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EDITORIAL:

Development issues in Africa, south of the Sahara are multifaceted. Old issues are hardly old in the sense that they have been consigned to the “dust bin” of the past: they are recurring. Evidence abounds: governance problems, social and political conflicts tottering towards war, low-intensity ethnic wars that stall development efforts, problems of nationhood or the nation-state, food security, migration, youth unemployment and many other critical issues of development. Surely, there are various sustainable means of development that are and have been available through such bodies as World Bank, IMF, UK DFID etc. that counties in Africa have accessed. What has developed from these development frameworks is arguably the continuous incorporation of these countries into the orbit of the West and of course, what many have shown as marginalization by the forces of Globalization. The Global value chain has proved to be opposite of a springboard to development. No industry, no fair beneficial trade, no physical capital for infrastructural development: roads are bad and there is energy deficit; old conventional and sustainable off-grid initiatives have been shown to be limited. It is within the above wider context that the responses from civil society organizations in Africa can be located. But these organisations, a significant number of which are heavily dependent on foreign funding, are confronted with allsorts of obstacles and are riddled with internal organisational problems. The reviewers of the paper by Yntiso Gebre are all in agreement that his “reality checks” go beyond his focus on laws governing civic society organizations in Ethiopia; they are continent-wide. His paper is based on three different studies, including fieldwork and literature reviews, of Civic Society Organisations that he undertook in Ethiopia between 2011 and 2014 to examine regulatory issues and the existing legal frameworks in Ethiopia. The paper, with the main point that Civil Society Organisations have made key contributions towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, form part of a the continued engagement with issues of development in Africa south of the Sahara.

Olajide Oloyede
Managing Editor

Les questions de développement en Afrique au sud du Sahara, sont multiples. Les vieux sont Problèmes they guère vieux dans le sens où ils ont été dans le consignés «Poubelle» du passé: ils sont récurrents. Les nombreuses preuves sont les Problèmes de gouvernance, les politiques et sociaux Conflits Menaces par la guerre, les Guerres de ethniques FAIBLE Intensité freinent qui les efforts de développement, les Problèmes de la nation ou de l'État-nation, la Sécurité Alimentaire, les migrations, le chômage des jeunes et de nombreux autres aspects cruciaux du développement. Certes, il existe divers moyens de développement durables qui sont disponibles et ont été grâce à des organismes tels que la Banque mondiale, le FMI, le DFID du Royaume-Uni, etc., que les Comtes d'Afrique ont eu accès. Ce qui s'est développé à partir de ces cadres de développement est sans doute l'incorporation continue de ces pays dans l'orbite de l'Occident et, bien sûr, ont beaucoup ce que comme une montre marginalisation par les forces de la mondialisation. La chaîne de valeur mondiale s'est avérée être l'opposé tremplin d'un vers le développement. Pas d'industrie, pas de Commerce et juste bénéfique, pas de capital physique pour le développement infrastructurel: les routes sont mauvaises et le déficit énergétique; Les anciennes initiatives hors-réseau et durables conventionnelles it sont révélées limitées. C'est dans ce contexte que les Réponses des Organisations de la société civile en Afrique peuvent être localisées. Mais ces Organizations, dont un grand nombre Dependent fortement for Financing du étranger, confrontées sont à tous les chimney et sont aux prises avec des Problèmes d'internes organization. Les Réviseurs de l'article de Yntiso Gebre sont tous d'accord pour dire que ses «vérifications de la réalité» vont au-delà de l'accent mis sur les lois régissant les Organisations de la société en civique Ethiopie; Ils sont continentaux. Son article est basé sur trois différentes études, parmi lesquelles le travail sur le terrain et la revue de la littérature des Organisations de la Société Civique a qu'il en Entreprise Ethiopie entre 2011 et 2014 pour examiner les questions réglementaires et les cadres juridiques existants I Ethiopie. Le document, avec le point principal que les Organisations de la société civile ont des contributions of assets in kind clés à la réalisation des objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement, s'inscrit dans le cadre de la poursuite de l'engagement

Olajide Oloyede
Rédacteur en chef

Reality Checks: The state of civil society organizations in Ethiopia

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Abstract.

The general literature on the state of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Ethiopia gives the impression that CSOs have been rendered dysfunctional by the restrictive law passed in 2009. While considerable attention has been given to the devastating effects of the CSO law on human rights groups, the successful stories of the overwhelming majority of organisations engaged in development and service delivery have been overlooked. The law does limit the space for CSOs working on human rights and governance and it is legitimate and ethical to challenge the restrictive provisions on constitutional, legal, moral and/or practical grounds. However, it is equally important to recognize the continued operations of numerous CSOs, their contributions to national development priorities, their innovativeness in dealing with sensitive rights issues, the role of donors in supporting CSOs and the responses of the government to the request for a more enabling environment. This paper contains contextualized arguments based on empirical data as reality check on the current state of CSOs in Ethiopia.

Key words: civil society organizations; regulatory frameworks; service delivery and development; human rights and advocacy; Ethiopia

Résumé

La Littérature générale sur l'état des Organisations de la société civile (OSC) I Ethiopie donne l'impression que les ont été OSC rendues dysfonctionnelles par la loi Restrictive adoptée en 2009. Bien qu'une Considerable attention ait été Accord aux effets de dévastateurs la loi sur les OSC, Les réussites de l'écrasante majorité des Organisations engagées dans le développement et la prestation de services ont été négligées. Limite la loi l'espace réservé aux OSC travaillant sur les droits de l'homme et la gouvernance et il est légitim et éthique de contester les dispositions restrictives sur des bases constitutionnelles, juridiques, morales et / ou pratiques. Cependant, il est tout aussi notice reconnaître de le fonctionnement continu de nombreuses OSC, leur contribution aux priorités nationales de développement, leur capacité d'innovation dans le traitement des questions de droits sensibles, le rôle des bailleurs de fonds dans le soutien aux

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OSC et les Réponses du gouvernement à la demande Environnement favorable. Cet article contient des arguments contextuels Bases sur des données empiriques comme un contrôle de réalité sur l'état actuel des OSC I Ethiopie.

Mots clés: Organisations de la société civile; Cadres réglementaires; La prestation de services et le développement; Les droits de l'homme et le plaidoyer; Ethiopie

1. Introduction

The second half the 20th century witnessed a proliferation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the global South. The increase in the number CSOs has been explained in terms of humanitarian crises, a perceived turbulence in world politics, the volatility of culturally plural societies, the acceleration of globalization and the failure of states to provide for their citizens and govern with legitimacy (Fisher 1997:439). CSOs have been engaged in humanitarian assistance, service delivery, development projects, human rights and policy advocacy and environmental protection. They have been playing the role of the 'the third sector' in society, alongside government and business. It is equally important to note that CSOs in many countries have been operating under restrictive regulatory frameworks. Kendra Dupuy and her associates (2015:422-423) noted that 86 of 195 countries in the world have passed more restrictive NGO laws since 1955, most of which appeared between 1995 and 2012.

Regarding the history of CSOs in Ethiopia, Jeffrey Clark (2000:4) stated that civil associations began to emerge in Ethiopia around the 1930s and a law to regulate these groups was passed in 1960 but during this period both national and international NGOs began to appear. The 1973-74 and 1984-1985 famines increased the number of CSOs that focused on the provision of humanitarian aid. Since then CSOs have been engaged not only in relief works but also in capacity building, service delivery, development and advocacy.

Three national level surveys commissioned by the European Union and its partners revealed that CSOs operating in Ethiopia have managed to mobilize huge resources and contribute to national development priorities (Abebe et al. 2004; Cerritelli et al. 2008; Gebre et al. 2014). According to the 2014 study, as discussed later in some detail, there were more than 2600 on-going projects implemented by charities and societies with a total budget of Birr 35.76 billion (US\$1.788 billion). The 2014 study also indicated that CSOs encountered challenges that hampered their operations.

The passing of the controversial Proclamation No. 621/2009 to provide for the registration of charities and societies and the establishment of the Charities and Societies Agency brought both opportunities and challenges. The government's justifications for the passing of the law are the following: to ensure the realization of citizens' right to association, which is enshrined in the Constitution; to ensure CSOs' legitimacy,

accountability and transparency, which were recognized as major deficiencies of the sector and to create an enabling environment for CSOs (proclaimed to be development partners) and facilitate their role in development.

Critics have dismissed the claim that the new law ensures the right to association and creates an enabling environment for CSOs. The legislation is criticized for limiting the right to freedom of association to engage in rights issues, in violation of Article 31 of the Ethiopian Constitution (Yalemzewd 2009; Debebe 2010:23). This is a valid legal argument that challenges the constitutionality of the law. There is a foreign funding restriction on rights organisations² and operational restrictions on those CSOs allowed to receive up to 100% of their funds from foreign sources.

However, some of the critical views seem to be overly simplistic or unbalanced. Dupuy and her associates (2015:426) stressed that the real intention of the law was to shut down political opposition. On 17 December 2012, the Addis Standard (a private magazine) published an article titled “Ethiopia: A self-defeating charities and societies proclamation hurting all.” Such generic expressions send an unbalanced message to unsuspecting readers. As indicated in the literature review section below, some local studies have also emphasized the challenges related to foreign funding and the division of operational and administrative costs (Kassahun 2013; Debebe 2011; Gebre 2011).

It is important to acknowledge that few studies have, at least partially, touched on success stories (Gebre et al. 2014; Kidist et al. 2012; TECS 2012; ICOS Consulting 2011). And yet, the considerable emphasis on the adverse impacts of the 2009 law on organisations working on human rights and governance (a total of 120 CSOs in 2008) and the tendency to overlook the successful accomplishment of many others have led to a gross oversimplification of the state of CSOs in Ethiopia.

The nuances and complexities involved warrant careful assessment of the contexts in which the various CSOs have been operating and the perspectives of the different actors involved. With this in mind, the present article intends to shed light on (1) the conceptualization of charities and societies and the associated funding and operational restrictions on CSOs, (2) the contributions of charities and societies to national development priorities and (3) the common operational challenges facing these CSOs.

2. Research Methodology

This paper is based on three different studies, including fieldwork and literature reviews, of CSOs that the author undertook in Ethiopia between 2011 and 2014. The first two studies were carried out in Addis Ababa City, Bahir Dar (Amhara Region),

² The term ‘rights organisations’ refer to CSOs that are allowed to work on ‘rights issues’, namely, the advancement of human and democratic rights; the promotion of equality of gender, ethnic groups, and religion; the promotion of the rights of children and persons with disability; the promotion of conflict resolution and the promotion of the efficiency of justice and law enforcement services.

Adama (Oromia Region) and Hawassa (Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region, SNNPR). The author also participated in the 2014 non-state actors update mapping study, which was carried out in all nine regions and the two city administrations in Ethiopia.

The nature of the research (exploring the lived experiences of people and institutions) required a thorough examination of the views and perspectives of the informants. A qualitative research approach was used because it allowed observation, active participation of informants and cross-examination of facts during the research period. General literature and policy documents on CSOs were reviewed both before and after the fieldwork. One of the core objectives of the study was to examine regulatory issues and therefore the existing legal frameworks in Ethiopia were carefully scrutinized.

In the field, the author collected data through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and observations of projects sites, home/businesses of informants, and offices of CSOs. A total of 137 people participated as informants and 20 focus group discussions were held with different groups of people. The informants were identified based on their knowledge of the research issues being explored. During the fieldwork, data were collected from members of CSOs (in the case of societies), beneficiaries of CSOs (in the case of charities), representatives of CSOs, and relevant government officials. The questions raised with the various research participants focused mainly on the activities of the CSOs, their contributions to development and their challenges/constraints.

Regarding data analysis, the field notes, the interviews and the document reviews were transcribed and translated. In order to examine and interpret the content of qualitative data, it was necessary to identify themes and categories, do some coding using key concepts, and organize the voluminous data systematically. Preliminary writing started during the fieldwork in the form of advanced notes, which were edited and harmonized with the final report. The themes and concepts facilitated the write up process and shaped the content of the paper.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Global trends in CSOs’ operations

Globally, civil society organisations have been experiencing two major changes: shrinking operating environment and transformation to becoming development actors. Historically, the functions of civil society organizations have been associated with the protection and promotion of democracy and good governance (Inglehart 1997; Foley and Edwards 1996; Schmitter and O’Donnell 1986; Nie et al. 1969; Almond and Verba

1963). However, in the last two decades, their contributions to economic development and poverty reduction have been increasingly acknowledged (Clayton et al. 2000; Salamon and Anheier 1997; Fukuyama 1995; Putnam 1993).

It is equally important to note there is a counter-argument that civic engagements are inefficient and may even hinder economic growth (Olson 1982 in Putnam 1993:176; Callaghy 1993 in Harbeson 1994:294). Ronald Inglehart (1997) argued that there exists elements of both: civic associations could be conducive to economic growth especially in the early stages of development, and in industrial societies they tend to become strong defenders of certain interests at the expense of economic growth.

In Ethiopia, CSOs started with provision of relief aid in the 1970s and 1980s and began to engage in service delivery and development in the 1990s (Clark 2000; Cerritelli et al 2008), while involvement in human rights advocacy occurred in the 2000s (Cerritelli et al 2008). Prior to the enactment of the restrictive CSO legislation in 2009, Ethiopian authorities are reported to have subscribed to the view that NGOs pursued a rent-seeking political economy thereby contributing to the economic crisis of Africa and negatively affecting the development of Ethiopia (Debebe 2010:20). However, their contributions to service delivery and development activities have shown significant increase at least since 2008 (Gebre et al. 2014).

Recent studies revealed the enactment of restrictive laws in many countries seriously shrank the operating environment for civil society organizations (Dupuy 2015; CIVICUS 2015). The space for civil society engagement has been shrinking in non-democratic states and established democracies (Unmuessig 2015). In the non-west, authorities associated civic activism with neo-liberal inspiration and opted for heavy-handed responses, while western democratic nations suspended civil liberties or reduced the space for civic life due to fear of terrorism and in the name of security.

In Ethiopia, combinations of factors (namely, accountability deficit of CSOs and the unprecedented civic activism during the period leading to the 2005 contested election) seem to have led to promulgation of the controversial Proclamation No. 621/2009 (Yeshanew 2012). As stated elsewhere in this paper, the legislation had a devastating effect on rights organizations due to foreign funding restrictions (Yalemzewd 2009; Debebe 2010; Dupuy et al. 2015). There are reports that some rights organizations changed their mandates to engage in service delivery and development as a survival strategy (Kassahun 2012).

3.2 The controversial law: Proclamation No. 621/2009

In the literature, the concept of civil society organizations refers to a wide range of organizations, associations, networks, and groups that promote public interests and that are not part of the government structure or the business sector. This paper focuses on a sub-set of CSOs officially recognized as charities³ and societies.⁴ Other CSOs such as trade unions, cooperative societies, micro and small enterprises, and community-based organizations are beyond the scope of the paper. Proclamation No. 621/2009 mandates the Charities and Societies Agency (a federal institution) to register and regulate three categories of CSOs: Ethiopian charities and societies, Ethiopian resident charities and societies and foreign charities (Article 2:2-4). In July 2014, there were 3077 CSOs registered with the Agency, although most of them were not operational. This section summarizes the conceptualization of these CSOs as well as the foreign funding and operational restrictions that caused the controversy.

Rights organisations. Ethiopian charities or Ethiopian societies (which the author of this paper calls 'rights organizations') are those CSOs that are formed by Ethiopians under the Ethiopian laws and that can engage in any activity, including human rights and policy advocacy (Article 2:2). However, they are not allowed to receive more than 10% of their funds from foreign sources. This 10% ceiling came to be known as the 90:10 rule and it became the most controversial issue. Informants (authorities) stressed this provision would reduce the vulnerability of sensitive domestic issues to manipulation by imported agendas that may accompany foreign funds.

On the other hand, critics viewed the 10% ceiling as a strategy to silence the rights organizations and undermine their influence in society by starving them of funds (Yalemzewd et al 2009; Debebe 2010; Dupuy et al 2015). Informants (representatives of rights organisations) also indicated that the 90:10 rule has eroded their capacity to attain their goals. Some CSOs are reported to have changed their commitment to service delivery while others terminated their operations.

Without being dismissive of the principled arguments of some critics and the noble mandates of the rights organisations, it is important to note the fact that the 2009 CSO law affected a small group rather than all the CSOs. In 2008, there were 120 rights organizations (of the total 3128 CSOs) and their numbers had shown a sharp increase around and after the 2005 election in Ethiopia (Cerritelli et al 2008:100, also see page 68). It is equally important to note that, prior to the implementation of the 2009 Proclamation in 2010, many service delivery CSOs working, for example, in health

³ Charities are established for charitable purposes, and four types of charitable organisations are recognized: charitable endowment, charitable institution, charitable trust, and charitable society (Article 15:1).

⁴ Societies are non-profit making and voluntary associations organized to promote the rights and interests of their members and undertake other similar activities (Article 55:1). Mass-based societies, development associations, professional associations and trade unions are examples of societies.

and education, operated from a rights-based perspective. After 2010, such organizations were obliged to change their mission statements and literature and refrain from making references to rights, although some of them continued delivering the same services in much the same way.

Service providing CSOs. Ethiopian resident charities or Ethiopian resident societies are CSOs that are formed by the residents of Ethiopia under the Ethiopian laws and they can receive up to 90% of their funds from foreign sources (Article 2:3). However, they are not allowed to engage in specific activities, namely, the advancement of human and democratic rights; the promotion of equality of gender, ethnic groups and religion; the promotion of the rights of children and persons with disability; the promotion of conflict resolution and the promotion of the efficiency of justice and law enforcement services (Article 14:2 & 5).

It appears that, for the purpose of the law, the government has differentiated human rights and democratic rights from the right to basic services and the right to development. Although the basis of this distinction remains unclear, the message is unequivocal: CSOs interested in service delivery and development can receive 90% of their funds from foreign sources but the money should be used only for service delivery and development, not for rights issues.

Critics contend that these restrictions make the CSO law inconsistent with international standards related to freedom of association and human rights. The argument is that CSOs should not be barred from engagement in rights issues because of their income and all CSOs should be allowed to promote the international standards to which the Ethiopian Government is committed.

During the research period, representatives of many CSOs registered as resident charities or societies rarely complained about the inconsistency of the law with international norms. It seems that they have chosen to focus on protesting against the restrictive provisions that hinder their day-to-day works within the framework of their operational domain and securing donor funds. Some Ethiopian resident charities/societies have been wisely and innovatively promoting (without advertising) governance and rights issues in such thematic areas as gender empowerment, rights of children and environmental protection. The recent forced closure of certain CSOs for exceeding their operational mandates reveals the risks involved in promoting a rights-based approach without a proper mandate.

International NGOs. Foreign charities are those charities that are formed under the laws of foreign countries or which consist of members who are foreign nationals or are controlled by foreign nationals or receive funds from foreign sources (Article 2:4). There is no limit on the amount of funds that foreign charities are allowed to bring into the country. However, the restrictions that apply to the Ethiopian resident charities and societies apply to foreign charities as well and for the same reason. Although the implications of the law for foreign charities have been raised and discussed by others

(Yalemzewd et al 2009), it is beyond the scope of this paper.

3.3 Research reports on charities and societies in Ethiopia

Many studies have been undertaken in Ethiopia to examine the opportunities and challenges resulting from the enactment of the new CSO law in 2009. Most studies gave considerable attention to challenges and the concerns of rights organization, while the successful accomplishments of numerous CSOs engaged in development and service delivery have been overlooked. This paper is intended to fill the existing knowledge gap in the literature.

Human rights, governance and advocacy. As indicated above, the 90:10 rule requires that CSOs interested in engaging in sensitive themes (namely, human and democratic rights; equality of gender, ethnic groups, and religion; the rights of children and persons with disability; conflict resolution and justice/security) are barred from receiving more than 10% of their income from foreign sources. Consequently, the rights organisations have been forced to change their mandates, limit their roles or terminate their operations. The legislation has been criticized for limiting the right to freedom of association to engage in rights issues, in violation of Article 31 of the Ethiopian Constitution and international standards (Dupuy et al. 2015; Kassahun 2012; Debebe 2010; Yalemzewd 2009). Critics argued that CSOs should not be denied the right to association based on income.

Operational vs administrative costs. Some studies examined the challenges associated with the classification of CSO expenditures as operational (70%) and administrative (30%). According to the 70:30 rule, expenses for personnel (e.g., project managers and staffs), purchase of project vehicle, transportation, monitoring and evaluation, research and training are classified as administrative costs rather than as operational costs. Moreover, networks (or consortia) are not expected to be direct implementers and therefore they cannot have operational costs. The 70:30 guideline is reported to have discouraged CSOs from employing/retaining qualified staff, launching projects in remote locations, giving capacity building trainings, undertaking serious monitoring and evaluation activities, and sharing information (Kassahun 2013; Long and Regassa 2013; Debebe 2011).

Income generation activities. A study on CSO income generating activities revealed that the CSO law hinders meaningful engagement in IGA due to two requirements: separating IGAs from the core mission of CSOs and engaging in IGAs that are directly related to the primary mission of CSOs (Gebre 2011). These provisions pose practical challenges. For some CSOs, IGAs represented part and parcel of the charity work that cannot be managed separately. The requirement to engage in IGAs directly related to core missions CSOs would exclude certain civil society organizations (e.g., those

working on human rights, disability, the elderly, etc.) that cannot produce marketable goods and services.

Independence of CSOs. Mass-based societies are expected to play key roles in promoting democracy, good governance and human rights. However, their independence from government influence has been questioned (Fekadu 2014; Ayalew & Ezana 2011; Yalemzewd et al 2009). Ayalew Gebre and Ezana Amdework (2011) noted that mass-based societies maintained close ties and relied on government institutions for financial, infrastructural, and organisational support. The authors also acknowledged that mass-based societies played active roles in fighting corruption and administrative injustice through training programs, educational campaigns, and by disclosing corrupt practices. Regarding the question of independence of mass-based societies and development associations, Fekadu Terefe (2014:8) wrote,

In the Ethiopian case, the mass-based societies...are often seen as dependent on government...successive administrations have tried to use such associations as a means for mobilizing public support and used them to promote their political agenda, thus jeopardizing the independence of such associations.... Same applies to region-based and party initiated development organizations...which are not seen as independent organizations.

Disadvantaged groups. A study designed to explore the activities, the achievements and the challenges of CSOs working on persons with disabilities and the elderly indicated that only a small proportion of the organizations covered in the study attained their goals (Gebre et al. 2013). Many of them are reported to have experienced a multitude of challenges that have limited their performances. Some of the challenges include shortage of funds, shortage of human resources and lack of space/facilities. Compared to the number of CSOs working on HIV/AIDS, orphan and vulnerable children, gender empowerment, and the environmental, those working on the elderly and persons with disabilities are few in number, and this was explained partly in terms of lack of policy attention and lack of donor funding.

Impacts on women. The impacts of the CSO law on women have been studied from two perspectives: gender-based violence and women's economic empowerment. The first study emphasized that the enactment of the CSO law forced many women-focused and rights organizations to change their mandates and terminate advocacy works and legal aid, and this was viewed as a setback to the process of combating gender-based violence and enhancing survivors' access to justice (Messeret 2012). The second study, on the contrary, underlined that CSOs' engagement in women's economic empowerment in the five major areas: skills training, credit and saving, in-kind/cash transfer, integrated women empowerment programs, and market access facilitation (Kidist et al. 2012).

Some of these initiatives led to increased income, saving, and asset formation. Moreover, the CSOs' interventions have resulted in the establishment and proliferation of women's grassroots organizations, new forums for women to address their issues and concerns such as gender-based violence.

Development and service delivery. The European Union and its partners have commissioned three non-state mapping studies in Ethiopia in 2004, 2008 and 2014 (Abebe et al. 2004; Cerritelli et al. 2008; Gebre et al. 2014). The three surveys revealed that CSOs have managed to mobilize huge financial resources from foreign sources and contribute to national development priorities. For example, the number of operational projects increased from 2020 in 2008 to 2604 in 2014, and the funds mobilized to implement these projects increased from US\$1.123 billion in 2008 to US\$1.788 billion in 2014 (Gebre et al. 2014). According to the study, the CSOs have been providing various services and implementing various development projects, which are considered as major contributions to the national development goals.

4. CSO numbers and distributions

The 2014 non-state actors update mapping study estimated the total number of non-state actors in Ethiopia at 289,630 (Gebre et al 2014). This figure does not include the 17,700 SHGs (Gebre 2015), trade unions, and numerous unregistered community-based organizations in the country. The major categories of non-state actors identified in the 2014 study included charities and societies (3,077), civic associations registered in the regions (34,911), cooperative societies (35,719), and micro and small enterprises (217,636). This section and the remaining two sections focus on the charities and societies registered with the federal agency rather than the entire sector.

4.1 CSO numbers

According to the records of the Charities and Societies Agency, in August 2014 there were 3,077 registered charities and societies that pledged to operate in different parts of Ethiopia. However, data pieced together from the regions, especially from the regional bureaux of finance and economic development (BoFED), which are mandated to sign operational agreements with charities and societies, revealed that 870 (28.3%) of the registered CSOs were operational (Gebre et al 2014).

The discrepancy between the registered and the active organizations may be explained as follows. CSOs that are pledged to operate in multiple regions may not have yet started operations in some regions for different reasons. After registration, some CSOs may have failed to launch projects for lack of funds or other challenges. It is possible that some CSOs may also be operating in the regions by signing operational agreements

with lower level offices and without reporting to BoFED.

The total number of registered CSOs slightly decreased from 3,128 in 2008 (Cerritelli et al 2008) to 3,077 in 2014. However, the number of international NGOs (INGOs) increased from 201 in 2008 (Cerritelli et al 2008) to 348 in August 2014. INGOs appear to be thriving while some national CSOs seem to be struggling to survive. In addition there are some that have simply vanished. The increase in the number of INGOs may be explained in terms of their ability to mobilise foreign funds and the weakness of the national CSOs in mobilising resources. Moreover, the new law does not seriously hinder the activities of most INGOs, which often focus on humanitarian aid, service delivery and development rather than on rights issues.

However, the 70:30 guideline has incapacitated INGOs that work as 'intermediaries' pursuing modalities that range from mobilization and disbursement of funds to local CSOs to direct implementation of projects (TECS 2014). There are indications that other INGOs are advised to refrain from extending funds to local CSOs. The INGOs initiatives aimed at building the capacity of local CSOs faces formidable challenges.

4.2 Geographic distribution

Charities and societies are unevenly distributed across the administrative spectrum. Most CSOs tend to concentrate in the major cities/towns, accessible locations (e.g., along road-sides) and central areas close to Addis Ababa. For example, the 2014 update mapping study found that in SNNPR, 68% of the CSOs operated in Hawassa (the capital of the region) and five of the 15 easily accessible zones.⁵ In Oromia, most CSOs (62.5%) operated in seven central zones close to Addis Ababa. In Tigray Region, Mekelle (the capital) and Southern Zone were favoured by most CSOs. In Amhara Region, the highest concentration of CSOs (26.4%) was noticed in North Shoa and South Wello Zones. The various zones mentioned are very or relatively close to Addis Ababa. At the national level, the overwhelming majority of CSOs (74%) operated in five relatively well-resourced regions: Addis Ababa, Oromia, SNNPR, Amhara, and Tigray. The development and service-delivery gaps are worse in the remote and less accessible regions of Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, and Somali. It is these regions that have the greatest need for CSOs.

There are different explanations for the uneven distribution of CSOs. Government interviewees focused on the lack of capacity and unwillingness of CSOs to bear hardships by working in remote locations. Informants from the CSO side explained the concentration of CSOs in remote locations by referring to their lack of capacity, regulatory constraints, lack of policy incentives, the demonstrated needs in urban and

⁵ Administratively, the country is divided into regions, which are further divided into zones. The zones are split into woredas (districts) and each woreda is divided into kebeles (the lowest units).

central areas and the difficulty in convincing donors of the feasibility of projects in inaccessible, remote locations.

4.3 Thematic distribution

The 2014 non-state actors update mapping study revealed the existence of 2,604 different on-going CSO projects throughout Ethiopia. Based on the information obtained from the regional BoFED offices, these projects are categorized into eight sectors/themes: health and HIV, education and training, children and women, agriculture and livelihoods, integrated development, water and sanitation, environment and others. These themes are consistent with the key development issues identified in the national Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP), which incorporated the global Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as part of the national development priorities of Ethiopia.

Of the eight themes, most CSOs focused on four sectors of interventions: children and women, agriculture and livelihoods, health and HIV and education and training. The 2008 non-state actors mapping study also showed the same order (Cerritelli et al 2008), and all four themes experienced growth in terms of project numbers and budget amounts. From these observations, it is apparent that CSOs have been investing in human development and these efforts can be expected to have a long-term impact in terms of improving the country's stock of human capital to sustain economic and social development.

5. Contributions of CSOs to Development

5.1 Resource mobilization

In 2008, there were 2,020 on-going projects implemented with a total budget of Birr 9.976 billion, which was then equivalent to US\$1.123 billion (Cerritelli et al 2008). In 2014 charities and societies were implementing 2,604 projects with a total budget of Birr 35.761 billion (US\$1.788 billion) obtained principally from western donors.⁶ Between 2008 and 2014 the number of projects and the budgets earmarked to implement them have increased by 28.9% and 59.2% respectively. Figures from two regions illustrate the steady budget increment. The CSO budget in SNNPR increased from Birr 2.2 billion in 2008 to Birr 4.3 billion in 2011 rising to Birr 6.7 billion in 2014. Likewise, the total amount of money that went to the Amhara Region through CSOs increased from Birr 5.3 billion in 2012 to Birr 6.4 billion in 2013 and to 6.5 billion in 2014. The on-

⁶ According to TECS Bulletin No. 7, local funding of CSOs accounts on average for 5-10% of all funds in Ethiopia.

going projects and the budgets earmarked to implement these projects in each region are indicated below.

Table 1. Number of CSO projects and budget, 2014

	Region	Active CSOs	CSO Projects	Budget in Birr
1	Oromia	241	491	11,939,630,929
2	SNNPR	214	595	6,755,640,155
3	Amhara	159	503	6,516,435,881
4	Addis Ababa	364	390	3,436,868,441
5	Somali	57	170	2,661,864,734
6	Tigray	98	99	2,278,057,291
7	Afar	44	63	256,807,796
8	Benishangul-Gumuz	46	68	750,592,329
9	Harari	33	64	264,000,000
10	Gambella	26	50	901,530,206
11	Dire Dawa	61	111	-
		1343	2604	35,761,427,762

Source: Adapted from the records of BoFED

5.2 Relevance to GTP and MDGs

In Ethiopia, the national development priorities are expressed in terms of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of the country and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).⁷ In order to establish the relevance of CSOs' works to the GTP and MDGs, it is important to outline the key strategic objectives and priorities.

The first GTP, Ethiopia's medium-term strategic framework for the period 2010/11-2014/15), was developed to attain faster and equitable economic growth, maintain agriculture as a major source of economic growth, create favourable conditions for the industry to play a key role in the economy, enhance social development and infrastructural development, build capacity for and strengthen good governance, promote women and youth empowerment and equitable benefits for citizens. These key pillars of the plan had detailed strategic goals and targets, for example, doubling agricultural production to ensure food security and reducing the maternal mortality rate by more than half.

The United Nations identified eight Millennium Development Goals to address extreme poverty by 2015. These included: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering

⁷ Since 2016, the GTP and the MDGs have been replaced by GTP2 and SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) respectively.

women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development. These MDGs were integrated into GTP1.

CSOs have been working towards the attainment of the two integrated frameworks in partnership with the state actors. Government authorities in the regions recognised the contributions of CSOs to achieving government plans. Those widely attributed to CSO-government partnerships include: reduction of maternal and infant mortality rates; prevention and control of the spread of HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria; gender empowerment through income improvement and girl's access to education; combating harmful traditional practices affecting the health and education of girls and women; creation of educational access to children; promotion of water and sanitation services and capacity building for government agencies.

CSOs also pride themselves on fostering innovation through providing tested models of practice on community participation, micro-finance, new technologies, capacity building, effective awareness-raising and the use of social inclusion tools. The projects of CSOs obviously benefited millions of people, especially children, women, low-income households and communities facing risks and adversities such as droughts. The exact number of beneficiaries cannot be known due to the multiple counting of the same beneficiaries by different organisations. The following cases from regions illustrate the nature of CSOs' contributions to the GTP and the MDGs.

Benishangul Gumuz Region. A group of seven INGOs (namely, the Canadian Hunger Foundation, the Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief, Food for the Hungry, International Network of Bamboo and Rattan, Oxfam Canada, Save the Children Canada, and World Vision) have been working on different thematic areas but under an integrated approach. Their common focus was to ensure food security which is a strategic objective of both the GTP and the MDGs. One of the achievements of the team was increasing land productivity and the quantity of agricultural production. Accordingly, the production of different crops per hectare increased as follows: sesame from 7 quintals to 12 quintals, maize from 12 quintals to 22 quintals and groundnuts from 4 quintals to 7 quintals.

Gambella Region. Women's empowerment is one of the key strategic objectives of the GTP and the MGDs. A key contribution of CSOs in Gambella has been the economic and political empowerment of women. Many women are reported to be participating in farm and non-farm income generating activities such as horticulture, fishing, selling different products, embroidery, etc. They have been supported in these activities through the formation of groups, provision of skills training, financial support (e.g. revolving funds), provision of operational space and the creation of market access. It is reported that many women's groups have benefited from these projects and improved their lives.

SNNPR. The GTP and MDGs contained plans for the protection and sustainability of the environment. SOS Sahel is one of the CSOs working on environmental protection,

livelihoods enhancement and the interaction between the two. In SNNPR SOS Sahel promoted value-chain business activities in the Gurage area focusing on pepper and in Bonga on honey production. In order to address land degradation in the Lake Hawassa catchment area, the siltation of the Lake Hawassa and rural youth unemployment, the organization launched an environmental and livelihood rehabilitation project. It claims the successful containment of soil degradation, the restoration of watershed flora, reductions in flooding and siltation of the lake and the improvement of income and livelihoods for the youth who participated.

Tigray Region. The Tigray Development Association (TDA), a CSO that played a critical role in the post-war reconstruction of the Tigray Region in the 1990s, launched a school construction initiative to respond to the growing demand for education. The aim was to forge a partnership among four core stakeholders: the community, the government, the diaspora and TDA itself. The association identified the types of contributions needed (finance, labour, material, etc.), secured a partnership agreement and executed the plan. The initiative led to the construction of 570 primary schools, 30 high schools, and one special high school for talented students (Bahru et al 2014). The action taken by TDA contributed to the provision of universal primary education, one of the objectives of the GTP and the MDGs.

Oromia Region. More than 27% of the CSOs in the region focus on health and education. In the area of health, CSOs are reported to have contributed to the improvement of basic health care, reproductive health, nutrition, community health through water and sanitation programmes, prevention of HIV infection, and improvement of the capacity of health providers and health facilities. In education, CSOs are said to have contributed to the improvement of the learning process and educational management, enhanced the quality of pre-primary and primary education, widened access to education and improved educational infrastructure and facilities.

Afar and Somali Regions. Some CSOs working in the pastoral areas of Afar and Somali Regions have promoted a mobile education system that does not interfere with the migratory lifestyle of the people. In Afar Region, the Afar Pastoralist Development Association, in collaboration with its partners, introduced the mobile education system which has enhanced educational access for pastoral youth who would not have been reached through conventional schools. The “Emergency Education System” in Somali region provides a similar service addressing the needs of children whose education has been interrupted due to conflict and natural calamities. It is important to acknowledge that the mobile education system has been adopted and replicated by CSOs operating in other agro-pastoral areas.

6. Operational challenges

6.1 Regulatory challenges

The assessment of regulatory constraints focuses on three contentious issues (the 70:30 directive, the 90:10 provision, and the IGA provision) related to Proclamation No. 621/2009. The intention of the author is to examine a few issues in detail: the perspectives of stakeholders, the efforts made to address the challenges and the outstanding issues that deserve future attention.

6.1.1 The 70:30 directive

The directive on administrative and operational costs (commonly called the 70:30 rule or guideline), requires CSOs to allocate 70% of their budget for programme activities and 30% for administrative purposes. The logic behind the law stems from the pre Proclamation allegations that CSOs spent 60% of their budget on administrative matters and that their highly paid leaders allegedly advanced the interests of foreign agencies rather than the citizens (Dupuy et al 2015; EPRDF 2006 in Debebe 2010; Yalemzewd et al 2009). Many local authorities and ordinary beneficiaries of CSOs' projects reported to have witnessed noticeable improvements in accountability, transparency and the flow of resources after the enactment of the law.

The 70:30 rule has been challenged on legitimate grounds. The argument is not that the 30% is unfair but that the items classified as administrative costs undermines the quality of CSO activities. The classification of transportation, training, research and monitoring and evaluation expenses as administrative costs (rather than operational costs) is considered mistaken and counter-productive (Long and Regassa 2013; Kassahun 2013). It is mistaken because these costs are part of the core activities of most projects and counter-productive in that CSOs lose the motivation to launch projects in remote areas, undertake baseline studies, provide training and engage in serious monitoring and evaluation.

The directive is also viewed as discriminatory in that it rewards financially strong CSOs. Organisations with very large budgets do not necessarily have the largest work forces, pay the highest salaries or spend proportionately more on research and training than smaller organisations. Indeed, they may not need to spend 30% of their budget on running costs. This is not the case for the resource-poor CSOs that may be required to exceed the 30% threshold. The proponents of this view call for the amendment of the provision to address the concerns of small CSOs.

The new law recognises the rights of charities and societies to establish consortia to coordinate their activities.⁸ The directive issued to regulate the establishment of consortia recognises the role that networks play: building the capacity of their members, voicing common challenges, facilitating experience and information sharing and enhancing the ethical and professional standards of their members. However, the 70:30 guideline considers all expenses incurred by a consortium as administrative costs stating that networks are not implementers and therefore they do not incur operational costs (Debebe 2011). The consortia are expected to transfer a minimum of 70% of their funds from donors to member CSOs effectively reducing their role to that of fundraiser. Consortia are expected to derive their income from membership fees and a percentage share of the 30% administrative costs of CSOs and this makes it difficult for them to carry out broader functions.⁹

As a response to the advocacy efforts exerted by different donors and CSOs to improve the regulatory framework, the Charities and Societies Agency made some amendments to the 70:30 guideline. The changes apply to the salary and transport expenses of CSOs working on HIV, persons with disabilities, agriculture, access to clean water, environmental protection, capacity building, training and construction.

The amendment does not apply to all the CSOs and does not address the concerns of small CSOs and networks discussed above. Also, the request to reclassify research, monitoring and evaluation expenses as operational costs remains unaddressed. On a positive note, however, the government's responsiveness to the advocacy efforts deserves to be viewed as a step in the right direction.

6.1.2 The 90:10 provision

As indicated earlier, Article 2:2 of the new CSO legislation prohibits Ethiopian charities and Ethiopian societies from receiving more than 10% of their funds from foreign sources. As stated earlier, this provision rolled back the fledgling involvement of CSOs on rights issues. Rights organisations have been forced to change their mandates, scale-down their activities or terminate their operations.¹⁰

Ethiopian charities/societies are expected to generate 90% of their funds through domestic resource mobilization: income generation, private donations, public collection and membership contributions. Although it is commendable to have local funds for local projects, it is not a viable and realistic option in the current Ethiopian context

⁸ Prior to promulgation of the Charities and Societies law, the Ministry of Justice (by then responsible for regulating CSOs) narrowly interpreted associations as entities that are founded only by individuals, not by organisations, and this had prevented the growth and proliferation of networks (Debebe 2011).

⁹ According to the records of the Charities and Societies Agency, 28 consortia were registered to operate in Oromia Region. In 2014, relevant regional authorities recognised three of them as active.

¹⁰ In 2010, the Human Rights Council (HRCO), Ethiopia's first human rights organisation, closed nine of its twelve offices and cut 85 per cent of its staff.

where even the government cannot function without foreign funds (Yeshanew 2012). Hence, the sharp international criticism levelled against this particular provision has some justification.

Recently, the government has created some exemptions to address the concerns of key donors. The European Union and the World Bank negotiated with the government to reclassify some foreign funds as domestic (to circumvent the 10% ceiling) so that Ethiopian charities and Ethiopian societies could access such funds. The reclassified funds have been channelled through the European Union Civil Society Fund II (EU-CSF II) and the Ethiopian Social Accountability Programme Phase 2 (ESAP2). Some rights organizations have expressed concerns that EU-CSF II and ESAP2 are temporary arrangements that might end anytime and the gains achieved so far cannot be sustained without the amendment of the 90:10 rule.

6.1.3 Income generation

In Ethiopia, charities and societies are allowed to engage in IGAs (Proclamation No. 621/2009, Article 103). This provision is meant to enable CSOs to mobilise resources from within the country and reduce their heavy dependence on foreign funds. However, the provision contains restrictions that makes engagement in IGAs rather difficult. CSOs wishing to engage in IGAs are expected to work on activities related to their 'core' mission, secure written approval from the Agency, obtain valid business licenses from the relevant government departments and maintain separate accounts for their IGAs. It appears that CSOs' 'businesses' are subjected to additional scrutiny that does not apply to the private sector. According to authorities, an IGA is a business activity that must be governed by the trade law, not by CSO law. Moreover, there should not be confusion between business and charity activities that would distort the market and put private businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

Representatives of some CSOs have argued that their IGAs are inseparable from their charity work and that their activities are not purely commercial. Typical examples include donor-funded CSOs running schools and clinics. Such organisations provide affordable services (often of high quality) to non-target groups with the intention of supporting nearby communities, recovering part of their expenses and generating income that enables them to provide services for the poor who cannot pay.

The provision that IGAs must be directly related to the core missions of the CSO (Article 103:1) is particularly difficult for Ethiopian charities and societies. Officials explained the logic behind this provision in terms of enabling CSOs to promote their areas of interest and address business development gaps in those areas while avoiding overcrowding and market distortion in certain business areas and discouraging the establishment of CSOs with business as their primary interest. However, the logic

works only for some CSOs. Organizations that are engaged in service delivery can easily identify IGAs (e.g., opening schools, clinics, bookstores, pharmacies, etc.) directly to their missions. In this regard, CSOs that receive 90% of their funds from foreign sources are in an advantageous position. The challenge is for Ethiopian registered CSOs working on rights issues and receiving only 10% of their funds from external sources. They find it difficult to identify business activities leading to marketable products and services that are directly related to their missions.

Proclamation No. 6 21/2009 forbids the distribution of proceeds from IGAs among the members or beneficiaries of CSOs (Article 103:1). This provision is inconsistent with Article 14:2h of the Proclamation that links 'charitable purpose' to "the relief of those in need by reason of age, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage." The relief of those in need may require the distribution of proceeds. Representatives of CSOs working on HIV/AIDS noted that many organizations are established with the objective of providing economic and other types of assistance for their members.

6.2 Capacity constraints

Fundraising. Western donors remain the main source of funds for charities in Ethiopia. Securing foreign funds is rather difficult because of stringent and complex criteria. Many small CSOs lack the capacity to meet the requirements of donors. Thus, foreign funds have long been monopolised by some larger and more capable local organisations and the international NGOs. The principle of aid effectiveness has been promoted by donors to avoid aid fragmentation and to reduce transaction costs.¹¹ Therefore, donors' gravitation towards concentrating spending on larger organisations is likely to marginalise smaller CSOs. Meaningful resources cannot be generated from local sources due to the weak state of the economy, a lack of resolute philanthropists and the lack of a tradition of giving to secular organisations.

Human resources. For some CSOs funding problems translate into capacity deficit in terms of human resources. After the enactment of the law, rights organizations were obliged to scale-down their personnel. Most small and resource-poor CSOs lacked qualified and experienced staffs to help with the mobilisation of funds. The lack of experienced staff also affects the quality of planning, project implementation, monitoring and evaluation and the timely reporting on projects. Informants associated the poor performance of many CSOs in the regions with these capacity deficits.

Concentration in accessible areas. Representatives of CSOs recognise that their activities have concentrated in urban and accessible areas and that the deserving remote villages and developing regions have attracted little attention. Although different reasons have

¹¹ *Aid effectiveness is the impact that aid has on development in terms of reducing poverty and inequality, increasing growth and building capacity. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) provide details on aid effectiveness.*

been provided for the uneven distribution of CSOs in the country, the lack of capacity to mobilise sufficient resources (human, financial, etc.) is the key factor.

Cooperation and coordination. Many civil society organisations in Ethiopia rarely cooperate in terms of sharing resources and information and jointly voicing their concerns. To some extent the restrictive provisions applied to consortia has eroded their capacity to facilitate cooperation and coordination. However, CSOs rarely make active and sustained efforts to collaborate with each other or coordinate their activities. During focus group discussions held at different locations, it became evident that many CSOs knew little about the activities of other CSOs operating in the same geographic and/or thematic areas.

Self-censorship. The regulatory constraint (the 90:10 rule) that limits CSOs' access to foreign funds is not the only reason for the decline of engagements in rights issues. Many organisations previously engaged in advocacy on human rights and democratisation issues have succumbed to self-censorship out of fear and frustration and in order to avoid confrontation.

5. Concluding remarks

In Ethiopia, CSOs have experienced transformation from providing humanitarian aid in the 1970s and 1980s to implementing development projects in the 1990s (Clark 2000; Cerritelli et al 2008) and engagement in human rights advocacy in the 2000s. In 2009, the CSO law checked this momentum and rolled back the incipient involvement in rights issues. On the other hand, new civil society groups have mushroomed and the role of the conventional CSOs in service delivery and development has increased. However, in the general literature, the human rights issue overshadows many positive developments. This article has addressed the gaps without sidestepping the challenges encountered by rights organisations and other CSOs.

The paper reveals that civil society organisations have been making contributions to the national development priorities of Ethiopia through mobilisation of foreign funds, introduction of new ideas and technologies, provision of education and skills training, provision of materials and equipment, the creation of business opportunities and the enhancement of community participation and ownership. There exist strong reasons to argue that CSOs have made key contributions towards the achievement of the GTP and the MDGs. Apart from addressing immediate problems facing their target groups, CSOs have been engaged in the improvement of the stock of human capital with the long-term view of sustaining economic and social development in the country.

It is equally important to recognise the fact that CSOs have been operating under a restrictive law. The 90:10 rule has incapacitated the rights organizations. Domestic resource mobilisation is unrealistic in the current Ethiopian context – weak economy.

The law also contains other restrictions (e.g., the 70:30 guideline) that have limited the activities of networks and smaller CSOs. Recently, the government amended the 70:30 guideline and made an administrative decision to relax the 90:10 rule. Although a lot more needs to be done, these positive responses deserve recognition.

Since 2009, the relationship between some CSOs and the government has been strained and distrust has prevailed. Government officials seemed to be dissatisfied with some CSOs for different reasons: underperformance, lack of dedication to mission, poor accountability and transparency, donor-driven engagement, reluctance to handover property after project phase-out, launching projects without study and unexpected project termination. Some of the concerns raised from the CSOs' side include: failure to ensure their constitutional rights to engage in rights issues, treatment of CSOs as gap-fillers rather than as partners, indiscriminate portrayal of CSOs as rent-seekers and promoters of neo-liberalism, inconsistent and arbitrary administration of the Proclamation and the preferential treatment of some CSOs over others. It is high time the government and the CSOs strengthened their joint forum (GO-NGO Forum) to alleviate the climate of distrust.

Shortage of financial resource and qualified experts, the concentration of activities in urban and accessible areas, poor CSO coordination, and self-censorship represent other challenges that hinder the full realisation of CSOs' potential. Amendment of the restrictive provisions of the law and strengthening the capacity of CSOs through financial and technical supports could increase their role in development and the democratisation process. Given the current condition of the Ethiopian economy, neither the government nor the CSOs can be expected to function well without foreign funds. However, the long-term strategy should be to encourage domestic resource generation and mobilisation and to reduce heavy dependence on foreign donors.

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Re-Conceptualizing the Impact of Development on Childcare: The Volta River Project and the Child Survival Challenge in Dzemeni

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Abstract

Ghana's most prestigious energy infrastructural project, the Volta River Project (VRP), aimed to trigger industrial development through the generation of cheap electricity. At its initiation, the project had a people-oriented resettlement and livelihoods restoration programme, which was abandoned. The Tongu Ewe who constituted more than 80 per cent of those displaced, have faced socio-cultural and economic dislocation without adequate compensation. Within the Development-Induced 'Displacement and Impoverishment' literature a content and knowledge gap especially theoretical models of the impact on child care. As such, this paper proposes two models that focus on the effects of displacement on childcare practices of impoverished mothers who have assumed multiple roles. This is to establish an understanding of the economic and emotional effects of impoverishment and socio-cultural dislocation from development project displacement as the study in Dzemeni portrays.

Key words: *childcare costs; impoverished mothers; Tongu Ewe migrants; Dzemeni; development-induced-displacement; development impact on childcare*

Résumé

Développement industriel grâce à la production d'électricité bon marché. Lors de son lancement, le projet a bénéficié d'un programme de réinstallation AXÉ sur les populations et de restauration des moyens d'existence, qui a été abandonnée. Les Tongu Tongu, qui constituaient plus de 80% des déplacés, ont été confrontés à une dislocation socio-culturelle et économique sans compensation adéquate. Dans la Littérature «déplacements et appauvrissement» induite par le développement, il existe un fossé de contenu et de connaissances, notamment des modèles théoriques de l'impact sur la garde d'enfants. En tant que tel, le présent document propose deux modèles qui mettent l'accent sur les effets du déplacement sur les pratiques de garde d'enfants de mères appauvries qui ont des rôles multiples à assumer. Il s'agit d'une compréhension établie des effets économiques et de l'appauvrissement émotionnel et de la dislocation socio-culturelle du déplacement du projet de développement comme Dzemeni dépeint dans l'étude.

Mots clés: *frais de garde d'enfants; Mères appauvries; Tongu Ewe migrants; Dzemeni; Développement-induit-déplacement; Impact sur le développement des enfants*

Introduction

The Volta River Project (VRP), Ghana's most prestigious energy infrastructural project, aimed at the socio-economic development of the country, was brought to the fore of wider public attention when, in 2009, the Vice President and later President of the Republic of Ghana, H. E. John D. Mahama admitted that Ghana had committed mistakes regarding the lack of faith in discharging social responsibility of the state to communities affected by the VRP. This admission was an open invitation for self-reflection and critical analysis of the economic and socio-cultural effects of the dam on all the groups displaced when the VRP was executed. To many purposes, it could also present the foundation for the state to initiate social policies and development strategies that would rescue those who sacrificed their vibrant livelihoods for the survival of Ghana's socio-economic development for decades.

For the purposes, at least, at its initiation, it was clear in Nkrumah's mind what the dam was to represent and signify for Ghana. He and his country thence became expectant beyond measure as it clearly marked an advent of hope, for both the surreal expectations and the practical manifestations. Ghana was to be catapulted to a position of prominence and her image solidified as an economic haven for all black people, if possible. Although this was not openly acknowledged, the power from Akosombo was to ignite the industrial revolution in and around Ghana and transform her access to power into the epicentre of the generic and global connotations of the 'Power Icon'.

As expected, praise for the VRP filled every space on the airwaves during the period of the recent celebrations of the VRA, which was seen by Ghanaian to be powerful, but a connotation which did not necessarily connect sovereign Ghana as a powerful entity. And this power aura of the VRA and the importance of the VRP have significantly failed to coincide with the expectations of the Tongu Ewe. Thus, for the Tongu Ewe especially, half a century later, the logical and moral imperative to insert the *hows* and *whys* within the national development discourse has forged to the fore more poignantly. Although scholarly treatise of the topic has been established within academia, yet the nation has yet to further contemplate whether the ethics of development have not been 'celestially' violated and their plight neglected in current national development planning. As legitimate questions call up anew, there seems to be a resurgence of activism to draw attention to the wrongs of the past in the execution of the VRP.

Notable among the works that have pointed to the destruction of the livelihoods of the Tongu through the construction of the VRP and studied the alternative livelihoods available to them as a result are; Geker (1999); G. W. Lawson (1963); R. M. Lawson

(1961; 1963; 1968; 1972) and Tsikata (2006). Today, the Tongu Ewe who constituted more than 80 per cent of those initially displaced (Geker, 1999) are intent upon finding out whether they have not been deliberately thrown out of the celebrations of the fortune the nation found in their backyard. It seems more probable by the day that although their livelihoods were truncated without adequate compensation, yet, their real or perceived marginalisation in the fashioning of special development packages has been established. And this is just made to fall within the global normative culture and practice of overlooking the plights of those marginalised in development project execution as a Faustian legacy.

As a phenomenon of nascent global significance, the debate for eco/human-friendly energy sources has become topical within the global energy strategy and discourse. In that regard, this paper intends to stoke the continuing debate on the VRP and the compensation to the displaced downstream and upstream, largely. Although not a core issue of discussion here, the paper desires to rake up the issue of the relevance of developing states' continued reliance on large dams in the wake of their decommissioning elsewhere. Especially pertaining to livelihoods large dams are noted culprits in their destruction and non-replacement.

Tsikata (2006) has noted that when the VRP was executed in the mid-1960s, destruction of livelihoods and displacement of thousands of the population was not an issue of prolonged hassle. The project had worked out a satisfying, relieving package for the livelihoods restoration for the displaced populations by community, individual and household count. According to Tongu Ewe elders, an important component of the agricultural schemes was an all-year-round irrigation farming, which promised relief and hope in the resettlement package, for which they have yearned in vain. For unspecified and unjustified reasons, they could simply not be implemented.

It seemed at the beginning, emotion reigned to a point where a critical and encompassing sociological audit was either relegated to the background or inadequately incorporated. Through an ethnographic study undertaken, between 2005 and 2008 (by the author), many questions arose regarding Ghana's review of and attention to the economic, emotional and the socio-cultural effects of the VRP especially on the Tongu Ewe. The study benefitted from many earlier studies into large dam displacement, and the VRP and livelihoods of the Tongu Ewe but which did not specifically treat the issues as a combined cocktail of household provisioning and child care practices in the home and in the market. Many earlier frameworks led by those of Cernea which proved invaluable to this discussion are thus reviewed for our analysis.

Earlier Frameworks

Michael Cernea, a sociologist employed by the World Bank (WB) in the 1980s to review the effects of the bank's sponsored projects uncovered numerous negative

effects on people displaced by these projects. The Volta River Project, also a World Bank sponsored project, was included in the study from which it was concluded that the 1 per cent of Ghana's population that was displaced by the VRP constituted then the largest per centile proportion of those ever displaced in relation to the general population in any large dam displacement on the globe.

Cernea (1997: 7, citing Cook and Mukendi, 1994), has noted that "involuntary resettlement caused by government sponsored development programs has generated and continues to generate, a distinct set of problems on the African continent". This, however, is not peculiar to Africa. Involuntary resettlement processes are only a subset of the broader massive population resettlement processes which have been going on all around the world (Cernea 1997: 2). Involuntary resettlement is not normally an intended end in itself. But the need for population movements has been a response to the problem of attempting to match the spatial distribution of the populations with the rich endowment of natural resources for sustenance and growth (Cook and Falloux 1994, cited in Cernea 1997: 2). It is now a well-known fact from the Large Dams literature that the genuine attempts of states to develop industrial capacity through dam projects establishes a complexity that is difficult to avoid and appropriately manage.

From one angle, this complexity is established by the long term effects of the destruction of livelihoods of those initially displaced. This results in their involuntary movement in search of new livelihoods. The impoverishment risks faced by the descendants and dependants of the displaced populace seem to be replicated in a cyclical manner over the years. They then could assume an unstable social and economic status in new settlements. This status as 'troublesome guests' is mischievously bandied about and used as a weapon in psychological warfare by their hosts at the least provocation, even without any provocation. In such instances, a settler at one settlement could be seen abandoning everything acquired over years and embarking on the search for a new, friendlier settlement. And this underscores and illustrates the complexity of the initial displacement that places them on a constantly rolling wheel of the search for a place to find some viable livelihood.

Thus, the diminution of the economic opportunities for settlers in lakeside communities, such as Dzemeni, can be traced to dam projects that initially destroyed the livelihoods of their *clan*. Added to this is the inescapable fact that the potential of limited access to livelihoods in these communities to affect the survival chances of their children has not been fully addressed in many survey studies or by state policy.

Many factors, that have remained unexplored, account for the childcare challenge. Negligence of parents (at the individual and household level) cannot be completely ruled out. But, at the same time, a wider examination of other factors is imperative. In lakeside settler communities, the prevalence of the problem could have existed and be aggravated, to a higher degree, as a result of the 'migrant statuses' of mothers. For, 'migration is a significant event that could easily create the conditions for the slackening

in the observance of traditional sanctions and grounds for individual's deviation from cultural norms' (Oppong and Abu, 1987: 3).

From another angle, (that of analysing the child care challenge in lakeside communities), it is clear that one complexity of dam projects is the irony embedded in them. Projects that are crucial for initiating economic growth and promoting social change do not have a one-way traffic of a smooth passage. They portray the associated features of a double edged sword - a dichotomy of end results with dual contradictions of benefits and costs, joy and pain. A common practice prevails that could not be fully understood and also fully questioned. State operatives assume or are mandated to fashion out development projects that determine and allocate economic opportunities to sections of their societies. In the aftermath of such development projects, one possibility exists as an established order- the destruction or distortion of the economic organization of sections within the nation state. Apart from the loss of economic opportunities, the social organization (of the displacees) becomes disintegrated and their cultural heritage dismembered. And this is largely occasioned by their exodus from home in droves in search of greener pastures. But in the case of the Tongu, it is in the search of 'deeper waters' that set their socio-cultural orientation in strange lands and strangeness, and their economic activities in imbalance that have refused to support normal Tongu Ewe child care practices.

However, in Africa, it is not only imbalances in economic opportunities that initiate population movements; it is also a characteristic feature of Africa's mostly agrarian economy. Indeed, 'traditionally, spatial mobility is a central feature of many African societies' (Cernea, 1997: 2). Cernea (passim) has explained that population displacement and resettlement and its unintended consequences have displayed certain characteristic traits that have manifested in different forms, pointing out that:

First, involuntary resettlement is itself never the primary objective of a project that causes displacement; it is the by-product-often unavoidable-of urban programs or of the construction of dams, highways, industrial estates, ports, forestry, natural resource management projects, and so forth. Second, whereas other types of projects explicitly aim to increase agricultural productivity and people's incomes, forced resettlement starts by taking away land, the main asset for family livelihood. Third, if not properly addressed by the state, involuntary resettlement operations certainly degenerate into processes of massive impoverishment and also social disarticulation (Cernea, 1997: 3) (emphasis mine).

Significantly, development-induced population displacement and resettlement has introduced a quite different dimension of response in Africa. Apart from the resultant recreation, re-adjustment, redefinition and realignment of demography over geographical

space, it has also led to impoverishment of sections of populations on a massive scale. And this, in no mean measure, significantly contributes to the diminution of the capacity for child care. In particular, motherhood and child care have remained silently hauled and shaped by these physical and socio-economic re-adjustments initiated by displacement in ways that have remained invisible.

In Ghana, the status of pre-eminence assumed by state interest over individual or a smaller group interest (deemed insignificant) could have been responsible for pushing away the negative effects of the dam displacement out of the content of public discourse. In many situations, the role of the state in initiating development decisions is normally well-intentioned and has often resulted in tremendous benefits for the larger section of its citizenry. But, at the same time, some of the development projects have led to devastating effects for specific and minor population sections. Cernea (1997: 2) observed that:

The challenges posed by mandated processes of involuntary resettlement epitomize some of the most complex problems involved in inducing, accelerating, and managing development. They raise core questions about the role of the state in population relocation decisions, the goals and social actors of development, its costs, pathologies, and benefits.

Displacement, Resettlement and Livelihood Deprivation

It cannot be denied that, although displacement in itself is not the genesis of impoverishment, yet it nevertheless increases or aggravates an already poor condition. O'Brien and Leichenko (2000) refer to this human condition as 'Double Exposure'. The following observation by Cernea (1997) further explains the reality:

Many of the people subjected to forced displacement are poor even before displacement, or are in a marginal economic situation. They have already been working hard to overcome poverty and to improve their incomes, health and sanitation. Then suddenly, a development program intended to bring benefits to many people (triggers a resettlement operation that is so inequitably designed and implemented it fails to protect the affected people from a worsening of their situation. Such a program turns displacement into a weapon that aggravates rather than alleviates poverty. The paradox is as blatant as it is unjust and unacceptable (p.19).

Tsikata (2006) has documented the livelihood trajectories of the people displaced by the VRP in the mid-1960s. The findings from her study do not point to “improvements in the well-being of participants”. Rather, she noted, “in general terms, these efforts have fallen short of expectations”. She has identified that initially, states and the international institutions did not respond to the plight of people suffering the negative effects of dams. The response came from academia and development professionals. The coping strategies of displaced and resettled people in their new ‘worlds’ have been studied. From these emerged proposed models as the processes through which their lives are reconstructed and reorganised.

These studies, of models, have also established the fact that dam projects affect succeeding generations of those initially affected, since livelihoods are not only economic but also community assets and social/cultural legacies. A focus of these studies, which is relevant to this discussion, is that, they have delved not only into the short-term impact but also the long-term economic, socio-cultural and also psychological effects. This paper is another contribution in this regard. Its focus on child care is a novelty so far as the discourse on well-being effects of Development Induced Displacement and Resettlement (DIDR) is concerned. Some of the relevant findings from the analysis of the coping strategies of Large Dam displacees by Cernea, Stanley, Chambers, Scudder and Colson, Colchester and others including Tsikata and Lawson to which this study and paper are heavily indebted provide valuable insights.

Theoretical Models on Development Induced Displacement and Resettlement (DIDR)

Stanley (2008) has studied the various theoretical models existing in the DIDR literature and observed how inapplicable some were to the real situations and experiences of displaced people. Several such conceptual models have been in use in the social science literature over the last three decades. According to Stanley (2008), the first model in the literature was Robert Chambers’ (1973) conceptual representation of population, land settlement as a three-phase process. But this did not work as it was later found to be an inadequate representation of the lived reality, hence the need for universally applicable models. In response to this need, for a more universally applicable model, Scudder and Colson (1982) proposed a four-stage model of how people and socio-cultural systems respond to resettlement.

The stages were labelled recruitment, transition, potential development, and handing over or incorporation. In the recruitment phase, policy-makers and/or developers formulate development and resettlement plans, often without informing those to be displaced. During transition, people learn about their future displacement, which heightens the level of stress they experience. Potential development occurs after physical

relocation. Displacees then begin the process of rebuilding their economy and social networks. Handing over or incorporation refers to the handing over of local production systems and community leadership to a second generation of residents, that identified with and felt at home in the community. Once this stage has been achieved, resettlement was deemed a success (Stanley 2008: 12).

The Scudder–Colson model was interested in behavioural tendencies commonly associated with each of the different stages through which resettlers pass. But the mounting evidence of the failure of involuntary resettlement schemes to pass through all four stages in the 1980s and 1990s showed how inapplicable it was to all such cases. It meant that in order to explain the consequences of involuntary relocation, a new theory was necessary. “What was increasingly seen as predictable impoverishment in forced resettlement schemes” could then be modelled (Stanley 2008: 13).

In response to the recognition of the need for a new theory, Cernea’s Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) model arose in the 1990s. Contrary to the Scudder–Colson model, the IRR model did not identify the different stages of relocation. It rather tried to identify the ‘impoverishment risks intrinsic to forced resettlement and the processes necessary for reconstructing the livelihoods of displacees’ (Stanley 2008: 13). It noted that if targeted policies failed to specifically address the negative effects of displacement, displacees could face dangers such as loss of access to common property resources, marginalization, landlessness, homelessness and joblessness. They could also have to contend with the challenge of food insecurity, with associated problems of community disarticulation, increased mortality and morbidity (ibid.).

Stanley (2008: 13) refers to the additional risks stated by Downing and others, such as: loss of access to public services, civil and human rights and disruption of formal education activities. The model also recognizes impoverishment risks to the host population. At the same time, it noted that not all of these processes necessarily occur; neither are all displaced households affected, in each case of forced resettlement, by each process (ibid.). Cernea (1997:10) has conceded that his model takes a different, complimentary approach, as it is not aiming at distinguishing the stages of resettlement. Rather, it is “identifying the fundamental impoverishment risks intrinsic to resettlement and the key socio-economic processes critical for reconstructing the livelihoods of resettlers” (ibid.).

The category that is often affected in aggregate terms by DIDR are the marginalized who are already the most economically, politically, and socially vulnerable in a population (Stanley, 2008: 14). And then at both the individual and community levels, certain segments of the displaced population can feel the impoverishment risks associated with resettlement more intensely. Children can be included in such categories since they are wholly dependent on adults.

Others have found similar correlations in their studies. For instance, Colchester (2000, cited in Stanley, ibid.) provides an overview of the worldwide impact of dam projects on certain marginalized sections of some countries. Some of these indigenous

populations and ethnic minority groups make up a disproportionately large percentage of those whose livelihoods are adversely affected by development projects. For instance, Colchester observed that the Adavasis, an ethnic group in India, make up only about 8 per cent of the population of India, but they are estimated to constitute 40 - 50 per cent of those displaced by development projects in the country.

Some of the difficulties indigenous peoples have encountered with regard to dam projects have been identified by Colchester (2000). The outright dispossession of land and resources, lack of consultation, insufficient or complete lack of compensation, cultural alienation and a lowering of living standards are some forms of the human rights abuses that result. Apart from these measurable and identifiable factors, a more harmful one exists. The physical dislocation becomes potentially more harmful due to "the specific and strong cultural connection that many indigenous groups have with the land on which, and the environment in which, they live, and "from which they are removed (Colchester, 2000, cited in Stanley 2008: 14). Both the short and long term effects of displacement have different implications for the two sexes. Examining these implications from the DIDR literature is important for understanding of the conditions of Tongu settlers in Dzemeni.

Gender Disparities in Resettlement

Stanley (2008: 14-15) has observed that gender disparities in resettlement operations have not been well highlighted in the DIDR literature. He found out that:

A small number of studies have shown that women often experience the adverse consequences of forced resettlement more strongly than men. For example, compensation payments are usually paid to the heads of households, which can concentrate the cash value of family assets in male hands, leaving women and children at higher risk of deprivation".

Women have been identified to be the section of society that loses heavily from projects that take away people's livelihoods. The reason for this is that, "in rural areas, women can be more adversely affected because they are often more dependent than men on common property resources [such as land and water resources] for income sources" (Stanley, 2008:15). Women are more likely to suffer impoverishment as a result of loss of access to rights and opportunities for negotiating compensation, due to power relations in the domestic setting (ibid.). He also refers to Guggenheim's (1993) discussion of Mexico's Zimapan Dam Project in which women were initially consulted for the negotiations, but as it started yielding results, the men began to attend in place of the women.

Normally and because women and young children are in coterminous terms, when women are pushed and heckled out of the way of benefits and access to compensatory resources, the well-being of children is being pushed to higher levels of risk and vulnerability. As 'childhood' remains an unclassified category in the gender division, it is naturally put together only notionally with 'women'. Therefore the effects of displacement on women logically affects more than just women.

Conceptual Frameworks

Although no single framework referred to addresses all the aspects of the study, each of them suits an aspect of it. It uses frameworks developed from the DIDR conceptual models and the UNICEF framework to examine the child care practices of migrant women. The first, (Fig. 1), is named: 'External Influences on Household Resources and Child Well-Being'. It asserts that child well-being in the household and community level is determined by the invisible hand of macro-economic policies at the global and national level and socio-economic and cultural influences on the household access to and utilization of resources. The VRP was an international economic development model that postulated that Large Dams were necessary in establishing a firmer foundation for the development of a young nation's economy. The Akosombo Dam was initiated and implemented by the state with international co-operation; advice from international economic consultants and World Bank sponsorship. The connection between the impoverishment of those displaced by these projects and failure of state social policy to address their plight cannot be discounted.

Child care is eventually at the receiving end of these policy failures by state and international organizations. The model also asserts that the fundamental support system for the child, that are expected to provide domestic resources for child survival are father, mother and kin, who are the closest form of security for the child, and the 'primary players'. But these players' access to resources could be manipulated or influenced by the 'larger forces' of local environment, cultural influences, state and international economic policies.

The second framework for this study is based on the UNICEF framework. It is named 'Health - Seeking Behaviour of Mother for Child: Determinants of Child Well-Being' (Fig. 2). It suggests that the prospects for the attainment of child well-being and survival are not only dependent on the provision of health facilities and programmes, but also contingent upon the suitability of the programme, access to resources by the household, and the schedule of the child's mother. In addition, kin support, (and that of the husband), proximity of facilities, and friendliness of programmes are important determinants. Thus, institutional support, household resources and mothers' time play significant parts in contributing to success in ensuring optimum child survival prospects.

Fig. 1: External Influences on Household Resources and Child Well-Being

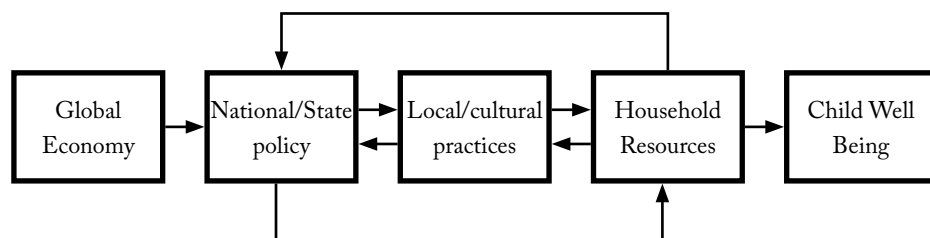
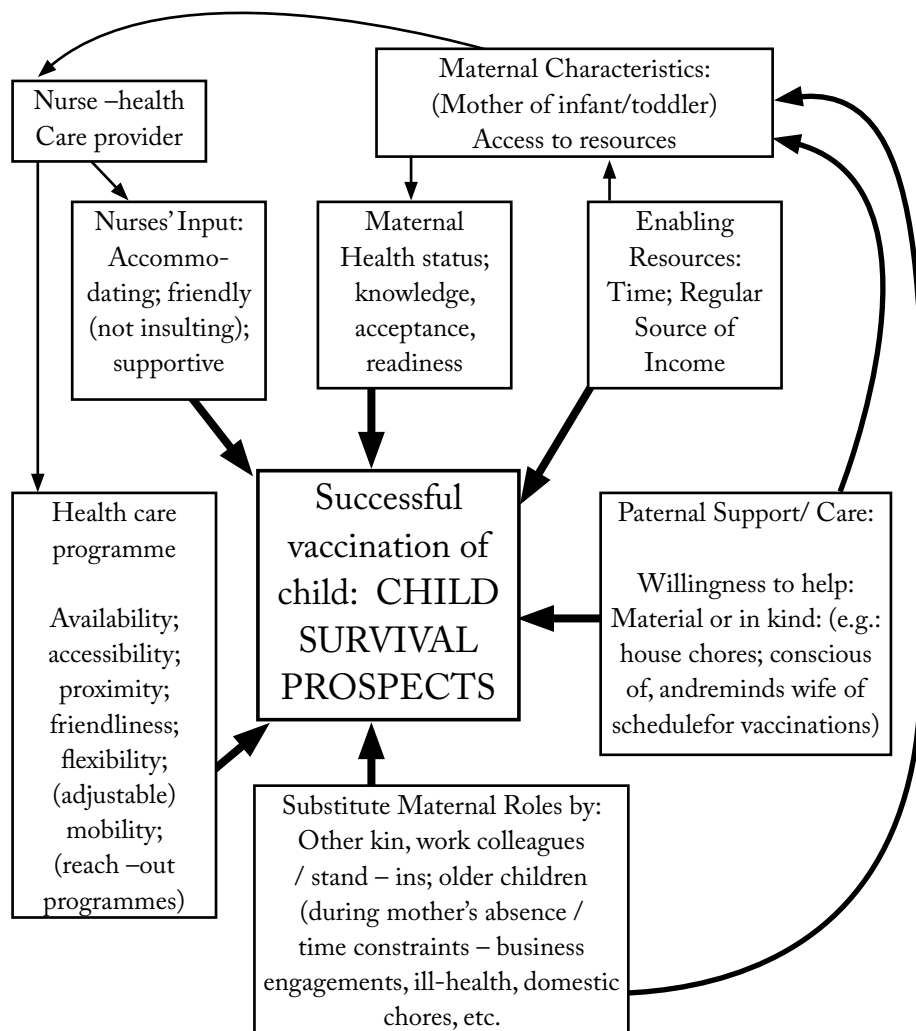


Fig. 2: Health-Seeking Behaviour of Mother for Child; Determinants of Child Well-Being.



Conclusion

The paper has reviewed some of the theoretical models proposed for the analysis of dam impacts on displaced populations from the available literature. Mainly, the works of Cernea, Stanley, Chambers, Scudder and Colson, and Colchester have been reviewed and analysed. Their significance or otherwise regarding the lives of displacees of the VRP has been placed in context. The practical context presented here is the household experiences from the findings of a 22-month ethnographic field study into the child care practices of Tongu Ewe migrants in Dzemeni situated along the Volta Lake at the upper reaches of the Akosombo Dam. It has come to light that childcare has been inadequately treated within the existing frameworks available for review. Proposed frameworks for the analysis of childcare in relation to dam displacement and impoverishment risks are presented. It is worthy of note that a multiple-site larger study of the effects of displacement on mothers, child care practices and child survival prospects is needed for a fuller understanding of the phenomenon that has failed to attract adequate attention from economists and politicians. This is in order to lay the foundation for a firmer re-conceptualization of displacement and exposure to impoverishment risks from large dam or other development projects within the corpus of literature on demography and development discourse. It looks apparent that knee-jerk solutions to development displacement have been a creation of the development enterprise itself. Individual governments have to back away from the mantra of the UNDESA laid down in the 1951 justification for the destruction of livelihoods and dislocation of socio-cultural structures. The larger ramifications of the sweeping devastating effect of the failure of the state to address the livelihood loss of the Tongu Ewe might not be fully known. But the state can still make the attempt with state policy to halt the debilitating effect of such losses on child care for already resource-access vulnerable groups. Perhaps, certain

Economic models have informed state operatives' dereliction or inability to address livelihood loss questions. Another possibility is that this neglect has thrived on the silent ideology that the destruction of the opportunities for survival by a sub-group within a state could be referred to as the 'price of economic progress'. It is known that the 'suffering for the good of all' ideology which Prime Minister Nehru stood upon in his famous public declaration in 1948 is now deemed anachronistic and anti-people. Unfortunately, this was promoted by such an important body of the United Nations. Perhaps the consolation could be that the time lapse has made that organ of the UN to discard such lewd ideology.

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Endnotes

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A Review of Youth Violence Theories: Developing Interventions to Promote Sustainable Peace in Ilorin, Nigeria

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Abstract

Ilorin is located in North Central Nigeria with an estimated population above two million people. For some time now, Ilorin has been regarded as the most "peaceful" State Capital in the North Central geo-political zone; due to rare outburst of violence and criminality. However, in the recent past, the peaceful atmosphere of the State Capital has been under serious threat owing to frequent outburst of youth violence, particularly in socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods (SDNs). Consequently, youth violence has attracted the attention of policy makers and stakeholders in the State Capital, thereby occupying an important space in local discourses. In this paper, we undertake a review of theories of violence to understand the etiology of youth violence in Ilorin in particular and Nigeria as a whole, and assess the implications of these theories for developing strategies and policy frameworks for promoting long-lasting, sustainable peace.

Keywords: Youth violence; Relative deprivation; Social disorganisation; Broken window; Ilorin,

Résumé

Ilorin est situé dans le centre-nord du Nigeria avec une population estimée de plus de deux millions de personnes. Depuis quelque temps, Ilorin a été considéré comme la capitale d'Etat la plus "Paisible" dans la zone géopolitique du centre-nord; en raison de rares explosions de violence et de criminalité. Cependant, dans un passé récent, l'Atmosphère paisible de la capitale de l'Etat a été sérieusement menacée en raison de fréquents éclats de violence chez les jeunes, en particulier dans les quartiers socialement défavorisés (SDN). Par conséquent, la violence chez les jeunes attire l'attention des décideurs et des acteurs de la capitale, occupant ainsi un espace dans les discours locaux. Dans ce document, nous entreprenons une revue des théories de la violence pour comprendre l'étiologie de la Violence chez les jeunes à Ilorin en particulier et au Nigeria dans son ensemble et les implications de ces Théories évaluées pour l'élaboration de Stratégies et de cadres politiques pour promouvoir une paix durable.

Mots-clés: Violence chez les jeunes; Privation relative; Désorganisation sociale; Fenêtre Cassée; Ilorin,

Introduction

Youth violence is rampant in Nigeria. Nigeria is becoming or has become a theatre of youth violence. Its occurrence and persistence have ostensibly undermined and threatened social security in the country. Apart from militancy in the Niger Delta region and acts of terrorism in North Eastern Nigeria, other common violent activities include clashes among cult members, political clashes, religious clashes, land disputes, communal clashes, herdsmen/farmer clashes, as well as tribal and ethnic violence. Meanwhile, research has found that persistent violence and restiveness across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria is inimical to growth, and stifles economic development (Akpan et al. 2012; Ewetan and Urhie 2014). Apart from wanton destruction of poverty, several lives have been lost to violence. Between 1999 and 2003, USAID (2005) reported that scores of youth violence in Nigeria resulted in the death of over 9000 young people and displaced over 200000. Specifically, in Northern Nigeria, more than 90 people were injured and more than 20 reported dead in 2007 alone (US Commission on International Religious Freedom, 2008). In 2008, more than 600 people lost their lives and properties worth millions of naira was destroyed in Jos (Adinoyi 2009; Balogun 2009). In 2009, over 600 deaths were recorded in a series of youth related violence in Bauchi, Jos, Nasarawa, Lagos and Ibadan (Adinoyi 2009; Balogun 2009; Eya 2009). In 2011, Human Rights Watch (2012) estimated that over 15 000 youths were killed in violence since Nigeria transitioned to civilian rule in 1999. The activities of *Boko Haram*, especially in the northeast, have resulted in the deaths of thousands of Nigerians.

Meanwhile, while the killings and mayhem were going on in several parts of Nigeria,

Ilorin, the State Capital of Kwara State, had been relatively peaceful. In fact, Ilorin and by extension the Kwara State, has been christened 'The State of Harmony', following the peaceful nature of the people and the entire society. The State Capital has been so peaceful that even individuals from the crisis-laden northern states often see it as a safe-haven to pick up the pieces of their ruined lives. These people are facetiously addressed as 'ogun le nde' literally referred to as 'people dispersed from the war zone to settle in Ilorin'. However, as much as this has been a long held perception, there is insufficient evidence to support this assumption, especially in the recent past. Since 2003, the ancient city of Ilorin has been plagued by violence perpetrated by young people. The widely reported cases of violence are in sharp contrast to the wide-held belief that Ilorin is a peaceful city. There are several reported cases of violence to support this claim (see Alanamu 2005; Fagbemi 2015; Muhammed 2005; Tunde 2015).

Ultimately, the electoral process in Ilorin in particular has witnessed an unprecedented build-up of armed youths, recruited and trained by politicians to win elections with violence. Recruited thugs are usually school dropouts and unemployed youth, who bend to the whims and caprices of power-hungry politicians in exchange for some naira, political appointments and lucrative government contracts or tenders. Incidentally, politically motivated youth violence has been widely reported (Tijjani 2013; Saka 2010; Alanamu 2005). This was heightened between 2001 and 2003 during the administration of the late Governor Muhammed Alabi Lawal. It was during this time that the manipulation of the youth for settling political scores became entrenched, setting the stage for subsequent violent acts in the State Capital (Saka 2010). This became apparent during the political face-off between the then Governor and his late political 'god-father', Olusola Saraki. In this face-off, the two political figures were accused of recruiting, arming and deploying youth gangs for electoral malpractice and fraud. At this time, cultism became widely pronounced, as it crept into the political terrain to settle political scores. Previously, cultism was restricted to tertiary educational institutions. Prominent among the notorious ring leaders who were recruited to carry out politically motivated violent acts were *Suraju Akaje*, *Babalola*, and *Bayo Hajia*, all in their early and late 30s with many followers in their early 20s. The ring leaders however met their waterloo in 2008, 2010 and 2015 respectively when they were brutally murdered by unknown gunmen. The youthful ages of these individuals confirm previous findings that most violent activities are perpetrated by the youth. A previous study specifically found that 56.3% of the victims and perpetrators of violence in Ilorin were between the ages of 21 and 40 years (Agere et al. 2012).

Meanwhile, beyond the age of the perpetrators, there is an existing nexus between neighbourhood characteristics and youth violence. Youth violence usually takes-off from socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods (SDNs), widely regarded as economically and socially deprived environments where levels of poverty, unemployment and underemployment are very high (Moser and McIlwaine 2006). These neighbourhoods

are usually characterised by 'ungoverned spaces' occupied by those who perfectly fit the definition of *Armed Non State Actors*¹ (ANSAs) who operate in non-conflict situations (DCAF Horizon 2015). These include crime groups, youth gangs, militias and vigilantes. These ANSAs were eminently present in most parts of Ilorin. The *Sango and Oke- Andi* areas were under the control of *Afobaje* and *One love*; *Opomalu-Emirs road* and *Oke-Sunawere* under the control of *Apase* boys; *Oloje* is controlled by *Tatase* boys; *Anifowose* is controlled by *Authority*; *Idiape* is controlled by *Ariyo* boys; *Isale-Oja* is controlled by *Oluomo* and *Adua* boys; *Agaka* and *Adabata* are controlled by *Bayero* and *Owo* boys; *Gambari* and *Ita-Ajia* (Fifa 11 domain) and *Okelele* (Go-slow). In many of these neighbourhoods, socio-economic activities, including the collection of daily 'tax' from motorists, *Okada* riders and allocation of shopping activities have been literally surrendered to cult gangs.

It is against this background that the current paper attempts to examine the predisposing and enabling factors responsible for the proliferation of youth violence and more importantly ANSAs in Ilorin. Although, the ancient city of Ilorin has attracted the attention of scholars, many of whom have produced a plethora of literature on the history of Ilorin (e.g. Jimoh 1994; Danmole 2012) researchers have failed to capitalise on the emergence of youth violence in contemporary Ilorin. Existing scholarship does not provide sufficient sociological analysis. This paper attempts to bridge this gap. Based on the 'Causative-Preventive Model of Youth Violence in Socially Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods' (Abdullahi and Issah, 2016), this paper x-rays relevant contemporary theories of violence to unearth the causes of youth violence in Ilorin with a view to proffer sustainable clinical interventions. The study is, therefore, timely as it contributes to national discourses around neighbourhood characteristics and youth violence in Nigeria. The paper is, perhaps, one of the few on Ilorin that underscores the connection between neighbourhood characteristics and youth violence using relevant socio-psychological theories.

¹ The term ANSAs encompasses varieties of entities. Base on the Geneva Call, an ANSA is defined as any organised group with a basic structure of command operating outside state control that uses force to achieve its political or allegedly political objectives.

METHODOLOGY

Description of Ilorin

Modern Ilorin is the Capital of Kwara State. Spatially, modern Ilorin lies 306kilometres northeast of Lagos and 500kilometres southwest of Abuja. It plays a dual role of being the state headquarters and as well serving as a link between the northern and southern parts of Nigeria. It is located on latitude 8°30' North and longitude 4°35' East (Ahmed 2010; Raheem 2010). It has a built up area of about 14kilometres. For political convenience, the capital city is divided into three Local Government Areas; Ilorin West, East and South (see figure 1). The State is bordered by Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Kogi and Niger. Modern Ilorin is a confluence of cultures, populated by Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and now the Igbos and is predominantly a Muslim community. Yoruba language is however the lingua franca. Modern Ilorin, according to geographers, is categorised based on three major residential patterns, which are clearly identifiable on the urban landscape (Aderamo 1990). These are traditional or core areas, the transitional/mixed residential zones and the modern planned housing estates. The core areas, best described as socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods, are dominated by the locals. They include areas such as *Oja-Oba*, *Okelele*, *Kuntu*, *Pakata*, *Adangba*, *Alore*, *Ita-Ogunbo*, *Adabata*, *Sannin-Okin*, *Okekere*, *Omoda* and *Ita-Merin*. The transitional/mixed residential zone, comprised areas such as *Taiwo Road*, *Gaa-Akanbi*, *Offa Garage*, and *Government Reserved Areas* (GRAs). The modern areas consist of planned housing estates such as *Irewolede*, and *Aderwole*.

Figure 1: The Map of Kwara State, Nigeria, Indicating Ilorin (Nigeria map insert)



Source: Google Map

Kwara State is nicknamed the 'State of Harmony' and prides itself as a place of peace and tranquillity in a country where many states are crises-laden. However, the emergence of violence in Ilorin in the recent time, has brought the perceived peace under very serious threat, as the ancient city is becoming a battle-ground for youth violence. Apparently, each of the gangs is domiciled in particular locations and these locations are better described in academic domains as 'ungoverned spaces' or 'hot-spots' and are usually restricted areas mostly located in SDNs. Meanwhile, the eruption of inter-group conflicts is very common among the gangs. Whenever violence erupts, residents become prisoners in their homes. Innocent people are at risk because rival gangs and police pursue their targets with little regard for innocent bystanders. People become afraid of one another and are unwilling to help. Consequently, parents are afraid to let their children participate in community activities, which may lead to further isolation. Unfortunately, children in SDNs of Ilorin have become consistently exposed to violence and isolated from other more positive experiences and positive role models.

Ilorin strategic location in the North central Nigeria has attracted the attention of many scholars in the past. The ancient city of Ilorin was established in the early 18th century with a very strong history of Islamic scholarships. Hence, scholars have sufficiently delved into the historical and political exigencies of the pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial Ilorin. In *Ilorin: The Journey So Far*, Jimoh (1994) outlines the connection between historical and contemporary events in Ilorin. Danmole (2012) discussed the interface between religion, politics and economy of Ilorin in the 19th century and its impact on the reputation of modern Ilorin. However, in the recent time, few scholars have attempted to dissect the root causes of emerging violent activities in Ilorin, despite recorded growing numbers of violence in the ancient city. In 2014, one person was reported injured when unknown thugs attacked the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps at Gambari area. In 2015, Kwara State Police Command arrested eight persons for alleged involvement in violence (Tunde 2015). On the 25th of April, 2015, at least two unidentified people were reported dead and properties and houses worth millions of Naira destroyed as a result of the mayhem that broke out across several neighbourhoods of *Oja-Oba*, *Adifa*, *Idi-ape*, *Agharere* and *Ita Ore* areas (Fagbemi 2015). This paper attempts to fill this gap relying on theoretical justifications to understand the upsurge of violence in modern Ilorin.

Data Collection

This paper relied on secondary data as a source of collection. The paper reviews theories of violence relevant to the understanding of the upsurge of violence in Ilorin in particular and Nigeria as a whole and assesses the implications of these theories for developing strategies and policy framework for promoting long-lasting, sustainable peace. To achieve

this, a search was performed on MEDLINE, EBSCO, ScienceDirect, JSTOR and ERIC databases using the keywords of 'youth violence'; 'theories of violence'; 'political violence in Nigeria'; 'violence in Ilorin', 'neighbourhood characteristics and violence' from the start date of each database to July 2016. Additional searches were carried out at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria library. A Google and Google Scholar search was equally painstakingly carried out. All databases consulted were searched again using the names of theories as keywords, with 'meta-analysis' or 'systematic review'. Published articles and book chapters in English, describing particular theories and violence, and articles that presented a meta-analysis of the theory were included. Newspaper reports were equally utilised. Articles and reports were excluded if they did not satisfy the criteria set out in the study. Where possible, interventions related to youth violence were identified. Several additional randomised controlled studies and other articles were also included as examples of the use of theories in intervention development. In all, three theories, relative deprivation, social disorganisation and broken window theories, were identified and reviewed to understand the upsurge of violence in the study. This method of data collection has been successfully utilised by previous scholars (Munro et al., 2007).

RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY (RDT)

Relative deprivation theory (RDT) is fundamentally embedded in the psychological theory of frustration-aggression hypothesis. Retrospectively, early psychological theories of crime believed that the cause of crime lies in the individuals' psychology. They argued that individuals with personality disorder are more likely to commit crimes than those within the borderline of neurotypical personalities. This line of thinking may have influenced the development of the RDT. However, RDT moved beyond the individual psychology to understand collective psychology that aggravates crime and violence. The idea of relative deprivation specifically measures individuals' subjective evaluation of their financial and political position or other measurement of social examination. Relative deprivation is more critical when predicting individuals' conduct, compared with "objective" measures of hardship, such as, poverty and inequality. Scholars contended that individuals will encounter relative deprivation when they need X, or see that comparatively others have X, and feel qualified to have X (Davis 1959), and individuals must think it is attainable to get X (Runciman 1966), while people do not have an awareness of other's expectations for their inability to have X (Crosby 1976). RDT refers to the disenchantment people feel when they compare their positions to others and realise that others in the group possess something that they do not (Chen 2015). When this feeling persists, it may lead to frustration, stress and aggression, which may result to violence.

Gurr (1970), one of the pioneers of RDT, contends that relative deprivation is the distinction between one's value expectations and value capabilities. Value expectation alludes to merchandise and opportunities that the individual needs and feels qualified for, evaluated, taking into account correlations with others. Gurr (1970) indicates that youth violence is normal if the general practices and legislative issues that authorise vicious responses to violence are enormous. In any given society, deprived youth are usually pushed to the edges of society (Lea and Young 1984). While, in response to their social, monetary and political deprivations, greater numbers of youth have momentarily entered the world of violence and created a criminal sub-cultures that consequently wreaks destruction on the security of lives and property. Gurr (1970) maintained that the perception of deprivation, marginalisation, and persecution of the individuals in a given community may lead to frustration and anger. He argues that people rebel because they were frustrated and angered by the enormity of the socio-economic and structural inequalities, which are inextricably entrenched in the fabrics of societies. Ikuomola et.al., (2009) noted that as a reaction to social marginalisation in Lagos, *area boys* (thugs) react to their weaknesses by constructing sub-cultures based around violent conduct and other deviant behaviours, including theft and violence.

However, the following scholars (Tilly 1978; Tarrow 1998; Burton et al. 1994) have criticised the methodological pertinence of relative deprivation as an indicator of youth violence and reason that relative deprivation is not an imperative indicator of violence. While it is contended that clarifications of violence ought to start by analysing the social and political structures of the areas (Skocpol 1994), Tilly (1978) focused attention on political mobilisation as the impetus and driver of violence in human social orders. Tarrow (1998) is of the opinion that there is the requirement for mass social movements for structured and organised youth violence in human society. Bandura (1973:33;) criticised RDT as follows.

The widespread acceptance of the relative deprivation notion is perhaps attributable more to its simplicity than to its predictive power. In fact, the formula that deprivation-frustration breed aggression does not hold up well under empirical scrutiny in laboratory studies in which conditions regarded as deprivative-frustrative are systematically varied. Deprivation-Frustration, as commonly defined, is only one- and not necessarily the most important-factor affecting the expression of aggression and violent conflicts.

Criticism against relative deprivation notwithstanding, the assumptions of RDT are still relevant to the understanding of youth violence in Ilorin in particular and Nigeria in general. From the theory, it can be argued that the major actors of violence in Ilorin and other disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Nigeria usually lack legitimate means of

income, formal education and awareness of other's expectations in the general public. This kind of youth when contrasting their condition with other people who are moderately doing admirably well tend to feel ignored and dejected and may subsequently set out to engage in violence to make themselves relevant in the society. Likewise, when a specific neighbourhood feels denied of assets or civilities that different groups have, they have a tendency to become involved in aggregate activities to request their own offer of the assets as it was the situation with the Niger Delta aggressors. Despite the fact that, this theory incompletely provides clarification on political violence resulting from political deprivation in Ilorin, it presents a thorough clarification to aggregate violence as a precursor to violence.

SOCIAL DISORGANISATION THEORY (SDT)

Social disorganisation theory (SDT) of violence has a long history in the field of sociology. The concern for social violence has occupied an important space in sociological lexicon since the time of classical sociologists. The theory is concerned with why violence is more common and prevalent in some neighbourhoods than others. Among the questions raised are:

1) Which neighbourhood attributes advance social disorganisation in a society?; 2) Is there something about the qualities of these neighbourhoods that encourage violence? and; 3) Why is violence higher in some neighbourhoods than others?

The idea of SDT was first proposed by Thomas and Znaniecki in 1918 towards the end of the First World War. However, the theory was popularised in sociological circles at the Chicago School by Robert Park in 1924. The theory suggests that social disorganisation within a society, especially in urban centres, is a consequence of industrialisation, migration flows, neighbourhood deterioration and the absence of social control (Rubington and Weinberg 2010). Robert Park and his colleagues combined SDT with other theoretical propositions to investigate and examine the socio-ecological connection of neighbourhood and violence. The idea was to deal with the environmental and social diversities of the criminogenic neighbourhood that catalyses youth engagement in violent acts (Bursik 1988).

Incidentally, the classical SDT influenced contemporary sociologists, in their analysis, Shaw and McKay (1942) argued that socio-economic structures, residential mobility and ethnic heterogeneity are important factors for measuring the level of social disorganisation in any neighbourhood. During the early years of the theory, Shaw and McKay (1942) contended that social order requires that community members oversee and control teenage groups, neighbourhood kinship systems formed and active participation in formal and voluntary associations. However, the more complex a society becomes the more social control becomes difficult to instil. Poverty, residential mobility,

ethnic heterogeneity and weak social networks decrease a neighbourhood's capacity to control public conduct of a people, and hence increase the likelihood of violence (Kubrin and Weitzer 2003). It is argued that where people persistently move in and out of a particular neighbourhood, it becomes difficult for residents to know who to trust which consequently hampers social cohesion and erodes informal social control to prevent violence (Kubrin and Weitzer 2003; Sampson and Groves 1989; Bursik and Grasmick 1993). Shaw and McKay (1942) noticed that, beside the absence of behavioural regulation, socially dispersed neighbourhoods tend to create "criminal conventions" that could be passed to progressive eras of adolescents.

Indeed, Shaw and McKay's (1942) studies provided the impetus for the SDT to become popularised and widely accepted. The popularity continued until 1970's, thereafter the relevance of SDT started to wane, especially in analysing youth violence. However, barely a decade later the theory experienced a revitalisation, which started with the works of several sociologists and those outside the field of sociology. Among these were Kornhauser (1978); Stark (1987), Bursik (1998), Sampson and Groves (1989), Land *et al.* (1990), Bursik and Grasmick (1993) and Wilson (1996). These scholars' empirical studies boosted and helped to extend the scope of SDT as a theoretical construct. The scope of the theory was adjusted to include variables and constructs beyond the macro-level components specified by Park and Burgess (1924) and Shaw and McKay (1942). According to Bursik and Grasmick (1993:39), 'key causal processes have been reformulated into a more sophisticated systemic model that incorporates both intra-neighbourhood and extra-neighbourhood factors and more clearly specifies the relationships among these factors'. More specifically, Sampson and Groves (1989) added urbanisation, family disruption and concentration of youths in a neighbourhood to the theoretical formulation of SDT. In these analyses, urbanisation was used as the main criterion of social disorganisation. It is argued that urbanisation can have major effects on a neighbourhood's quality of life. The deindustrialisation of inner-city neighbourhoods would directly wash-out the number of blue-collar jobs, and increases economic deprivation, leading to the growth of illegal drug distributions and consumptions in socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and consequently aggravate youth violence (Doran and Lee 2005). Other social determinants of social disorganisation in a society are education, occupation, median family income and family disruption. It is argued that, a neighbourhood characterised by a high number of uneducated people, high levels of unemployed young people, high level of poor people and a high rate of divorce is a fertile-ground for crime and violence. It is suggested that social disorganisation encourages youth violence through its effects on family structures and stability (Sampson and Groves 1989).

While researchers have employed SDT empirically and theoretically to explain neighbourhood disparity in youth violence, critics have pointed out that the theory is at best substantively and methodologically deficient. According to Bursik (1988), a key

problem is with the measurement of what constitutes social disorganisation. He argued that the theory does not separate the presumed outcome of social disorganisation (such as high rates of crime and delinquency) from disorganisation itself (Kubrin and Weitzer 2003). Critics contend that criminality and other forms of social disturbance were both often cited, as examples of disorganisation, while in the real sense were something caused by social disorganisation itself. It is difficult to delineate whether social disorganisation is the dependent or independent variable. Despite the criticism, SDT has occupied an important place in sociological and criminological thought because of its popularity and utility in the understanding of crime and violence (see Paulsen and Robinson 2004; Lowenkamp, *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, the assumptions of SDT could be applied to the understanding of youth violence in Ilorin and beyond. The emergence of violence in Ilorin, like most urban centres in Nigeria, partly aligns with the fundamental canons of SDT, given the influence of social change, rapid urbanisation and population growth on the security of lives and property in the ancient city.

BROKEN WINDOW THEORY (BWT)

Wilson and Kelling (1982) proposed the broken windows theory of crime. They adopted the analogy of 'Window-Building' to outline how minor fierce act may lead to major violent act if not legitimately attended to by the security agencies. According to Wilson and Kelling (1982: 378), if the first broken window in a building is not repaired, the general population who like breaking windows would assume that nobody cares about the building and more windows would be broken. Before long, the building would have no windows. The underlining assumption of the theory to the understanding of crime and violence is that, where any fierce act of demonstration has gone unchallenged, un-checkmated, or not legitimately managed by the appropriate security agencies, it would create more violent acts (Kelling and Coles, 1996; Skogan 1990). The theory suggests that signs of physical disorder (such as illegal dumpsites, dilapidated buildings, lack of security patrol, and unplanned structure) in a neighbourhood can predispose such neighbourhood to violence. The fundamental assumption of the theory is that physical disorder in a neighbourhood can infringe the ways in which residents can wield social control. Thus, lack of social control makes the neighbourhood prone to social disorder activities such as bars (public drinking), gambling, and brothels (prostitution). Unfortunately, these activities further attract illegal commercial criminal enterprises such as drug dealing and elevate the level of violence in the neighbourhood (Sherman and Eck 2002; Skogan 1990).

Empirical studies conducted to test the hypothetical, methodological and empirical importance of the Broken Window Theory provide supportive results (e.g. Zimbardo 2004; Skogan 1990) although with some methodological concerns (Sherman

and Eck 2002). Nevertheless, researchers have questioned the theoretical relevance of the BWT, among the questions raised by critics were: what is the theoretical basis for BWT? Why are windows in the neighbourhood broken in the first place?. According to critics, while the theory posited that the primary causes of youth violence are broken windows, failure of the theory to provide convincing answers to its hypothetical issues have diminished the hypothesis to a negligible theoretical exercise, with constrained theoretical, empirical and methodological importance in clarifying the etiology of youth violence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Bratton and Kelling (2006), Gault and Silver (2008), Xu, Fiedler and Flaming (2005) took exception to this interpretation and argued that the broken windows thesis never suggested a direct path between disorder and youth violence, but rather asserted that the path was indirect and asymmetric. They, accordingly, introduced a logical grouping of its hypothetical formulations. Likewise, socio-physical or physical disorder in a disadvantaged neighbourhood would build the trepidation of violent acts in the neighbourhood, which would decrease social control and leave neighbourhoods defenceless against criminal invasion.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

It is a common notion that social theories are formulated to explain and understand how society works. Theories contain hypothetical statements that have been tested and trusted over a period of time. As a result, the search for theories of violence has been a long-standing endeavour that has preoccupied the minds of sociologists, since the early 20th century. At first, causes of crime and violence in particular were traced to the individual actor; i.e. his biology. These scholars relied on biological determinism to explain and understand the causes of crime. Indeed, historical record indicates that many of the earliest criminologists – including Cesar Lombroso (1835–1909), believed that certain physical characteristics indicated a “criminal nature” (Englander 2007; Siegel and McCormick 2006; Ellis 2005). Lombroso's manuscript *L'Uomo Delinquente* (The Criminal Man) is perhaps the most famous of these early efforts to draw a direct link between biology and crime (Lombroso 1876). According to Lombroso, criminals possessed certain physical characteristics (including long arms and fingers, sharp teeth, abnormal amounts of body hair, extended or protruding jaws) that distinguished them from ordinary law abiding others. In sum, he argued that criminals were atavists' biological throwbacks to an earlier period of human evolution. He further maintained that these atavists engaged in criminal activity, including violence, because it was instinctive for them to do so. Because these characteristics are the product of biological forces, Lombroso felt that criminals lack free will and are thus not morally responsible for their actions.

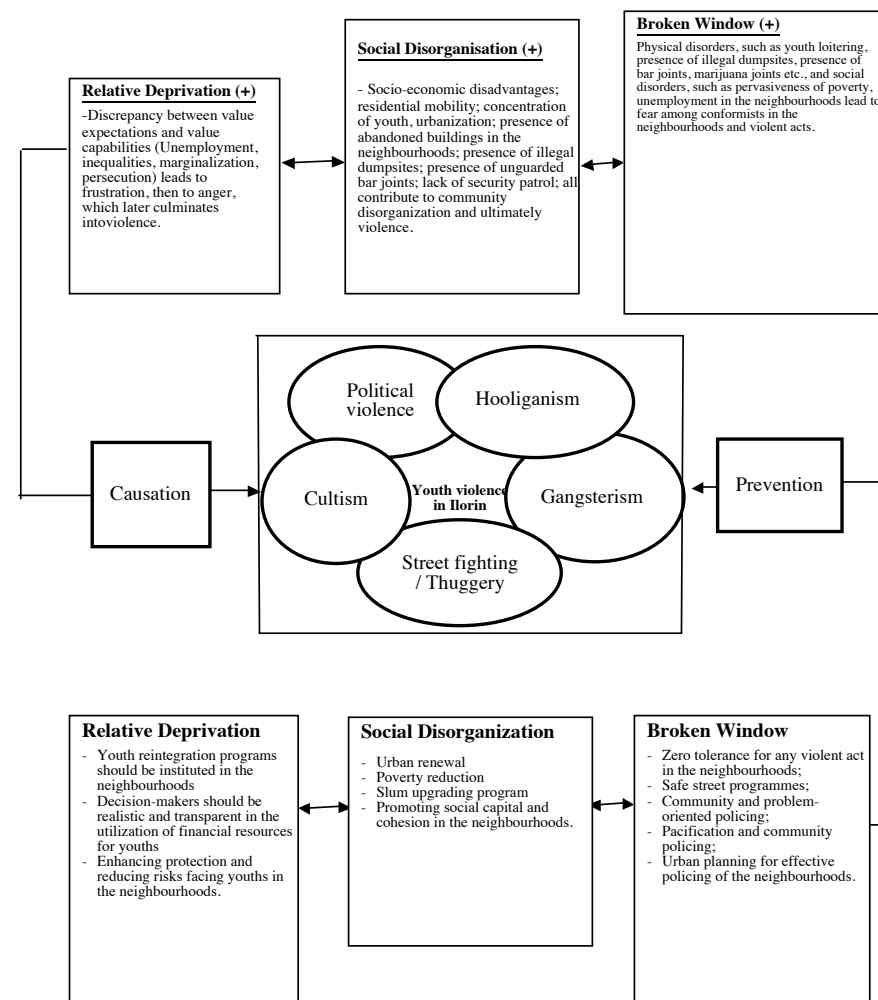
Contemporary criminologists have discounted Lombroso's work. Critics of biological determinism of crime and violence have argued that many of these early arguments were based on small, non-random samples and rarely involved adequate control groups (Seigel and McCormick 2006). They argued that many of the physical traits mentioned by Lombroso and others could have been caused by deprived social conditions, including poor nutrition and health care. Therefore, their central argument is that Lombroso and his followers failed to consider the many social factors that could lead to criminality. Consequently, bio-criminology fell out of favour during the early 20th century and began to pave way for more psychosocial factors, and more emphasis on sociological variables. The supporters of sociological factors argue that it is more productive and empirically accurate to focus on the social factors (social exclusion, economic strain, poverty, family disruption, neighbourhood structure) that produce class differences in violent behaviour than to spend efforts trying to uncover the genetic basis for criminality. What is common to virtually all violent activities and clashes is the fact that they usually take-off from SDNs where socio-economic and environmental strains are entrenched (Moser and Mcilwaine 2006). In these neighbourhoods, most young people have become the willing tools of violence.

Historically, RDT, SDT and BWT stand out among the prominent theories of crime and violence. Specifically, RDT explains frustration and aggression can exacerbate collective violence even though it tends to see the eruption of violence as a rational means to redress economic or political grievances (Gurr 1970; Sambanis 2002: 223). The theory posits that the experience of frustration, grievances and aggression often creates conducive atmosphere for the eruption of violence as experienced in most part of Nigeria, especially in Ilorin. The SDT argues that a neighbourhood characterised by social disorganisation provides fertile-ground for violence. Such a society is characterised by lack of behavioural control mechanisms and a culture of violence. It identifies residential mobility, family disruption, low socio-economic status, poverty, and unemployment as causal factors of crime and violence. The theory posits that neighbourhoods with more of these vices and social ills are more prone to violence than those with less. BWT proposes that where any violent act goes un-checked, or not properly dealt with immediately either by the community or law enforcement agents, it could generate more violent acts (Kelling and Coles 1996; Skogan 1990). The moment a society or community fails to address crime immediately, the situation can degenerate to a more chaotic condition.

Given the complexity and diversity of violence, a single variable or factor is grossly inadequate in explaining its etiology. Although each of the RDT, SDT and BWT has their merits, each may not be sufficient to understand the complexity of violence in Ilorin or anywhere in the world. A combination of the assumptions and variables as proposed becomes indispensable in the understanding of crime and violence in any given society. Incidentally, researchers, including Merton (1956) have advocated for the adoption of multi-theoretical approach in sociological and criminological

studies. A theoretical pluralism combines many theoretical formulations to explain a particular social problem. The importance of multiple-theoretical approach is situated in its exhaustiveness and extensiveness to provide the basis for the understanding of multi-factors aetiology of youth violence. It is considered a framework sufficient to provide thorough explanations of the multiple factors precipitating social problem like youth violence. It is against this circumstantial that this paper adopted a 'Causal-Preventive Model of Youth Violence' (Abdullahi and Issah, 2016) as the theoretical pluralistic approach to explaining youth violence in Ilorin.

Figure 2: Integrative Model of Youth Violence in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods of Ilorin



Source: Authors'

The “Causal-Preventive Model of Youth Violence” in Figure 2 summarises the predisposing and enabling factors of youth violence (with plus signs) as contained in the RDT, SDT and BWT and simultaneously suggesting policy options to promote long-lasting, sustainable peace (with minus signs) not only in Ilorin but Nigeria as a whole. From the figure it is evident that, RDT explains that the perceived gaps between value expectations and capabilities may lead to feelings of anger and disenchantment among the people in neighborhoods that are socially disadvantaged, and, consequently, can result in collective violence. RDT argues that individuals will encounter relative deprivation when they need X, see that comparative others have X, and feel qualified to have X. This is even more likely where some groups of people compare their standard of living with others with whom they used to share similar characteristics that have used violence to gain access to political power. Incidentally, this may have further fuelled the resurgence of militancy in the Niger Delta regions because those who did not benefit from the Amnesty Programme of the government wanted to have share of ‘national cake’. So, as the government is trying to quench the flame of violence in the Niger Delta, more violence may have been taking place. Similarly, previously condemned thugs in Ilorin are seeing living large. Some of them are even holding political offices. When other criminals see this happening they may wish to continue their activity hoping that government would listen to them some day.

Therefore, the real performing artists of political violence in Ilorin and other places in Nigeria have the tendency to compare themselves with the vast majority of the hooligans that have been utilised by the politicians to accomplish political goals, but who were later compensated for the ‘good job’ done with colossal sums of money, lucrative contracts and even political offices. This may spur an interest in violence to attract the political class or have access to resources. Relative deprivation among the dejected and neglected youth may result in sentiments of misery, disappointment, grievance, and outrage, and may be an effective motivator of violence, as are widely reported in the Ilorin metropolis recently. RDT suggests that youth reintegration programmes should be instituted in the neighbourhoods and that decision-makers should be realistic and transparent in the utilisation of financial resources for youth to reduce risks facing them in the neighbourhoods. Social disorganisation theory, explains youth violence in terms of socio-economic disadvantages such as of residential mobility or turnover, poverty and unemployment, and the presence of uncompleted or abandoned buildings, which may serve as the potential hideouts for the potential perpetrators of youth violence in the neighborhood. Research has found that neighbourhoods physical and social characteristics contribute greatly to the incidence of youth violence. Scholars have posited that economically poor neighbourhoods differ from affluent neighbourhoods in a number of ways and those living in poverty have a much greater chance of being violent than the general population (Shaw and McKay 1972; Odumosu 1999; Siegel 2005; Moser and Mcilwaine 2006). A household survey conducted by Ijaiya and Raji (2005),

revealed that incidence of poverty is inversely related to the demand for modern health care in Ilorin. Atoyebi and Ijaiya (2005) found that the deterioration in the housing conditions of the people in Ilorin, inadequate toilet and sanitation facilities, the poor nature of water sources are most related to the incidence of poverty among the people. Thus, disadvantaged neighbourhoods like these are criminogenic as they are characterised by high concentrations of poor people with high levels of transiency, family disruption, crowded housing, school dropouts, criminal subculture, substance abuse, unemployment and underemployment (Baugher, & Lamison-White, 1996; Odumosu 1999; Siegel 2005). It can thus be argued that the greatest incentive influencing violent behaviour among youth in Ilorin include poor living conditions that youth find themselves in. In consonance with this position, researchers (Hong and Farley 2008; Eamon 2001; Smith and Jarjoura 1988) posited that what usually inspired violence among youth has to do with poverty, economic frustration, insufficient infrastructure, political disagreement, and failure of government to punish the previous perpetrators of violence. Thus, the proposed model suggests urban renewal, poverty reduction strategies, slum upgrading programmes and promotion of social capital and cohesion in the neighbourhoods as a sustainable measure to ensuring peace and tranquillity in the neighbourhoods that are socially disadvantaged. BWT, which also has an association with the SDT, suggests that physical disorders such as the proliferation of vacant and uncompleted buildings, neighbourhood unplanned structures, illegal dumpsite, bar and cannabis joints and social disorders (pervasiveness of poverty, unemployment in the neighborhoods) often lead to fear among residents and violent acts among the non-conformists in the neighborhoods. Such unique characteristics in the neighbourhood might be ‘pull factors’ for violence, because they serve as hide-outs for violent youths. Neighbourhoods where signs of disorder such as dilapidated/uncompleted buildings, youth loitering, and low socio-economic status are more attractive to potential violent youths, such that violent act is aggravated and tolerated in the area. From the model, urban planning for effective policing is suggested. Also important are youth-related programs, such as capacity-building workshops and entrepreneurial leadership skills training for the youth.

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to uncover the predisposing and enabling factors in the incidence and prevalence of youth violence in Ilorin relying on RDT, SDT and BWT. The paper adopts these theories not only to understand the complexity in the etiology of youth violence in Ilorin but to also suggests the way out of the quagmire. The relative importance of ‘Causative-Preventive Model of Youth Violence’ is the fact that it supports the on-going argument that a mono-factor explanation of youth violence is grossly insufficient in analysing a complex phenomenon like youth violence. The

overall relevance and message of this review is that most violent activities do occur in neighbourhoods that are socially and economically disadvantaged, where conventional institutions of social control, such as families, schools, and religious organisations are weak and unable to regulate the behaviour of residents, especially the youth. Such neighbourhood provides a fertile-ground for violence in two ways: i) a lack of behavioural control mechanisms that could prevent youths from engaging in violent activities and ii) the cultural transmission of violent values to the younger generations. It is in view of this that most youth violent activities occur mostly in socially and structurally disadvantaged neighbourhoods of Ilorin characterised by high concentrations of people living in poverty, substandard housing, poor community design, limited public services. These are mainly the traditional, core areas of Ilorin which include *Okelele, Kuntu, Pakata, Adangba, Agbarere, Alore, Adabata, Sannin-Okin, Okekere, Omoda and Ita-Merin*. Therefore, youth related programmes such as capacity building workshops and skills for entrepreneurial leadership for the youth in the areas have become highly important. It is also important that political resources be evenly distributed, and the political class should desist from recruiting youths into violence. State security agencies should embark on strict measures to police violence prone areas to prevent the havoc of youth violence from transcending to the so-called socially, economically advantaged areas (Abdullahi and Issah, 2016).

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La participation citoyenne en contexte local au Cameroun. Entre demande de légitimité, efficacité versatile et tensions politiques.

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Résumé

Le présent article propose une analyse empiriquement ancrée de la dynamique de la participation dite « citoyenne » en contexte camerounais. En partant d'un parcours de la montée en visibilité d'une urgence participative, il analyse les principaux modèles de participation en œuvre au Cameroun en mobilisant le concept de mini-public tout en examinant des options de leur opérationnalisation au niveau local. Cette participation citoyenne à l'échelle locale, semble se situer entre trois points de tensions s'articulant entre une demande de légitimité des décisions publiques, leur efficacité versatile et des logiques fortes d'appropriation politique.

Mots-clés : Action publique, Cameroun, échelle locale, mini-public, participation citoyenne

Abstract:

This paper aims to analyze citizen engagement in Cameroonian context. Through an overview of the vulgarization of a discourse on participation, it analyses the main models accompanying them in some local scale studies, which operationalizes the concept. In this way, citizen engagement at local level seems to be located between three points of tension: need of legitimacy, irregular efficacy and strong logics of political appropriation.

Keywords : Cameroon, citizen engagement, local scale, mini-public, public action

Introduction

Aborder la thématique de la participation dite « citoyenne » dans les contextes politiques locaux au Cameroun semble indissociable d'un double constat. Premier constat. L'« impératif participatif » (Blondiaux, Sintomer, 2002) est une donnée récurrente des discours des politiques et des acteurs de développement. Pour les acteurs politiques, la participation citoyenne se veut un gage, un indicateur de la qualité des politiques publiques. Une décision politique ouverte aux citoyens, donc à leurs avis et opinions,

est un gage de légitimité. Cet engagement vers plus de participation, est subtilement suggéré dans certains textes spécifiques notamment ceux de 2004 portant orientation de la décentralisation et fixant les règles applicables aux communes (1). Peu nombreux sont les discours des hommes politiques qui n'évoquent pas cet aspect participatif comme élément déterminant, sinon caractéristique de leurs actions. Cette *participatophrenie* est également associée à une récurrence dans le discours des partenaires au développement. Les appuis des acteurs internationaux tels que l'Union européenne, la Banque mondiale sont aujourd'hui conditionnés, principalement et techniquement, par une nécessité d'implication citoyenne. Second constat. Il semblerait que la recherche camerounaise ait accordé une attention minime, au plan empirique, au foisonnement de ces expériences relevant de la participation extra électorale et indicateur d'une démocratie dynamique. L'attention s'est davantage portée sur la participation électorale et sur celle *macro* stratégique avec l'accent mis sur la place de l'acteur « société civile » (Abe, 2001 ; Abega, 2007) ou globalement des « acteurs sociaux » (Sindjoun, 1996), dans les dispositifs politiques et les sphères publiques.

Ces constats nécessitent une appréhension plus constructive de la dynamique de l'espace public camerounais. Ils doivent permettre d'analyser l'appropriation qui est faite de ce besoin de participation au niveau local et ses traductions expérimentales. Partant de cela, c'est la dimension politique de telles expérimentations qui intéresse. Notamment, les troubles assumés d'une démocratie représentative dont les failles orientent vers le développement de modèles plus inclusifs et censés les corriger. Ces multiples dispositifs de participation, pensés à partir d'une matrice marquée du sceau de la représentation, interrogent quant aux logiques, à la portée et aux effets qu'ils induisent. A ce titre, le présent texte repose sur l'hypothèse selon laquelle les dynamiques de participation citoyenne à l'échelle locale, se définissent et s'expriment autour de trois points de tension à savoir une (forte) demande de légitimité des décisions publiques, une efficacité contextuellement variable et des tentatives d'appropriation politicienne. A cet effet, l'article commence par questionner la notion de participation citoyenne dans ses diverses déclinaisons. Il essaie d'examiner ensuite, l'émergence d'une « urgence » participative sur la scène publique africaine et camerounaise en explicitant les enjeux y relatifs. Une analyse est faite après, des principaux modèles de traduction expérimentale de la participation citoyenne dans les arènes locales en l'arrimant au concept de « mini-public » de Fung (2003). Enfin, il s'agit de faire un état analytique de trois cas d'opérationnalisation de ces modèles dans des communes considérées comme cadres opératoires représentant les contextes locaux (Bertoua 2, Edzoundou et Yaoundé 2). On y mettra en exergue la tension entre les pôles précédemment évoqués.

Discussion théorique autour d'une notion mouvante: la participation citoyenne

La notion de « participation », fusse t-elle « politique » ou « citoyenne » semble recouvrir des significations très changeantes selon les contextes et les réalités auxquels elle s'adosse. Il nous semble opportun de questionner ses fondements conceptuels et théoriques avant de nous intéresser à ses déclinaisons pratiques.

D'entrée de jeu, précisons que définir la participation est indissociable d'un voyage entre différentes conceptions de l'animation de l'espace public, entre différentes conceptions de la démocratie. La signification de la notion sera fluctuante et reflètera les multiples débats entre libéraux et gauchistes, entre « élitistes », « réalistes » ou « idéalistes » relativement à la théorie démocratique. Prenant appui sur les travaux de Teoell (2006), Bastien rappelle qu'il existe justement des conceptions différenciées de la participation (politique) selon des perspectives représentative, participative et délibérative ; elles-mêmes prenant ancrage sur des conceptions particulières de la démocratie. Le point de vue représentatif considérerait la participation politique comme « une tentative [en vue] d'influencer les gouvernants afin qu'ils agissent conformément aux vœux des gouvernés en veillant à une protection égale des intérêts en jeu » (Bastien, 2013). Cette perspective est très présente dans les travaux portant sur la participation. Elle donne à la notion une teinte représentative s'articulant autour de deux actions : le choix des représentants et le recours aux représentants pour faire entendre sa voix. Cela a une conséquence sur les modalités d'expression de cette participation qui assumeront une forte intermédiation. La perspective participative soulignerait elle, les possibilités, les cadres offerts aux citoyens en vue de se prononcer eux-mêmes sur des décisions publiques, politiques (Barber, 1997). Cette modalité qui a une préférence pour une forme de participation directe, est très située (niveau local). Elle s'inscrit parfois, selon les situations, dans une tension ou une complémentarité avec les institutions représentatives. La conception délibérative pour sa part, mettrait l'accent sur le processus de formation des préférences, des points de vue politiques. C'est l'échange des points de vue, des arguments qui est ici valorisé. La discussion favorise la formation, l'information des opinions en vue de la prise de la décision (Fishkin, 1991). C'est donc elle qui intéresse et donne du contenu au processus décisionnel.

Un dépassement qualitatif de ce contenu conceptuel peut également porter sur le caractère passif ou pas de la participation. Verba, Schlozman et Brady (1995) précisent à cet effet que la participation (citoyenne) concerne toute activité conduite par les citoyens ayant pour conséquence d'affecter directement ou indirectement l'action gouvernementale (2). La participation dans ce cas, serait de l'avis de Bastien (2013), différente de l'activité communicative moins active. Soulignons déjà pour nous situer en rupture avec cette idée, que la communication n'est pas simplement associée à une

« exposition à un média d'information » (Bastien, 2013), fusse t-elle passive, mais qu'elle implique aussi un minimum d'interaction entre les deux pôles de la chaîne (émetteur et récepteur). Dans ce sens, et à bien d'égards, la communication peut être associée à la participation ne serait ce que parce qu'elle donne des possibilités de discuter des questions publiques. Cela passe par un minimum d'informations. Dans ce cas, sur le fameux « spectre de la participation » (IAP2, 2007), que nous aborderons plus tard, l'information et la communication peuvent se situer au départ du processus, disons le, participatif tout comme elles peuvent en constituer des formes élémentaires.

La littérature scientifique, anglo-saxonne surtout, a toujours souligné la proximité sinon la confusion, qui existerait entre la notion de participation et celles d'*empowerment*, de transparence (*transparency*), de redevabilité (*accountability*), d'inclusion ou de plus en plus, celle de *citizen engagement*. Ces travaux montrent, pour certains, l'étroite relation à la fois conceptuelle, fonctionnelle voire expérimentale entre elles (Gaventa, Barrett, 2012 ; Bailur, Gigler, 2014 ; Carothers, Brechenmacher, 2014).

Pour revenir à notre réflexion, il nous semble nécessaire de circonscrire le contenu que nous affecterons à la notion de participation citoyenne ici. En nous attelant à lui donner une dimension active et tout aussi flexible, la participation citoyenne sera considérée comme toute activité des citoyens, des groupes de citoyens ou leurs représentants, ayant pour finalité d'influencer la nature et la forme de la décision publique. Cette activité reposant sur une capacité intrinsèque (en lien avec une idée d'autonomie d'action ou de décision) ou extrinsèque (donc favorisée) des citoyens à agir, à participer. Une telle posture est donc aussi associée au besoin des citoyens de faire émerger leurs voix, leurs préoccupations (Bailur, Gigler, 2014). Le citoyen dans le cas d'espèce étant tout individu soumis aux règles et lois d'une société organisée, vis-à-vis de laquelle il a des devoirs, des responsabilités mais aussi des droits.

De l'« urgence » participative en contexte camerounais : parcours philosophico-historique

Le besoin de participation dans l'environnement camerounais, s'est développé dans le sillage des évolutions historiques de la société politique mais aussi de celles liées aux mutations des différentes approches conceptuelles du développement. Comprendre cela nécessite de (re)examiner les conditions de mise en visibilité de la préoccupation participative dans certaines parties de l'Afrique, de faire état de son appropriation sur l'espace public camerounais par les acteurs, de s'interroger sur l'attention que la recherche y a porté et d'en présenter les enjeux structurants.

Bref historique de l'émergence de la préoccupation participative en Afrique

L'idée de la participation citoyenne est ancienne. Etroitement associée à l'idée démocratique elle-même, elle est repérable à travers l'histoire et les différentes civilisations : en Asie du Sud-Est au 5^e siècle avant J.C., dans la culture musulmane ou encore en Afrique précoloniale (3). Les réflexions modernes sur la participation citoyenne sont elles, généralement associées à des auteurs tels que Rousseau et Mill.

En Afrique, un repérage de cette notion dans la réalité sociétale contemporaine est visible dans les premiers modèles de développement communautaire. Ils étaient promus par des acteurs internationaux tels que l'USAID qui ont injecté d'importants fonds dans des projets de ce type (Mansuri, Rao, 2012). En plein contexte de guerre froide, ce type d'alternative était imaginé comme un rempart « démocratique » contre la montée communiste. La sous-estimation des effets d'accaparement par les élites, de la manne y associée et de l'absence de partenariats stratégiques avec les bénéficiaires (White, 1999) ont conduit à l'échec de ce modèle. Il semble avoir connu un déclin à la fin des années 1960 et le début des années 1970.

Entre 1970 et 1980, des approches de développement « *top-down* » furent prônées et implémentées. Ils mettaient l'accent sur le développement de certains domaines tels qu'agricole et industriel. Des politiques de type centralisé (liées à ces approches) étaient de plus en plus fréquentes. Ils répondaient davantage à une recherche de stabilité encouragée par une mouvance libérale (Mansuri, Rao, 2012). A ce niveau, le modèle démocratique n'était important que dans sa capacité à permettre le choix des leaders. La participation citoyenne, et extensivement, la délibération étaient substantiellement appauvries. Cette approche « *top-down* » fut sérieusement remise en cause au milieu des années 1980 par de nombreux acteurs politiques, des activistes et des chercheurs. Ces critiques prenaient appui sur les faibles effets des initiatives relevant de ce modèle sur les communautés en matière de santé, d'éducation, des infrastructures de base ou même de l'agriculture. Ils n'offraient pas des solutions adéquates aux conditions de vie de plus en plus difficiles. Ces approches semblaient souffrir d'une déconnexion trop importante d'avec les réalités qu'elles étaient censées transformer.

De nombreuses initiatives furent donc développées dans le sens inverse, « *bottom-up* » en vue de remettre les intérêts locaux au cœur des interventions publiques. Ce mouvement était en faveur d'un modèle de développement plus participatif. Porté par de nombreux travaux tels que ceux d'Olson (1965), d'Hirschman (1970) ou d'Olstrom (1990), ce mouvement participatif fut adopté par de nombreux acteurs tels que la coopération étasunienne, la coopération française ou des organisations internationales tels que l'ONU, l'OUA en son temps, ou la Banque mondiale. Ces appropriations furent renforcées plus tard, par la chute du mur de Berlin et la vague de démocratisation qui

s'en est suivi, notamment dans les pays africains comme le Cameroun. Ils trouveront un point d'ancrage majeur dans le concept et le modèle de la « décentralisation » déjà remis au gout du jour à la fin des années 1980 par la Banque mondiale. La décentralisation apparaissait pour cette institution comme une solution à l'inefficacité des politiques publiques en Afrique dans un contexte marqué par des crises économiques. Elle mettra l'accent au milieu des années 1990 sur la participation citoyenne comme un élément-clé de la décentralisation mais au-delà, un facteur de transparence permettant de rendre les autorités responsables et redevables de leurs actions. La participation deviendra dès la fin des années 1990, un élément décisif et incontournable des interventions de la Banque mondiale dans les pays en développement (World Bank, 2001 ; 2004). Cette conception participative du développement intègre en réalité deux idées très proches : décentralisation locale et implication communautaire.

Apparition et récurrence dans les discours des acteurs publics au Cameroun

Le Cameroun n'a pas échappé à ces évolutions conceptuelles et idéologiques. Dès les années 1990, la nécessité de partir des aspirations populaires pour définir les politiques publiques, était, comme nous l'avons évoqué, de plus en plus présente dans les discours d'institutions internationales, mais surtout des acteurs sociaux et autres leaders d'opinion. Ces revendications se feront croissantes et intenses entre 1990 et 1993 avec les mouvements de contestations sociopolitiques que le pays connaîtra. Elles se cristalliseront partiellement dès 1996, autour de la décentralisation prévue par le constituant. L'idée, s'il est possible de la simplifier, était la suivante : le meilleur moyen d'assurer une efficacité et un impact des interventions publiques était de les définir avec les citoyens et pour les citoyens. Ces derniers étaient susceptibles d'orienter les actions vers leurs besoins réels. Cela leur conférait ainsi plus de pertinence et de légitimité dans un contexte national marqué par une crise réelle de gouvernance aux origines parfois historiques. A l'instar de la conditionnalité de l'aide à l'existence d'une société démocratique, la participation citoyenne devient un impératif pour toute initiative soutenue par les partenaires internationaux : Banque mondiale, Union européenne, coopération canadienne. Leurs discours s'en font l'écho. Cet impératif, mieux cette urgence participative, au vu de la situation critique du corps sociopolitique, était répercuté sur tous les organismes ou institutions sollicitant l'appui de ces partenaires : Etat, collectivités locales ou société civile (4). Les acteurs politiques locaux, de tous bords, incitaient également à plus d'attention aux points de vue des citoyens. Les propos d'un conseiller local de Yaoundé 2, en 2015, sont à cet égard illustratifs :

« Il nous est difficile de travailler sans impliquer les populations. Ils nous observent et nous attendent au tournant. Le meilleur moyen d'avancer est donc de faire avec eux... Pendant longtemps, on pouvait 'jongler' avec cela. Mais cela est aujourd'hui difficile. Il faut trouver des moyens de faire avec les populations... »

Cela nécessitait de passer d'une démocratie discontinue à une démocratie « continue » (Rousseau, 1995) qui soit à même de permettre le développement des cadres donnant vie à ces « voix » citoyennes. Cette dynamique spécifique a influé sur les types de dispositifs participatifs à l'œuvre au Cameroun.

Une attention scientifique insuffisante

Paradoxalement, la recherche camerounaise en sciences sociales et plus spécifiquement en sciences politiques, semble ne pas avoir intensément investi le champ des expérimentations participatives. En effet, très peu de travaux au niveau doctoral ou extra doctoral s'y intéressent. D'une part, l'attention semble s'être focalisée sur les modalités de participation stratégique (société civile dans le jeu de la gouvernance, l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre des politiques publiques, concertation avec le secteur privé notamment) sans s'intéresser aux actions localement situées (Abéga, 2007 ; Kiamba, 2010). D'autre part, il semble y avoir un tropisme, sinon un intérêt plus porté sur les motifs et logiques de participation électorale et d'engagement partisan, qui semblent être des déterminants majeurs et caractéristiques du jeu politique (Sindjoun, 1997 ; Menthong, 1998).

Le mouvement participatif relevant des logiques de l'« en bas » du « bas », semble ne pas avoir fait l'objet d'un intérêt similaire à celui perceptible dans des contextes européens avec les conseils de quartiers, les jurys de citoyens (Blondiaux, 2000 ; Bacqué, Sintomer, 1999 ; 2001.) ; latino-américains avec le budget participatif (Abers, 2000 ; Desouza, Genro, 2000 ; Baiocchi, 2007 ; Fedolazzi et al., 2013) ou récemment nord-américains avec des expériences diverses de *citizen engagement* (Fung, 2003 ; Gilman, 2015). Pourtant l'environnement local est essaimé de telles pratiques dont les implications sur la qualité de l'action publique et sur le modèle démocratique camerounais, sont multifformes et mériteraient d'être objectivées.

Soulignons, pour être assez objectif sur ce point, qu'il existe une production intéressante de travaux sur ces approches et dispositifs participatifs chez des étudiants de Master au niveau universitaire (5). Sans doute gagneraient-ils à être mieux valorisés.

Les enjeux autour de la participation citoyenne au Cameroun

Les expérimentations de participation citoyenne dans les arènes locales semblent s'articuler au Cameroun, autour de trois grands enjeux. Le premier enjeu est d'ordre institutionnel. En effet, il semble y avoir une faible appropriation de cette problématique par le législateur. Même si des orientations sont contenues dans divers textes notamment ceux de 2004, sur la décentralisation ou sur les communes, peu de précisions sont faites sur les mécanismes et les cadres institutionnels devant concrétiser cette participation. Seuls des textes portant sur les questions environnementales introduisent par exemple le recours aux audiences publiques dans le processus de prise de décisions relatives à des actions dans ce secteur (6). Un tel vide a néanmoins l'avantage de donner libre cours à l'inventivité des acteurs locaux (mais pas que) afin de trouver des formules d'opérationnalisation de cette urgence participative. Cela conduira nécessairement à une variété des registres et des dispositifs comme nous le verrons. L'une des conséquences sera que la vitalité de ces expériences de démocratie participative, directe ou semi-directe, reposera de façon importante, sur la seule volonté des élus locaux. Le second enjeu est de nature politique. Ce besoin de participation citoyenne repose en réalité d'une part, sur un substrat démocratique représentatif. Les élus locaux, confortés dans leur légitimité issue du mode représentatif qui entoure leur mandat, ne sont pas particulièrement motivés à l'idée de la recherche d'une légitimité additionnelle via l'ouverture d'espaces de participation. Bien qu'ils aient encore une liberté de manœuvre dans la configuration ou pas des dispositifs participatifs (en l'absence de contraintes législatives), ils sont de plus en plus bousculés par des demandes provenant de diverses sources en faveur d'une implication plus grande des citoyens. D'autre part justement, l'enjeu de la participation traduit aussi une volonté sociale d'exercer des formes de contrôle et/ou de surveillance sur l'action des détenteurs formels des pouvoirs publics : Etat, administration, élus. Le troisième enjeu est social. Il réside dans la capacité de ces dispositifs à mettre en visibilité des couches, des groupes sociaux jusque là, à l'écart dans la fabrique de l'action publique. Indistinctement, les femmes, les jeunes, les ruraux semblent être sur le banc des exclus en matière d'expression citoyenne. Les dispositifs sont donc censés contribuer à résoudre ces inégalités expressives ou représentatives selon les cas. Ceci dans un contexte où l'initiative de la vulgarisation de la participation peut reposer sur des bases faussées en fonction des logiques, des manœuvres des élus locaux. Ces trois principaux enjeux semblent sous-tendre les nombreux dispositifs de participation citoyenne.

Il sera justement question, dans les lignes ci-après, de proposer une analyse des modèles, des initiatives de participation repérables à l'échelle locale, au Cameroun.

Typologies, modèles d'implémentation de la participation citoyenne dans les arènes locales

La participation citoyenne peut revêtir de nombreuses formes compte tenu des enjeux auxquels elle doit faire face. Non loin d'être une panacée, elle s'inscrit dans des registres spécifiques dépendant de leurs points et logiques d'impulsion. Elle présente dans la pratique, divers niveaux d'ouverture de la décision aux citoyens. Au Cameroun, elle s'organise autour de pratiques typifiables et rendant compte de modalités spécifiques d'association des citoyens à l'action publique.

Les registres et modèles à l'œuvre dans la sphère publique

Les trajectoires d'expression de la participation citoyenne au Cameroun semblent historiquement, s'inscrire dans des registres se différenciant par leurs points d'impulsion dans la logique de Mansuri et Rao (2012) ou par leur intensité d'engagement et d'expression selon la distinction établie par Leighninger (2014). Ici, nous nous intéresserons principalement à la première catégorisation.

L'intensification de la participation s'est voulue d'abord « organique » (*organic participation*). Ceci du fait qu'elle relevait d'aspirations populaires issues d'une constellation contestataire à son apogée au début des années 1990. Au-delà de son port par des groupes civiques demandeurs de changement, ces revendications se caractérisaient également par leur opposition au gouvernement. Les « années de braise », les « villes mortes » sont autant de références rhétoriques, historiques et situées de ces mouvements. Cette participation organique renvoie aussi à l'émergence de forces sociales spécifiques regroupées sous la constellation des « organisations de la société civile » dont l'action quoique parfois décriée, sous-valorisée ou sous-estimée, demeure néanmoins prégnante sur la scène publique nationale. Elle est clairement aujourd'hui dans une trajectoire d'autonomisation (assez difficile il est vrai) et d'auto affirmation vis-à-vis du corps politique. L'une des caractéristiques de cette participation organique est son caractère très localisé, très spontané et parfois très ponctuel. Enfin, elle prend également ancrage dans le soutien apporté par les partenaires internationaux aux États qui font de la participation de la société civile aux interventions publiques, une nécessité aux efforts de construction démocratique des États. C'est par exemple dans cette perspective qu'il faut interpréter les contenus de la déclaration de Paris ou celle du forum d'Accra.

Cette participation est ensuite institutionnellement motivée ou « induite », « *induced participation* ». Autrement dit, elle relève des programmes, des politiques promus par l'autorité publique. La décentralisation ou les initiatives publiques de développement reposant sur la participation communautaire en sont des expressions. Ce type de participation a une portée importante, favorisée par les moyens publics. Aussi, de

nombreux dispositifs rentrant dans ce type trouvent une partie de leurs fondements dans les logiques de partenariat avec les acteurs internationaux. Cela est clairement visible dans le support apporté à de nombreux programmes faisant la promotion de dispositifs de participation citoyenne à l'instar du Programme national de Développement participatif (PNDP). Bien évidemment, dans le contexte camerounais, la distinction avec la participation organique, est loin d'être aussi fractale. En effet, de nombreuses formes d'actions relevant de la participation institutionnellement motivée ont été suscitées par des actions spontanées et/ou relevant d'une dynamique endogène. Ces deux tendances se traduisent par des modèles opérationnels que nous nous évertuons de décrire et de caractériser.

Pour revenir à Leighninger, il distingue entre participation « épaisse », « *thick participation* » et participation « fine », « *thin participation* » (Leighninger, 2014). La première, se veut intensive et délibérative. Elle permet à un grand nombre de citoyens de s'exprimer, d'exposer leurs points de vue quant à diverses options de choix décisionnels. Tout en prenant en compte leurs actions (en les encourageant même) à diverses échelles d'action. La participation fine se veut elle rapide, souple et « virale ». Elle inclut un panel d'activités permettant aux individus d'exprimer leur point de vue, d'opérer des choix et de s'associer à diverses causes. Pour l'auteur, les innovations en matière d'engagement citoyen devraient combiner ces deux approches. Celles-ci sont le résultat des tactiques développées par divers praticiens et spécialistes en vue d'aider les citoyens dans la définition de leurs perspectives.

Les niveaux (et formes) de participation

L'objectif de décrire et caractériser les dispositifs opérationnalisant la participation citoyenne, prendra ici un ancrage théorique sur le spectre de la participation, (IAP 2, 2007). Ce modèle propose une approche progressive (pas nécessairement linéaire) des différentes formes de participation, dans leur aptitude à faire évoluer le niveau d'impact public ou plus structurellement, à accroître les degrés de partage, d'ouverture de la décision publique (Nabatchi, 2012). Ces formes incluent l'information, la consultation, l'implication, la coopération et la co-décision (figure 1).

Information

Consultation
Implication
Coopération
Co-décision

Communication unilatérale (one way-communication)

Communication bilatérale

Communication délibérative

Information objective en vue de faciliter leur compréhension des problèmes, de leurs enjeux et des solutions appropriés

Obtention des feed-back des analyses, des alternatives ou sur des décisions

Travail direct avec le public à travers un processus qui assure la compréhension et la considération de leurs intérêts, de leurs considérations

Partenariat avec le public sur chaque aspect du processus décisionnel en y incluant le développement d'alternatives et l'identification des solutions préférentielles

Place du processus décisionnel entre les mains du public

Buts assignés

Niveau de partage de la décision

Information

Consultation

Implication

Coopération

Co-décision

Communication unilatérale (one way-communication)

Communication bilatérale

Communication délibérative

Information objective en vue de faciliter leur compréhension des problèmes, de leurs enjeux et des solutions appropriés

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Place du processus décisionnel entre les mains du public

Buts assignés

Niveau de partage de la décision

Source : IAP2, 2007 ; Nabatchi, 2012 ; adapté

L'**information** se veut une démarche consistant en une facilitation de l'accès aux données relatives à la compréhension globale des enjeux et déclinaisons d'une problématique soumise à débat et nécessitant une prise de décision. Elle s'appuie dans bien des cas, à une forme de communication unidirectionnelle. Cette dernière confortant largement la marge de manœuvre laissée à l'autorité, de filtrer selon sa volonté, la nature et le type d'informations à véhiculer. La **consultation** consiste en un rassemblement, à une

collecte d'informations par le gouvernement, les autorités publiques auprès du public. Ces informations seront utilisées, idéalement, pour la prise de décisions relatives à la formulation de la décision publique. S'appuyant sur une communication unidirectionnelle ou bidirectionnelle selon les cas, sa portée reste fortement dépendante de la posture de l'autorité. L'**implication** se veut une approche plus interactive que les précédentes car mettant directement en lien les deux groupes (autorité/gouvernement et public) dans un travail assurant une prise en compte importante de leurs considérations et autres positions. Ces dernières étant reflétées à des intensités diverses sur la décision. Elle s'appuie sur une communication bidirectionnelle. Cette forme, tout comme la précédente, a donc un rôle anticipatif sur les conflits et controverses sur la décision et l'action publiques. La **coopération** repose sur un partenariat avec le public dans la fabrique de la décision. Elle y assure, au maximum, l'incorporation des recommandations et avis du public. Elle repose sur une communication bidirectionnelle mais aussi une communication délibérative comprise ici comme une communication mieux « structurée » et mieux « orientée » vers la « résolution » des problèmes (Nabatchi, 2012). Elle suppose donc que le processus décisionnel soit suffisamment ouvert, accessible et fondé sur une discussion raisonnée. Elle prend en compte les faits, les données objectives mais aussi les « valeurs », les « émotions » et d'autres « considérations moins techniques » (Gastil, 2005 ; Nabatchi, 2012). La **co-décision**, qui ne rend pas justice à son équivalent anglais « empowerment » renvoie à la remise de la décision au public via des processus divers mis en place à cet effet. Ces processus d'« empouvoirement » s'appuient sur des modèles délibératifs plus constants. Ceux-ci se reflètent également sur le mode de communication. Il nous semble néanmoins, et nous le verrons, plus tard que cette forme est, en contexte camerounais, plus proche de l'idéal-type que d'une expression purement repérable dans la réalité locale. L'observation empirique révélant des trajectoires d'intégration ambivalente ou de mixture entre ces différentes formes.

Sous quelles formes, selon quels mécanismes ou dispositifs, ces modèles sont-ils concrétisés ?

Les pratiques identifiables au Cameroun

Il semble à la fois difficile et fécond de dresser un inventaire typifié des pratiques de promotion des cadres d'expression citoyenne dans les environnements locaux du Cameroun. C'est une tâche difficile car l'identification complète des panoplies de dispositifs de participation citoyenne dans les environnements municipaux relève d'une mobilisation de ressources importantes pas nécessairement évidente. Ajouté à cela, les dispositifs font l'objet d'expérimentations, ou selon les cas, de traductions très contextualisées rendant plus difficiles les efforts de généralisation. C'est en outre une activité féconde, car des modèles assez similaires issus de formes institutionnelles ou

d'actions de groupes sociaux semblent essaimer les municipalités et simplifient, peut-être illusoirement, les efforts de catégorisation des expériences sous différentes chapelles. En capitalisant les informations disponibles à ce sujet, nous pouvons identifier cinq grands types de dispositifs. Ils ne sont pas forcément représentatifs des expériences existantes dans les arènes locales. Ils constituent simplement des procédés, mieux des « mini-publics » (7), pour reprendre l'expression de Fung (2003), correspondant à des formes répandues d'application des registres et niveaux préalablement discutés (tableau 1). Il en existe certainement d'autres.

- **L'audience publique (et/ou forum public)** correspond à des réunions publiques au cours desquelles les informations autour d'une étude d'impact sont présentées et soumises à l'appréciation populaire limitée dans le cas d'espèce, à la clarification des compréhensions du sujet et à la réception des avis sans engagement formel de leur prise en compte. Ils semblent fréquents autour des processus décisionnels ciblant le secteur environnemental. Dans ce cas, ces audiences publiques réglementairement encadrées, permettent aux citoyens à divers niveaux (du local, de l'arrondissement, du département et au-delà), de se prononcer sur l'élément soumis à leur appréciation et important quant à la décision relative à une initiative environnementale. Bien qu'ouvert, sur le principe, au public, il fait très souvent l'objet surtout en milieu urbain, d'un ciblage ou d'une sélection de participants censés refléter les groupes stratégiques concernés par l'enjeu à débattre. Cette sélection est opérée par les autorités. Ce mini-public semble relever de la participation induite et son niveau d'ouverture de la décision semble se concentrer à l'information du public.
- Le **panel de planification participative** réfère à un processus de planification des enjeux de développement d'un territoire (généralement la commune) en y associant les citoyens, les communautés du dit espace territorial. L'élément le plus concret étant des ateliers ou fora de participation. Il est incarné au Cameroun par l'action du PNDP. Il s'agit d'un programme développé par le Gouvernement camerounais avec l'appui des partenaires techniques et financiers (Banque mondiale notamment) pour améliorer les conditions de vie des populations en milieu rural, péri-urbains et aujourd'hui même urbain. Après une première phase (entre 2004-2009), une seconde a été approuvée pour son extension à l'ensemble des communes rurales. Elle comprenait trois composantes : (1) l'appui financier au développement à travers un fonds mis à la disposition des communes sous forme d'une allocation budgétaire prévue pour, entre autres, préparer les Plans Communaux de Développement, cofinancer des microprojets identifiés par le biais d'un diagnostic participatif, prendre en charge de manière dégressive deux agents communaux. (2) L'appui aux communes dans le cadre de la décentralisation avec pour objectif de poursuivre l'amélioration du cadre législatif et réglementaire de la décentralisation et renforcer les capacités techniques et opérationnelles des

communes, afin de leur permettre de s'ancrer de façon efficace dans la mouvance de la décentralisation. (3) La coordination, la gestion, le suivi-évaluation et la communication. La phase 2 du PNDP ciblait les communes rurales. La phase 3, engagée en 2016, est quant à elle étendue aux communes d'arrondissement. C'est néanmoins la dimension « planification » de la composante 1 qui intéresse ici car constituant le cœur de l'intervention du PNDP à cette deuxième phase. Elle permettait la mise en place de panels de planification localement appelés « unités de planification ». Ils correspondent à des sous-unités spécifiques au sein du territoire dans lequel ils sont implémentés. Leur pérennité peut aussi être questionnée tant ils fluctuent entre ponctualité et permanence en fonction des contextes. Une initiative telle que le programme de développement urbain et d'accès à l'eau (PDUE), aujourd'hui renommé « Programme de Développement inclusif des villes », bénéficiant également du soutien de la Banque mondiale, reflétait plus ou moins le recours à ce type de dispositif. Ces deux initiatives s'inscrivent dans une participation induite offrant davantage une ouverture consultative de la décision aux citoyens. Toutefois, il a existé des variantes de ce type relevant davantage d'une participation organique car résultant d'une action de la société civile dans certaines localités. Ce fut le cas, entre les années 2005 et 2011, des actions de l'Association de Soutien aux organisations et d'appui aux libertés (ASSOAL) dans des quartiers de la ville de Yaoundé (à l'instar de Mimboman ou Mokolo) ou de l'ONG Association Enfants, Jeunes et Avenir (ASSEJA) au début des années 2000 dans la commune de Yaoundé 2.

- Les **cadres locaux de concertation** sont des espaces formalisés, au niveau local, qui sont censés collecter, fédérer et défendre les intérêts et les positions des communautés. Ils sont à la fois des espaces de délibération (entre habitants d'une part et entre habitants et acteurs extérieurs à la communauté d'autre part) au niveau local et des cadres de discussion, de débat avec les autorités. Ils s'expriment sous diverses figures : comités d'animation au développement (cas à Yaoundé 2 et 6), comités de quartiers (Douala 5^e en 2012) ou comités de villages (Edzoundouan par exemple). Ils se situent à la fois à des niveaux implicatifs et coopératifs au plan de l'ouverture de la décision. Ces cadres relèvent à la fois des modèles induits et organiques. Cela dépend de la diversité des situations et des contextes. Dans certaines communes, ils ont été le fait d'initiatives spontanées des acteurs locaux, notamment sociaux. Ce fut le cas à Douala 5, entre 2008 et 2012, où on repérait des comités de quartiers relevant des seules volontés endogènes. Elles seront confortées *a posteriori* par une collaboration avec la municipalité. Ailleurs, elles ont relevé d'une volonté des acteurs institutionnels, notamment les municipalités, à disposer d'interlocuteurs au niveau local.
- Les **cadres participatifs de suivi des politiques et programmes publics** renvoient à des dispositifs associant autorités, acteurs sociaux, citoyens ou leurs représentants

en vue de veiller à la bonne exécution des politiques ou programmes autour desquels ils se structurent. L'une des expressions les plus caractéristiques de ces comités est leur capacité à se prononcer sur la conduite des actions ou politiques et proposer des mesures correctives quand cela est nécessaire. Néanmoins, la prise en compte de ces avis demeure très aléatoire. Les comités de suivi du Budget d'investissement public (BIP), les comités de suivi des services sociaux de base en sont des exemples. Ces formes prennent ancrage comme les précédents, dans des modèles mixtes (induit ou organique) contextuellement différenciés. Leur niveau de partage de la décision se situe à la fois dans des formes implicative et coopérative. Cette variation dépendant du niveau de performance de chaque dispositif dans son implémentation.

- Le **budget participatif (BP)** est un modèle de gouvernance démocratique participative originaire du Brésil à la fin des années 1980. C'est un mécanisme, un processus « par lequel les populations décident de l'affectation de tout ou partie des ressources publiques ou sont associés aux décisions relatives à cette affectation » (Genro, Desouza, 1998). Ce processus s'organise en contexte camerounais autour de deux cycles. Le premier cycle est consacré à la priorisation et le second est dédié aux réalisations des projets. Le premier cycle comprend quatre étapes : une réunion d'orientation budgétaire permettant de déterminer, sur la base de projections réalistes liées à la capacité de mobilisation financière de la commune, le montant du budget communal soumis aux débats citoyens (1) ; l'organisation des forums de priorisation au niveau des différentes sous-unités territoriales des municipalités (quartiers, villages selon les cas) permettant l'identification des projets considérés comme prioritaires par les citoyens (2) ; la tenue d'un forum des délégués (représentants désignés au niveau communautaire à l'étape précédente) qui permet de dresser en concertation avec la population et l'équipe municipale, une synthèse des projets retenus en s'orientant éventuellement vers une consolidation ou un regroupement (généralement thématique) des projets en fonction du budget initialement alloué et de leur faisabilité technique (3) ; la tenue d'une assemblée communale qui permet aux citoyens, de voter les projets qui seront réalisés à la hauteur du budget initialement mis à disposition. Ce premier cycle est en réalité, la matrice fondamentale du processus (4). Le second cycle, consacré à la phase de réalisation des engagements pris lors du premier cycle, se décline également en quatre principales étapes. Il s'agit de la restitution des projets votés pour leur insertion au budget communal, la mise en place des observatoires citoyens (en fait des cadres de suivi des projets au niveau des quartiers ou villages), l'exécution des projets, leur suivi et leur évaluation dans une logique participative. Des municipalités telles que Yaoundé 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, Edzoundouan, Douala 3, Douala 6 implémentent ce processus. A la fin de l'année 2014, plus d'une trentaine de communes avaient mis ou mettaient en œuvre ce

dispositif avec des hausses constantes de participation des citoyens aboutissant à des seuils assez intéressants (10% de la population adulte en 2015 par exemple à Edzoundouan). Ces seuils ont été favorisés par l'intégration progressive des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication (TIC) dans ce dispositif. C'est l'un des rares mini-publics se situant principalement dans un registre de co-décision. Toutefois, l'expérimentation peut mettre à mal la portée de ce dispositif comme nous le verrons.

Tableau 1 : Synthèse d'expérimentations de participation citoyenne identifiables à l'échelle locale au Cameroun.

	Participation institutionnellement motivée	Participation organique
<i>Information</i>	Audiences publiques*	
<i>Consultation</i>	Panel de planification participative (modèles « PNDP » et « PDUE »)	
<i>Implication</i>	Cadres locaux de concertation* Cadres participatifs de suivi	Cadres locaux de concertation*
<i>Coopération</i>	Cadres locaux de concertation* Cadres participatifs de suivi *	Cadres participatifs de suivi *
<i>Co-décision</i>		Budget participatif*

* dispositif variant

Ces différentes formes de « mini-publics » repérables au Cameroun, ne sont pas représentatives du capital existant. Elles en constituent quelques traits saillants. Elles sont porteuses de visions et de principes reposant notamment sur leur capacité à revigorer la gouvernance et le substrat démocratique dans lequel elles s'insèrent. Ces formes renseignent également sur les tensions existant entre différentes approches de la dynamique de l'espace public, des modèles démocratiques et des modalités de fabrique des politiques et décisions publiques. Ces tensions se traduisent d'une part par une méfiance de certains acteurs face à de tels dispositifs présentant peu de valeur ajoutée comparativement aux modèles bureaucratique et représentatif qui rythment l'espace public. Elles se traduisent d'autre part, par un gain de confiance en ces dispositifs permettant de redynamiser des gouvernances locales en mal de légitimité et porteuses d'actions publiques mal ciblées et peu efficaces. Une modélisation de ces formes peuvent nous conduire à quatre figures typifiées si on s'inspire de la typologie de Fung (2003) : des fora orientés vers l'information et l'éducation des citoyens, les dispositifs orientés vers la participation, les dispositifs tournés vers la résolution des problèmes - ponctuels - et enfin ceux, favorisant une gouvernance démocratique participative. En outre, les mécanismes de sélection des participants dans ces dispositifs sont variables et vont

de la sélection des participants sur des bases quasi-objectives de représentativité ou consensuelles à l'ouverture total à l'ensemble des citoyens selon leurs possibilités. On n'observe pas encore de modalités aléatoires raisonnées de sélection des participants comme c'est le cas dans certains dispositifs ailleurs (8). Cela suppose donc aussi que ces différents mini-publics ne ciblent pas toujours les mêmes acteurs. Il y a donc une plasticité identificatoire, conceptuelle et même idéologique dans l'expression de la participation citoyenne à l'aulne de ces divers dispositifs. Pour mesurer la portée de ces tensions dans ces expérimentations, l'on ne peut s'affranchir d'une observation empirique de celles-ci.

• Une mise en visibilité des expérimentations dans leurs tensions à travers des études de cas

Pour situer empiriquement notre réflexion, le choix a été fait de s'intéresser à trois études de cas : le budget participatif à Yaoundé 2^e, l'action du PNDP à Edzoundouan et la dynamique des cadres de concertation à Bertoua 1^{er}.

Le budget Participatif à Yaoundé 2^e

Le BP a été introduit dans la municipalité de Yaoundé 2^e en 2009. Il s'est greffé à un passif important en matière de procédés participatifs. Les premiers cadres de concertation, incarnant les volontés de participation populaire, y ont été développés intensément depuis la fin des années 1990. Le BP a permis d'élargir cette participation. Son adoption apparaissait alors comme un levier de renforcement des dynamiques préexistantes en permettant une implication des citoyens à la priorisation budgétaire. Il permettait également d'accroître la visibilité des efforts municipaux en matière de « gestion de proximité » (Bacqué, Sintomer, 2001). Le BP y a donc toujours bénéficié de l'implication du magistrat municipal.

Toutefois, sur la durée, cette appropriation présente un visage assez inédit incorporant activités liées spécifiquement, au BP et des actions aux teintes politiques, voire partisans.

D'une part, le BP semble s'être clairement inscrit en appui à la légitimation de l'action publique locale. Elle a permis de faire évoluer quantitativement et qualitativement la participation des citoyens aux choix des priorités devant faire l'objet d'une affectation budgétaire en matière d'investissement. Ces choix reposaient autrefois sur les seules volontés des représentants élus, les conseillers municipaux. Mais leur capacité à adresser les problématiques communautaires les plus pertinentes, était remise en cause du fait des dérives traditionnellement associées au registre représentatif de la démocratie et parfois localement avérées. « L'autonomie des représentants » (Gaxie, 2003) les conduisant à défendre des positions, des idéaux tout à fait décalés de ceux sur la base desquels ils ont

été élus par les représentés. Cet accaparement par l'élite ne permettant pas une trame de gouvernance optimale s'alignant sur les préférences citoyennes. Il est donc nécessaire de le réduire. C'est entre autres, l'un des buts de ce dispositif participatif. De ce fait, le BP a permis l'ouverture de cet espace public à de nombreux citoyens dont le chiffre n'a jamais cessé d'augmenter entre 2009 et 2015 (tableau 2). Ce taux de participation demeure néanmoins relativement bas (en dessous d'un pourcent de la population totale de la commune), reflétant ainsi la difficulté de ce modèle à optimiser cette de participation directe.

Tableau 2 : Evolution de la participation au BP à Yaoundé 2

	2010	2011	2015 (TIC)
Effectif de la participation au BP aux fora de quartiers	704	1 331	1 640
Pourcentage de la population	0,26%	0,48%	0,52%

Au plan de la qualité des investissements, en 2010, 2011 et en 2015, le choix des projets s'est orienté, non pas vers une répartition « égale » de petits investissements dans les différentes sous-unités territoriales de cette commune, mais vers la définition de programmes par domaines prioritaires (eau, assainissement, éclairage public, entretiens des voies secondaires) ciblant les zones nécessiteuses en fonction des ressources budgétaires. On est passé ainsi, par exemple de la réalisation de projets modestes dans chaque quartier (un point d'eau au quartier X, des lampadaires à Y ou le reprofilage d'une voie secondaire à Z) à des programmes d'amélioration de l'accès à l'eau potable, de sécurité urbaine ou de promotion de l'emploi jeune. Leur envergure étant cohérente aux ressources disponibles. Il existe par contre, pour l'instant, très peu de données sur les niveaux de réalisation de ces différents programmes.

D'autre part, ce processus s'est politisé et semble être également devenu un cadre d'expression de visées et d'actions politiques et partisans. Comment cela se manifeste-t-il ?

D'abord, pour l'exécutif municipal, le BP est également une opportunité de maintenir le contact non pas seulement avec les communautés mais également avec les militants issus du parti à la tête de la municipalité. La responsabilisation des acteurs communautaires autour du processus, s'assimile alors à une rétribution symbolique et parfois matérielle de faveurs ou de tâches à des « militants ». Un tel état de fait permettant de garder une ambiance partisane, elle aussi « continue ». Deux situations sont assez illustratives à cet effet. Première situation. Durant les activités foraines liées au BP, de nombreux citoyens (dont des leaders communautaires) arboraient des T-shirts ou des vêtements en pagens aux couleurs du parti politique dont ils sont sympathisants. Cette atmosphère particulière semblait donc conférer des airs d'événement du parti à une activité principiellement neutre. Seconde situation. L'examen des profils biographiques

des responsables des CAD et de ceux des sous-sections de base du parti à la tête de la municipalité, révèle des correspondances. Certains responsables des CAD occupent donc aussi des fonctions dans les sous-sections du parti. Coïncidence ou manœuvre volontaire ? Il est assez difficile de trancher à ce sujet. De l'avis de certains citoyens réticents à cette approche de cooptation, les CAD deviennent formellement et parfois structurellement des excroissances du parti. Un participant à l'assemblée communale de 2015, au vu des débats houleux liés à la nature foraine de cette activité, explicitait cette ambiguïté en ces termes : « *Nous sommes parfois perdus. Nous ne comprenons pas si c'est une activité pour discuter de notre développement ou alors c'est un meeting politique. Qu'on nous dise ce que c'est...* »

Ensuite, Les TIC, introduites dans le BP dès 2012, ont fait l'objet d'une appropriation subtile et spécifique par la municipalité. Les discours municipaux se sont explicitement saisis de cette innovation en vue de souligner leur arrimage à la modernité. Ce fut largement le cas en 2013, lors des élections municipales. Les discours du candidat, élu sortant, était fortement emprunt de références à ce trait de modernité reflétant elle-même la logique innovatrice qui caractérise l'action municipale. Enfin, l'étape de l'assemblée communale du BP de l'exercice 2015 s'est caractérisée par une forme d'élitisation du panel. Il s'agit de l'une des étapes majeures du premier cycle du BP. Il permet aux citoyens, de voter les projets ou programmes qui seront réalisés à la hauteur du budget initialement mis à disposition. En principe ouverte à tous les citoyens, on semble avoir assisté davantage à une assemblée de responsables communautaires et de conseillers municipaux. A ce niveau, il semblerait donc qu'à l'étape des validations finales, des formes de capture par l'élite se fassent visibles. Le registre représentatif semble donc reprendre le dessus. Les informations collectées associent cette situation à deux éléments : l'urgence dans la préparation de cette activité du fait des contraintes de calendrier et la prépondérance d'une communication classique (c'est-à-dire sans les TIC) conduite par les relais communautaires, a semblé viser des leaders communautaires plutôt que des citoyens « ordinaires ». Cela est néanmoins à relativiser car plus de 65% des enquêtés-participants ont déclaré avoir reçu un SMS d'information les ayant motivé à assister à cette rencontre. Aussi sur les 198 participants formellement recensés lors de cette assemblée, 32% étaient des leaders communautaires : conseillers municipaux, responsables de CAD notamment. En tout état de cause, par delà les faits, on peut observer qu'il y a néanmoins des phénomènes de forte « politisation » de ces arènes, relativement à leur appropriation, non pas politique, mais surtout politicienne. Bacot parle de « politisation politicienne ».

Bien qu'il n'y ait pas d'évidences que ces stratégies politiciennes relèvent d'une démarche bien prédéfinie, il n'en demeure pas moins que les éléments sus-évoqués rendent compte de la volonté de l'élue d'ouvrir l'espace à plus de participation mais également à le contrôler. Cela semble correspondre à une variante du fameux « paradoxe de l'intermédiaire » de Mahrer et Krimmer (2006). Cet intermédiaire, « *middleman* »

enclin à favoriser des innovations en matière de participation citoyenne mais qui parallèlement du fait de la crainte d'un très grand contrôle citoyen (et incidemment, un affaiblissement de « son » modèle représentatif) peut en limiter la dynamique ou en contrôler les effets.

La planification participative du développement à Edzandouan

Avec l'appui du Programme national du Développement participatif (PNDP), la commune d'Edzandouan, située dans la région du centre-Cameroun, a initié un processus de planification participative entre 2010 et 2011. Il avait pour finalité l'élaboration d'un plan communal de développement (PCD). Pour notre analyse, nous nous intéresserons principalement au processus de planification lui-même, notamment dans sa capacité à susciter des formes de participation. De façon complémentaire, l'attention se focalisera sur sa portée.

Le processus s'est appuyé sur des techniques spécifiques. Deux actions assez classiques ont constitué le cœur de cette initiative. La première était un diagnostic participatif au niveau des villages. Il permettait de « diagnostiquer » la situation sociale en mettant un accent sur les points suivants : les données socio-économiques, infrastructurelles et socio-environnementales ; l'identification des problèmes prioritaires par secteur et au sein de l'institution communale ; la définition de la vision de développement de la Commune. Conduit à l'échelle des villages, cette action assurait une prise en compte optimale des problèmes et des *desiderata* de toutes les communautés dans les différents villages. Cette couverture territoriale assurait donc sur le principe, une ouverture de cet espace spécifique de participation à toutes les populations. Elle se structurait autour des unités de planification (les villages de la commune). Ces dernières apparaissaient donc comme des cadres périodiques de consultation des citoyens. En effet, ces unités se désintègrent ou deviennent inactives au lendemain de l'exercice de planification. Elles ont donc des fonctions ponctuelles. La facilitation de cette dynamique avait été assurée par l'appui d'une organisation de la société civile (le Groupe d'Etude et d'Action pour le Développement -GEAD-). La seconde action a concerné la planification proprement dite. Elle a, contrairement à la première action, regroupé des profils précis selon une logique représentative dans le cadre d'un atelier. Les données collectées lors du diagnostic ont permis en plénière, d'identifier à partir des problèmes récapitulés par secteur, les problèmes prioritaires de la Commune. Pour analyser les thèmes (recherche des causes et des conséquences des différents problèmes), les participants ont été répartis en des groupes de travail mixtes (sectoriels, chefs de villages, conseillers municipaux, etc.). Le but étant de déboucher au terme des débats, sur un support popularisé de planification : le cadre logique.

On peut donc constater qu'ici, l'identification des problèmes fait l'objet d'un large débat ouvert à tous tandis que la phase de (pré) planification cible des profils répondant à une logique de représentation.

Le plan de développement communal qui en est issu, faisait état des projections en matière de développement sur trois (3) ans, entre 2011 et 2013, (avec possibilité de réajustement des délais). Il était structuré autour des domaines liés au développement « économique et culturel » de la commune, à l'accès aux services sociaux de base, à l'amélioration de la gouvernance environnementale et au renforcement des capacités de l'institution communale. D'un coût total de **4 875 836 000 de FCFA**, le cadre de dépenses à moyen terme (CDMT) de ce PCD était estimé à **3 991 300 000 FCFA**. On peut néanmoins s'interroger sur la capacité de la Commune d'Edzandouan à assumer le poids financier de ce plan au vu de ses possibilités financières. Les projections budgétaires y sont en effet par exemple passées de **91 600 000 FCFA** en 2008, à **16 990 000 FCFA**, en 2010. Soit une baisse de plus de **81%**. Sans doute, cet exercice de planification aurait dû faire preuve d'un peu plus de réalisme en s'attardant sur les domaines éminemment prioritaires du point de vue du vécu des populations locales et non nécessairement faire l'état (quasi-exhaustif) des besoins sur tous les secteurs. Cela a un effet sur les orientations en matière de suivi et d'évaluation qui pourraient éventuellement découler de ce plan. Un tel constat questionne fondamentalement les approches en matière de programmation, privilégiées ici. Mais au-delà de ces idées, qui nous éloignent un peu du corps de notre propos, notons qu'une portée autant tournée vers de l'irréalisme donne une teinte très instrumentale aux procédés ayant abouti à ce résultat. La planification participative dans ce cas, renverrait à une mise en scène destinée à créer une émulation rendant compte de la proximité de l'institution municipale, des pouvoirs publics aux citoyens, de leurs « efforts » en matière de programmation inclusive. Les cadres participatifs (unités de participation), inactifs dès les années suivantes, sont inhérents au caractère ponctuel de tels dispositifs et sans doute pas suffisant pour les inscrire dans la durée.

On peut observer que le procédé de concertation ou de participation, ponctuel, peut aider à identifier des éléments factuels et symboliques à même de conférer une légitimité en pertinence à une action publique. Néanmoins, elle se doit également de tenir compte des possibilités, des ressources du territoire indispensables à la concrétisation de cette action. La bonne gouvernance rimant aussi dans bien des cas, avec les notions de réalisme et d'efficacité. A défaut, le procédé est clairement orienté vers un usage instrumental permettant aux élus, aux pouvoirs publics de créer une émulation illusoire (dans sa portée) de proximité avec les communautés à des fins tout à fait décalées. On y remarque également la tension prégnante entre participation directe et universelle et participation représentative.

• Les CAD des quartiers à Bertoua 2

La commune d'arrondissement de Bertoua 2 (Région de l'Est du Cameroun) a, dans le cadre de la préparation de l'adoption du BP, favorisé la création en 2013 de cadres de concertation locaux dans ses différents quartiers et villages. Ces cadres baptisés comités d'animation au développement (CAD), relèvent d'une logique d'organisation communautaire permettant à l'institution municipale d'avoir un interlocuteur au niveau de chaque unité *infra* territoriale. Il s'agit là aussi d'un effort de formalisation de cadres anciens existant déjà dans certains quartiers de cette commune. Cette action assumée par la mairie, a bénéficié de l'appui technique d'organisations de la société civile, en l'occurrence ASSOAL, et du soutien de la coopération française. Au total, 12 CAD ont été mis sur pied. Que peut-on retenir du rôle de ces cadres, au plan de la promotion de la participation citoyenne ? Quel bilan précoce peut-on faire de leur dynamique fonctionnelle ?

Les CAD ici ont d'une part, une proximité conceptuelle avec l'organisation et/ou le « mouvement communautaire nord-américain » (Bacqué, Sintomer, 2001). En effet, elle préconise d'une certaine façon, un traitement territorialement localisé des problèmes communautaires (mauvaises conditions de vie des citoyens, sous-emploi, etc.) en les motivant à s'auto organiser, à se mettre ensemble. L'affinité s'arrête là. En effet, différence de contexte aidant, ils ne s'inscrivent pas dans les mêmes trajectoires historiques de ce mouvement aux Etats-Unis ou n'ont pas connu des processus d'institutionnalisation et de professionnalisation similaires. D'autre part, elles ont des affinités avec la politique française de la ville ayant favorisé la création de conseils de quartiers. En ce sens, ce qui intéresse est le regain d'intérêt pour un développement local porté par les habitants en favorisant leur immixtion dans les processus décisionnels. L'idée dans ce cas, étant d'améliorer la gestion du territoire. Dans le cas des CAD ciblés ici, cette immixtion revêt des formes allant de la consultation relativement à des centres d'intérêts publics, à une implication dans le suivi des politiques et programmes. La participation des citoyens prend ancrage ici, dans leur capacité, favorisée, à se prononcer sur des points de l'action publique ; dans leur potentiel à suivre l'implémentation des programmes publics mais aussi dans leur aptitude à proposer et à s'investir dans des réalisations ciblant leur territoire. Aussi, de façon concrète, les CAD sont consultés sur les contenus du plan de campagne municipal, comme ce fut le cas en 2014. Cette consultation a semblé être symbolique car par la suite, il n'a pas été observé des modifications des contenus, eu égard à certaines doléances citoyennes. C'est aussi cela la logique locale de la consultation : elle n'est pas pragmatiquement engageante. Bien que le besoin pour les CAD, de suivre les actions communales dans les quartiers, ait été formulé et préconisé lors de nombreuses rencontres avec la municipalité, elle est restée très aléatoire sur le terrain. Il s'avère en effet qu'avec des arguments classiques liés notamment à l'indisponibilité de ses membres,

les CAD n'étaient pas toujours techniquement outillés pour ce suivi. Cela pose aussi des interrogations sur leurs capacités et sur un besoin ciblé de leur accompagnement.

Le fonctionnement des CAD a reposé sur deux éléments qui continuent de peser sur leur développement. En première analyse, ils résultent d'une logique d'institutionnalisation par le haut, même si celle-ci vient souvent formaliser des dynamiques endogènes préexistantes. Cela favorise deux postures. La première incombe à la municipalité qui se partage entre une exploitation instrumentale ou stratégique de ces cadres. Une telle flexibilité rend la dynamique des CAD, fortement dépendante des stratégies municipales. La seconde posture est celle des habitants qui dans certains CAD, peuvent être dans une attitude expectante. En seconde analyse, l'implication d'ASSOAL dans la structuration technique de ces cadres, a également créé une dépendance et un attentisme vis-à-vis de cette organisation. Aussi, le déploiement opérationnel des CAD a souvent été associé à une implication d'ASSOAL. Il semble donc y avoir une mauvaise compréhension ou une faible explicitation du rôle de cette structure et de l'enjeu que constitue l'autonomisation des CAD. Le maire de cette commune rappelait fort à propos, que durant l'année 2013, les CAD ont été « invisibles » du fait de l'absence d'ASSOAL. Le tableau est donc celui d'un état relationnel et mitoyen des CAD entre une dépendance politico-institutionnelle (en lien avec la mairie, ses stratégies, ses ressources) et une dépendance technique (ASSOAL et son accompagnement). De ce fait, entre 2012 et 2014, il ne serait pas superflu de dire que les CAD ont reflété une ambition et une expression de la participation citoyenne qu'on pourrait assimiler à des rituels figuratifs ou « symboliques ». Néanmoins, l'existence même de ces cadres et des performances isolées de certains parmi eux, montre qu'il subsiste des belles possibilités en la matière. En outre, il faut voir derrière ce dispositif, deux conceptions étroitement liées, qui devraient ou auraient dû mieux s'exprimer dans la pratique. L'enjeu pour la coopération française qui a soutenu cet effort, était de donner plus de « proximité » à la gouvernance urbaine ici. Cette proximité avec les citoyens étant susceptibles de se répercuter sur la qualité de l'action publique et sur les performances de la municipalité (meilleure qualité de la ressource humaine, incidence sur la fiscalité, etc.). Pour ASSOAL, soutien technique à l'initiative, la question de la qualité de l'action publique, dans sa capacité à s'inscrire dans une continuité symbiotique avec la société, était tout aussi fondamentale. Cette symbiose étant réalisée en favorisant un meilleur engagement des citoyens. Ces derniers seraient de ce fait, plus concernés par la gestion de leur ville.

On voit ici, qu'en dépit d'une orientation « induite » du point de vue de leur mise en place, les cadres locaux de concertation peuvent avoir des portées relatives. Il semblerait que leur inscription dans des cadres collaboratifs, pertinents et stratégiques soit déterminante quant à leur pérennité. Tout comme la promotion de leur renforcement technique.

Conclusion

Que retenir de cette réflexion saccadée autour d'une thématique tout aussi délicate à discuter ? D'abord, il existe une réelle imbrication dans l'environnement camerounais, entre logiques représentative et participative de la démocratie. Elle se répercute sur les formes de fabrique de l'action publique et sur les dynamiques propres des espaces publics. Ensuite, divers dispositifs ont été développés par des acteurs aux profils divers (institutions publiques, acteurs politiques, société civile, etc.) en vue de traduire ces logiques en des pratiques localisées. Le choix du local comme perspective de définition (parfois) et d'implémentation (souvent) de telles options montre que ce niveau scalaire permet un « ancrage des débats dans la réalité concrète » (Bacqué, Sintomer, 2001) et une meilleure sensibilité de leurs effets. Une « montée en généralité » apparaît toutefois cruciale pour dépasser des limites qui sont aussi associées à cet accrochage au local. Enfin, loin de l'idéal qu'on pourrait associer à ces dispositifs, ils sont confrontés aux turpitudes propres au champ socio-politique : l'opposition entre respect de leurs valeurs principielles, leurs objectifs initiaux et leurs multiples instrumentalisation par des intérêts spécifiques. Ces appropriations instrumentales sont multiformes et interpellent quant à la portée de ces dispositifs et leur potentiel à améliorer durablement la gestion publique. Cela nous conduit donc à deux arguments à valeur de perspectives ici, relativement au contexte camerounais de multiplication de ces dispositifs et des activités de recherche les prenant pour objet.

Au plan expérimental, il convient d'associer le développement de tels dispositifs à des visions et philosophies précises reflétant des façons singulières de penser l'agir social et politique sur l'espace public. C'est le niveau de consensus autour de ces principes de base qui en détermineront la réussite ou l'échec. Le *designing* des mini-publics éventuels doit également rechercher deux niveaux de cohérence. Une cohérence avec le cadre institutionnel ambiant : celui-ci pouvant être renégocié en vue de faciliter cette articulation. Une cohérence avec les caractéristiques propres du corps social vers lequel est orienté le dispositif. Cela permet donc de créer un minimum de symbiose de sens entre les dispositifs et la société. Les mini-publics répondant donc à des demandes précises de la société : plus de participation, meilleure qualité d'intervention publique, plus grande inclusion, etc. Ces dispositifs doivent également reposer sur, ou prendre en compte les capacités, les possibilités des citoyens à les animer. On peut donc comprendre pourquoi dans la littérature anglo-saxonne tant évoquée ici, la participation citoyenne est associée à la notion d'*empowerment*. Le niveau de performance de ces dispositifs, dépendra aussi du niveau de « capacitation » des citoyens qu'ils auront su créer, encourager ou valoriser. Il y a, pour clore ce point, un impératif lors des processus de développement de tels dispositifs : celui d'une définition claire et partagée des règles de son fonctionnement.

Comment fonctionnera-t-il ? A quelle fréquence ? Qui peut participer ? Comment s'effectuera la participation ? Ce sont là des questions dont les réponses devront toujours être associées aux objectifs poursuivis.

Il est à noter que ces dispositifs, dans leur fonctionnement, montrent une forte soumission aux « cadres institutionnels de domination politique » qu'ils contribueraient à reproduire (Gourgues, 2013). Ils deviennent donc des procédés supplémentaires de légitimation de l'ordre politique établi (Gaxie, 1996 ; Caillosse, 1999). Ils interpellent également sur la précocité illusoire d'une auto-détermination des modèles participatifs ou délibératifs, au vu la prégnance des inégalités de tous ordres, identifiables dans la société. Pour reprendre l'invité de Gourgues (2013), il y a un besoin de repolitiser l'enjeu de la participation en la mettant en perspective d'une réflexion plus assumée sur le modèle démocratique ou sur les différentes formes de « pilotage » de la société. Une telle question étant éminemment urgente en contexte africain où l'expression démocratique semble relever d'une logique d'« ailleurs » pas toujours conforme aux conditions du « dedans ». Cela invite sans doute à associer le travail empirique sur ces dispositifs à un exercice réflexif et critique à même de rendre peut-être compte des évolutions propres aux modalités de gouvernements, de gestion publique à l'oeuvre dans les environnements locaux africains et au-delà. Cela peut passer par un meilleur examen de leurs liens avec les décisions publiques ; avec les formes anciennes mais toujours présentes de représentation des préférences citoyennes (logiques sectorielles, partisans, ethniques ou communautaristes) ou encore leur capacité à redéfinir ou pas, la place inéluctable du « conflit » dans le champ sociopolitique (Abé, 2004 ; 2006 ; Bacot 2002 ; Gourgues, 2013).

Notes

1. Loi n°2004/017 du 22 juillet 2004 portant orientation de la décentralisation et Loi n°2004/018 du 22 juillet 2004 portant sur les règles applicables aux communes.
2. Ils donnent à propos la définition suivante à la notion de participation : « *activity that is intended to or has the consequence of affecting, either directly or indirectly, government action* » (Verba, Scholzman et Brady, 1995)
3. Voir Mansuri et Rao (2012) pour une synthèse de ces références à travers l'histoire.
4. Voir par exemple les divers appels à proposition « Les secteurs Non Etatiques et les Autorités Locales dans le Développement » de la délégation de l'Union européenne au Cameroun et dans d'autres pays africains.
5. C'est le cas dans divers Master de la Faculté de Sciences Sociales et de Gestion de l'Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale ou encore du Master « Gouvernance urbaine » de l'Université de Yaoundé 2.
6. Voir les textes suivants : Loi cadre n°96/12 du 05 août 1996 ; Décret n°2005/0577/PM du 23 février 2005 ; Arrêté n°0070 du 22 avril 2005.

7. Cette notion de « mini-public » est ici intéressante car rendant compte de ces efforts de délibération publique organisée, qui s'inscrivent dans une logique « réformiste » et subtile plutôt que dans une logique de « réforme révolutionnaire ». Ils correspondent à des efforts modestes de refondation, d'amélioration de la qualité de l'espace public. Ils contribuent ainsi au projet démocratique. Fung (2003) dit à cet effet, s'être inspiré des notions de *minipopulus* de Dahl (1989) et d'assemblées délibératives sur base aléatoire, « *Deliberative Assemblies on a Random Basis* » de Nagels (1992). Sa notion de mini-public s'avère néanmoins plus ouverte, donc plus inclusive et affiche nettement sa connexion avec la société civile et l'Etat contrairement à ses auteurs références.
8. Pour des clarifications sur les options en matière de sélection des participants, voir Fung (2003), Nabatchi (2012).

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Corporate Social Responsibility and Workers' Well-being in Nigerian Banks

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Abstract

The usual focus of Corporate Social Responsibility in Nigeria has always been on the society or the community where business is located while the place of workers as stakeholder in business is usually downplayed. This study examined the impact of corporate social responsibility on the wellbeing of workers in the Nigerian banking system. The objective was to know if adequate health facilities are provided for workers in the banks to meet their health needs when required. The study was conducted among ten commercial banks in Ilorin North-Central Nigeria while primary data was retrieved through self administered questionnaire from 160 participants. Participants were selected through a multi-stage sampling technique while the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 19.0) was employed to analyse data retrieved from the field. Hypotheses formulated in the study were tested using the Chi-square statistical tool. Findings revealed that, 85.0% of the participants' employers provided for them health facilities even though only 55.1% of the health facilities provided are adequate. A significant relationship was also found between participants' wellbeing and health facilities provided $p < 0.05$, while there was no significant relationship was between wellbeing of participants and adequacy of the health facilities provided by participants employers $p > 0.05$. The study concluded that, even though some banks in the country provide health facilities for their workers, the health facilities provided are not adequate enough to meet the health needs of the workers. The study however, recommended a more comprehensive health plan for bankers that cover life saving health care services such as intensive care, surgeries and other life threatening diseases.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Bankers, Health Facilities.

Résumé

Le focus habituel de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises au Nigeria a toujours été sur la société ou la communauté où se trouve l'entreprise alors que la place des Travailleurs en tant que partie prenante dans les affaires est généralement minimisée. Cette étude examine l'impact de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises sur le bien-être des travailleurs dans le système bancaire Nigeria. L'objectif était de savoir si des Etablissements de santé sont adéquats fournis aux travailleurs des Banques pour répondre à leurs besoins en matière de santé au besoin. L'étude a été Menée Auprès de Banques commerciales à dix Ilorin au nord-center du Nigeria alors que les

données Primaires ont été par récupérées questionnaire auto-Administré de 160 participants. Les participants ont été sélectionnés au moyen d'une technique échantillonnage d'en plusieurs étapes, tandis que le Paquet statistique pour les sciences sociales (SPSS 19.0) a été utilisé pour analyser les données sur le terrain obtenues. Les Hypothèses formulées dans l'étude ont été Testées à l'aide de l'outil statistique Chi-carré. Les résultats ont révélé que des employer in 85.0% des participants fournissaient des services de santé, même si seulement 55.1% des Etablissements de santé fournis étaient adéquats. Une relation significative a également été Trouvée entre le bien-être des participants et les Établissements de santé fournis $p < 0.05$, alors qu'il n'y avait pas de significative relation entre le bien-être des participants et l'ADEQUATION des Établissements de santé fournis par les participants employer in $p > 0.05$. L'étude a conclu que, même si certaines Banques du pays fournissent des installations de santé à leurs Travailleurs, les structures de santé sont pas fournies they suffisamment adéquates pour répondre aux besoins de santé des Travailleurs. L'étude a toutefois recommandé un plan de santé plus complet pour les Banquiers couvrent qui les services de soins de santé des vies sauvent qui, comme les soins intensifs, et les autres maladies chirurgies mortelles.

Mots-clés: responsabilité sociale des entreprises, Banquiers, Centres de

Introduction

Corporate social responsibility has been described as the persistent commitment by an organization to behave ethically, and contribute to the development of the society, by increasing the quality of life of workers, the local community and the society at large (Branco & Rodriguez, 2007). CSR covers all areas of business and according to Mc-Williams & Siegels (2001) the aim of CSR is to improve the social good of people beyond the interest of the business. In the Nigerian banking system, CSR is channelled towards improving the lives of the people, as a proportion of banks' profit is usually set aside and invested in CSR yearly (Achua, 2008; Adegbite & Nakajima, 2011). However, most of the studies conducted on CSR in Nigeria have concentrated on multinational companies especially, oil companies in the Nigeria Delta region while less has been done on indigenous companies like commercial banks (Amaeshi et al, 2006).

Previous studies have thus shown that, the principal beneficiaries of banks' CSR policies have been the healthcare, education, security, housing, agriculture, arts and tourism, sports, charity organization, religion, social clubs, government agencies, youth development and public infrastructure (Odetayo, Adeyemi & Sajuyigbe, 2014). It would appear that companies in Nigeria focus on environmental stewardship but, research has shown that, even customers expect charity to begin from home, that is, the best proof of CSR is treating employees well (National Consumers League, 2005). This is so because; one of the most important entities in any organization is its human capital. It is the human resources of a business that makes the profit that is set aside and used for CSR. Therefore, any organization that seeks to do well and compete favourably with her peers

must pay particular attention to the wellbeing of its workers.

According to Holme & Watts (2000), the wellbeing and wellness of workers in any organization on issues relating to CSR cannot be overemphasised. Holme & Watts (2000) argued further that, employees' right to good healthcare is a CSR concern which must be given utmost attention. It is against this backdrop that this study investigates the impacts of corporate social responsibility on the well-being of workers in the Nigerian banking system. This study is expected to expound on the need for a healthy workforce as a requisite to productivity.

What is the Problem?

Workers in the Nigerian banking system are like other people who are vulnerable to illness and diseases that need to be cared for and cope with in the course of discharging their duties. Unfortunately, the nature of work in the Nigerian banking system today is quite demanding and enormous (Akingbola & Adigun, 2010). Many workers in Nigerian banks live with various forms of illnesses owing to the stress they go through in the course of discharging their duties as well as rigorous job demands demanded from them (Osaremem, 2012). According to Ajede (2011) & Anenne & Anenne (2013), workers in the Nigerian banking system in recent years are beginning to show signs of various lifestyle diseases like as high blood pressure, obesity, peptic ulcer and sexually transmitted infections which were not common in the past owing to nutritional deficiency, stress and irregular working hours.

In addition to this, the health plan made available to workers in the banks only covers primary health services, or to a maximum amount leaving out other essential services such as surgery, comprehensive health screening or ambulance services (Anenne & Anenne, 2013). Furthermore, Ogunwale & Mohammed (2013) have also argued that many banks do not make medical facilities available to their workers and when this is done, it is usually to a maximum amount or even monetised.

Brief review of literature

The demand for CSR in the Nigerian banking system is imperative because Nigerian banks operate in the society and they are instrumental to the development of the country (Achua, 2008). According to Amaeshi et al., (2006) & Gbervbie (2012), banks that practice CSR are more likely to exhibit improved ethical standards than those that do not. In addition, Akindele (2001) has also contended that banks that practice CSR are better able to attain their organizational goals and therefore influence the development of a country when they engage in CSR. In the same vein, Akanbi & Ofoegbu (2012) have equally argued that, CSR is a major requisite to organisation performance and

imperative for any organisation that wants to continue to strive and have a competitive edge over her peers in the society.

A study conducted by Carisson & Akerstom (2008) suggests that, organizations engage in CSR to increase their bottom line and give them an edge over other competitors. On the contrary however, a study conducted by Uwaloma & Egbide (2012) found a negative relationship between organizations' financial leverage and the level of corporate social responsibilities exposures. This was also confirmed by Adeboye & Olawale (2012) in their study where no significant difference was found between organizations' performance and ethical standard in which business is done.

Theoretical Orientation

Marxist Exploitation Theory

Marxist Exploitation theory was propounded by Karl Marx (1867) in his critique of the Gotha Program. Marx proposed a set of principles that governs the distribution of welfare under socialism and communism and these principles saw distribution of resources to each person according to their work and needs. Marx (1867) identified two basic conflicting groups in his theory namely: The Bourgeoisie (the owners of means of production also referred to as the exploiters) and the Proletariats (those who sell their labour for wages also referred to as the exploited).

According to Marx, exploitation occurs when workers do not receive wages according to their work or needs. He argued that, the bourgeoisie are able to command goods with revenue from their wages that are embodied with more labour than the exploiters themselves have contributed to the business. He argued further that, the exploited would receive less than the average product he or she produces. Therefore the proletariats cannot enjoy the fruit of their own labour and the difference between what is made and what that can purchase cannot be justified by redistribution according to need.

This theory therefore serves as a platform to explain the study. Based on the aforementioned assumptions, it can be assumed that, while workers in the banks contribute mass labour into the business, their wellbeing is not adequately catered for. Workers in the banks are exploited and alienated and are unable to meet their health needs despite their enormous contribution to the business in terms of labour while the owners of business who contribute very little labour to the business receive large proportion of the profit realised from the business and better welfare packages.

The theory has been criticised for assuming that bourgeoisie do not contribute anything to the process of production (Steele, 1999).

Methods

The study employed the multi-stage sampling technique in which 160 participants were included. The study was carried out in Ilorin, capital city of Kwara State, North Central Nigeria. A total of ten commercial banks were involved in the study out of the seventeen commercial banks operating in the capital city as at the time the study was conducted. As at the time the study was conducted, only twenty one commercial banks operate in Nigeria Central Bank of Nigeria (2015) out of which sixteen is located in the study area. The banks included in the study are: United bank For Africa (UBA), Union Bank PLC, First Bank of Nigeria (FBN), Unity Bank, Wema Bank PLC, Fidelity Bank, Diamond Bank, First City Monument Bank (FCMB), Zenith Bank and Stanbic IBTC bank.

The first stage included the purposive selection of a mixture of old and new generation banks representing all the commercial banks in Nigeria. The second stage included the hierarchical selection of the main branches of the selected banks while the last stage included a random selection of sixteen participants from each branch based on those that were present at work during the survey. Information was gathered through the questionnaire administration because the study population was literate and sample size was relatively high (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2001). The questionnaire consisted of open and close ended questions and was divided into three sections. The first section contained socio-demographic factors of participants while the second section contained questions that addressed wellbeing of participants and the third section contained questions relating health facilities provided by banks.

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 19.0) was used to analyse the data while the Chi square statistical tool was used to test the formulated hypotheses. The researcher made use of tables and simple percentage to organise the data collected from the field. The researcher was assisted by two research assistants who helped to administer the questionnaire and also explain the content of the questionnaire to the participants for clarity. Permission was sought from the management of the banks before the research was conducted and verbal approval was granted for the research to be conducted in the banks. Participants were duly informed of the purpose of the research and the significance of the study to them.

Results

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Factors of Participants

Variables	Percentage	Frequency
Sex		
Male	77	(48.1)
Female	83	(51.9)
Total	160	(100.0)
Age		
18-30	69	(43.1)
31-40	79	(49.4)
41-50	12	(7.5)
Total	160	(100.0)
Marital Status		
Single	56	(35.0)
Married	102	(63.7)
Widowed	2	(1.3)
Total	160	(100.0)
Salary Per Year (Naira)		
100,000 -1M	77	(48.1)
1.1M-5M	63	(39.1)
5.1M-10M	15	(9.4)
10.1M-15M and Above	5	(3.1)
Total	160	(100.0)

Researchers' Survey 2015

Table 2: Questions on Participants' Well-being

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages
Ever been ill on the job?		
Yes	137	(85.6)
No	23	(14.4)
Total	160	(100.0)
How severe was the Illness?		
Not too severe	111	(81.0)
Severe	22	(16.4)
Very severe	4	(2.9)
Total	137	(100.0)
Did you utilize health facility when you were ill?		
Yes	105	(76.5)
No	32	(23.4)
Total	160	(100.0)
Ever been ill due to job demand?		
Yes	86	(53.8)
No	74	(46.3)
Total	160	(100.0)

Researchers' Survey, 2015

Table 3: Questions on Participants' health plan

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages
Does your employer provide health facilities for you?		
Yes	136	(85.0)
No	24	(15.0)
Total	160	(100.0)
How adequate are the health facilities provided?		
Adequate	75	(55.1)
Manageable	58	(42.6)
Not adequate	3	(1.9)
Total	136	(100.0)
Is your health package monetised by your bank?		
Yes	79	(49.4)
No	81	(50.6)
Total	160	(100.0)
Is the money provided adequate to meet your medical bills?		
Yes	42	(53.2)
No	17	(21.5)
Manageable	20	(25.3)
Total	79	(100.0)

Researchers' Survey, 2015

Table 1 shows that, 83(51.9%) of the studied population is female while 77(48.1%) are male. Half of the participants are in the age category of 31-40 years while 69(43.1%) are below 30 years. In addition, 56(35.0%) of the participants are single while 102(63.7%) are married. Also, 77(48.1%) of the participants earn below 1 million annually while 63(9.4%) earn between 1 million naira and 5 million naira yearly.

In Table 2, 137(85.6%) of the participants had fallen ill on the job out of which only 22(16.1%) of the illness was severe. However, 105(76.6%) of those that have fallen ill on the job utilised health facility while 86(53.8%) claimed that their job demands made them ill.

In table 3, 136(85.0%) of the participants claimed that their employers provided health facilities for them, 75(55.1%) claimed that the medical facility provided is adequate while 3(1.9%) of the participants claimed that the medical facilities provided by their employers is not adequate. However, out of the participants that are provided with medical facilities, 79(49.4%) had their health package monetized of which 17(21.5%) claimed the money provided was not enough to meet their health bills.

Test of Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship participants' wellbeing and Medical facilities provided by banks

Ever been Ill on the job?	Does your bank provide for you health facilities?		
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total
Yes	123(89.8)	14(10.2)	137(100.0)
No	13(56.5)	10(43.5)	23(100.0)
Total	136(85.0)	24(15.0)	160(100.0)
X ² 17.086 df = 1, p-value = < 0.001			

Researchers' Survey, 2015

H02: There is no significant relationship between participants' wellbeing and adequacy of medical facility provided.

Did you utilise health facility when you were ill?	Is the medical facility provided adequate?		
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total
Yes	97(29.4)	8(7.6)	105(100.0)
No	26(81.3)	6(18.8)	32(100.0)
Total	123(89.8)	14(10.2)	137(100.0)
X ² 3.312 df = 1, p-value =0.069			

Researchers' Survey, 2015

H03: There is no significant relationship between participants' wellbeing and monetised health package

Ever been ill due to job demands?	Is your health package monetised?		
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total
Yes	42(48.8)	44(51.2)	86(100.0)
No	37(50.0)	37(50.0)	74(100.0)
Total	79(49.4)	81(50.6)	160(100.0)
X ² 0.022 df = 1, p-value =0.883			

Researchers' Survey, 2015

Discussion

The study has been able to assess the impact of CSR on the wellbeing of bank workers in Nigeria. Result showed that, even though, 85.0% of the participants' employers provide for them health facilities only 55.1% of the health facilities provided are adequate. However, 49.4% of the medical facilities provided are monetised while only 53.2% of the monetised package is adequate. This result is in line with the submission of Ogunwale & Mohammed (2013) that that, many banks in the country do not make available for their workers health facilities and when this is done, they are usually inadequate.

The first hypothesis tested in the study found a statistical significant relationship between participants' wellbeing health facilities provided by banks as p value $0.001 < 0.05$. This means that banks in the Nigerian banking system provide health facilities for their employees as part of their welfare package in line with global best practices. This result is however not in tandem with a similar study previously conducted by Annene & Annene (2013) who contended that the place of employees as stakeholders in the Nigerian banking system when it comes to CSR is seriously downplayed.

The second hypothesis tested in the study however, found no statistical significant relationship between participants' wellbeing and adequacy of medical facilities provided by bank as p value $0.069 > 0.05$. This result however corroborates the view of Ogunwale & Mohammed (2013) and Annene & Annene (2013) who argued that Nigerian banks do not make available health facilities for their workers and that when they are made available they only cover primary health care, or to a maximum amount leaving out other essential services such as surgery, comprehensive health screening or ambulance services.

The last hypothesis also suggested no statistical significant relationship between participants' and the money made available by banks to cater for their medical bills as p value $0.883 > 0.05$. This result agrees with the view of Balogun, Ademosu, Ojelu & Ebhomele (2013), who confirmed that Nigerian banks do not cater well for the welfare of their staff.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study investigated the impact of corporate social responsibility on the health of bankers in the Nigerian banking system. The study was carried out in ten commercial banks in Ilorin, capital city of Kwara State, Nigeria, out of the seventeen commercial banks located in the city, as a representative of the twenty one commercial banks operating in Nigeria, as at the time of the study. 160 respondents were included in the study that was selected through the multi-stage sampling technique. Information was gathered through self administered questionnaire administration which consisted

of open and closed ended questions. Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 19.0) and was presented in tables, frequencies and simple percentages while variables were tested using the Chi-square statistical tool.

Three hypotheses were tested in the study in which a statistical significant relationship existed between participants' wellbeing and health facilities provided, while a significant relationship was not found between participants' wellbeing and health facility provided as well as between participants' wellbeing and adequacy of money provided by banks to meet the health needs of bankers. The study however concluded that, although some commercial banks in Nigeria provide health facilities for their employees, the health facilities provided are not adequate while some other banks only monetize the health package of their workers which is not also adequate.

Following the foregoing, the study recommends that banks should make available for their workers adequate health facilities that cover life saving health care such as intensive care, surgeries and care for other life threatening diseases should also be included in employees' health care package. The study also recommended that, where health package will be monetized, such package must be adequate enough to cover for the health needs of employees.

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A qualitative application of Amartya Sen's 'development as freedom' theory to an understanding of social grants in South Africa.

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Abstract

Amartya Sen argued that poverty is the "deprivation" of a person's capability to lead a "good life", therefore ending poverty means meeting basic physical and social needs, and enabling meaningful economic and political choices. The aim of this paper is to investigate whether and how social grants enable "choices" in Sen's sense. In-depth interviews conducted with social grants recipients' in this study provided evidence that social grants reduce poverty, both in terms of helping grants recipients to meet basic needs, and enabling them to make more choices, such as buying food, accessing education and health care, as well as facilitating job searches and starting small businesses. However, there was also evidence that showed that grants are inadequate to entirely remove the "unfreedoms" facing the poor because the grants are too small to adequately cover basic needs in the context of large family sizes, a serious and long-term lack of resources, persistent unemployment, and high indebtedness. Further, these grants could enable only a limited expansion of "choices". This paper argues that social grants in South Africa do enable recipients some "choices" although access to these "choices" is limited. It is envisaged that this paper will help academics to think more about the extent of the developmental impact of social grants in South Africa.

Key words: Amartya Sen, poverty, social grants, choices, development as freedom.

Résumé

Amartya Sen a soutenu que la pauvreté est la «privation» de la capacité d'une personne à mener une «Bonne Vie», donc la fin de la pauvreté signifie répondre aux besoins physiques et sociaux de base et permettre des choix économiques et politiques significatifs. Le but de cet article est d'étudier si et comment les Subventions permettent des «choix» sociaux au sens de Sen. Des entrevues approfondies menées avec des bénéficiaires de Subventions sociales dans cette étude ont démontré que les Subventions sociales réduisent la pauvreté, tant pour aider les bénéficiaires de Subventions à répondre aux besoins fondamentaux que pour leur permettre de faire plus de choix, comme l'achat de nourriture, l'accès à l'éducation et la santé ainsi que la facilitation de la recherche d'emploi et le démarrage de petites entreprises. Cependant, il y avait aussi des preuves

qui montraient que les Subventions sont insuffisantes pour éliminer complètement les «non-libertés» auxquelles sont confrontés les pauvres parce que les Subventions sont trop petites pour couvrir adéquatement les besoins de base dans le contexte de familles nombreuses, Le chômage persistant et l'endettement élevé. En outre, ces Subventions, elles ne pourraient permettre qu'une expansion limitée des «choix». Cet article soutient que les Subventions sociales en Afrique du Sud permettent aux bénéficiaires de certains «choix» bien que l'accès à ces «choix» soit limité. Il est prévu que ce document aidera les universitaires à réfléchir davantage sur l'ampleur de l'impact sur le développement des Subventions sociales en Afrique du Sud.

Mots clés: Amartya Sen, pauvreté, Subventions sociales, choix, développement comme liberté.

Introduction

Sen (1999:87) argues that "poverty" cannot be understood in terms of low incomes only: poverty should also be understood as a "deprivation" of the capabilities to lead a "good life". These capabilities include meeting basic physical needs, but also the ability to make economic and political "choices" in society. Sen views poverty as a state of "unfreedom" or incapacity, and a disabling proposition on the part of a poor people in terms of their inability to access a good quality life (Sen, 1999:20). This "unfreedom" deprives people of their freedom to satisfy hunger, or to get adequate nutrition, or to get remedies for treatable illnesses, or the chance to get proper clothing, or shelter or to enjoy clean water and sanitary facilities (Sen, 1999:4). Poverty is not only a lack of access to basic *physical* needs such as food, water, education, health, but also to other *social* necessities. Therefore, Sen, (1999:87) views poverty is a deprivation of choices on the part of a poor person to lead a life that they have reason to value.

The literature on social grants in South Africa indicates that there is an on-going debate on the aims, role and impact of social grants. This debate has not been about whether grants reduce poverty, but whether they help people overcome poverty. Although scholars express different arguments about the role and impact of social grants on the livelihood of recipients, there is general agreement that social grants play a positive role in the lives of many poor South Africans (using any measure of poverty reduction) (Africa Check, 2015; Samson, Lee, Ndlebe, MacQuene, van Niekerk, Gandhi, & Abrahams, 2004:08; Xaba, 2013:02; Department of Social Welfare, South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2011:01; Xaba, 2015:01). For most poor households, grants are the sole source of income (Samson, et al, 2004:08; Siebrets and van der Berg, 2011:85). This research is in line with international research that show that grants improve the wellbeing of recipients and beneficiaries.

However, whether the grants can end "poverty", in the broader sense that Sen (1999) has in mind, has not been explored fully (Xaba, 2015:10). Less is known about whether and how state-provided, non-contributory, cash social grants enable economic and political "choices" in Amartya Sen's sense. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to

interrogate the role and impact of social grants further by looking at the ways (if any) in which social grants enable recipients to access “choices” as described by Amartya Sen (1999).

A qualitative approach was applied, in the form of in-depth interviews to gain a deeper insight into the role of social grants in alleviating poverty.

The main argument in this paper is that social grants in South Africa do enable recipients to access some “choices” although access to these “choices” is limited because these “choices” are accessed under dire straits. Many respondents interviewed said that while they are able to access basic needs, they are constantly stressed because they are in debt indicating that their needs are greater than the value of the social grants. Additionally, grants seem to limit political choices as most respondents felt that they should vote for the party that gives them grants, which happens to be the African National Congress (ANC).

This paper is structured as follows; I will begin by discussing South African social grants in general as well as the debates on social grants and the theoretical framework used in the study. The next section will be on the methods used to collect data. Results will follow the methods section. The final section is the discussion and conclusion which explains the significance of the paper and conclusions of the paper.

Literature survey and theoretical discussion

The state-run social welfare system in South Africa was initially racialised during apartheid as it covered whites only (Haarman, 2000:10). Although other racial groups were gradually included, the social welfare system during apartheid was based on discriminatory practices (Woolard, Harttgen and Klasen, 2010:09). This means that after defeating apartheid the incoming African National Congress (ANC) government inherited a racially fragmented social welfare system in 1994 which was not initially crafted for the whole population (Haarman, 2000:10). The ANC government has made steady and modest progress in addressing poverty and creating an equitable society for all South Africans (Bernstein, de Kadt, Roodt and Schirmer, 2014:15).

The two goals of the post-apartheid government are to address poverty and to reduce inequality (The World Bank, 2014: v) and the primary objective of social welfare policy in South Africa is poverty alleviation (Van der Berg, 1998a, cited in Triegaardt, 2005:249). The ANC government has tried to increase the social welfare pie while at the same time it has tried to grow the economy with market-oriented policies like the Growth Employment and Redistribution strategy (GEAR). The GEAR strategy holds that the basic solution to poverty is jobs, not welfare, and imposes significant fiscal constraints on welfare (van der Walt, 2000:71).

Social grants in South Africa come from a right to social security in the Constitution

of Republic of South Africa (RSA) (1996), although the Constitution does not specify this policy (RSA, 1996, Section 27, Subsection 1; Rosa, Leatt and Hall, 2005:06). The eligibility for these grants is based on an income-based means test to cater for the most needy and deserving poor South Africans (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005:363; SASSA, 2012:07), and the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) is responsible for the implementation of the social grants in South Africa (Green, 2015; Woolard, Harttgen and Klasen, 2010:04).

Social grants are means-tested non-contributory cash transfers that are tax-funded and targeted at specific categories (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2011:364). Means testing is done to distinguish between the “deserving poor” and the “non-deserving citizens” (Leubolt, 2014:11). This is how means testing has shaped the post-apartheid system of social assistance as grants are exclusively designed for individuals who are not able to work, such as pensioners, family caretakers, the disabled and those who are chronically ill. Grants are mainly for the elderly, the disabled, and children, as well as anyone who lives with the recipients (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005:377).

Since 1994, the welfare spending and coverage has, by most measures increased substantially (Phaahla, 2015). The number of non-contributory cash social grants increased from 537.5 percent in 1996 when 2.4 million people received some form of government grant, to 16.3 million people in 2014 who had access to grants (Paton, 2014; Africa Check, 2015). In 2015, over 16 million South Africans have been receiving social grants (Daily Maverick, 2015) and in 2013, 60 percent of the government’s budget was channelled towards social spending (Paton, 2014).

Debates

As I have indicated above, grants in South Africa have been a contested terrain as critics including members of the public, policy-makers, academics and other stakeholders view grants with scepticism. Liberals generally hold the view that social grants limit individual freedom (Friedman, 1982:2, 12), and that grants, for all their benefits, also lead to “welfare dependency,” discourage employment, support lazy behaviour, encourage teenage pregnancy, reduce payment of remittances, and enable inappropriate spending (UNDP 2011:379; for more, see e.g. Friedman 1982, chs 2 and 11). In this view, grants pay people to be irresponsible, and unproductive, in the long run creating a pool of dependant citizens (Mazibuko, 2008:08), and all of this distorts labour markets while consuming resources through taxation and state spending. In other words, the liberals’ argument is that the structure of social grants has the effect of keeping the recipients from taking steps that would help them reduce poverty. In this sense, grants are viewed as not playing an effective role in alleviating poverty. The real solution, for this view, is less welfare and more free markets.

It is alleged that in South Africa, poor women and teenage girls get pregnant to access

government Child Support Grants (CSGs) (e.g. The Sowetan, 2014, Daily Maverick, 2015) and this belief has gotten stronger (News 24, 2012). Some even describe the CSG as the “thigh grant”, because girls allegedly “spread their legs” to “get the grant” (Marais, 2011:253). However, findings by (Potts, 2012:80) reveal that there is no link between social grants and teenage pregnancy. The view that access to grants leads the able-bodied to avoid work, has also been refuted because there is no real evidence for the claim (Leubolt, 2014:12-13; Makiwane, Udjo, Richter and Desmond, 2006). In fact, the economy has serious problems that prevent it from creating adequate jobs, and this creates dependency on welfare (Marais, 2011:176, 179) and lack of land in some cases forces dependency on grants (Conway and Xipu, 2010:131).

Another related argument is that as welfare spending grows, it could become unsustainable, taking South Africa to a “fiscal cliff” where the “welfare bubble” will burst (Business Day, 2014). This also comes at the time when the South African government is considering extending the eligibility age for CSGs from 18 to 23 (Oderson, 2014; Africa Check, 2015). Adding to the “dependency syndrome” argument South African president Jacob Zuma once said, that the government “cannot sustain a situation where social grants are growing all the time and think it can be a permanent feature” (Daily Maverick, 2015).

It is not clear whether funding the social grants is fiscally sustainable although the government insists that funding the social grants is fiscally sustainable (Paton, 2013), but Pauw and Mncube, (2007:4) assert that grants are often regarded as fiscally unsustainable because there are more people on welfare than people who are working (financing welfare). It is also argued that the current expenditure on social grants will be sustainable as long as the South African economy keeps growing by 3 percent although the 3 percent growth rate provides a slim margin for additional spending (Africa Check, 2015). However, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected a 2, 1 percent economic growth rate for South Africa in 2015 and a 2, 5 percent in 2016 (Africa Check, 2015; Phaahla, 2015).

For Marxists, poverty is inherent in capitalism and cannot be “cured” by capitalism. However, welfare may be desirable as it provides some temporary protection from capitalism. Anarchists/ syndicalists agree with Marxists on the above arguments (van der Walt, 2006:01), but add that state welfare is problematic in that it is administered in authoritarian and inefficient ways by self-interested state elites (Millet, 1997). Welfare is seen as benefiting the working class, but as an inevitable “symptom” of the inequities of the current social order (van der Walt, 2005:56-57). It cannot provide a “cure” for the problems of poverty, but can help blunt the worst effects. The solution for this view is more welfare (for now), but in the end the overthrow of markets and the (welfare) state to create a society where no one *needs* welfare.

Put differently, Liberals, Marxists and Anarchist view the provision of social grants as an attempt to “bandage a broken arm” because it does not help recipients to break the cycle of poverty. If people are given social grants, they argue, they will always be poor anyway.

For Keynesians, markets are imperfect in that they do not always adjust and that even if they adjust they do so slowly (Wolff and Resnick, 2012:115). So the point is that if an economy is in a depression, it should spend out of that problem via state expenditure. Increased state expenditure means increased real incomes and increased incomes will lead to increased consumption which will eventually lead to a high aggregate demand (Wolff and Resnick, 2012:122). Keynesians believe that investors are attracted to economies with a high aggregate demand (Williams and Williams, 1995:72) and since welfare boosts aggregate demand, it should attract investment and thus generate employment (Stewart, 1986:82; Wolff and Resnick, 2012:122). Thus welfare should not be seen as a threat to the capitalist economy as welfare can benefit capitalism and profits, as well as the underprivileged.

These debates have influenced South African policies. The ANC's 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which aimed at expanding and deracialising welfare (RSA, 1994, Section 1.2; Stacey, 2014:98) was influenced by Keynesian ideas (De Wet and Harmse, 1997:23). The RDP document even describes welfare as a necessary step to “build the economy”. On the contrary, the Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (GEAR), which was neoliberal in thrust (Stacey, 2014:98), viewed welfare as a limited, temporary, safety net. Thus, the real solution to poverty has always been seen as job creation through free markets (van der Walt, 2000:71).

Amartya Sen's “development as freedom” theory

Sen's core argument is that poverty should be seen as a form of “unfreedom” or a deprivation of choices on the poor person's capability to access a life that he/she has reason to value (Sen, 1999:87). Poverty involves a lack of ability to exercise capabilities, due to factors such as low income, poor education and health, or lack of human and civil rights, poor economic opportunities, neglect of public facilities, and intolerance and repression (Sen, 1999:04). In this case, poverty is viewed in terms of shortfall of “basic capabilities” or “basic capability failure” (Clark and Qizilbash, 2005:07). In Sen's view, one can be fed but still poor, which means that meeting basic needs only is not enough (Clark, 2003:173). Although income is important in understanding poverty, Sen, (1999) argued that income should not be seen as the main indicator of poverty which is what the poverty line is all about.

Thus, development for Sen entails removing these “unfreedoms” that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency (Selwyn, 2011:69). Development should be about increasing human choices and freedom to

achieve outcomes that they value and have reason to value (Sen, 1999:291). Freedom entails the processes of decision making as well as opportunities to achieve valued outcomes (Sen, 1999:291). Freedom, entails having the ability to achieve what one considers valuable after thinking it through (Walker and Unterhalter, 2007:02). Hence, development should be about an engagement with freedom's possibilities (Sen, 1999:291, 298). Therefore, expanding human freedom should be the "primary end and ...principal means" of development efforts (Sen, 1999: xii, 01).

"The general enhancement of political and civil freedoms is central", and these "freedoms include the liberty of acting as citizens who matter and whose voices count, rather than living as well fed, well clothed and entertained vassals (Sen, 1999:288). Besides meeting basic needs, capabilities also mean having the ability to make political and economic choices. In order to enable people to be participating citizens, public discussions are important. Public discussions can be enabled by a variety of public policies such as "press freedom and media independence (including the absence of censorship), expansion of basic education and schooling (including female education), enhancement of economic independence (especially through employment, including female employment, and other social and economic changes that help individuals to be participating citizens (Sen, 1999:281).

Most importantly, poor people know their position better and hence what people choose to do with their capabilities is their choice because "selection and weighting of capabilities depends of personal value judgement" (Clark, 2005:05). Poor people should be given the opportunity to participate in decision making not local elites or cultural experts (Clark, 2005:08). Valued capabilities include the ability to "live long, escape available morbidity, be well nourished, be able to read, write and communicate, take part in literary and scientific pursuits and so forth", but not everyone would want to have this capability (Sen, 1984:497, cited in Clark, 2005:05).

I have discussed how Liberals, Marxist, Anarchists and Keynesians view social grants in general. I have also provided a section that details Amartya Sen's capability approach. A section on the description of the research area follows. Then there is section that deals with methods and results before the final section on discussion and conclusion.

Description of the area

This research was done in Queenstown that is situated in Eastern Cape. Queenstown in Lukhanji is the administrative centre of the Chris Hani District Municipality in Eastern Cape. According to a document written by the Municipality in 2007, the CHDM has an extremely high rate of dependency on social grants as a result of widespread pervasive chronic poverty, scarce jobs and low household incomes in the district (Chris Hani District Municipality, 2007:43). These poverty rates in CHDM were confirmed by a

research in 2014 that was done by researchers (Edward Webster, Anthea Metcalfe, Robert van Niekerk, Michael Noble, John Reynolds, Ulandi Du Plessis, Xoliswa Dilata, Vijay Makanjee, Russell Grinker and Jeff Peires) who found that 87 percent of the population received one or more social grants (Webster, Metcalfe, van Niekerk, Noble, Reynolds, Du Plessis, Dilata, Makanjee, Grinker and Peires, 2014:35). According to the 2011 national statistics census, Queenstown has a total population of about 43 971, 11 206 households and 46, 4 percent of the population is female headed while 68, 8 percent is of the working age (15-64) (Stats SA, 2017; Email Correspondence with Stats SA official, 2017).

Methodology and Results

I have used a qualitative approach because issues like poverty and access to grants are sensitive in that those who access grants are by definition poor as determined through means testing (Makino, 2004:01). Moseotsa, (2006:17, 87) adds that issues such as low incomes, hunger, poverty, hopes and disappointments are sensitive, so it would have been difficult (although possible) to collect data using a quantitative approach. A qualitative approach also helps to gain people's trust (Moseotsa, 2006:17, 87) and allows access to information about experiences and meanings (Lune, Pumar and Koppel, 2010:79; Tracey, 2013:05).

Data was collected using in-depth interviews with residents of the Ezibeleni Township, a historically black working class township situated in Queenstown, in the Eastern Cape. I interviewed household heads including pensioners, middle-aged parents and young mothers. This study selected households that received at least one grant, regardless of whether the household also received income from other sources. I used semi-structured interviews, with the questions repeated in the same order and in the same wording which allowed probing of issues across the data set (as advised by Tracey, 2013:139). I also analysed secondary data in the form of government reports and newspapers to get a broader picture of the geographical area and topic than that provided by the individual interviewees (Mathews and Ross, 2010:278), and also to allow statements in interviews to be cross-checked and contextualised.

I accessed respondents via snowball sampling, starting with contacts in Ezibeleni, who introduced me to social grant recipients. When using the snowball sampling, members of the initial sample (grant recipients) were asked to identify others with the same characteristics as them (grant recipients), whom I, as the researcher, then contacted (Mathews and Ross, 2010:162). The study was carried out in an ethical manner, without coercion or persuasion and everyone was told clearly that they could withdraw at any stage. I used pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality and privacy of respondents. The methods section has detailed how I collected data to support my argument in this paper, the following section presents the results of my fieldwork in Ezibeleni.

Role of Grants

The results obtained in this study indicated that grants play a very important role in the livelihoods of recipients and without these grants, poor South Africans would have more stressed lives (Interview: Bukeka Sitela, 4 November 2014). Social grants enable recipients to access food, funeral policies, education and health care, as well as assisting them to start small businesses and funding job searches. Without these grants, the livelihoods of these recipients would have been more stressed and many recipients even indicated that without the grants they would not have been alive. Although most recipients complained about the small monetary value of grants, most of them conceded that without the grants their lives would be worse *“Without grants, life would be hard because I would not have had what I have. It was going to be hard to have something to eat”* (Interview: Nomvelo Klaas, 4 November 2014).

Grants help recipients to buy food and clothes, pay rent, school fees, electricity, funeral covers and other basic needs, as well as to sometimes to buy items like furniture with one respondent claiming that grants also help her to cover her medical costs. Asked about how they survive on grants one respondent had this to say: *“Well, it's not the same, my son, at least we manage to go to shops, doctors and buy some stuff. It is things like that: we can manage our lives with these grants. You see, we buy food and we go to doctors when we are sick”* (Interview: Bukeka Sitela, 4 November 2014). One woman even claimed that she will send her grandson to the mountain (a Xhosa practice for every boy to become a man) using the grant money (Interview: NoRepublic Khwephe, 3 November 2014).

However, the small monetary value of grants meant that recipients have to borrow money from loan sharks (and elsewhere) as well as buying larger goods on credit which attracts interest because they are not able to meet their needs with the cash paid (grants) (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso, 3 November 2014). In one case, a grant recipient did not get his grant at all because it (cash grant) went straight to deductions from a furniture shop from which he had purchased furniture (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso, 3 November 2014). This has a negative effect on happiness and “choices” which are critical in getting a “good life” as envisaged by Sen, (1999) because being in debt is stressful, as they fail to meet some needs because of monthly deductions. In the meantime, debts will increase and to make matters worse, being in debt means that recipients cannot borrow money (from neighbours or even loan sharks) because they will not be able to pay back that money. This keeps recipients in a cycle of *debt*, a situation that I describe as a “debt curse” (Xaba, 2015:47). Bearing in mind that some grants recipients are illiterate, many unscrupulous business people take advantage and make them sign documents that the grants recipients do not understand (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso, 3 November 2014).

Physical needs: life, health and grants

Most households interviewed said that grants decrease hunger and that they eat three times a day with one household claiming that their food lasts the whole month (Interview: Ntombomzi Khumalo, 3 November 2014, Interview: Nomvelo Klaas, 4 November 2014). However, they added that they do not eat what they prefer, but they “eat what is there” (Interview: Ntombomzi Khumalo, 3 November 2014). A few households complained that grants do not help them reduce poverty because their food does not last the whole month (Interviews: Akhona Ntshika, 3 November 2014; Nolwazi Potwana and her granddaughter, name not provided; Vuyisile Mancam, 3 November 2014; NoRepublic Khwephe, 3 November 2014; Gwiba Xaba, 3 November 2014). These mixed messages indicate that although the grants help, they are not decreasing hunger overall.

In this sense, the grants are decreasing hunger, but there is also the issue of the quality of the food, and the small “choices” involved, to think about. Most households said they do not eat the best meals, rather they eat what they afford and not what they prefer because food is expensive. Out of 16 households interviewed, there are only three households that said they ate what they preferred (Interviews: Bukeka Sitela, 4 November 2014; Silindokuhle Mntwazi, 4 November 2014; Vuyokazi, 4 November 2014). In this way, recipients are merely surviving on these grants; at the most basic physical level, they have few choices and serious gaps.

There is too much pressure on finances as most household heads are old and they are constantly sick which means that they constantly need medication. Most households said grants were not enough for them to go to hospital and that they use free clinics which have inferior facilities. Failure to access proper medical attention is so bad such that some people are reported to have died because of lack of proper medication. In some households, prepaid electricity usually finishes before month end which means that recipients will then have to use candles and firewood (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso, 3 November 2014).

Economic choices and dignity

Despite all the hardships they face in the form of fewer resources (small grants) versus greater needs, the recipients could make “choices”, even though these “choices” are limited; they all wanted to see themselves as having dignity and respectability. Recipients are able to have funeral policies, to look for jobs and start small businesses (micro-trading businesses) using grants. Most importantly, the majority of recipients valued paid work because grants are smaller than salaries and they say they were tired of being dependant on grants. Therefore, they believed that it is possible for them to

generate their own income (Xaba, 2015:49). One recipient even said that grants can only help those who are clever to start businesses (Interview: Kamva Toli), meaning that grants can only help those individuals who have a sense of self-reliance.

Interestingly, a number of older grant recipients believed that grants lead to laziness because *“some people do not bother looking for jobs because of grants. They [lazy recipients] know that each and every month they would get money”* (Interview: Nolwazi Potwana and her granddaughter, name not provided, 3 November 2014). In the end, access to these grants may lead to tensions because adult children do not want to contribute towards the household's expenditure. They (adult children) allegedly buy alcohol using grants (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso). It was alleged that in households that get different grants, members of the same households fight over these grants because it is difficult to coordinate expenditure thereby rising stress levels.

Adult children were allegedly abusing the grant system to avoid work and to abuse alcohol. Asked about whether grants lead to laziness or not, one elderly recipient said:

Ja!, I do agree with that statement ... but I am also not accepting this argument because people are different. Some people always say there are no jobs, but who will create a job for you? Jobs are there; it's just that people do not look for opportunities. There is no employer who will go around looking for people; people have to go and look for jobs. Jobs are there, be it garden jobs or any other odd jobs. Some people will even tell you point-blank that they do not want garden jobs. That is not right. I do not understand that (Interview: Kamva Toli, 4 November 2014).

Recipients also reported that there is animosity between non-recipients and recipients because non-recipients view social grants recipients as people “with money” (Interview: Ncebakazi Busaphi and friends, 3 November 2014). This leads to a situation whereby non-recipients do not want to borrow recipient's money. On the other hand, those who are working do not respect grants recipients as they assume that recipients are abusing grants (Interview: Sihle Booi, 3 November 2014).

Grants also help recipients to look find jobs as they gave job seekers money for taxi fares, to look for jobs in different places with one recipient claiming that her grandchild who is in Cape Town got the job through grants (Interview: Akhona Ntshika, 3 November 2014). Grants help job seekers to print CVs and make other necessary arrangements for job seeking (Interviews: Silindokuhle Mntwazi, 4 November 2014; Kamva Toli, 4 November 2014; Bukeka Sitela, 4 November 2014; NoRepublic Khwephe, 3 November 2014; anonymous, 3 November 2014; Nolwazi Potwana and her granddaughter, name not provided, 3 November 2014).

On the contrary, some grant recipients said their grants got finished before they could even think about job seeking (Interview: Vuyisile Mancam, 3 November 2014). The

grant application system was said to be annoying and that SASSA officials were said to be rude and not helpful (Interview: Nolwazi Potwana and her granddaughter, name not provided, 3 November 2014) while some said the grants application process was relieving as they know that they would “get something” (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso, 3 November 2014).

Social expectations and stress

In an emotional interview, one elderly recipient complained that grants were too small and that the government seems to forget that they (elderly grant recipients) also paid taxes during apartheid (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso). In their view, the black government is neglecting them. With the high costs of living, recipients are always stressed as they are unable to fully meet basic needs. As a result, cash grants could make the stress of poverty worse because of the debts that get incurred; and they did not feel safe at night as robbers target them (Interview: Nolwazi Potwana and her granddaughter, name not provided, 3 November 2014).

At the end of the day, stress and worry about the future is always there because of fewer resources versus bigger needs. Grants could worsen family relations causing problems because there were not enough resources and different people (in the same household) had different needs and wants. *“My child might want this whereas my sister's child may want something different; but with less money it causes stress”* explained one young mother (Interview: Sihle Booi, 3 November 2014). Also grants do not always enable self-respect as recipients fail to fully partake in community life church and funerals.

However, there was mixed message on grants and family relations. Most respondents interviewed said grants improved their relations as they had money to buy food, clothes and furniture (Interview: Ncebakazi Busaphi and friends, 3 November 2014). Generally, when people describe family relations that have been strained by access to grants, they were speaking of the households of *other* people they had “heard” about (Xaba, 2015:54). Thus in some households, grants reduced stress. There was also evidence that suggested that grants reduced stress as most respondents said grants reduced stress as they are able to meet basic needs like food, clothes, etc. Most respondents, said the grants help them to partake in community life and that grants helped to keep their households safe as security was fitted (Interview: Ncebakazi Busaphi and friends).

Importantly, most respondents said grants gave them self-respect, at the very least because they have enough food to eat. These means that they are able to be “indoors” all the time, without bothering anyone (Interview: Ncebakazi Busaphi and friends, 3 November 2014). *“There isn't much worry because of these grants”* added one recipient (Interview: Nomvelo Klaas, 4 November 2014).

For those without any income, the grants are appreciated. *“Well, it's better. It's not the*

same, you know. The children understand that there is no other source of income" explained one recipient (Interview: Bukeka Sitela, 4 November 2014). Another recipient said "It decreases stress: when I was in hospital, my family members were able to buy a few things that are needed in this household. They used to come and visit me, using this money. This money protects me from many things. I am able to buy my son a few things that are needed at school" (Interview: Kamva Toli, 4 November 2014).

Political: choices and information

From what I have observed from these interviews, the mantra amongst grant recipients is that *the ANC gave us grants, so we vote for ANC or else if any other party takes over, the grants would be gone*. Some recipients vote because they believe that if they do not, the grants would be taken away while others said they vote because they are exercising their rights. Most recipients were active voters except in one case where the recipient said she does not vote because she does not see the need to vote as she remains poor anyway (Interview: Vuyisile Mancam, 3 November 2014).

By voting, they said they are appreciating what the government is doing for them (grants). Some vote to escape the stigmatisation tied to people who do not vote (Xaba, 2015:55). All recipients said they will "never vote" for a party that wants to remove grants. Asked if she would vote for a party that wanted to remove grants, one recipient said "Never! What will we eat?" (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso, 3 November 2014). "How will we survive without grants?" one woman asked: "We survive on these grants" (Interview: Nomvelo Klaas, 4 November 2014).

Bearing in mind that all of them seem to be voting for ANC because they believe that grants come from the ANC, this seems to confirm the view that grants act as a vote buying mechanism for the ANC (Patel, 2013:10). All respondents said no one coerces them to vote for a particular party. One respondent boasted that politicians will not be able to remove grants because if politicians remove grants, they will not vote for the ANC (Interview: Vuyokazi, 4 November 2014). So, I would suggest that the grant recipients are coerced indirectly and psychologically and that grant recipients' political choices are limited by the existence of the grant system itself. Recipients access information via polling stations political campaigns, pamphlets and television. Most recipients are unable to pay for TV licences because the grants are small.

Good life and grants

Most recipients believe that grants put them in charge of their lives and make them better people because at least they can send their children to school (Interview: Ncebakazi Busaphi and friends, 3 November 2014). Most recipients value independence, money and one of them described a "good life" as a *"new life, a life with peace of mind, stress-free, where people afford to buy what they want or need, and without corrupt businesses"* (Interview:

Thuba Mayekiso, 3 November 2014), *"a life that is full of happiness, a life that is free of poverty"* (Interview: Vuyisile Mancam, 3 November 2014). However, one recipient argued that grants do not give them a "good life" because loan sharks keep harassing them at night (Interview: Thuba Mayekiso, 3 November 2014). The results discussed above provides evidence for my main argument of the paper, in the next section, I will discuss the significance of the paper and tie the literature with the findings of the study.

Discussion and Conclusion

The main argument in this paper is that social grants do play a positive role in the livelihoods of recipients and that they enable some "choices" to recipients although these "choices" are limited. The data collected at Ezibeleni, Queenstown, suggests that social grants, paid in cash transfers by the post-apartheid state, not only assist people in meeting some basic physical needs but offer a limited means to exercise increased economic and political choices – all of which Sen (1999: xii) argues are keys to escaping the "unfreedom" of poverty. In most of the households I interviewed, grants are the sole income. It becomes safe to conclude that without these grants, recipients would have more stressed lives as they would lack access to food, clothes, electricity, healthcare, education and other basic needs.

But these grants do not fully end poverty both in the sense of fully meeting basic physical and social needs, and in Sen's sense (1999) of allowing the full exercise of human capabilities through "choices". These "choices" are limited by the small size of the grants, large family sizes versus greater needs, a serious and long-term lack of resources, persistent unemployment, and high indebtedness. This means that grants meet these needs to a limited extent only and under stressful conditions. Therefore, recipients do not have the capability to defeat poverty or "unfreedom" seen by Sen and they do not live the life they would prefer. For instance, most recipients said they eat what they can afford, not what they prefer, as food is expensive.

Although social grants help recipients to generate additional income by starting small businesses and funding job searches, some recipients exhaust their funds before such actions can even be considered because of poverty, large families and small amounts of grants. This is related to the view by (Williams, 2007:14-15; Kane-Berman, 2016:8) that grant income may be used to finance small enterprise creation, through accessing credit, hiring equipment and buying inputs. It is important to stress that these businesses are micro-trading and that there is very limited scope to move beyond micro-trading. There is no investment in mutual aid systems like self-administered benefit funds, which the anarchists/ syndicalists (e.g. Ward, 2011) favour.

This study also confirms the findings by Jacobs, Ngcobo, Hart and Baipheti (2010:04) that people living in low-income households that receive grants may have a higher rate

of employment than low-income households that do not receive grants as grants are helpful in funding job searches and application.

Contrary to the view by critics that receiving social grants lead to a “dependency syndrome” and laziness, I found that recipients value paid work, independence and that they do not like being dependent on grants. Most recipients show a determination to find jobs and stop receiving social grants because these grants are inadequate for solving their poverty related problems whereas paid work would provide a higher income and more benefits, while for others, employment means a higher status in the community.

While grants enable recipients to access furniture and desired clothes this is usually through debt financing and recipients remain poor. Recipients are also able to meet various social needs such as participating in local community life, child-rearing and family roles, attending church, and obtaining more expensive items that are considered to be vital. The small size of grants keeps the recipients in severe debt as they try to meet their needs. When recipients run out of money, they are seen as abusing the grants by non-recipients which means that they cannot borrow money from neighbours. Thus, there is a belief that grants promote laziness, disrespect to elders and that adult children on social welfare abuse grants.

Grants limit political “choices” in that all respondents believe that they have to vote for the ANC as a form of appreciating grants. Although all of them say that no one coerces them, I suggest that grants coerce recipients psychologically and indirectly. Recipients assume that grants come from the ANC party and not from the post-apartheid legislation. Although much of that legislation and policy is driven by the ANC the link made between voting and grants is so strong that it also seems to mean that people would overlook other problems in the ANC since they will tend to “vote for grants”.

It becomes difficult to imagine another political party making headway as long as the state grants are seen as ANC grants, bearing in mind that grants recipients are eligible for voting and that they form a big chunk of the voting population. Most of them felt that if they do not vote for the ANC, the grants would be taken away and this explains the striking pattern of recipients being active voters. Therefore, the mantra is, *let us vote for the ANC in numbers, to keep our grants*. This confirms the view by (Patel, 2013:10) that grants act as a vote buying mechanism for the ruling party in South Africa. Hence it can be political suicidal for the ANC to cut grants, even if the grant system led to a fiscal crisis (Financial Mail, 2014). Hence, the political choice for grant recipients becomes the ANC.

This is not to ignore the ANC’s efforts in expanding the social grants, the point is that political choices for recipients seem to be limited as a result of receiving grants. Most importantly, this also creates a dependency on “state philanthropy” in a highly unequal capitalist society, as pointed out by Marxists (van Driel, 2009:139) or involves using grants to control working class people, as the anarchists/ syndicalists argue (Holton, 1980).

Also, respondents feel that they had no control over their grants and that SASSA officials are usually rule bound and strict. This becomes financially strenuous for the extremely poor as they have to call Pretoria if they have a serious problem with their grants. This confirms the view by Ward (2011) that that state-run social welfare tends to be top-down in approach, rather than enabling bottom-up actions.

In closing, while the positive role of grants in poorest households is evident, one must also mention that “choices” are limited by bigger families, unemployment, and the small amount of grants as well as the general cycle of poverty that most families are in. However, this is done to a limited extent only, and the stressful conditions that people endure continue. Social grants have a positive role in most households and offer more choices, but are inadequate to fully offer choices – and end poverty – as conceptualised by Sen. Grants do not remove the “unfreedom” as described by Sen (1999) *per se*, they only reduce the “unfreedom”.

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List of dates, times and places of interviews

- a. Interview 1. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Thuba Mayekiso. Sex: Male, Age: 70s. Family role: grandfather.
- b. Interview 2. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Names of interviewees: Ncebakazi Busaphi and her three friends, their names not provided. Sex: Female. Age: 63. Family role: mother.
- c. Interview 3. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Ntombomzi Khumalo. Sex: Female. Age: 18, Family role: young mother and daughter.
- d. Interview 4. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: anonymous. Sex: Male. Age: 72. Family role: grandfather.
- e. Interview 5. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Akhona Ntshika. Sex: Female. Age 87. Family role: grandmother and mother to an adult daughter.
- f. Interview 6. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Names of interviewees: Nolwazi Potwana and her granddaughter, her name not provided. Sex: Female. Age: 80. Family role: grandmother.
- g. Interview 7. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Vuyisile Mancam. Sex: Female. Age: 42. Family role: mother.
- h. Interview 8. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Sihle Booi. Sex: Female. Age 24. Family role: young mother and daughter.
- i. Interview 9. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: NoRepublic Khwephe. Sex: Female. Age 47. Family role: young grandmother.
- j. Interview 10. 3 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Gwiba Xaba. Sex: Female. Age 62. Family role: grandmother.
- k. Interview 12. 4 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Nomvelo Klaas. Sex: Female. Age: 55. Family role: mother.
- l. Interview 13. 4 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Bukeka Sitela. Sex: Female. Age: 65. Family role: grandmother.
- m. Interview 14. 4 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Kamva Toli. Sex: Male. Age: 48. Family role: father.
- n. Interview 15. 4 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewee: Silindokuhle Mntwazi. Sex: Female. Age: 25, Family role: young mother.
- o. Interview 16. 4 November 2014, Ezibeleni. Name of interviewees: Vuyokazi, no surname given. Sex: Female. Age 60, Family role: Mother.

Appendix

Email Correspondence with Stats SA official. 2017.