HUMAN SECURITY, SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND REALISATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Human security has been considered scholarly as a major instrument of preventing social exclusion across the globe. It is a means of promoting peace, justice, and equity in a socially excluded society. In Nigeria, the issue of social exclusion has become the order of the day because of the multicultural nature of the country. It is a major challenge threatening the peace and unity of Nigeria. However, with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda of the United Nations which seeks to promote human security and inclusive societies, five years after the SDGs was launched in Nigeria, much has not been achieved in the realisation of the golden objective of some of the goals related to human security and social exclusion in Nigeria. With ***ex-post approach,*** *this article notes that persistent insecurity, non-commitment on the side of the ruling elites, lack of accountability, probity, and lack of due process in the administration*

of justice has become the major issues hampering effective implementation of the SDGs targets in Nigeria. The paper recommends that the government should put machinery in place towards curtailing those associated issues deterring the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals related to human security and social inclusion in Nigeria.

Keywords: Human Security, Social Exclusion, Poverty, Zero Hunger, SDGs

Introduction

GLOBALLY, the issue of insecurity and social exclusion has become a major phenomenon affecting the unity and social integration of people. It is accompanied by full threats on many fronts with protracted crises, violent conflicts, natural disasters, persistent poverty, epidemics, and economic downturns in the country. The persistence of insecurity and social exclusion especially in developing countries made the United Nations (UN) General Assembly through resolution 66/290 design a human security approach to curtail the menace. As stated in the United Nations Trust Fund Human Security (UNTFHS) 2012 report, human security as an action plan is a way of identifying and addressing widespread cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of the people.

According to Mamadov (2018), human security is participatory solutions that protect and empower people. It serves as both analytical lens and a programming framework that complements the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by preventing social exclusion through regular engagement of the people and

uncovers their specific needs, vulnerabilities, and advance policies actions based on the priorities of the people. Human security also promotes social harmony, social integration, and social inclusiveness in the decision-making process of the government.

In Nigeria, Birchall (2019) observes that the issues of human security and social exclusion have become a subject of discourse recently. This is so when the majority of the women and girls; people with disabilities; ethnic and religious minorities; migrants and internally displaced people; children and younger people; people without official identification and those living with diseases become the subject of social exclusion in the society. Such exclusion ranges from formal and informal barriers to the combination of restricted access to employment, education, health service, legal rights, and public participation in decision-making in Nigeria.

As observed by Otubu (2022), the growing rate of human insecurity has resulted in north-south migration, non-geographical and occupation migration globally recognised. The issue of migration in Nigeria has been of negative concern and this has been promoting social exclusion in the country. Social malaise such as kidnapping, banditry and insurgency are some of the human insecurity issues promoting social exclusion in the country. Multiple security threats in the north are an imminent risk of mass atrocities, including growing attacks by armed groups commonly referred to as Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA).

According to the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect Risk Level (GCRPRL) 2022 mid-term report, armed bandit groups killed more than 2,600 civilians in 2021, an increase of over 250

percent compared with 2020. Since January 2022 more than 250 people have been killed in attacks by armed bandits in Zamfara State. On 10th April 2022, more than 100 people were killed in attacks on several communities in the Kanam Local Government Area of Plateau State. The violence has displaced hundreds of thousands of people. The violence perpetrated by Boko Haram and ISWA against civilian and military targets has resulted in mass north-south migration in Nigeria.

As revealed in the GCRPRL (2022) mid-term report, in February 2022, ISWA perpetrated a series of attacks in Borno State, killing at least 25 civilians. More than 35,000 people have been killed in northern Nigeria since 2009 when Boko Haram launched its insurgency aimed at overthrowing Nigeria's secular government and establishing an Islamic state. There are at least 2.2 million internally displaced persons in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States while health services and education have been severely disrupted. These groups have also perpetrated attacks in neighbouring countries, killing and displacing civilians in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Alongside persistent violence between herding and farming communities, armed banditry has expanded in all parts of Nigeria (GCRPRL 2022 mid-term report).

Otubu (2022) avers that the socio-economic consequences of human insecurity do not only affect Nigeria but also the investors to the country. This problem has scared away potential and existing investors thereby worsening the already battered economy in Nigeria. It imposes hardships and undercut prospects for peace, stability, and crises of sustainable development in the country. The overlapping has become more grown exponentially and spilled into all aspects of people's lives. The phenomenon made it possible for

more complexity to entail multiple forms of human insecurity across Nigeria.

Given those noted challenges, this paper examined the level of attainment of some goals of SDGs related to human security and social inclusion agenda in Nigeria. This is so because; human security provides the basis for prevention of social exclusion and highlights the impact of income and other inequalities on a broader perspective. It is the best option to uncover various forms of social exclusion of women, minority groups, and economically 5arginalized people in the society. Human security, based on its core vision is developed to achieve freedom from fear, want, and indignity in the society.

Research Methodology

The paper adopts an ex-post approach where literature was surveyed to explain the various components of the Sustainable Development Goals relating to this study. Hence, the methodology is content analysis of existing literature. As revealed in the literature, a content analysis is an explanatory statements devised to explain a phenomenon, especially the one that has been repeatedly tested or widely accepted by scholars. The content analysis is adopted for this research work to explain the extent to which human insecurity and social exclusion has become the instrument of disunity among ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. This methodology is predicated on the nature of the subject matter that limits itself to the theoretical discussion. It is justified against the background of its ability to capture the dynamics of human security, social exclusion, and attainment of SDGs in Nigeria.

Brief Review of Literature

Human Security

Human security is a people-centred policy of the United Nations. It recognises the interlinkages between peace, development, and human rights of the people. The policy is designed to consider the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of the people. It is a prevention-oriented response that strengthens the protection and empowerment of the citizens. Human security is an approach of the proven analytical planning framework that supports more comprehensive and preventive measures for promoting social security and human inclusiveness in the day-to-day activities of the government. It also represents a departure from orthodox security studies, which focuses on the security of the state.

Gregoratti (2007) notes that human security is centred on individuals, and its end goal is the protection of people from traditional and non-traditional threats such as poverty and disease; the approach aims at moving the security agenda beyond state security and does not replace the existing order. Central to this approach is the understanding that human security deprivations can undermine peace and stability within and between states, whereas an overemphasis on state security can be detrimental to human welfare which has been one of the fundamental goals of the SDGs. As averred by Gregoratti (2007), human security by practice is a means of being more sensitive to the well-being of the people. It is a way of drawing together all actors necessary to respond to different challenges confronting the people, the application of human security ensures coherence, eliminates duplication and advances integrated

solutions that can promote effective and tangible improvement in the daily lives of the people.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through its 2020 report sees human security as fundamentally concerned with human life and the dignity of the people. It is safe from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, and repression. It is a way of protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of the daily life of the people. Acknowledging the varying intensity of possible threats to human welfare, UNDP grouped these threats into seven non-exhaustive and non-exclusive securities such as community, economic, environmental, food, health, personal, and political. Human security is a way of making people's hearts become endeared to peace-building. It is an act of recognising various grievances that are often the root causes of violence to prevent possible conflict in society.

Paul (2014) maintains that human security recognises several dimensions related to feeling safe, such as freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity. It is a people-centred approach that has implications on how government understands conflict assessment, programme planning, implementation, and evaluation of peace-building initiatives in the state. Human security provides basis for addressing associated issues related to sustainable peace and recognising social, economic, and political grievances. It is not only centred on people as objects of intervention, but also a provider of security in its own right. It is a way of making policy-makers considers participatory ways of evaluating inclusiveness in the activities of the people.

Social Exclusion

There is no universally agreed definition of the term social exclusion. However, scholars see the concept as a lack of individual participation in social activities due to some social reasons. It is a process where individuals are unable to participate fully in day to day activities of society. According to Sayce (2000), social exclusion involves the interlocking compounding problems of impairment, discrimination, diminished social role, lack of economic and social participation, and disability. It is a complex and multi-dimensional process involving the lack and denial of resources, rights, goods, and services, and the inability to participate in the normal activities available to the majority of people.

This is also corroborated in the 2003 report of the Council of the European Union (CEU) where social exclusion was described as a process where certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully in social, political, and economic activities in the state because of their level of poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income, and education opportunities as well as social and community networks. They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feel powerless and are unable to take control of the decisions that affect their day-to-day lives.

As observed by Khan, Combaz & McAslan Fraser (2015), social exclusion is multi-dimensional and encompasses social, political, cultural, and economic dimensions. It increases poverty by reducing groups' access to vital services such as health, education, and social protection including livelihood opportunities. It can also be a result

on land; peace, justice and strong institutions and partnership for the goals.

Each goal typically has 8–12 targets, and each target has between 1 and 4 indicators used to measure progress toward reaching the targets. The targets are either outcome targets or means of implementation of the targets. The latter targets were introduced late in the process of negotiating the SDGs to address the concern of some member states about how the SDGs were to be achieved. By the design, individual governments were urged to translate the goals into national legislation, develop a plan of action, and establish their budget. However, at the same time, they must be open to and actively searching for partners. Coordination at the international level is crucial, making partnerships valuable. The SDGs note that countries with less access to financial resources need partnerships with more well-to-do countries.

Overview of Social Exclusion Issue in Nigeria

Social exclusion is the process in which individuals are blocked or denied full access to various rights, opportunities, and resources that are normally available to members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration. In Nigeria, women and girls; people with disabilities; ethnic and religious minorities; migrants and internally displaced people; children and younger people; older people; sexual minorities; people without official identification; and people living with HIV are specifically identified as socially excluded people in the society. As observed by Birchall (2019), gender inequality and discrimination against women and girls in Nigeria is well-recognised as major causes of social exclusion. Nigeria ranks 118 out of 134 countries on the Gender Equality Index

in 2017. Women and girls in Nigeria face a range of formal and informal barriers to social inclusion.

These barriers arise from a combination of restricted access to employment, education, health services, legal rights, and public participation, and gendered social norms that position women and girls as wives and caretakers while men and boys are breadwinners and decision-makers in society. This means that boys' rights whether to education, health care, or adequate nutrition are prioritised over those of girls from an early age. Following the 2019 elections, Kelly (2019) notes that women make up 7.3 percent of the Nigerian Senate, 3.1 percent of the House of Representatives, and no woman was elected as Governor in all the 36 states in the country. This is also in addition to gender-based violence in the southern part of the country and women in the north-western states marry on average at 16 while in southeastern states, the average age is 24 years old.

According to the National Population Commission (NPC) 2020 annual report, 51 percent of rural women have no education compared to 16 percent of urban women in Nigeria. There are also differences across states in women's legal rights, freedoms, and duties; in some states, all women can acquire, hold and dispose of property, while in northern states only married women have such rights. As with women and girls, Wapling (2019) notes that people with disabilities also experience a combination of formal and informal barriers arising from discriminatory attitudes and exclusionary practices of social exclusion in Nigeria. People with disabilities are disproportionately affected by poverty, with nine out of ten living below the poverty level.

Rates of youth unemployment for people with disabilities as of 2020 were 77.3 percent, compared with 49.2 percent for people without a disability. The adult unemployment rate is 62.5 percent for people with disabilities compared to 21.5 percent for those without disabilities. Women with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed than men before the year 2030 (NPC, 2020 report). The participation rate in education as revealed in the report is 12 percent for children with disabilities, compared with 57 percent for those without disabilities while those children with disabilities who are in school have good primary completion rates, the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) estimates that 90 percent of children with disabilities are out of school in Nigeria.

Barriers to education for people with disabilities include long and difficult journeys to school, poverty and school fees, negative attitudes and stigmatisation, inaccessible infrastructure, and lack of support services and professionals. Thompson (2019) believes that access to health care is another area where people with disabilities in Nigeria experience social exclusion. This is so because the majority of people with disabilities are only cared for by family and friends, leading to an increase in the social and economic exclusion of those households. Also, the issue of stigmatisation, discrimination, and negative attitudes toward people with disabilities are also regarded as major causes of social exclusion in Nigeria. Intersecting with religious and cultural beliefs and superstitions, such negative attitudes made people with disabilities to be seen as a burden to society.

Birchall (2019) avers that state and local governments' practices of treating 'indigenes' differently from 'non-indigenes' are also

regarded as another source of significant social exclusion in the country. In some states, non-indigenes are facing barriers in accessing free education, social protection, and public sector jobs when compared with the indigenes of those states. Le Van, Hassan, Isumonah, Kwaja, Momale, Nwankwor & Okenyodo (2018) in their study of marginalised groups in the context of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Nigeria observed that social exclusion is also more likely for populations who do not have official identification. In the report, it was revealed that less than 50 percent of residents in Nigeria have any form of identification at all. Living without an identity makes it difficult for individuals to access social protection, healthcare, or financial services and they may be unable to vote in elections or cross borders legally.

Those groups of people as stated in the report include IDPs; slum dwellers and informal housing residents; women; people with disabilities; religious minorities; migrants and border communities (Le Van et al., 2018). When combined with other causes of marginalisation such as gender, disability, or displacement, the result of being without an official identity is systematic, social, economic, and political exclusion. Also, people living in different locations in Nigeria face social exclusion in the country. According to Birchall (2019), living in an urban area is no guarantee of avoiding poverty and exclusion because an estimated 80 percent of Nigeria's urban residents live in informal settlements that lack proper sanitation and clean water.

Many urban poor families cannot afford education, despite laws guaranteeing free basic education for all Nigerians. Those who arrive in search of new opportunities encounter high unemployment,

along with economic and social exclusion in urban areas. Access to healthcare and health outcomes also depends on location in the country. Le Van et al., (2018) in their report revealed that assess to maternal and prenatal mortality in Makoko Riverine and Badia East in the most vulnerable slums of Lagos indicates that the maternal mortality ratio in those urban slum populations was extremely high compared to the estimates for non-slum areas in Lagos State. This helps in identifying and redressing inequities that exist among poor, remote, vulnerable populations as in the urban slums of Lagos. The report concluded that Nigerians living in border communities regularly face social exclusion and vulnerability. The geographic remoteness of these communities means that public service provision and education levels are far lower than elsewhere in the country.

Performance Review of Human Security and Social Inclusion Policy on the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria

i. Goal 1: Ending Poverty in all its forms: In Nigeria, much has not been achieved on the issue of ending poverty despite different social intervention programmes such as Anchor Borrowers (AB), Trader Money (TM), and Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) put in place by the government. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) 2020 report revealed that 40 percent of the total population in Nigeria still lives below the country's poverty line of 137,430 naira ($381.75) per year. The NBS report is based on data obtained from the Nigerian Living Standards Survey (NLSS), conducted in 2018-2019 with support from the World Bank's Poverty Global Practice.

It is being used to estimate a wide range of socio-economic indicators including a benchmark of the SDGs.

Ezemenaka (2021) avers that the rampaging growth of poverty in Nigeria is promoting social exclusion. Lack of access to reliable food supplies, safe drinking water, adequate health care, and modern energy supplies constitute an immediate form of social exclusion in Nigeria. Despite the social intervention programmes put in place by the government, it has not been able to translate to improvement in the socio-economic well-being of the people and with the prevailing economic situation; many Nigerians survive on less than one dollar per day.

ii. Goal 2: Promotion of Zero Hunger: In Nigeria, the issue of economic development remains a lofty ambition. However, hunger, starvation, and malnutrition continue to reign supreme even in the midst of plenty. Concerns are growing over certain trends where hunger is blamed for most crimes perpetrated today in the country. The income gap between the poor and rich widened so much in Nigeria and this has been one of the major factors responsible for hunger in the country despite series of social intervention programmes put in place to achieve the zero hunger objectives of the SDGs.

To achieve the zero hunger agenda, the Nigerian government through the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) established the Anchor Borrowers' Programme (ABP), which was launched by President Buhari in 2015 with the intention of creating a linkage between anchor companies involved in the processing and small holder farmers (SHFs) of the required key agricultural

commodities. However, Layden (2021) notes that banditry and killer herdsmen forced farmers who took ABP loans to abandon their farms, this made the farmers bemoan their losses and wonder how they would be able to repay the loans they took. This seriously impacted negatively on attaining the zero hunger agenda of SDGs in Nigeria.

According to Alikor (2022), a food security and nutrition analysis published in October 2021 (Cadre Harmonise) revealed that 12.1 million Nigerians experienced food crisis in 2021. These figures are even predicted to worsen in 2022 by the World Bank. The sad reality is that hunger is growing every day in Nigeria. Beyond 40 percent of Nigerians (over 86 million) who live below $2 per day, a higher percentage of Nigerians are finding it difficult to afford two square meals per day. As observed by Alikor (2022), the Nigerian government pegged the minimum wage at ₦30, 000 naira in an average of thirty calendar days which implies ₦1, 000 per day to cater for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and other essential needs of the workers.

This minimum wage would even make sense only for those who are able to secure a white-collar job in the country. Unemployment, especially among the youths who constitute over 70 percent of Nigeria's population is equally getting worse. Productive, able, and willing youths who are desirous of working to earn a living have no job, while those who have jobs are grossly under-employed. The inability to secure a job makes it impossible for unemployed Nigerians to escape the claws of hunger and starvation while those with average income have been affected by rising food inflation in the country. Food insecurity caused by inadequate foreign exchange

for importation of raw materials, insecurity in different parts of Nigeria where farmers are unable to engage in traditional farming, high cost of transportation, and certain climate change effects are graciously contributing to the reason why the zero hunger policy of the government in Nigeria is yet to come to reality.

iii. Goal 4: Promotion of Quality Education: This is another major aspect of SDGs that has a direct impact on human security and the elimination of social exclusion in Nigeria. Quality education as stated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNCEF, 2020 report) is a foundation for the successful implementation of the human security agenda of the SDGs. However, the desire of Nigeria to achieve this goal is hampered by the kidnapping of school children in the northern part of the country. More than 1,400 children were abducted in Nigeria since 2014 when the School girls were kidnapped in Chibok community in Borno State. According to Peterside (2021), bandits kidnap school children in Nigeria for ransom. This is part of the prevalent insecurity that threatens to collapse the desires of the government to provide quality education in line with the human security agenda of SDGs.

Nigerians, all over the country, are groaning under the yoke of Islamic terrorists, secessionists, armed robbers, ritualists, and all manners of criminal elements threatening the provision of quality education, especially in predominantly rural areas. Empirically, Peterside (2021) notes that from the 2014 incident of the Chibok girls to the mass abduction in Dapchi (Yobe State), terrorists and bandits have specifically targeted vulnerable school children in the northern part of the country. Since December 2020, when suspected gunmen attacked the Government Boys Science Secondary School

in Kankara, Katsina State, and abducted over 300 students, kidnapping school children for ransom has become rampant in Nigeria.

In Kaduna State, the bandits seemed to step up to higher institutions as they kidnapped 39 students of the Federal College of Forestry Mechanisation in early February and 20 students, alongside three non-academic staff of Greenfield University in April 2020. As argued by Peterside (2021), the kidnapping of school children for ransom has become part of the prevalent insecurity that threatens to collapse the desires of the government to provide quality education in line with the human security agenda of SDGs. It is also hindering the attainment of making quality education a stepping stone to promoting social inclusion in Nigeria.

iv. Goal 10: Reducing Inequality: As contained in United Nations Development Programme 2020 report. It is revealed that reducing inequality represents resolution 66/290 of the human security agenda of the United Nations General Assembly where the issue of integration of the people irrespective of ethnicity, religion, and economic status must be the priority of the government. However, despite the resolution, the issues of inequality and social exclusion persist and remain the order of the day in Nigeria. As averred by Birchall (2019), ethnic and religious identities are often intertwined in Nigeria, forming part of a complex pattern of inequality and social exclusion in the country. Religious minorities experience social, political, and economic exclusion, as a result of differences. Horizontal inequalities by ethnic groups remain persistent for wealth, access to public services, and education. People classed as

'non-indigenes' are prevented from benefiting from public sector jobs and some social services in some parts of Nigeria.

Birchall (2019) notes that people with disabilities in Nigeria face a range of attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers to social inclusion; this includes a combination of formal and informal barriers arising from discriminatory attitudes and exclusionary practices in Nigeria. Women and girls also face a range of formal and informal barriers to social inclusion. These barriers as noted by Birchall (2019) arise from a combination of restricted access to employment, education, health services, legal rights, and public participation, and gendered social norms that position women and girls as wives and caretakers while men and boys are breadwinners and decision-makers in society. Internally displaced people (IDPs) in Nigeria also face inequality and social exclusion in socio-economic activities in the country. The particular groups of IDPs, such as women, children, and people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable and have become victims of social abuse in the country.

v. Goal 16: Promotion of Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: This goal seeks to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions for the people. However, the lack of accountability and injustice on the part of those who are in the position of leadership in Nigeria made the realisation of this goal a little bit difficult to achieve. As noted by Ibegbu (2007), the inability of successive administrations to promote social justice and equitable distribution of resources resulted in the neglect of the Niger-Delta region in Nigeria. The

region is the treasure base of the nation contributing so much to the socio-economic development of the country with little compensation when compared to the unhealthy environment subjected to by the people of the region.

Ogunye (2019) notes the unconstitutional removal of the former Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Walter Onnoghen through an ex-parte order against the provisions of Section 292 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is a big setback to the commitment of the government towards providing strong institutions for the administration of justice. Also, Anenene & Oyewole (2020) note that previously attacking the home of some judges under Buhari's government are means of weakening the strength and morale of the judicial officers in the dispensation of justice in the country. The attack cannot guarantee a secure environment for the nation's judicial officials to operate without hindrance, fear of intimidation, or harassment. It will also retard the attainment of peace, justice, and strong institutions as envisaged in the SDGs in Nigeria.

Implications of Ineffective Implementation of SDGs on Human Security and Social Inclusion in Nigeria

i. **Geometric Increase in Global Poverty Rating:** The inability of the government to effectively implement the SDGs in Nigeria portends danger to the socio-economic development of the people. As argued by Adeyeye (2020), the ineffective implementation of the SDGs already added to a very low Human Capital Index rating of Nigeria on human security with a geometric increase in the level of poverty. This has already made Nigeria become the poverty capital of the world with 40

percent of the total population of almost 83 million people in Nigeria still living below the country's poverty line of 137,430 naira ($381.75) per year.

ii. **Increased Health Challenges:** Adeyeye (2020) notes that health reports in Nigeria also do not suggest that Nigeria is meeting the SDG target on 'good health and well-being of the people. In early 2020, health challenges such as diarrhoea, malaria, neonatal disorders, HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, blood/endocrine disorders, unintentional injuries, nutritional deficiencies, and other non-communicable diseases were identified as leading causes of death in Nigeria. Coupled with the Covid-19 pandemic, Nigeria currently has the second-largest number of people living with HIV globally and the highest burden of malaria globally. This has a greater implication for the better living condition and general well-being of the people in Nigeria.

iii. **Low-Quality Education:** As revealed in the UNICEF (2020 report), the quality education in Nigeria is at best a mere fantasy. With over 13 million school-age children out of school, Nigeria still struggles to meet the SDG target on education. The quality of education in the country is declining especially in many public schools in the northern part of Nigeria due to insecurity. Prohibitive costs of accessing quality private education leave many Nigerians without a chance to access quality education. The Nigerian girl child still does not have access to education at all or past a certain age, especially in the northern part of Nigeria. This is because they are

considered ripe for marriage and are subsequently forced into marriage.

iv. **Delay in Administration of Justice:** Ibietan & Okafor (2019) identified gaps bothering on the delay in the administration of justice in Nigeria. Five years after the adoption of SDGs, considerable evidence indicates undue executive muzzling vitiates the independence of the judiciary, and by its self-imposed afflictions, the Nigerian judiciary has not demonstrated adequate capacity and readiness to effectively discharge its core functions in attaining SDGs. Although, the Constitution guarantees the right to a fair trial for all Nigerians, unfortunately, these trials are never speedy or heard at the appropriate time. This has proved to be one of the obstacles to accessing justice, based on the world Justice Peace Project Index Report 2018 (WJPR, 2018).

v. **High Level of Unemployment:** The youth unemployment rate in Nigeria according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2020 report) increased to 53.40 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 from 40.80 percent in the second quarter of the same year. This has resulted in social and economic consequences such as; an increase in crime rate, loss of respect and identity, reduction in purchasing power, psychological injuries, and advance free fraud in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper examined the level of implementation of human security and social inclusion policy in line with some selected goals of the SDGs Agenda of the United Nations in Nigeria. As revealed in the

article, human security serves as a programming framework for preventing social exclusion in society. This article, therefore, examined Goals 1, 2, 4, 10, and 16 of the SDGs that have to do with human security and social inclusion using **an ex-post approach.** In the course of the assessment, the article observed that the issues of banditry, Fulani/Farmer clashes, and kidnapping in some parts of Nigeria have been making it difficult for the government to end poverty and promote zero hunger in the country.

With the prevailing economic situation, many Nigerians only survive on less than one dollar per day and this has widened the gap between the rich and poor despite different programmes put in place to address the gap by the government. The article also notes that the goal of promoting quality education is affected by the incessant closure of schools in the northern part of Nigeria due to insecurity. This has become a major challenge impeding the desire of the government to provide quality education in line with the human security agenda of SDGs. With this development, reducing inequality in Nigeria has not been achieved due to horizontal inequalities among different ethnic groups in the country while women and girls also face different barriers to social inclusion.

The issue of insecurity, lack of accountability, probity, and due process in the administration of justice has also been noted as challenges to the realisation of the human security and social inclusion agenda of the SDGs in Nigeria. To put an end to those associated challenges, this article recommends a participatory approach in the implementation of the SDGs related to the issue of human security and social inclusion in Nigeria. All three tiers of government need to join hands together to develop a mechanism for

the effective implementation of those goals. This will be more useful for the prompt realisation of the objective of the policy. This will also help in addressing the issue of insecurity, banditry, and lack of political commitment to the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria.

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