Reparation Process and the Reconciliation of Boko Haram, Herdsmen/Farmers, Niger Delta Militants and Biafra sit-at-home Conflicts in Nigeria: The Transitional Justice Approach

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Abstract

Reparation process and reconciliation of conflicts is a core aspect of the transitional justice approach. This mechanism has been argued to be a veritable strategy to addressing the mirage of conflicts and violent conflicts in Nigeria. This paper assessed the reparation process and reconciliation of Boko Haram, Herdsmen/farmers, Niger Delta militants and Biafra sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria. The paper is discoursed based on the transitional justice approach. Its analytical framework was anchored on the conflict resolution theoretical persuasion. The design of the paper is the survey research design. Data was generated from a sample size of 554 derived from the 2023 Nigeria's population estimate put at 223,804,632 via the use of the Taro Yamene formula. Instrument for data gathering was a likert scaled questionnaire; administered and retrieved from respondents. While secondary information gotten via documentary materials complimented needed information for the paper. Data was analyzed using percentages, scaling and other statistical tools while the single hypothesis of the paper was tested via Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Coefficient (r). The paper concluded that transitional justice is usually considered in violence and conflict affected politics as inter-wined with one another in other to promote post-violence socio-economic and political stability. Thus, the paper revealed that

transitional justice processes such as reparation and reconciliation, addresses economic, social and cultural rights issues in addition to rule of law and human rights as an essential part of the main causes of violence, conflicts and repression. Accordingly, the paper recommends that; the Nigerian government should pay attention towards stopping the prevalence of impunity and enshrining values that underscore justice and reconciliation by adopting and deepening the transitional justice approach of reparation process and reconciliation of the Boko-Haram, Herder/farmers, Niger Delta Militants and Biafra sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria.

Introduction

The focus of transitional justice specifically relates to situational contexts where the rule of law has been blatantly raped, where conflict has left a demeaning legacy, and human rights have been systematically violated (Hassan & Tyvoll, 2018). Transitional justice has, therefore, extended its influence beyond the acknowledgment and examination of the past by focusing on the victims of the rule of law and human rights violations. Recently, transitional justice's compass has examined how legacies of violent, conflict, and human rights violations are addressed and how this 'affects short-term peace processes and longer-term state-building and development processes (Bakiner, 2016).

Conceptually transitional justice refers to a set of institutional mechanisms that document human rights violations suffered in relatively recent periods of violence, with the dual objective of providing an effective remedy to victims and reducing the potential for new cycles of violence by reforming institutions and social processes (Dukic, 2007). This model of understanding of transitional justice has proved to be insufficient to reflect the experience of indigenous peoples. The various transitional justice mechanisms, due to their historical contexts and doctrinal roots, have not properly recorded the experiences considered relevant by Indigenous peoples. As they have failed to incorporate the range of Indigenous encounters with violence and oppression, they have not adequately linked the violations of the past with the ongoing marginalization of the present (Zwanbin, 2017).

However, transitional justice is dynamic and has been gradually incorporating more effective practices to reflect Indigenous experiences. At times, it has been transformed in response to interventions and adaptations by Indigenous communities and thanks to the growing international recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights (Kathryn & Hun, 2013).

Human existence and community development have been contemporaneous with struggles. Sometimes the struggles are enmeshed in violence leading to human rights abuse and violations. The victims or community of persons whose rights are violated may never get redress in the normal course of justice administration. For instance, the sit-at-home (SAH) order restricted to South eastern Nigeria has led to diverse human and economic rights abuses on a larger scale. The violations are from both sides of the divides. (Ejemheare, 2021). The order is one of the series of incidents in the aftermath of the second extra ordinary rendition and subsequent and detention of

Mazi Nnamdi Kanu (MNK). The initial SAH order was to be operational every Monday. It later became obvious that sit-at-home can possibly be anytime, any day, without sufficient notice to the persons who are expected to comply with it. The continued SAH appears to be having more impact than expected albeit negatively. The economy of some States in South eastern Nigeria is constantly held by the throat with gradual strangulation.

Government has deployed forces to counter the trangulatory order. This approach now appears futile. The use of force may not have produced the desired result in the region (*Iguh et al.*, 2021). Before getting to these crossroads, there have been lingering diverse forms and shapes of violence and abuse of human rights amid agitation for self-determination and national questions in Nigeria. Much of these rights abuses have not been addressed especially since the civil war (1967-1970) era to date. These include the ethno-religious crisis in Northern Nigeria, coups and counter coups of 1966, Nigeria/Biafra civil war, and the annulment of June 12 general elections of 1993 leading to exodus of people of Igbo extractions from all over Nigeria in anticipation of another spate of violence targeted at them. The Niger Delta is not left out in these crises. They have had a handful of it leading to the famous Ogoni 9 and eventual creation of militia of different calibers and approaches. The middle belt region, especially Plateau and Benue, are crisis-ridden flowing from tribal wars to herdsmen induced violence. These and other flashpoints constitute the massive kegs of gun powder that Nigeria appears to be perching on. Of all these crises and violence none was as profound in terms of right abuses and criminality as the Nigeria/Biafra civil war. The issues that led to the war, whether right or wrong, appears not to have been dealt with 63 years after the war (Ikelegbe & Onokerhoraye, 2016). These issues now at the front burner have not only resurfaced but also have been reinvigorated, reinforced, and reorganized. Amid these reinforcement and reinvigoration of the self- determination agitations came the SAH order.

At the core of the official response has been the application of force by the central federal government of Nigeria. This, by and large, appears to be wrong approach to the issues of violence and human rights abuses. Available literature suggests that the use of force, political mathematics and economics, and conventional justice administration, all seem to have failed or not to have been properly harnessed in Nigeria (International Center for Transitional Justice, 2017).

Theoretical Persuasion
Conflict Resolution Theory
According to Burton (1991) conflict resolution means terminating conflict by methods that are analytical and that get to the root of the problem. It points to an outcome that, in the view of the parties involved, is a permanent solution to a problem (Burton, 1991). The Conflict Resolution Theory is a four-stage process, which enables groups to work towards resolving inter-group conflicts in a non-threatening, non-coercive and non-confrontational environment. It often paves the way for official negotiations by initiating attitudinal changes in public opinion and decision makers. Traditionally, conflict resolution has largely been based on negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration. Though Burton (1991) distinguishes between Conflict Resolution, Management and Settlement, for purpose of this paper, we shall use them interchangeably, and together, since they all serve the same purpose of bringing about peace. Conflict Management is

by alternative dispute resolution skills and can confine or limit conflict; while conflict settlement is by authoritative and legal processes and can be imposed by elites. But conflict resolution aims at proffering a mutually agreed permanent solution to the conflict. The wisdom towards solution is for the conflicting groups to work out their problems in an analytical way, supported by third parties who act as facilitators and not authorities. The purpose of this process is to enable the participants to come to the understanding that all participants have legitimate needs and identity that must be satisfied and recognized in order to resolve the conflict. Burton further states that conflict resolution is, in the long term, a process of change in political, social and economic systems. It is an analytical and problem-solving process that takes into account such individual and group needs as identity and recognition, as well as institutional changes are required to satisfy the needs (Burton, 1991:91). The theory has three major assumptions: Between individuals or groups, conflict emerges from having opposing interests, or competing for scarce resources. Struggle and conflict lead to some individuals or groups controlling and dominating others, and that pattern of subordination and domination are self-perpetuating. Dominant groups disproportionately influence resource allocation and societal structure.

One of the key phenomena of this method of Conflict Resolution strategies is to deal with protracted social conflict, a type of conflict based particularly on identity related needs of ethno-national or communal groups. These identity groups, whether formed around shared ethnic, racial, cultural, or other characteristics, will act to achieve and insure their distinctive identity within a society. When they are denied physical and economic security, political participation, and recognition from other groups, their distinctive identity is lost, and they will do whatever is in their power to regain it (Azar, 1990). The application of this type of Conflict Resolution mechanism, involves critical processes or stages that enable group representatives to work towards resolving conflicts in a non-threatening, non-coercive and non-confrontational environment. This process paves the way for official negotiations by initiating attitude changes in public opinion and decision makers. These processes include: First, Series of problem-solving workshops, seminars or commissions. These are designed to bring influential people from the respective factions (communities and government) in the conflict together to explore alternative means of defining their conflict. The goal is to transform their perception about the conflict from zero-sum to win-win (Cunningham, 1984).

These can be achieved through the process of facilitated meetings as part of the workshops. These workshops are facilitated by a panel of experts in negotiation, mediation, arbitration and conciliation. The facilitators do not seek to impose or even offer solutions to the conflict, their pre-occupation/purpose is to facilitate communications and gently guide the participants towards changing their attitudes, perceptions themselves. The atmosphere is very conducive to bridge building and understanding. Kelman (1991) believes that these focuses are essential in the process of attitude and perceptual change: for example,if both parties insist on possession of the same territory, they are boxed into a zero-sum definition of the conflict, whereby they look behind these positions, however, they may discover that one party wants the territory to satisfy its identity needs and the other to satisfy its national security and economic needs.

Conceptual Discourse
The Concept of Transitional Justice

The term transitional justice was coined in 1995, as a result of the publication of Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, edited by Kritz. Today, over two decades later, the concept of transitional justice has influenced the legal, social and political discourse of societies undergoing fundamental social change, and that of the international community (Zwanbin, 2017). This assumption underpins the United Nations (UN) working definition of transitional justice. For the UN, transitional justice refers to "the full set of processes and mechanisms associated with a society's attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuse, in order to secure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation" (Annan, 2004, p. 4).

Arthur (2009) for example, defines transitional justice as the "set of practices, mechanisms and concerns that arise following a period of conflict, civil strife or repression, and that are aimed directly at confronting and dealing with past violations of human rights and humanitarian law. According to this concept, transitions can only take place when conflict or repression has ended and should include all human rights, not only civil and political rights. This concept is not broadly supported by stakeholders, some of whom prefer to limit it to serious and systematic violations of civil and political rights. Remarkably, however, the UN has moved towards recognizing that to properly deal with the root causes of conflict it is also necessary to address violations of economic, social and cultural rights (OHCHR, 2009). Implications of past violence and conflict on humans and economic prosperity have pronounced the widespread use of transitional justice as a global concept through which various past atrocities and legacies of violations are checked and addressed. The emergence of the term was prevalent in the early 1990s.

According to Buckley-Zistel et al. (2010), the term has since come to be "an ever-expanding range of mechanisms and institutions, including tribunals, truth commissions, memorial projects, reparations and the like to redress past wrongs, vindicate the dignity of victims and provide justice in times of transition". Transitional justice can, therefore, be defined, as the "effort to respond to the needs of societies emerging from conflict or political violence" (United Nations Secretary-General, 2004). Also, transitional justice is seen as "the range of processes and mechanisms that are utilized to enable war-affected or post-authoritarian societies to make a transition to a more democratic and peaceful dispensation" (Selim and Murithi, 2011, p. 59). These definitions have shown that transitional justice has set measures and parameters as designs for implementing actions to redress the legacies of abundant human rights abuses and violations of the rule of law during violence and conflict in authoritarian regimes. The development of these measures is set to provide enduring norms against human rights violations.

The specific violations of transitional justice dealt with were civil and political abuses and economic and social violations. With this, the contexts associated with the operation of transitional justice have expanded to cover conflict and post-conflict contexts. It extends to countries that are currently experiencing conflict and those that have not even gone through a significant economic and political transition (Lutz, 2006). Such conceptions are not necessarily based on the idea that

civil and political rights are intrinsically more important than economic, social, and cultural rights; instead, "this view sees transitional justice as being meant to address one part of the problem with the hope that it can contribute to solving the whole" (Ruti, 2003, p. 71).

Transitional justice initially developed as a particular way of both addressing serious human rights violations and facilitating transitions to democracy; responding to claims for justice for the violation of economic and social rights was not part of this understanding of how best to effect such a transition. More so, as viewed by Olsen et al. (2010), transitional justice is 'the array of processes designed to address past human rights violations following periods of political turmoil, state repression, or armed conflict'. The concept of transitional justice is meritoriously given an all-encompassing definition that attempts to include different transitional settings and a situation or context where the violators of human, political, economic, and social rights are not limited to state actors or are not seen as the only provider of justice. Still, all facets of the social setting were involved. Rule of Law and Transitional Justice The rule of law is an indispensable legal framework for the stability of any organisation. Its presence in any establishment ensures there is a situation in which all persons, institutions, and entities, public and private, hold on to the principle of accountability, lawfulness, and responsibility for the promulgation, enforcement, and independent adjudication which are consistent with human rights norms and standards and economic, social and political rights (Owoeye & Afolabi, 2018).

The Processes of Transitional Justice (Dimensions of Transitional Justice)

Four processes are believed to constitute the core of transitional justice, even if there is disagreement about what each of them entails and the relationship that should exist between them. Usually, a transition encompasses a justice process, to bring perpetrators of mass atrocities to justice and to punish them for the crimes committed; a reparation process, to redress victims of atrocities for the harm suffered; a truth process, to fully investigate atrocities so that society discovers what happened during the repression/conflict, who committed the atrocities, and where the remains of the victims lie; and an institutional reform process, to ensure that such atrocities do not happen again (OHCHR, 2009).

In addition to these core processes, others have become part of the transitional justice agenda: primarily, national consultations, which have been strongly recommended by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Peace building Commission, which emphasize that "meaningful public participation" is essential for the success of any transition and National consultations should take place in relation to different aspects of transitional justice. Finally, Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), which usually take place in parallel rather than as part of the transitional justice processes, actively interact with and complement transitional justice mechanisms and policies. DDR focuses on helping ex-combatants to stop fighting and to reintegrate into society (Bell, 2009). While all these processes are important, this report focuses on the core processes of transitional justice, namely: justice, reparation, truth and institutional reform.

The Concept of Reconciliation

Reconciliation' is viewed as a key term in transitional justice and is often presumed to be one of its goals (Arthur, 2009). It has been used by the UN Secretary General, who clarified that transitional justice denotes a full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society's attempt to come to terms with a legacy of a large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation (Bell, 2009). Reconciliation, however, is difficult to define as the concept is quite vague and diverse. It can vary according to culture and can differ due to the nature of the crime (Charles, 2008). It can also depend on the political and historical context of the society. Notwithstanding the complexity of the subject, reconciliation can be considered as a process which is aimed at attaining or restoring a relationship between parties that have experienced an oppressive or a destructive situation. During that process, both parties' endeavor to heal trauma and put an end to a period of bad relations (Davis, 2009).

Reconciliation may begin either with the leaders (top-down process) or at the grassroots (bottom-up process). It can be also individual (between victim and perpetrator) or collective (between groups or communities). With regard to the first type of the reconciliation, the process should be mutual: both victim and perpetrator must make an effort to overcome the trauma and damages caused by past atrocities (Buckley-Zistel, 2010). Collective reconciliation should be understood as a societal process that requires not only the mutual recognition of past suffering, but also a change of attitudes and the desire to reach peace (Sosnov, 2008). As already mentioned, reconciliation (as a goal of the transitional justice) is a broad term that is very hard to define clearly. Researchers indicate, however, a few elements that are essential for achieving the reconciliation, both at the individual and social level. The process requires an apology, forgiveness and desire to rebuild the relationships on the basis of trust. Reconciliation also involves searching for the truth, justice and healing (Cassel, 2007). It is important to point out that discovering the truth about past atrocities becomes now the focal point of the reconciliation process, which is very much connected with a development of the right to know the truth (and its growing importance for countries in transition) (Zorbas, 2014).

In this regard, reconciliation should aim to acknowledge experiences, uncover unknown facts and events, and enable victims and perpetrators to tell their stories (Bakiner, 2016). The process, therefore, refers to truth-seeking and truth-telling functions. It must be remembered, however, that the truth seems to be a concept that is very hard to pin down. Apart from objective credibility, the "truth" also requires a subjective understanding. This implies an agreement about factual reality, as well as a space for different interpretations. It cannot deepen divisions, but on the contrary, it should lead to healing and coexistence, and this is particularly important in a country such as Rwanda, where the victims and perpetrators were neighbors and still need to live next door to each other.

Conflicts/Violent Clashes across Nigeria

The root causes of the farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria lie in climate-induced degradation of pastoral land and Boko Haram incidences in the far north, thereby forcing herders down south. The escalation of this conflict has continued on the increase as a result of lack of available grazing settlements due to farmlands and the groups' traditional nomadic lifestyle, forcing passages through farms across the various states with severe damages to the crops. The rapid growth of ethnic militias among the Fulanis in Adamawa, bearing illegally acquired weapons and the failure of government to prosecute and punish offenders have combined to give impetus to the destructive activities of these herdsmen.

Another reason according to the International Crisis group is the introduction of anti-grazing laws in November 2017 which the herders in Benue and Taraba protested against as being inimical to their long dated pastoral living. Also, the migration of herders into Moddibo Adama in Yola, Adamawa State sparked off clashes with the farmers in the state. The north eastern Adama has witnessed a number of violent clashes between the Fulani herders and farmers of Bachama ethnic group. The tensions were heightened after the November 20, 2017 introduction of the anti-grazing laws, when the youth militias of the Bachama attacked three Fulani herdsmen, killing at least 55 people, including 48 children. The incident was followed was followed by a reprisal attack suspected herdsman in five villages killing over 100 people. Though there were attempts by the government to stop further attacks but killings continued on a smaller scale (*Britannica, 2021*).

There has been a long existing herders/farmers tension in Taraba State according to ICS report (2019). The conflict experienced in Adamawa led to the deterioration of the farmers/herders relations in the neighbouring Taraba state to ban open grazing by the state government. But between January 4 – 17, 2017, violent clashes erupted between the farmers and herders, killing at least 124 people with many properties and live stocks destroyed and stolen. Scores have been killed since the incidents. Benue and Plateau States have had their share of violent clashes over these periods. Reports by Akerjir (2018), revealed aspects of these conflicts. The Benue State Governor, Ortom signed the Benue State Law banning open grazing in May 2017 which took effect on November 1, 2017 (*BBC News, 2022*).

The law permits livestock to only graze on ranches, people who rear livestock to buy land and establish ranches, prohibits movement of animals within the state by road, rail, not even through farmlands. The laws spelt out punishments for offenders, which includes 5 years jail term or one-million-naira bail. In other words, it outlaws pastoralizaiton. The reason for this law was to eliminate conflicts that may arise through trespass and destruction of the farmlands by herders and their cattle.

Niger Delta Conflicts

Petroleum production and export play a dominant role in Nigeria's economy and account for about 90 percent of her gross earnings. This dominant role has pushed agriculture, the traditional

mainstay of the economy since the 1950s and 1960s, to the background (Arbour, 2007). Over the years, the federal government of Nigeria and various multinational oil corporations have extracted oil from the Niger Delta without giving adequate attention to the welfare of the people of the region. The people of the Niger Delta complain that they have not seen adequate benefits. Instead, oil production has cost them clearly in terms of environmental degradation and under-development. As a result, residents of this region have engaged in various forms of campaigns and protests against the Nigerian government and the oil companies. Without fail, both civilian and military regimes have responded to these protests with military repression and gross human rights violations. For example, military repression in Ogoni and Odi communities of the Niger Delta resulted in thousands of deaths, rape, and illegal detentions. What follows are specific cases of gross human rights violation in the Niger Delta (Okonofua, 2016).

Understanding the Niger Delta conflict as a prerequisite in resolving it has become a challenge and a concern for many scholars. Most work is based on theoretical perspectives. One of the common explanations of the conflict in the region entails the marginalization and frustration thesis. Another explanation is the inequitable distribution of revenue leading to deprivation and the desire for control over the resources. The issue of environmental injustices caused by the stakeholders in the oil industry has also become a common center of focus among scholars. Some scholars have adopted a critical approach in investigating the conflict that shows the interaction of the political, social, environmental, and economic factors in shaping the conflict. However, the declining security in the region has led to the prominence of two competing perspectives in explaining the issue (Nwaokocha, 2021.

One side of the argument proposes the marginalization-relative deprivation thesis as an explanation for the increased youth militancy and insurgency. The militancy and insurgency are rooted in inter-group inequalities, historical injustices, as well as socio-economic and political marginalization. On the other side, some consider the conflict from the political economy of war perspective. The perspective considers the conflict as a consequence of greed that has become entrenched in the minds of the stakeholders involved.

Consequently, some scholars have suggested the need to explain the violent conflict from both perspectives based on a comprehensive understanding of the stakeholders involved. Moreover, the tendency to restrict the conflict to a specific timeframe creates challenges in understanding the role of the stakeholders in the emergence and accentuation of the conflict. Considering that conflict is not static but highly dynamic and fluid, the study will seek to understand the conflict from both perspectives while incorporating the role of the stakeholders in the exacerbation of the conflict (Ikelegbe & Onokerhoraye, 2016).

The amnesty and the upshot disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs experienced several economic, political, security, and social challenges that have undermined their efficacy while making the conflict a continuum, despite their considerable benefits. Essentially, the region has not experienced a clear end to violence because insecurity remains an attribute of the daily life. So far, the region has experienced what can be referred to as: peace of the graveyards'

where hostility between security agents and militants has subsided but sustainable peace has not been achieved (Louis, 2007).

The Self Determination Question/ Sit-At-Home Order in the Southeast

The self - determination question is one of the underlying (key) factors in the Nigerian /Biafran Civil War. About 29 years after Nigeria/Biafra war MASSOB was formed in 1999. When it appeared that MASSOB was no longer pursuing her aim and objectives, IPOB was then found in 2012. Both bodies seek to actualize self - determination for indigenous people of Biafra. The formation of these bodies has had impact in the Nigerian polity in diverse ways. The impact of IPOB and her radio network led to the arrest of Nnamdi Kanu. The continued detention of Kanu has also led to the sit-at-home (SAH) order by some group of persons believed to be IPOB loyalists (Nwaokocha, 2021). The initial order was to be complied with every Monday, but it now seems to be laden with uncertainties. Sit-at-home order is another strategy to the IPOB's self - determination agitation. Public response to the sit-at-home (SAH) has been that of mixed feelings. While the people in the lowest cadre of the society fully support it, the middle class and leading politicians seem not to approve of it albeit secretly. The middle class are divided. However, it cannot be denied that the SAH order usually halts all economic activities in the southeast every Monday or on any other day it is imposed, especially in Anambra State. To this, majority of opinion posits that shutting down the Southeastern economy is counterproductive while others argue that it is a signal that the people are tired of the contract with Nigeria (*Iguh et al.,* 2021). Closely associated with this economic shut down is the relocation of certain businesses by wealthy merchants to neighbouring states like Delta and Rivers. The relocated businesses may not be returned soon.

The result will be continued economic hardship for the people of the region. The loss of lives and destruction of properties during sit-at-home (SAH) enforcement conflicts cannot be over-emphasized. People are attacked and killed; properties destroyed especially those who are seen to have flouted the SAH orders (Onyegbula, 2022). The SAH order, it appears, has been counterproductive and has not in any way caught the fancy of the federal government. The initial order for sit-at-home (SAH) may have made some impact and signals duly received by the central federal government. It is our considered view that continued sit-at-home (SAH) implementation will be akin to shutting down of the borders against the Biafrans during the civil war which led to unprecedented malnutrition and hardship. Issues of such magnitude of using hunger on a population to wipe them out are matters that are conveniently within the ambits of transitional justice and can best be handled in that arena of truth.

Boko Haram

The group has been known for its brutality, and since the insurgency started in 2009, Boko Haram has killed tens of thousands of people, in frequent attacks against the police, armed forces and civilians. It has resulted in the deaths of more than 300,000 children, displaced 2.3 million from their homes (*Hosenball, 2015).*

Boko Haram, officially known as *Jamā'atAhl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wahwa'l-Jihād* 'Group of the People of Sunnah for Dawah and Jihad'), is an Islamist militant organization based in northeastern Nigeria, which is also active in Chad, Niger, northern Cameroon, and Mali. Boko Haram was the world's deadliest terror group during part of the mid-2010s according to the Global Terrorism Index (*Hosenball, 2015).* In 2016, the group split, resulting in the emergence of a hostile faction known as the Islamic State's (*Klobucista, 2018).*

Of the 2.3 million people displaced by the conflict since May 2013, at least 250,000 left Nigeria and fled to Cameroon, Chad or Niger. Boko Haram killed over 6,600 people in 2014. The group has carried out massacres including the killing by fire of 59 schoolboys in February 2014 and mass abductions including the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls in Chibok, Borno State, Nigeria, in April 2014. Corruption in the security services and human rights abuses committed by them have hampered efforts to counter the unrest (*BBC News, 2015).*

In mid-2014, the militants gained control of swaths of territory in and around their home state of Borno, estimated at 50,000 square kilometres (20,000 sq mi) in January 2015, but did not capture the state capital, Maiduguri, where the group was originally based (*Thurston, 2019).* On 7th March 2015, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. According to the BBC (2015), due to internal disputes between the two groups, hundreds of terrorists left Boko Haram and formed their own organization, named "Islamic State's West Africa Province. In September 2015, the Director of Information at the Defence Headquarters of Nigeria announced that all Boko Haram camps had been destroyed but attacks from the group continue. In 2019, the president of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, claimed that Boko Haram was "technically defeated". Shekau was killed and confirmed to be dead in May 2021 *(Britannica, 2021).*

In March, Catholic Church sources in Cameroon, near the border with Nigeria, claimed that they had been attacked regularly by Boko Haram militants since September 2021. In one attack "they managed to reach Oupai by coming through Douval. They killed two people, burned the houses and carried off clothing and small animals. Since mid-February four of the seven areas of the parish have been paralysed (Onyegbula, 2022). According to this priest, who asked not to be named, the attacks seemed to be mostly focused on obtaining supplies (*BBC News (2022).* In the past they entered villages, ostentatiously yelling war cries, but recently they have come discretely, taking advantage of the full moon, to surprise people in their sleep. They kill the fathers of the family and the teenagers, especially the boys. Then they pillage the family's property and destroy everything they cannot carry off *(Bukarti, 2021).* On 11 August, 5 soldiers were killed during a terrorist attack in Bwari, Abuja. The soldiers were serving with the seven (7) Guards Battalion, Lungi Barracks, Maitama and 176 Guards Battalion, Gwagwalada in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja Organization *(Foucher, 2023).*

Method

The survey design is considered the most appropriate for this paper. It is generally regarded as the selection of representative samples whose analysis can be readily generalized. In this paper the survey design was used because according to Asawo, (2016), the survey research studies large and

small population by selecting and studying samples chosen from the population to determine the relative incidence, distribution and interactions of sociological and psychological variables.

The consensus opinion emanating from scholars is that population of study consists of a complete group of entities sharing some common characteristics. Aujuru and Enyioko (2018). The population of the study was 223,804,632 being Nigerian population estimate 2023 (*Source: Macrotrends*).

The distribution of the population by geographical zone is shown below:

Geographical Zone Population (2023) estimate

Geographical Zone	Population (2023) estimate
North West	52,742,307
South West	50,506,662
North Central	33,052,408
South-South	32,629,288
North East	30,063,866
South East	25,755,414
Total	223,804,632

Source: (Macrotrends, 2023)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = population size

e = level of significance (our level of significance is chosen at 5%)

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{223,804,632}{1 + 223,804,632\,(0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{223,804,632}{559,511.58} = 400$$

Add 154 persons for the wide spread of the respondents in Nigeria

Hence sample size of the study = 400 (computed) + 154 (error terms for the wide spread of the local government areas (theoretical constant) = 554

Therefore, the sample size was 554 persons for proper distribution to the six geo political zones as follows as shown in table 1 hereunder:

Geographical Zone	Population (2016)	Sample Size
North West	52,742,307	134
South West	50,506,662	128
North Central	33,052,408	80
South-South	32,629,288	79
North East	30,063,866	72
South East	25,755,414	61
Total	223,804,632	554

The sample size of the study was 554 persons.

Percentages, ratios, frequency distribution, scaling, ranking and other statistical tools were used to analyze data to achieve study objective. Also, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to test the formulated hypothesis

Table 2: Administration and Retrieval of Questionnaire from the Respondents

Options	Number of Questionnaire Administered	Number of Questionnaire Retrieved from Respondents	Number of Questionnaire found useful for the study	Response Rate
North West	134	125	120	90 %
South West	128	119	114	89%
North Central	80	74	71	89%
South - South	79	75	70	89%
North East	72	68	64	89%
South East	61	59	56	92%
Total	554	520	495	89%

Source: Survey Data, 2023

Table 2 reveals how the copies of questionnaire were distributed to the sampled elements or the respondents in six geo-political zones of Nigeria, the number generated there from and the number

found useful/relevant/valid for the data analysis. The data analysis indicated that 134 copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents from the North-West and 125 copies of them were actually retrieved, while 120 copies of questionnaire were found relevant, and this represents 90% response rate of this segment. Equally 128 copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents from South-West, and 119 copies were collected from them, but after going through them only 114 copies (i.e. 89% response rate) were found useful for the study. From the respondents in *North Central, 80* copies of questionnaire were administered on them, and 74 copies retrieved, while only 71 copies (representing 89% response rate) were found useful for the study. Also, 69 copies of questionnaire were administered on the respondents from the *South - South geopolitical zone, 75* copies were retrieved from the respondents and after going through them 56 copies of questionnaire (i.e. 89% response rate) were found useful in this segment. For the respondents from North Central, 72 copies of questionnaire were administered on them, and 68 copies returned and 64 copies of questionnaire (representing 89% response rate) were found useful for the study. Finally, 61 copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents from the South East and 59 copies of them were actually retrieved, while 56 copies of questionnaire were found relevant, and this represents 92% response rate of this segment. In all, the study administered 554 copies of questionnaire on the respondent traders in Nigeria, while 520 copies of questionnaire were actually retrieved from the respondents. However, after editing the copies of questionnaire only 495 copies (representing 89% response rate) were found useful for data analysis in this study.

Table 3:   Sex of the Respondents

Options	Number of the Respondents	Percentage Response (%)
Male	327	66
Female	218	34
Total	495	100

Source: Survey Data, 2023

Table 3 shows that the respondents were made up of 66% male and 34% female.

Table 4: Respondents' Years of Stay in the Area Under Survey

Options	Numbers of the Respondents	Percentage Response (%)
Under 5 Years	40	8
6 – 10 Years	99	20
11 – 15Years	79	16
16 – 20 Years	257	52
21 Years and above	20	4
Total	495	100

Source: Survey Data, 2023.

Table 4 Shows that 8% of the respondents have stayed in the area under survey for less than 5 years while 20% of the respondents have been in the area under survey for 6 to 10 years. Equally, Table 4.4 reveals that 16% of the respondents have been in the area under survey for 11 to 15 years and 52% of the respondents have stayed in the area under survey for 16 to 20 years while 4% of the respondents have been in the area under survey for 21 years and above.

The Extent to which the reparation process relates to reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria

The data in Table 5 give details of the extent to which the reparation process relates to reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria.

Table 5:   Extent to which the reparation process relates to reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in
          Nigeria

Options	Number of the Respondents	Percentage (%)	Response
Very Large Extent	119	24	
Large Extent	164	33	
Moderate Extent	158	32	
Low Extent	40	8	
Very Low Extent	14	3	
Total	495	100	

Source: Survey Data, 2023

The data in Table 5 show that 24% of the respondents indicated that to a very large extent the reparation process relates to reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria. Also 33% of the respondents indicated to a large extent the reparation process relates to reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria. While 32% of the respondents indicated that to a moderate extent the reparation process relates to reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria. Equally, 8% of the respondents indicated that to a low extent the reparation process relates to reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria. While only 3% of the respondents indicated that to a very low extent the reparation process relates to reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria.

There is no significant relationship between the reparation process   and reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria.

Table 6: **Relationship between the reparation process and Reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria**

Options	The reparation process (X)	Reconciliation of Conflicts in Nigeria (Y)	X^2	Y^2	XY
Very Large Extent	119	99	14,161	9,801	11,781
Large Extent	164	129	26,896	16,641	21,156
Moderate Extent	158	109	24,964	11,881	17,222
Low Extent	40	89	11,600	7,921	3,560
Very Low Extent	14	69	196	4,761	966
Total	495	495	77,817	51,005	54,685

Source: Survey Data, 2023 (See Tables 4 and 5)

r = 0.748 (Moderate positive Relationship)

t =1.953

t crit @ 3;0.05 = 3.18

The data in Table 4.10 are drawn to see whether there is any positive and or significant relationship between the reparation process and reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran/sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria. From the statistical presentation above and based on the values of r computed (i.e. 0.748) and t computed (i.e. 1.953) it is obvious that the computed t is less than the figure obtained from the table, which is 3.18. Therefore, 'there is no significant relationship between the reparation process and reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria'.

Discussion of Findings
The paper found that one of the main focuses of transitional justice discourse is to engage human rights law for political stability, accountability, and peace in changes, as developed in the strict law practice. On this, Umukoro (2018) revealed that transitional justice and the rule of law are considered a framework for analysis in violence and conflict- affected politics as intertwined to promote post-violence and conflict or socio-economic and political stability. Therefore, various political actors have engaged in promoting the rule of law and the promotion of peace through security sector reform. Owoeye and Afolabi (2018) agreed that with focus on transitional justice, various processes have been considered through the promotion of rule of law, security, and

accountability in the Niger Delta and the northeast of Nigeria that have been ravaged by insurgency, terrorism, violence, and conflict, and these processes have been supported and developed by an increasing number of actors at the national and international levels.

The revealed that; transitional justice processes, addresses economic, social, and cultural rights issues, in addition to rule of law and human rights, as an essential part of the main causes of violence and repression or human rights violations and abuses of rule of law occurring during the conflict. Maria (2017) revealed that under critical discussion, considered transitional justice as mechanisms and practices which are directed to 'redress past wrongs, institutionalise the rule of law and construct new legal and normative frameworks in post-conflict contexts or in societies that have suffered occupation, dictatorship or other suppressive situations, to prevent violence and war from happening again.' Even though the United Nations has, in 2014, referred to transitional justice measures as a set of judicial and non-judicial instruments and mechanisms as trials, truth commissions, lustration, memorials, reparations. Based on the arguments on human rights violations and economic, social, and cultural rights under transitional justice processes, there is a need to then see the overall focus of transitional justice as part of reconciliation process processes. Thus, a holistic perspective about the working of transitional justice as reconciliation process practices is an attempt to provide links between the past and reconstructing for the future, to ensure an enabling and more sustainable peace, security, and justice in the society, as against the violation of rule of law, human rights, and economic, social and cultural right. From this perspective, transitional justice projects and outcomes have important implications for political, civil, and economic relations in post-conflict societies (Maria, 2017).

Conclusion/Recommendations

Transitional justice is often considered in violence and conflict-affected politics as intertwined with one another to promote post-violence and conflict or socio-economic and political stability. More so, this paper shows that transitional justice processes can also be, used to address economic, social, and cultural rights issues, in addition to rule of law and human rights, as an essential part of the main causes of violence and repression or human rights violations and abuses of rule of law occurring during the conflict. Conclusively, it is evident that there is significant relationship between the justice process and reconciliation of Boko Haram, herdsmen/farmers', Niger Delta and Biafran sit-at-home conflicts in Nigeria.

Based on the findings and conclusion reached the following recommendations are made:

As Nigeria has progressed in building democratic institutions, more attention should be paid towards stopping the prevalence of impunity and enshrining values that underscore justice and reconciliation.

Also, Nigerian government should create spaces for social and political contestation to provide the basis for vibrant discourse on how to end the spates of impunity that have characterized most Nigerian governments at the sub-national levels by considering the transitional justice approach.

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