1: Statistics of field survey

Questionnaires issued	138
Questionnaires returned	116
Questionnaires not return	22

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Category	Number of Questionnaires	Percentage
Male	70	60.3%
Female	46	39.7%
Total	116	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3: Educational Qualifications of the Respondents

Category	Number of Questionnaires	Percentage
PHD	50	43.1%
B.SC / HND	30	25.9%
M.SC	23	19.8%
OND	13	11.2%
Total	116	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4: Age Distribution of Respondents

Category	Number of Questionnaires	Percentage
0-20 years	29	25%
21-40 years	49	42.2%
41-60 years	25	21.6%
60 and above	13	11.2%
Total	116	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 5: Department/ Units of Respondents

Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Administration	65	56.1%
Operations	31	26.7%
Corporate affairs	20	17.2%
Total	116	100%

Source: Field Survey, by Researcher 2024

Table 6: Human Rights Violations and Social Injustice

Category	Number of Questionnaires	Percentage
Strongly Agree	60	51.7%
Agree	40	34.5%
Disagree	10	8.6%
Strongly Disagree	6	5.2%
Total	116	100%

Source: Field Survey by Researcher 2024
Table 7: Reported violation of the Right to Life by Nigeria’s Joint Security Forces 2015-2017

S/N	Violation of Right to life / Victims	Year	Perpetrators
1	Onitsha Massacre of IPOB Members	2015	Joint Security Forces
2	Aba Massacre of IPOB Members	2016	Joint Security Forces
3	Aba-Port Harcourt Road Massacre of IPOB	2016	Joint Security Forces
4	Comprehensive Secondary Sch Massacre Aba	2016	Joint Security Forces
5	Afara-Ukwulbeku Massacre	2017	Joint Military Forces
6	Zaria at ZakZaky’s Massacre of the Shiites	2015	Military Forces

Source: Compiled and tabulated by Researcher 2024, HJI (2004),News Express (2013), etc

Table 8: Violation of the Right to Life by Nigeria’s Security Forces 2015-2017

S/N	Location	Year	Victims	No Killed
1	Zaria at ZakZaky’s	2015	The Shiites	Abv 20
2	Onitsha	2015	IPOB	Ov 200
3	Comprehensive Secondary School Aba	2016	IPOB	Ov. 300
4	Aba-P/Harcourt Express Road	2016	IPOB	Abv 250
5	AfaraUkwulbeku	2017	NnamdiKanu’s	Ov 28

Source: Socialscientia journal of the Social Sciences and Humanity (2018)

More Empirical Evidence: Human Rights Violations in Nigeria 2015-2024

Table 9:
Violation of freedom of Expression, 2023

Year	Incident	Description
2023	Fines on Media Outlets	The Nigerian national Broadcasting Commission (NBC) fined 25 media outlets for their coverage of the 2023 general elections.
2023	Arrest of Journalist	Chude Franklin Nnamdi was arrested for criticizing the governor of Anambra state on social media

Source: Amnesty International (2023)

Table 10: Unlawful Killings and Torture, 2023

S/N	Year	Incident	Description
1	2023	Police Shooting	Mr. OnyekachiIbe was shot dead by a police officer for refusing to pay a bribe
2	2023	Torture in Police Custody	FaizAbdullahi died in police custody after being tortured during interrogation.

Source:Amnesty International (2023)

Table 11: Enforced Disappearances

S/N	Year	Incidence	Description
1	2023	Abduction	MaduabuchObinwa was abducted by the Nigerian security agents and his fate remains unknown.
2	2023	Abduction	Obioraagbasimalo was abducted by gunmen and his fate remains unknown

Source: Amnesty International (2023)

Table 12: Violence against Women and Girls

S/N	Year	Incident	Description
1	2024	Kidnapping of School Girls	over 200 school girls were kidnapped by Boko Haram fighters in Borno state
2	2023	Rape and Murder	cases of rape and murder were reported, including the rape of an eight- month’s pregnant woman

Source: Amnesty International (2024)

Table 13: Economic and Social Rights

S/N	Year	Incident	Description
1	2024	Economic Reforms	Economic reforms introduced in 2023 led to high inflation resulting in cost of living crisis
2	2023	Fuel Subsidy Removal	The removal of the fuel subsidy led to a sheer rise in food prices and the cost of living.

Source: Amnesty International (2024)

DISCUSSION

The specific objectives of the study were to: (1) examine the extent to which Human Rights is advocated for in Nigeria (2) investigate the level of respect accorded human Rights in the Nigerian context (3) determine the level of social justice awarded to those whose fundamental rights are violated in Nigeria. The responses gotten from the respondents were analysed to explain with empirical evidence the initial claim of the study on the subject. A total of 138 closed ended questionnaires were issued out to respondents consisting of male and female from a defined academic background to sample their opinion on the claim of this study that despite all the seeming frantic efforts of the advocacy for human rights and social justice, fears abound that Human Rights is far from being promoted, protected and preserved and respected resulting in vicious injustices in Nigeria. Also to ascertain their opinion on the claim of the study that there is need to beef up advocacy for human rights and social justice that will eventually result in awarding remedies to Human Rights Victims or their families in the event the victim is extra-judicially killed in the cause of the violation of his rights

In table 6, the opinions of the respondents on:

- A) Whether human rights violation is still on the increase in Nigeria despite the efforts of human rights advocacy and whether the violation is impacting negatively on social justice in Nigeria, 60 respondents representing 51.7% strongly agree, 40 respondents representing 34.5% agree, while 10 respondents representing 8.6% disagreed, 6 respondents representing 5.2% strongly disagree.

The opinions of respondents on the need to beef up human rights and social justice advocacy in Nigeria embark on alternative form of communication strategies not examined by extant literature, followed similar responses.

- B) In corroboration tables 7 and 8 strongly agree that there is need to beef up advocacy for human rights and social justice in Nigeria, that human rights violation is on the increase in Nigeria, and there is little or no remedies awarded human rights victims in Nigeria. Agencies of the Nigerian government engage in constant extra-judicial killings with impunity, and not caring whether it violates the principles of due process (Kendall, 2002). Observer (2010) argues that when state officials deprive citizens the right to life or other rights directly violates the state's obligation to protect its citizens' rights including the right to life.

Tables 7 and 8 clearly show that between 2015 and 2017 alone were years of massacre of innocent Nigerian citizens in their numbers at different locations by government agencies void of damages to victims or their families. Victims who are killed outside the law were usually denied the right to be heard, this is a glaring deprivation of the right to fair hearing and right to life (Ojo, 1996).

Strength of the Study

In the context of the study, African Youths on Missions for persons with Disabilities Foundation Advocacy through Capacity building (being the independent variable) and Human Rights and Social justice (dependent variable) in Nigeria 2015-2024, the study examines the effect of advocacy through Communication- Capacity Building on human rights and Social Justice Outcome in Nigeria 2015-2024. The study will eventually lead to increased awareness, education, and mobilization of persons around human rights and social justice matters, which in turn, can result in changes in policies, practices, and behaviours that protect, promote, and preserve human rights and social justice in Nigeria.

To buttress this with example,

- Advocacy through Communication- Capacity Building, has the propensity to increase awareness about the importance of human rights and Social justice among Nigerian people
- The increase awareness realized will have the likelihood of leading to increased demand for human rights and social justice, which in turn result in putting pressure on policymakers and other change makers
- Resulting from these actions, policymakers and other changer makers in the society may more likely push for implantation of policies and embark on practices that promote human rights and social justice in Nigeria.

Flowing from the above therefore, the study examines the causal relationship between advocacy through Communication- capacity Building and human rights and social justice outcomes in Nigerian State.

Limitations of the Study

This study is not exhaustive especially as several factors hindered some of the goals of the researcher, including,

- Limited Scope: The study focused on human rights advocacy and social justice in Nigeria, and did not examine the subject in other countries. Also, the study focused on African youths on Missions advocacy through Capacity building form of communication as an added form of communication needed to chart the course of human rights advocacy in Nigeria,
- Limited sample size: the study had a limited sample size, which may not be representative of the entire population
- Insufficient finance to fund movement to places where other vital data could be collected, some questionnaires were not returned by respondents, while some interviews did not receive kind responses from the interviewed, others felt so scared identifying with the research basically given the Nigerian question- lack of security. However the limitation does not in any way reduce the quality of content in the study.

Implications of the study:

Notwithstanding the limitation of the study, holds a huge implication for the present day Nigeria for several reasons including,

- Promoting Human Rights and Social Justice in Nigeria: The study provides insights into how human rights and social justice can be

promoted, protected, and preserved through such effective communication strategy as capacity building advocacy

- Addressing power dynamics: The study recognizes the power dynamics involved in shaping public discourse and promoting human rights and social justice, which is critical in understanding the complexities of human rights and social justice advocacy in the State of Nigeria
- Improving understanding of human rights and social justice advocacy: This study provides an value-added understanding of how human rights and social justice are constructed, negotiated and administered through the social interactions and arrangements
- Informing Policy and Practice: The study provides recommendations for policymakers and practitioners on how to promote human rights and social justice in the Nigerian state.

Conclusion

Summary of key findings:

The study made findings based on the authorities reviewed including,

- Human rights advocacy groups in Nigeria have made frantic attempts to promote and protect human rights in Nigeria between 2015 and 2024
- The Social Media, Traditional media, and community-based initiatives, policy advocacy, art and cultural activism and community organising constitute the existing Human Rights and social justice advocacy outlets adopted by advocates (Tufekci, 2017; Herman & Chomsky, 2002; Freire, 1970)
- Government repression, Limited Resources, and social and Cultural barriers constitute the major challenges confronting human rights advocacy in Nigeria 2015-2014
- Litigation, Advocacy and Lobbying, Community Mobilization and Engagement, Media and Public Awareness, International Advocacy and Solidarity are existing strategies employed by human rights advocates involving the likes of Femi Falana (SERAP), ChidiOdinakalu (NHRC), Saudatu Mahdi (WRAPA), DapoOlorunyomi (PTCIJ), OsaiOjigho (Amnesty International) in Nigeria
- There are enormous recorded cases of human rights violations by Nigerian government agencies and government repression of human rights advocates

- There are still levels human rights advocacy needs to attend to produce more positive results in social justice outcome

Significance

These attempts by human rights advocate groups in Nigeria have contributed to positive outcomes such as increased awareness and recognition of human rights and human rights advocacy matters in Nigeria, the creation of the Action plan on business and human rights and the National Action plan for the protection and promotion of human rights 2024-2028 which provides a framework for promoting and protecting human rights in Nigeria.

Recommendation

Going by the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for future research:

- Future research may examine human rights advocacy and promotion of human rights and social justice in the Nigerian State
- Technology and Promotion of Human Rights Awareness and advocacy in Nigeria
- Human Rights Organisations and Challenges of Human Rights Communication in Nigeria

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