Social Exclusion and Its Linkage to Violence in Nations and Cities of Sub-Saharan Africa– Case Study of Nigeria.

Kunle Ifesanya[1], Taiwo David Olugbenga[2]
[1]Department of Architectural Technology/ The Federal Polytechnic, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria.
[2]Department of Urban & Regional Planning/ The Federal Polytechnic, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria.

Abstract: *Social divisions and exclusion in society are not new. However, the character of social divisions has changed. The challenges of inadequate resources in cities, caused by unprecedented population explosion and diminishing opportunities, are being further exacerbated. The paper reveals that ethnicity and religion, rather than other characteristics like profession/vocation, economic status etc are the principal identities by which most Africans characterize themselves. These social characteristics have, therefore, become the major causes of segregation and social exclusion within communities, cities and even in the continent within individual countries of Africa, leading to genocides in extreme cases. Improved education and enhanced urban governance is highly essential in ameliorating the situation and maintaining progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.*
Keywords: *African cities, social exclusion, ethnicity, religion, violence.*

I. Introduction

Historically, cities developed and evolved as potent implement for socio-economic interaction and growth. The lives and livelihoods of millions of people will be affected by what is done (or not done) in cities. [1] averred that cities and towns have always been centres of opportunity. Also, [2] corroborated this assertion, stating that Global Cities are engines of economic growth and centres of innovation for the global economy and the hinterlands of their respective nations. The foundations of prosperity and prominence for most global cities lie in their long-standing commercial relationships with the rest of the world. Cities, therefore, are valuable artefacts and catalyst of growth.

However, in contemporary times, as geographical entities, cities are hardly discernible places with distinct identities. Often, they have become endless inhabited sprawls without clear boundaries and have become sites of excruciating human suffering [3]. It is now common knowledge that mankind has entered the urban age, as, for the first time in history; the majority of human population on planet earth now lives in urban settlements ([4], [5]). According to [5], urbanization is progressing rapidly in those countries and world regions which are still predominantly rural and some of the fastest growing megacities in the world are emerging in the poorest countries like Lagos, Kinshasa, Dar-es-Salaam, in Africa, and Dhaka in Asia.

Similarly, sociologically, cities no longer spring to mind as the sites of community and wellbeing. For the vast majority of people, cities are polluted, unhealthy, tiring, overwhelming, confusing and alienating. Politically, too, the contemporary city bears little resemblance to images of the times when urbanism stood for citizenship, the ideal republic, good government, civic behaviour and the ideal public sphere. The 'urban' remains an enormously significant formative arena, not only as the daily space of over half of the world's population, but also as the supremely visible manifestation of difference and heterogeneity placed together[6]. These differences and heterogeneity have often led to competition and conflicts. Indeed, cities have always been sites of social conflict [7]. According to [8], social differences are gathered together in cities at unique scales and levels of intensity, supporting [9] which posited that the city is a place of meeting with 'the other'. Contemporary urbanism highlights the challenges of negotiating class, gender and ethnic or racial differences placed in close proximity, as the spatiality of the city plays a distinctive role in the negotiation of multiplicity and difference.

These widening differences and their implications exert tremendous influence on the nature and characteristics of present-day cities and nations, thereby, shaping contemporary world. This has, therefore, amplified the conflicts in cities, as postulated by Karl Marx in his Social Conflict Theory, in which he averred that these conflicts tend to climax in violence and revolution.

1.2 Study Area and Case Study

Nigeria, being the most populated country in Sub-Sahara Africa, having a population of about 168.8 million [10], constitute a very apt case study for Sub-Saharan Africa and the eight most populous country in the world, comprising more than 250 ethnic groups ([11] [12]). The population of the country increased from 140

million in 2006 to over 158 million by 2010, and by 2012 the population have risen to 168.8 million[10].The United Nations estimates that the country's population will be no less than 730 million by 2100 ([12], [13]). Nigeria's population is almost 20 percent of the entire continent, which means one out of every five persons in the 54 nation continent lives in Nigeria [14]. This makes the country a veritable case study for the region. Nigeria, as a case study is very apt, considering the fact that its population is greater than the cumulative population of all the other countries of the region, including Ghana, Cote-d'Ivoire and Cameroun. Also, Nigeria is the most populous nation not only in sub-Saharan but in the entire African continent with a population that is more than twice that of Egypt, four times that of South-Africa and more than ten times that of Libya and Zimbabwe.

Sub-Saharan countries and their estimated population figures are as follows; Benin (10.05 million), Burkina Faso (16.46 million), Cape Verde (494,401), Cote d'Ivoire (19.84 million), Gambia (1.791 million), Ghana (25.37 million), Guinea (11.45 million), Guinea-Bissau (1.664 million), Liberia (4.19 million), Mali (14.85 million), Mauritania (3.796 million), Niger (17.16 million), Nigeria (168.8 million), Senegal (13.73 million), Sierra Leone (5.979 million), Togo (6.643 million), Cameroun (21.7 million), Gabon (1.633 million) [10].

1.3.Theoretical Framework and Literature Review
Although, Karl Marx' social conflict theory emphasizes the class warfare between the rich and the poor, the pervasive poverty in sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 80% of the population live below the absolute poverty line creates a form of homogeneity, whereby, the people adopt other elements of their diversity as the rally point for struggle. Often, individuals and groups that hold political and economic power panders to the wishes of their respective ethnic and/or religious groups. [15] coined the term 'prebendalism' to describe this phenomenon of patron-client or neo-patrimonialism in Nigeria which is the case study. It, therefore, means that viewing [16] in the social conflict theory of Karl Marx, which state that social conflict tend to climax in violence and revolution, ethnicity and religious affiliations are fundamental ingredients for violence in Nigeria and in Sub-Saharan Africa in general. The term has since been commonly adopted in scholarly literature. It describes the sense of entitlement that many people in Nigeria feel they have to the revenues of the country as elected officials, government workers, and members of the ethnic and religious groups to which they belong feel they have a right to a share of government revenues. [16] further stated that

"According to the theory of prebendalism, state offices are regarded as prebends
that can be appropriated by office holders, who use them to generate material benefits
for themselves and their constituents and kin groups."

Hence, the virtual obliteration of the dividing lines between power and ethnicity or religion in sub-Saharan African societies, and the relevance of Marx' social conflict theory to this discourse. The Social Conflict Theory addresses this category of issues and states that the society or organization functions so that each individual participant and its groups struggle to maximize their benefits, which inevitably contribute to social change, such as changes in politics and revolutions [17].

The Theory is a Marxist based social theory which argues that individuals and groups within the society have differing amounts of material and non-material resources and that the more powerful groups (economic, religious or ethnic) use their power in order to exploit groups with less power. The two methods by which this exploitation is done are through brute force and economics. Marx avers that the ruling class exploits and oppresses the subject class. The theory states that there is a basic conflict of interest between the two classes, and the various institutions of society such as the legal and political system, including law enforcement and financial institutions, are instruments of ruling class domination and serve to further its interests [18]. Some theorists further posits that the criminal justice system and criminal law are operating on behalf of the powerful groups, with resulting policies aimed at controlling the others, and to protect themselves from physical attacks, thereby, ignoring the rights of others in the process [19].

2. Social Exclusion Dynamics in Contemporary Cities
Social exclusion can be defined, on the one hand, as 'disaffiliation' ([20], [21]), or non-integration into social and labour relations, that is understood as the absence of interdependence, and, on the other hand, as the absence of participation in various dimensions of social life. The standard given to certain levels of affiliation and participation in order to live a life as a respectable citizen is understood as given externally. This is a two dimensional approach to social exclusion, built on lack of 'participation' as well as lack of 'interdependence'. Inclusion in social relations is characterized by interdependence and formal co-operation within the formal division of labour, and reciprocal obligations, acceptance, acknowledgement and solidarity in private relations. Exclusion, on the other hand, means the abandonment and subsequent break-up of these relations.

Social divisions and exclusion in society are not new, yet the character of social divisions has changed. Social exclusion has become a preferred term in current debate, because it appears to be a broader and more dynamic concept than the notion of poverty. According to [21], the notion of poverty focuses primarily on distributional issues, the lack of resources at the disposal of an individual or a household. In contrast, social exclusion focuses primarily on relational issues; inadequate social participation, limited social integration and lack of power [21].

However, while poverty is not necessarily caused by social exclusion, the latter is usually a harbinger of the former. [22] earlier stated that in many countries of the (Global) South, where majority of people are low-income or poor by global standards, material deprivation is not automatically or necessarily accompanied by exclusion from full social participation. [23] also averred that social exclusion can be distinguished from poverty, although, both are inextricably linked, and that social exclusion is invariably a cause of poverty and inequality but not necessarily a consequence of them. This means that poverty does not necessarily lead to social exclusion, even though, socially excluded individuals can eventually lose their economic power through social exclusion. It also means that a poor individual who belongs to the power-holding (political) ethnic or religious group fares better in terms of social satisfaction and opportunities than a wealthy individual who belongs to the disadvantaged group. This underscores the reason why the struggle against social exclusion in the study area adopts ethnic and religious paths, rather than the traditional battle between the 'proletariat' and the 'Bourgeoisie'. The issue of social exclusion is, therefore, germane in addressing the pervasive poverty in the study area.

Urbanism highlights the challenges of negotiating class, gender and ethnic or racial differences placed in close proximity, with the spatiality of the city playing a distinctive role in the negotiation of the multiplicity and difference. Citizenship confers on a person membership of a political community, and the enjoyment of civil rights and protection within that community. However, in reality, most parts of the world, being a citizen, often, does not automatically guarantee one the full enjoyment of human rights, or social acceptance within one's state. Human rights of citizens are often violated for various reasons, such as, on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, political orientation, sexual orientation, religion, etc. The city, being the centre of agglomeration of these diverse groups of people, is the 'theatre' for the display of these inequalities.

The criteria for delineating and excluding sections of the city population which include such characteristics as gender, race, socio-economic class, physical state, religion, sexual orientation, etc. is known as 'Invidious discrimination', a term which generally refers to treating one group of people less well than another on such grounds as their race (racism), gender (sexism), religion (religious discrimination), height, ethnic background, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, preference or behaviour, results of intelligence (IQ) testing, age or political views. The term 'invidious discrimination' carries the implication that the factors on which the discrimination is based are intrinsically irrelevant to the decision being influenced. [24] also defines invidious discrimination as treating a class of persons unequally in a manner that is malicious, hostile, or damaging. Generally, the excluded group is perceived by the discriminator (often, the majority) as inferior to others.

'When this type of discrimination occurs, the ramifications can range from a slight discomfort to even murder or death. If institutionalised discrimination occurs, a large number of people are often affected. A disastrous example of institutionalised discrimination is slavery, where certain persons who are related to slaves are treated as non-citizens, or even in some cases, inhumanely. Religious discrimination occurs in many forms as well. There are several countries that have serious laws banning certain religions from practicing. When an individual acts differently toward another based on some preconceived notion regarding the other's religion, that is a form of discrimination. This type of discrimination can range from avoiding the person on a street to murder' [21].

The effects of invidious discrimination span the spectrum, from mild, such as slow or unhelpful retail service, through verbal slurs, denial of employment or housing, to hate crimes and genocide.

3. Social Exclusion in Sub-Saharan African Cities

[26] stated that 'Urbanism' or city growth in Nigeria, as in many other African countries predates, colonialism in the continent. Apart from Egypt where civilization dates back to c.3000 BC, cities in other regions of the continent like West Africa also date back many centuries. Early urban development was recorded from the ancient Sudanese empire of 800AD, Mali empire of 1500 AD to Songhai Empire of 1800AD [27]. These important historical artefacts – the cities – flourished as a result of their location along the famous trans-Sahara trade routes, emphasising their importance as catalysts in socio-economic inter-relationships. The emergence of powerful local rulers also enhanced the evolution of these cities into effective nucleus of development/engines of growth. According to [26], some of the prominent ancient pre-colonial cities of the sub-

region include Bamako, Gao, Timbuktu, Ouagadougou, Agades, Begho, Benin, Ibadan, Ile-Ife, Ilorin, Kumasi and Oyo, amongst others.

By the early nineteenth (19th) century, another group of cities emerged in the sub-region; they were the colonial cities. These second generation cities include Lagos, Jos, Port-Harcourt, Kaduna, Jebba, Lokoja, Dakar, Conakry, Accra, Niamey and Monrovia amongst others. Since cities are dynamic artefacts, that is, they are non-static, the social change in the Sub-Sagaran African sub-region by the mid-twentieth Century which culminated in the political independence of most of the countries in the region, led to the emergence of a third generation of cities which are known as the "Post-Colonial Cities". These cities include Abuja, Akure, Birnin Kebbi, Makurdi, Owerri and Youmosokro amongst others. Apart from Egypt where civilization dates back to c.3000 BC, cities in other regions of the African; continent like West Africa, also date back many centuries. Early urban development was recorded from the ancient Sudanese empire of 800AD, Mali empire of 1500 AD to Songhai Empire of 1800AD [26] These important historical artefacts – the cities – flourished as a result of their location along the famous trans-Saharan trade routes, emphasising their importance as catalysts in socio-economic inter-relationships.

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As developing countries of the world experience rapid rate of urbanization, the number of urban centres in Sub-Saharan Africa has risen drastically in the last one hundred years. The resultant effect has been the formation of more urban centres, which are densely populated. Studies have shown that the rapid rate of urbanization in the sub-region and the consequential explosion of urban population have not been matched by corresponding commensurate change in social, economic and technological development [1]. According to [28], it is estimated that 46 percent of the African urban population lives in slums and informal settlements, where poverty, overcrowding, unemployment, crime and pollution are prevalent. The deprivation and misery in these cities are further aggravated by the exclusion of some groups of people in the participation and enjoyment of opportunities within the cities. In most countries in Africa, citizenship is acquired by birth, ancestral descent, marriage, registration, or naturalisation. Whilst nationals are citizens, it does not however follow that all citizens are nationals. In some countries, while citizenship can be acquired by naturalization, such a person is barred from holding public office [29] as nationality offers the opportunity to hold public office in one's country of birth. Based on this, some heads of countries in Africa have declared political contenders as foreigners, despite their having been born and lived all their lives in the country, merely because one of their parents was born in a foreign country – thus rendering them unable to hold public office.

In Swaziland, for example, one is a Swazi (national of Swaziland) by virtue of one's language, specifically the pronunciation of certain words in SiSwati (the indigenous language of the people), looks and mannerisms, and other traits associated with being a Swazi. If one is unable to display these traits, one is not considered a national of Swaziland [29]. It is, therefore, common, for other minority ethnic groups, although citizens and nationals to be denied the sense of belonging in 'their' cities, being marginalized and discriminated against by the more dominant ethnic group(s). This type of social exclusion, which is State sponsored, leaves no avenue for seeking justice and confirms Karl Marx' postulation that the various institutions of society such as the legal and political system, including law enforcement and financial institutions, are instruments of ruling class domination and serve to further its interests. In the absence of legitimate means of redress or justice, social exclusion is, therefore, often, the cause of violent clashes and carnage wars on the continent, as this remains the only means of protest and seeking redress.

Also, the Basarwa people of Botswana constitute a peculiar case of discrimination and exclusion of indigenous people in their own native land/city [29]. According to the Special Rapporteur for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), "the body has received and continues to receive numerous complaints alleging human rights violations (against the Basarwa people) related to conflict over the tenure and collective ownership of land, access to natural resources such as water and forests …". According to UNDRIP, since indigenous peoples historically identify with 'Mother Earth' and base their cultural identity primarily on their long association with the earth and its fruits, when this relationship is disrupted or eroded situations arise that impair their human rights. The Body has received complaints from countries like Botswana and Kenya, in Africa, Philippines, India and Guatemala, among other countries of the world, that indigenous people lack information, opportunities for participation and decision-making power with regards to issues that affect them. This underscores the global spread of social exclusion and the importance of the subject in contemporary time

The case of Nigeria is particularly important, as it is the most populated country, not only in the sub-Saharan region, but in the entire continent of Africa as earlier stated.

In this most populous country in Africa, ethnicity is generally regarded as the most basic and politically salient identity. This claim is supported by the fact that, both in competitive and non-competitive settings, Nigerians are more likely to define themselves in terms of their ethnic affinities than any other identity. In Nigeria, ethnicity is demonstrably the most conspicuous group identity [30]. Almost one-half (48.2%) of Nigerians chose to label themselves with an ethnic (including linguistic and local-regional) identity, compared to almost one-third (28.4%) who opted for class identities, and 21.0% who chose a religious identity. In essence, close to two-thirds of the population see themselves as members of primordial ethnic, regional, and religious groups. In other words, Nigerians tend to cluster more readily around the cultural solidarities of kin than the class solidarities of the workplace or profession [30]). This, therefore, consequently, leads to large scale exclusion of people who are in the minority, in terms of ethnicity or religion, from full participation and enjoyment of opportunities in most cities of Nigeria.

Figure 1. Map of Africa Showing the Countries of Africa

Source: (Yes.or.ke, 2010) [31]

Figure 2: Voting pattern in Nigeria's 2011 Presidential
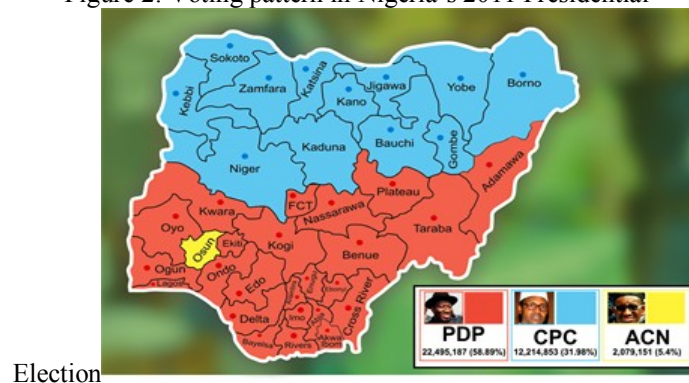
Election

Source: Transparency Nigeria, 2011 [32]

The April, 2011 Presidential election held in Nigeria was adjudged as the most free and fair in recent memory by both local and international media, including the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Cable News Network (CNN), Reuters Group, etc. The voting pattern, vis-à-vis ethnicity and religion can, therefore, be analyzed as authentic. Figure 1 shows the voting pattern across the 923,000 sq. Kilometre area and 36 states of the country [32].

[32] shows the predominantly Muslim ethnic group of the northern part of the country voting in unison for the foremost northern candidate – Muhammad Buhari, a Muslim from a dominant ethnic group in 'the North'. The map also shows the predominantly Christian ethnic groups of 'the South' voting for the foremost southern candidate– Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian from the South. It is instructive to note that the geographical lines of so-called political ideologies were obliterated and the voting pattern was narrowed down to ethno-religious considerations. This underscores the strength of ethnic and religious identity in African

political and socio-cultural environment. This elucidates the fact that minority groups from different regions of the country, who live among other groups in their area of dominance, will suffer segregation and exclusion in cities across the country. Cumulatively, this translates to the social exclusion of a large percentage of the population across the country.

Partly because of their tendency to spill over from their initial theatres into other localities, states, or even regions of the federation, ethno-religious clashes resulting from real and perceived social exclusion have proved to be the most violent instances of inter-group crisis in many part of Africa, including Nigeria. In Nigeria, such crises have occurred mainly in the Middle-Belt and cultural borderline states of the Muslim north, where Muslim Hausa-Fulani groups have been pitted against non-Muslim ethnic groups in a "dangerous convergence of religious and ethnic fears and animosities (in which it) is often difficult to differentiate between religious and ethnic conflicts as the dividing line between the two is very thin" [32].

The major examples of violent ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria have included the Kafanchan-Kaduna crises in 1987 and 1999, Zangon-Kataf riots of 1992, Tafawa Balewa clashes in 1991, 1995 and 2000, the Kaduna Sharia riots of 2000, the Jos riots of 2001 and most recently, the Jos riots of January 2010 and January 2011. More than 200,000 people were displaced by the Kaduna ethno-religious riots of February 2000, while the death toll reached 400 (Religious Tolerance, 2009). The ethno-religious riots of January 2010 in Jos, which was triggered by allegations of discrimination, had 17, 000 people displaced and 265 people killed [33]. These riots generated violent ripple effects beyond Kaduna and Jos, respectively.

According to [34] , the British colonial lords threw together incompatible people of varying faiths, cultures and dispositions for purely commercial reasons to form a country of artificially constructed conglomeration of peoples. According to ([34], [35]) sources, 'seething' and rolling of these peoples has led to series of genocide and instances ethnic and religious cleansing that have been perpetrated constantly in the country, apart from the country's Biafra Civil War in which an estimated one million people died due to the conflict, hunger and diseases. This underscores the linkage of real or perceived religious and ethnic based social exclusion to violence in African nations and cities.

Similarly, as minority groups suffer social exclusion within individual cities, the ethnic groups who do not hold the power at the central/national level often suffer social exclusion. This usually results in various forms of injustices, subjugation, persecution and sometimes, on the extreme, genocide, as experienced in Rwanda.

II.   Conclusion

Social exclusion has several unfavourable implications on human beings, like economic disadvantage and poverty. However, the most dangerous of all consequences of social exclusion is violence because it causes direct threat to life and several millions of lives have already been lost in sub-Saharan Africa as a result of this. Social exclusion, therefore, becomes a matter of grave importance and demands serious attention.

According to the UNDRIP, in [28], groups of people all over the world are trapped in a permanent cycle of exclusion, and this constitutes one of the most serious violations of human rights. While strengthening efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, governments, national and international agencies should pay particular attention to issues arising from the socio-economic exclusion of various groups/classes of people in many cities of Africa, and the world in general, as the full enjoyment of all human rights requires, first and foremost, the full attainment of their right to liberty and participation, which is essential for people to emerge from the exclusion and discrimination, and therefore, from poverty.

Improved level of education is critical creating enlightenment, thereby, down-playing the relevance of ethnicity and religion in social interaction. Also, administrative authorities, as presently constituted in many cities of the Global South, cannot manage the problem of social embedding or inclusion, as social embedding and networks for social caring have been weakened by the secular process of individualising. To solve problems of spatial inequality, the problem-solving capacity of the State must be improved. Social innovation is, therefore, highly necessary in countering trends of social exclusion and for fostering social inclusion processes.

According to [36], Africa's burgeoning urban problems have received less attention than warranted and now, at the dawn of Africa's urban age, these need to be urgently addressed. In line with this, improved urban governance is very critical. This should be geared towards improving citizen participation in decision making processes of government through its agencies and institutions. One of the most important recommendations is that many of these sub-Saharan African countries should be encouraged to establish true federations, whereby federating units, which comprise more monolithic groups, will be very strong and largely autonomous, having the right to negotiate their continued participation in the federation. This will promote symbiotic relationships, where each constituent unit gives and benefits from the union. It will also substantially limit the powers of Heads of States; minimize oppression and exclusion and makes violence unnecessary. Peaceful self determination should also not be resisted, as this will limit the ethnic and regions difference within each unit, thereby preventing avoidable conflicts and violence

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