

Social Dialectical Relations in the Development of Social Work in Developmental Agenda Setting: from Nigeria's Transformation to change Agenda

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Abstract

Nigeria's Socio-economic transformation is undergoing structural change Post and Vickers (1975), since 2007 ushering in new social developments initiatives in the country. In all these initiatives, this paper argues that, Social work has been either non-existent in the pages of these agendas or superficially involved and has over the years become treated as an instrument of social welfare systems as against an instrument capable of transforming the socioeconomic development of the general polity. The collapse of the transformation agenda regime in the 2015 general elections clearly inducted or admits formally to a poverty of a constitutional thrust which social work core values and mandate seeks to facilitate in the country. The paper identified impact of Development of Social Work in the transformation and change agendas of the global north and contended that the structural relation of stated function of social work to real functioning of social welfare system has a direct bearing to the relation of social work curriculum value base to social base values in the Nigerian general polity. Differences of opinion about what constitutes a social problem is now become a solutions to social problems which in turn creates social change and these structural dynamics are not factored in agenda formulation hence, impregnated by systemic failures. Still yet, the structural relation of a class teaching to a field work training in social work practice has structural specific ills to theory and practice as developmental model as an approach chose by any nation Gauntlett (1998). The shift in political leadership opts for change transitioning from transformation to western style civil society. Hence an adoption of social work seemed to be natural choice for the change agenda in the country. The paper

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therefore recommended the documentation of the change agenda into proper working document instead of adopting a change agenda from a political party manifesto avoid a structural bias

Keywords: *Dialectical relations, Development, Social work, Agenda*

Background to the Study

In Developed social policies whether it is framed as social welfare, or security systems, or development agendas etc.; the social structure and the dialectical relationships of institutional systems social workers are concerned about in locating social conditions combine to constitute the fundamental basic unit of analysis in the formulation. The same applies to the analysis of social problems that social work seeks to help individuals, communities at all levels of practice for specific intervention. Individuals that constitute working committees for the developments of agendas are part of the social system experiencing constant structural change themselves in which they are meant to find a blue print alongside social structural changes. Social workers locate social problems within social structures which these agendas are also a part as it were with the social worker as from the foregoing. That Developmental Agendas today seeks to address conditions that furnishes national agendas with policy thrust existed, is a function of social work lenses in locating social problems of individuals in situations and other environmentally related problems.

But over the years, the way and manner these processes takes place lacks the discretion of social workers particularly in Nigeria. While misinterpretation of societal conditions as not the primary source of social problems is adjudged to be true, the interpretation of solutions to social problems by value base knowledge is not given professional consonance. It is not also given consonance in agenda development in Nigeria despite the enormous role; the generalist approach in social work has in agenda formulation in specific countries. Social workers role in any policy agenda area note the multidimensional, institutional processes of social dynamics, order and equilibrium as closely linked to agenda formulation but those in direct service formulation or provision treats these processes with kids gloves in agenda setting. This little relevance to their work is indicative that power of agenda influence is not mediated through policy making processes.

System-blaters suggest that the key to understanding social problems for developing agendas is to understand the development of social work in relations to the distribution of power and power relations, inequality and levels of poverty in society.

Globally, the structural social relationships of an interrelated and interdependent institutional development not only shape the development of social work for agenda development as a part of that whole but; it produces social developmental agendas still yet as that very other part. This social-intercourse produces change, transforming societies to an expected outcome.

A peruse at the National Transformation Agenda and the change agendas in Nigeria reflect a poverty of these informed decision owing to the outright neglect of the development of social work and social development as an inclusive instrument of change and transformation in policy formulation. In the same way, comparative social developmental agendas in-turn shaped social development work through the structural relationships in which social work prides itself in the various branches of the profession.

The development of developmental agendas largely depends on full recognition of institutional responsibilities in the social work service delivery. This means that social work, just like any other social institution has a functional prerequisite in providing platforms for engaging negotiations for social change through social functioning in the public space. It sets the stage for public discourse on popular issues like the several developmental plans and agendas in Nigeria and enjoys some levels of micro and mezzo participations leading to an unprecedented success in government service delivery of developmental social welfare programs Onokerhoraye (1984). This means that the role of social work and agenda settings in Nigeria must include critical institutional formations for development. For instance, gender and gender related issues that are structurally related to the inevitable development of social work, Ibid (1984) is central in the development of agenda or agenda-setting.

Conceptual Decipher

Dialectical Relationship: Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* Ed (1959:110) these are autonomy and connectedness, favoritism and impartiality, openness and closeness, novelty and predictability, instrumentality and affection, and finally, equality and inequality. Autonomy and connectedness refers to the desire to have ties and connections with others versus the need to separate oneself as a unique individual.

National Transformation Agenda: National Transformation connotes the participation of all in the process that enhances the general wellbeing of citizens by improving the economic, political and social lives. The Goodluck Jonathan administration responded to this need in its Transformation Agenda, which covers the period 2011 to early 2015.

Conceptual Context in Understanding Dialectical Relationships in Social Agenda Formulation

The investigation of the dialectical relationship between structure, context and history is essential for a proper understanding of the nature and the defining characteristics of any social Agenda formation in which sustainable solutions are being sought to socially engage social problems.

First, in his first great synthesizing work, the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, Marx put into relief that, capitalist industrial production, had become an alienated form, the basis of social life; a circumstance considered by Marx “a priori a lie.” The only way is to be rectified by a deep-seated structurally determined social condition. We see in this position the social isolation of the structural institutional determining factors in the development of the social in agenda development which comprises of social policy and agenda setting.

Second, as far back as 1845 Marx forcefully underscored, capitalist agendas or policies in his contribution to the book written with Engels, *The German Ideology*, that societal reproduction in which the particular human beings happened to be constantly engaged in their daily life “without any mystification and speculation should be assessed in the production process in relationship to the connection of the social and political structure. This is a truism in social work principle because according them... “*The social structure and the state are constantly evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals*”... (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels 1975:5-35) This allow us “the necessity, and at the same time the condition, of a transformation both of industry and the social structure.” Ibid (1975:5-35)

Third, according to Reisch and Jani (2012), Social work value base principles are important in social policy because of its analytic philosophy of investigating or discussing the opinions that shaped policy agendas. It does this by enquiring into structural contradictions and solutions for the existence or action of opposing social forces in basic conceptual issues that informed the agenda.

Fourth, dialectical relationships in social agenda formulation beams light on social policy formulation as a process of construction of knowledge that appropriates critical social practice in developing social agenda setting. It leaves of the concrete issues, in the agenda as it accomplishes an abstraction process in the agenda and returns to the concrete issues therein. A critical reflexive paper of this nature analysis how the agenda can become a movement and how systemized are the plan action? Are they a true reflection of social action? That abstraction seeks to peruse into the fabrics of concrete realities in the agenda, is a function of to internal structures movement for the formulation of the agenda, their causes and socio-

economic laws justices, revealing their interactions, contradictions and independence for lucidity or showing clear and easy to understanding the agenda. Banks (2012) Boulet (2009) Fine (2007), Reisch and Jani (2012).

Scientific Claim of the Dialectical or System-Agenda Approach

According to Eitzen Stanley Etel (1986), (1994), (2000), (2003), Social Workers use the system-agenda approach for a couple of reasons which to my mind, were lacking in hitherto Nigeria agendas in Nigeria and other parts of the developing countries tend to blame individuals within the policy framework of action or those that initiated the agenda. System-agenda Approach introduces an objective need and balance to the understanding of Social Problem dimension of the agenda.

Second, the dialectical system-agenda approach is concerned with societal issues and society's institutional framework of action responsible for correcting a specific social problem in relations to multiple issues that creates the any.

Third, since national agendas are institutional human creations, we, should change them when they no longer serve the will of the structure that services the welfare of the people anymore. Democratic conceptions of society which Nigeria is a part has always held that institution/agendas exist to serve people, not vice versa.

The Role of Social Workers in Developing National Agendas: a Generalist Perspective.

Social administration is crucial in shaping institutional or organizational structures which facilitate the achievement of national goals. According to Wayne (1986), these goals are not restricted to welfare only, but extend over technical, economic, agricultural and whatever other desirables may be an integral part of national development. Social administrators provide services to a variety of clients to improve their quality of life. By fostering intensive interactions between themselves and their clientele or target groups, social administrators unleash those humane and emotional factors which might be impeded by scientific and pseudo-scientific, materialistic or administrative models. The importance of social administration is shown, among others, by its emergence as a distinct academic discipline in so many agendas and universities across the world.

Second, in their role as administrators, social workers oversee national programs or national agendas and systems that provide social, health and public welfare services, which are intended to enhance the people's quality of life and to help them achieve the desired standard of living. Based on their understanding of the mission of organizations for which they work, social workers help administer the material

and financial resources necessary to ensure that social developmental agendas operate as effectively and efficiently as possible, Morales Etel (1983). They also engage in continuous evaluation of developmental agendas programmes to determine whether social services are being delivered effectively, lacking and humanely and institute corrective measures where necessary (<http://www.socialworkers.org>).

Third, Social workers provides informed decisions on political and policy debates about social problems by reproducing deserving and undeserving dichotomies in various forms (such as victims-criminals or slackers-lackers as noted by Rosenthal (2000) and Blasi (1990) debating responsibility issues for social structural problems (such as 'who is to blame?...system or person'), "examining the coalescence and conflict between business and charity discourses and advocating for the removal of visible problems in the lives of people such as rough sleepers in 'cleaning the streets" discourses... (Zufferey and Chung 2006:36).

Fourth, social workers discussed broader practice-theory tensions in their work related to professional and personal concerns about social control, social care and social change critical of stereotypical agenda policies in constructions of social problems and direct service provision. In regards to how the agenda influenced their practice.

International Example of the Nature and Scope of Structural Dialectical Relationships between the Development of Social Work and Social Development Agendas: a Comparative Panoramic Perspective

A careful perusal at a complete survey of countries worldwide suggest a robust utilization of the development of social work in an unbroken view of a surrounding dialectical relationships between the developmental successes of developmental agendas

First, Itzhaky (2005) examined the Relationships between the Development of Social Work and Social Development Agenda in Israel by social worker in the face of terrorism tagged: "*Israeli community-based experience*". Terrorism and its aftermath have become part of the Western way of life extending to the Middle East. Social workers in Israel have developed an agenda known as the Israeli Community-Based Experience Agenda. In section 50(2), page 141-149 of the agenda, it lucidly provides a structural help for families and their communities. Drawing on community-based experience in Israeli communities, through a knowledge based examined planning of multidisciplinary teams. Their planning was put into effect in their communities in several terrorist attacks. The agenda use reports of social workers, community volunteers, and clients to map the phases of the activity, the

roles and goals of the social workers with different focal systems during the phase stages, and the tasks that the social workers carried out informed the agenda formulation.

Third, according to Jago (1991), Australian Social Workers developed a Flood Disaster Experience Agenda. In section 44(4), page 43-52 of the agenda, there is a dialectical structural concern, not only about how to manage the immediate emergency, but how to facilitate the long-term recovery period based on the experiences of a recovery worker. The agenda study emphasizes the importance of routine training for workers in organizations who may be called upon in a disaster. The agenda notes the unique situation in every disaster, decision making on recovery structures and processes needs to remain invested in the local community, with assistance from external resources including undergraduate social workers as dialectical structural support system.

Fourth, in India, social workers developed a social developmental welfare agenda called the "**Simplification of Intervention Strategy**" in the Indian rural camp experience, as cited by Ranganathan (1998) (1994) (2001). Medical barriers were overcome through home detoxification, de-dramatizing withdrawal, demystification of the need for drug support and empowerment of natural support systems in enabling recovery. Bischoff et al (2003) highly recommend a similar approach, i.e., social setting detoxification, especially for the noninsured and people with limited financial resources. Sharing their positive experiences at a community mental health center they present a balanced account of the strengths of treating clients in their own environments, using the resources available in the community and other agencies. While in rural South India, the camps were a necessary precursor to forming similar groups which America also transplanted as success story Gundy (2006).

Some past Attempts in Agenda and Policy Plan in Nigeria

Some past attempts in agenda and policy plan in Nigeria can be subdivided into the pre-independence development plans, independence and post-independence national development plans

Pre-independence development plans includes the 1946 colonial government plan tagged "Ten Year Plan of Development and Welfare for Nigeria". (Ogunjimi, 1997:97) Ayo (1988:1) Olaniyi (1998:106)

The launching of a five-year development plan for the period 1955-1960 to be implemented by the Federal Government for itself.

Independence development plan from 1960 included the in-between 1960 and 1985, four development plans in Nigeria which were referred to as the First, Second,

Third and Fourth National Development Plans. Each of these development plans had its own focus and well-articulated objectives which had far-reaching effects on the nation's developmental aspirations.

The First National Development Plan was launched in April 1962 and was to cover a period of six years (1962-68).

Second National Development Plan in 1970 Olaniyi (1988:107)

Third National Development Plan covered a five-year period from April 1975 to March 1980. Ayinla (1998:86) (Olaniyi, 1998:108).

The Fourth National Development Plan, (1981-85) Ogunjimi (1997:100)

Beyond the end of this period, this concept gradually faded away and has now become a thing of the past given rise to prolong military regimes with no consultations and popular participation.

On the return of democracy in 1999, new sets of policy trust in the forms of national plan of actions like the NEEDS, SEEDS LEEDS and seven point agenda, the National Transformation Agenda to the Change Agenda begin to surface.

The snags is that from all the social development plans from the pre-independence to the post-independence are impregnated with policy flaws and the poverty of a disciplinary approach of social work practice that can ordinarily engage these laudable agendas into contextual functioning as deliverables for their success.

The Poverty of Structural Development of Social Work in Nigeria's Transformation Agenda

First, a total amount of N32 trillion that was invested in the programme by the federal, states government and the private sector did not trickled down social workers who are not only specialist in resource networking and case management of social policy impact at the individual and community levels but in resource networking that could have contributed to the achievement of more that the needed funds for the agenda was not utilized.

Second, the machinery that constituted the first National Implementation Plan (NIP), (2010-2013) that sought for the collaboration of public and private sectors in economic development of the country is faulty. It completely lacked the composition of social workers who are not only verse in social policy formulations and administration but skilled in social needs assessment. Social workers could develop strong support network for the sustainability of the agenda itself Ojo (2006). Thus, the agenda is based on a set of priority policies and programmes that is defective of social work and structural considerations for sustainability.

Third, the Transformation Agenda is faulty of a lucidly carved in social development policy strategy. This existing policy drive is anchored on the modernization paradigm which has being challenged over the years by authoritative observers of the structural social institutional development. Sold as a “top-bottom” as against a dialectical approaches of what I called the “top-bottom-top approach”, in order to complete the circle of dialectical relationships”. Key issues of structural dialectical relationships that challenge the agenda brings to bear in the intellectual community; the unequal structural relational issues of globalization and localization i.e.- the tendency for globalizing and localizing tendencies to occur together, etc, all combined to emphasized the dominance of ideas of the elites, particularly the leadership along with their western counter parts, in the conception, design and implementation of socio-economic policies to the exclusion of the masses and civil society groups (Esteva, 1995; Haynes, 2005; Kato, 2011).

In my take, Nigeria, as in elsewhere developing countries, social workers working in development agencies in the global south are not considered by social workers of the global north hence they experience what I called the “a double jeopardy neglect” ...from

- i. ...the international social work, as else whilst would not be considered social work/er
- ii. ...been included in the development of policy and national agenda formulation back home

Fourth, more so, few Nigerian social workers work as official in international agencies. Few ones that do are viewed with similar differences at home and some other countries abroad.

Again, few Nigerian social workers work with international social work organizations like the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of School of Social Work (IASSW) on projects for or linking with such organizations. So Nigerian social workers have little or no representation that can influence or advocate for the inclusion of its members in agenda development in their respective countries. Aina (1996)

Fifth, According to Nelson and Write (1994:2), the policy arrangement as described in the above is the type that “can be traced to the historical unequal relations with the west in which capital penetration, commercialization, privatization and industrialization are modeled along western models, which will hopefully transform the economy of developing countries, including Nigeria, into their western European Scientific Journal July edition vol. 8, No.16 ISSN: 1857 – 7881

(Print) e - ISSN 1857- 7431 111 counterparts and enlist them into active participants in the modern economy of the world. This position is also the one adopted by the envisioned, Vision 20:2020”.

Kato (2011) amplified the above claimed that it has fostered over dependence on the States, alienated beneficiaries and prevented them from developing a sense of ownership and commitment to the agendas. It has also led to the exclusion of people such as rural non-literates, minorities, indigenous peoples, the poor, the very poor; women as well as children which to my sociological imagination fit into the role of social policy development trust that social workers are skilled in helping the foregoing.

Sixth, while the Prioritized Policies, Programmes and Projects contained in the policy thrusts of the Justice and Judiciary sector of the transformation agenda (2011-2015) include...

- i. Achieving greater independence for the judiciary in terms of funding,
- ii. Improving capacity and efficiency in judicial service delivery,
- iii. Eliminating all forms of corruption in the administration of justice in Nigeria
- iv. Enhancing the capacity of the justice ministry to superintend prosecution and law enforcement and
- v. Improving professionalism in legal practice for better service delivery...

...The policy thrusts completely neglected vital hallmark of restorative justice role the social worker plays in the postmodern social agendas and judicial system. For example, in the attorneys' offices, social workers help crime victims maneuver through complex legal processes and offer a helping hand on the road to recovery.

On the other side of the scale, social workers in public defenders' offices ensure defendants have a right to explain their story, and they promote the benefits of rehabilitation. Barker Etel (1993) Farrar (1996)

Forensic social worker whose duties includes amongst many others, the drafting of profile reports of defendants provides information that identifies impairment in the defendant's decision-making processes, the person's community, medical and mental health, education, court records, research findings and test results or reports. These reports help the attorney; judge and jury have an opportunity to hear about the defendant's mental health, substance abuse, brain development, medical conditions, social development and age. The report not only provides a comprehensive assessment of the client, but also a plan of action for successful rehabilitation and re-entry, should a defendant be convicted. The information can

also help suggest a sentence that allows the person the opportunity to be a productive member of society. Gostin 1983) Roberts Etel (1999), Roberts and David Springer (2007) Robinson (1990)

This means that the national transformation agenda by default makes it hard for a judge to appreciate aspects of a client's social condition shaped by social structure and social change over time. The dilemma is that, it is hard when an individual-in-situation is confronted with the absence of critical services or with the perfect program but at such an expense and the lack of or incorporation social work in development agenda like the national transformation, the client cannot afford the treatment. When social work is developed, it would address the inequality of treatment and sentences for defendants lacking privilege and money. Few legal professionals can sit without non-judgmental attitude and time listening abilities and learn from people arrested for serious charges. To help that person share the worst experiences of his/her life with you is both challenging and a gift NASW (2012). Crone, (1995), summarized the above thus... The outcome of such legal, ethical and professional misconduct varied but adamant on legalistic rather than jurisprudentially friendly to the transformation agenda.

Seventh, another snag however is that, the patriarchal nature of male dominance over the female, as against popular participation by all and sundry and echoed by the drums of transformation for example is a reflection of gender inequality in the agendas. This is directive to the fact among all the members that constituted the technical committee for the formulation of the agenda, only one amongst many was a female.

Eight, a rather ridiculous under performance is the observation that while in the Prioritized Policies, Programmes and Projects contained in the policy thrusts did not mention anything about social development, the mid-term report of the transformation agenda by May (2011 - May 2013) titled taking stock, moving forward, chapter thirteen mention the effective human capital & social development. While we are trying to locate structural functionality of social development policy, we see a structural dysfunctional system for social development policy in this report.

Nigeria's Change Agenda: Political Change or Structural Economic Change

The change in political leadership from The People's Democratic Party (PDP) to All People's Congress (APC) has no economic base. The change is as a result of socio-political impunity Nigerians witnessed from the past ruling party as against governing party. It is not a structural change based on substantial indices of change as a social process but base on lack of the former party to meet up with its

constitutional responsibility as enshrined in the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy in Chapter II of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) which the new government cashed into the lacuna with a change agenda. If the new government must stamp its presence into the realm of agendas transformation, it must not only fraternized with the principles of social work but, hook line and sinker, embrace social policy in social work practice.

Structural Relational ills between the Development of Social Work and the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy in Chapter II of the 1999 Constitution (as amended).

Reports of the Constitution Drafting Committee, Vol. 1 P.V. Fundamental Objectives are ideals towards which the Nation is expected to strive. Whilst Directive Principles lay down the policies which are expected to be pursued in the efforts of the nation to realize the national ideals; these are classic role of social workers in National Policy Administrations, social development case work, social development group work, Community Organization, Development and Mobilization.

All these branches are crucial and constitute a fundamental core value to Social work. Thus, the development of social work would be crucial to the realizations of the Fundamental Objectives which the nation is expected to strive towards. Again, the development of social work would be the key to the realization of the Directive Principles in driving home the policies expected to be pursued in the efforts of the nation to realize the national ideals,

Structural Relational ills between the Development of Social Work and the Government and the People and Section 14 (1) of the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy in Chapter II of the 1999 Constitution (as amended).

First, the Values Base: Social Justice Paradigm. Section 14 (1) states that the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a State based on the principles of democracy and *social justice*. The approach is explicitly grounded in the values of inherent human worth and the concomitant right of all human beings to live with dignity and respect.

The new global definition of social work is anchored on the Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. So ordinarily, the development of social work would have a direct relationship with the development of this fundamental objective.

I. Nigeria's Agenda formula-try base should relate with the understanding that such social structural values necessarily influence what material is chosen for presentation. Also how that material is interpreted and analyzed by adopting an

initial values orientation of human worth and social justice. Social development agenda committed to this uncovering and ultimately alleviating the plight of the poor and the disempowered in the current national economy World Bank (2006), needs social work core value,

ii. Nigeria's Transformation and Change Agenda must relate with the understanding that explicitly stated local as against national nature of the agenda issues under study requires that social development work extend the focus of these values beyond the agenda boundaries and biases, in adopting a truly nationalistic orientation toward human worth and dignity, and the perennial issues of social and economic justice.

iii. According to the Council on Social Work Education (2002), building on these foundational values is the structural strength base. Relationship with social work understanding of research base pedagogy to be continuously employs in social work education as a closely related social justice concept commonly found in social work curricula. The concepts of power, privilege, oppression, exploitation, and inequity are also foundational and may be defined and briefly illustrated early in the process agenda setting.

Second, the Values Base: Economic Justice Paradigm.

The values base of social work anchored on economic justice requires a structural emphasis or inflection of analysis of economic production in relation to relationships in which people entered into in the production process in regard to national agenda itself. Social work is concerned with the exploitation and injustice inherent in laissez-faire capitalism thus developing social work would mean developing mechanisms explicit in preparation for subsequent presentations of the various issues in the national agendas. According to Prigoff (2000), the question of government intervention designed in National agendas to mitigate the potentially exploitive and oppressive factors inherent in laissez-faire capitalism should involve a relationship with the historical and ongoing tension between environmental regulations, the social safety net, the minimum wage, and similar factors, and the ongoing pressure to maximize profit through pursuing low production costs and exclusive consumer markets. Ibid (2000), also posits that the role social work and history of labor organizing and unions in effecting economic justice in the context of free markets may also be presented along with the agenda setting.

Economic justice here concerns itself with economic institutions and policy mechanisms. Social work looks at the social development agendas in structural relations with these basic economic concepts with a rudimentary understanding of key concepts related to free trade. Central among these are trade-related taxes, including tariffs and excise taxes, as well as local and national government subsidies to small scale industry. The critical point here is that all of these factors are

inimical to the notion of "free trade and economic justice as they would tend to restrict barriers to the movement of goods and capital from the north to the south Khor M. (1994). Or, in some way create unequal advantage over national competition (Prigoff, 2000).

The development of social work would have mean, the structural development of general economic concepts inherent in the Nigeria's transformation agenda to the change agenda. The trade-related terms in the agendas would have presented with emphasis on identifying their potentially unjust effects on the Nigeria's poor. As one of many possible examples of this, the forced abandonment of tariffs on some essentials goods and subsequent flooding of poorer countries with cheap subsidized grain from the global north; has driven countless small farmers off their land and into deeper poverty in recent years Shiva, (2000a) and Turner (1978). Similarly, liberalization of the flow of capital across borders has contributed to the increased privatization and profit based pricing of public water systems. This has resulted in cases of the rural poor being priced out of the "clean water market" resorting to "drinking dirty water in the midst of plenty clean water" (Barlow & Clarke, 2002). In addition to Prigoff (2000), Madeley's (1999) book "Big Business, Poor People" may provide an excellent introduction and ongoing resource outlining of socio economic justice issues where Nigeria is ranked first the African economies without a corresponding impact on the social welfare development and development welfare of the people.

The Issues of Socio-Economic Justice

Invariably, the development of social work would have been the indirect development of fair and proper administration of laws conforming to the natural laws that all Nigerians, irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, possession, race, religion, etc., are to be treated equally and without prejudice (www.businessdictionary.com) Social work is not developed nor given prominence in Nigeria's democratic process coupled with prolong military intervention Onishi (2000). Social work provides the driving force for military change to democratic institutions at the micro and mezzo levels but these levels do not engage social work in the democratic era enough to sustain the change process in a way that social work would consolidate its gains and profession. According to Oyeleye (2004), the concomitant effect is a democracy and social in-justices administered with disrespect to fairness and value of every person's choice with military and military turned- politicians as it were with the general body polity. Ethnic governance, origin based employments irrespective of merit, gender inequality, wide spread of political possession, religious bigotry, un-equal treatment of man by man with prejudice, sentiments and stereotypes still remained pregnant.

However, on the interactions between people and resource systems, the social worker must:

1. Help people enhance and more effectively utilize their own problem solving and coping capacities;
2. Establish initial linkage between people and resource systems;
3. Facilitate interaction, modify and build new relationship between people and societal resource systems;
4. Contribute to the development and modification of social policy;
5. Dispense material resources; and
6. Serve as agent of social control.

Nigeria and the Change Agenda: towards Understanding the Structural Relationships between Social Work and Agenda Setting for Nigeria's Change Agenda

According to Lerner and Schramm (1967), for any meaningful Communication and Change in the Developing agenda of any Country there must be a national legal frame work of action. The snag is that the current change agenda in Nigeria as of the time of writing this paper does not have a national outlook in the sense that it is not in any national policy framework of action neither does it have any national outlook. The Nigerian change agenda is a mere reflection of the APC manifesto that has an initial slogan to only change a hitherto existing ruling party rivalry that has been there for over a decade. Thus, the change agenda is not coming from the people with a poverty of a hitherto government that was unable to meet up with the *Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy as contained in Chapter II of the 1999 Constitution (as amended)*.

The nature of social change is such that, it may be planned or unplanned, total (whole) or segmental (partly). Social change may also be coercive or voluntary and it may be an imminent change or contact change. The Types of change the APC government is bringing to Nigeria as of the time of writing this paper is an unplanned change agenda. It is possible that a planned changed agenda my come in effect much later. But the thesis is that it is likely that it may fall into the same pit of the transformation agenda especially if it does not adhere to the doctrine and principles of social dialectical relations in the development of social work in developmental agenda setting. Thus as of the time of writing this paper, we may say that the *Unplanned Change agenda* is however, accidental because it occurs suddenly. It is just like an earth quake that can make people to change location or get involved in one thing or the other to cope with the prevalent situation and not necessarily stop post tremors.

The Nature and Function of Social Work and the Role of the Social Worker in Changing Agenda

The function of social work and the role played by the social worker in contemporary changing Nigerian society must of course be influenced by major social changes which have occurred over the past two or three decades that encapsulates the transformation agenda. Of central to these structural considerations is demographic change.

Major demographic change such as the increasingly low birth rate in most western countries and a move to a much older age structure as Munday (2003) points out the significance of the low birth rate, must be considered in relation to the increasingly high birth rate in Nigeria and a move to a much younger age structure. This means that in the future there will be a shortage of 'adult-children' to look after elderly relatives thus increasing vulnerability of youth as migrants to the west. This will have an obvious impact on the provision of social services. More generally other than just social work and may well contribute to the further erosion of professional boundaries; as new mechanisms and initiatives for providing affordable care for the elderly have to be found for the back in elderly in Nigeria.

Munday (2003), and others also point to the continuing change in the nature of the family and the move away from the 'traditional' family model in Africa with its implication for the growth of the single parent or one parent families in the west as against the 'multi parent' families in Africa. The fact also that more women are entering the global labor market will also have an increasing knock on effect on the provision of care with the woman as the primary care giver in Africa. Women may be less inclined in the west than in Africa to view social work as an attractive career proposition considering that women in Africa are more associated with primary care than women in the west.

Social work operates in Nigeria as a very different world from that in which Kilbrandon reported in terms of the priority areas to be addressed. In particular, in addition to the specific situation of the elderly and ageing population, social work is now practiced in a context in which there have been a large number of scandals or problematic cases of pedophiles associated with Child trafficking and which have had an impact on the social work role in Africa and the west. The rise in drug related problems in Africa has not contributed to the work of social work in; Africa in terms of work with drug users and also in terms of the implications for increasing drug use on children and families as it has with social work in the global west.

The Change Agenda and Dialectical Social Structure

Change agenda must be assessed in relation to social structure. Changes and their significance are used to assess the reaction to the relevant conditions of the society at the time the change agenda come into effect to serve as a social indicator which is absent at the time of writing this paper. Social indicator is a direct measure of welfare in any social change agenda. Social indicators consider the following areas: *Health, Public, safety, Education, Employment, income, Housing, Leisure, and Recreation Population.* These has also to do with health conditions, access to drugs, literacy level, security of lives and properties, levels of employment, unemployment and underemployment, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross Net Product (GNP). Others include but not limited to Quality and standard of life, Evaluation of public programmes, Guide to social development, Social Reporting, Predictability. All of the above also must fall within the ambit of a periodic measure of social change in Information Data, Enlightenment Data, and Intelligence Data

Understanding the Structural Relationships between the Development of Social Work and the Nigeria's Transformation Agenda and the Change Agenda

The above subject or sequence of events in the foregoing discourse suggests two fundamental issues to the poverty of agenda policy for Nigeria *Agenda and Policy Shifts*. Under Agenda Shifts the following are taking place...:

- i. New aim in the Nature and Scope in social work Professional Role, Re-Socializing Agendas
- ii. The Changing Nature and Scope in social work Professional Role, Re-Socializing Agendas

Under Policy Shift the following are taking place...Welfare policy is moving away from the key concepts and values of inclusion and citizenship

- i. In welfare policy the aims are:
- ii. To control public expenditure
- iii. To shift responsibility from the public sector to the private sector (including NGOs)
- iv. To shift responsibility from formal services to the private individual/family
- v. To maintain/increase social control (e.g. in responsibilities of parents; workfare; crime and deviance)

Because of these policy aims, the work environment of welfare professionals is changing to:

- i. More prescription by policy and by management of aims and methods of intervention
- ii. More regulation and control of procedures, outputs and costs

Under Changes in Professional Role, the following are taking place...

- i. This means professionals have reduced opportunity to choose broad objectives (autonomy) and reduced discretion in how they treat individual cases
- ii. Sometimes welfare workers have to do things that are contrary to their professional opinion of the client's best interest.
- iii. Instead, professionals are increasingly required to enforce policies and objectives that are not of their choosing ((Jordan and Jordan, 2000): 'enforcement counselors')
- iv. More welfare policies are carried out by workers who are not required to be professionally trained
- v. Hence, there is a Focus on the Services Agenda, not the Individuals

The above reflects the worries that you can hear from many social workers in the public sector. But I do have some reservations about it. The question of whether welfare professionals really have less autonomy and discretion than they did, for example, 30 years ago is an empirical question and this paper do not have good research backings to answer it. Although the social work of 30 years ago was certainly much less prescribed and regulated, it can be argued that it also had less effective tools, far fewer resources and much less legal power than social work today. It is not obvious to me that the less regulated policy environment of yesterday was more effective in promoting social inclusion and the welfare of citizens than today's highly complex systems. One could even say that today's social workers are more professional because they exercise much stronger and more varied powers on behalf of society, instead of – as before – just having small regions of professional autonomy surrounded by large areas of professional ineffectiveness. And briefly, there is no reason to think that spending on social welfare is decreasing but still yet, social workers are structurally excluded from policy designs.

Emphasizing the social dimension in agendas social work brings social policy makers in an often ambivalent and uncertain position balancing rights in social policy and obligations,.... social policy interventions are not only answers to social agendas, but are closely connected to defining and constructing these agendas. As a consequence social work interventions themselves help to create the individual and societal horizon of legitimate aspirations (Mahon 2002). They also define the bounds of what is possible and not possible.

In many countries social work is public-private cooperation and a mixed ensemble of different organizations and institutions. This gives the opportunity to create a broad or structural social forum for discussion and for disagreement; especially

raising counter-arguments in any agenda formulation (Mouffe, 2005) and to break open the boundaries of social work and the often introspective social work debates in social agenda as a policy document.

The Complex Nature of the Social Change Process, Character of Social Problem and Agenda Development

These changes over time for example, until relatively recently, domestic violence was accepted within marriage and other personal relationships between men and women. Evidence that domestic violence indicates a risk of violence towards children and witnessing abuse is emotionally and psychologically damaging to children and young people has moved domestic violence from a private event, to a child protection concern (Mullender and Morley, 1994).

Drug and alcohol abuse is now a significant social problem. It impacts on the next generation of children through a failure to parent adequately and the likelihood of birth impairments. Hitherto, Child prostitution is now defined as child abuse rather than the consequence of the immoral behavior of a young person. Before now, Racial Abuse and Homophobic Behavior were endemic in our communities and institutions, but policies state that intervention is necessary. At points of change social work intervention is necessary to innovate or spread examples of good practice that have existed in isolated pockets.

An Overview of the Issues under Nigeria's Change Agenda: 2015

The specific national issues are numerous and may include but not limited to the following:

The debt of the Global South including its effect on health care, education and social services (Northcott, 1999; Roodman, 2001)

The massive exploitation of natural resources in southern countries, with implications for the poor (Anathasiou, 1998; Khor, 1994) this is alongside the trillions of dollars stolen from poor Nigerians which could be redirected by sound policy trust for social development.

The effects of free trade policies in terms of access to food, water and land by the poor (Barlow and Clarke, 2002; Madeley, 1999; Shiva, 2000b, 2002)

The exploitation of the poor in sweatshops (Investor Responsibility Research Center, 1998; Goldsmith, 1996)

The erosion of self-sufficient, indigenous cultures (Mander, 1991)

Numerous related environmental issues (Anathasiou, 1998; World-watch Institute, 2001) (Northcott, 1999)

Nigeria has been like its southern counterparts have been required by northern lending institutions to cut back on education, health care, and social services in order to make money available for debt service (Roodman, 2001). Corruption, Debt and poor policy designs in the form of agenda has also created multiple structural problems, (Madeley, 1999, Shiva, 2000a) as a foundational problem and it is closely linked to agenda development

The Role of the Change Agent in Agenda Development and Social Change

The nature of the change agent affects the acceptability of a change. If the change agent is technically competent, commands respect, attention and trust of his target audience or he commands a lot of credibility and belongs to a well-recognized organization, the change he promotes is much likely to be accepted. According to Odrah (1991), the social worker has amongst several roles in the change process of the identification of gaps in Social development Work policy as it were with other aspect of the profession in Nigeria in other to meet up with new challenges associated with change process itself.

Historical Dialectical Relationships between the Stated Function, Nature and Scope of Social Work to Actual Functioning of Social Welfare Agenda System in Nigeria

The history of social work in Nigeria is well documented by Ogundipe (2002) who clearly articulated the historical antecedents of Social Work in Nigeria as rooted in the traditional Africa social structures which was a complicated irregular network of passages or paths of relationships by blood or marriage, networking entire communities, and in that manner making everyone his brother's helper. Structural relationship expressed itself by kinship reciprocity and mechanical solidarity. The context of 'Solidarity'... Durkheim meant the moral beliefs and ideas which formed the 'common-sense' underlying social life. Mechanical solidarity thus was the characteristic of pre-industrial societies based on agreement and identity between people; provided in mutual support, assistance and succor Durkheim (1938).

Traditional dialectical social structures in Nigerian include organizational divisions into clans, lineages, families, households and individuals. Some of these structural divisions avail concerted action in times of stress, crises, sorrow, loss and failure. They encourage shared joy and success. Learning of genealogies of dissent is a traditional form of education, instilling a sense of origins, rootedness, sacred duty and history. Genealogies also established linkages between the living and the ancestors. The latter are believed to watch over the living from a higher plane than

the earthly one and to render assistance or punishment as appropriate.

Clan and lineage members by believing in a common ancestor possess a strong sense of identity with one another which often leads to further cooperation. With the breakdown in social, political and economic organization by colonialism and its attendant ills, Nigerian social structure fell apart and the result of colonization, modernization and westernization created changes which fostered modern social problems leaving the practice of social work in the hands of The Missionaries and institutional groups. Institutional groups include Remand Homes, day-care centers, Approved Schools, Prison and Hospitals.

Social work is currently placed under the Ministry of Social Development. The government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria came up with a national policy on social development tagged: "Social Development Policy for Nigeria" in October 1989. A revised version of the policy was published in 2004. This newer version has a sub-section on social work under the section on social welfare services. It states inter alia:

Social Work Education and Training has the task of producing various levels of manpower capable of applying professional knowledge and planned skill intervention in the various problem situations to achieve a suitable welfare state. The growing dimension of social problems without a corresponding increase in the number of qualified social workers to competently arrest these problems has created serious demands for professionally trained social workers in Nigeria. Social problems and social welfare delivery in Nigeria have evolved to a stage which requires a proper handling by social workers who are adequately trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, orientation, value and competence. This demand for professionally trained social workers has led to the establishment of a variety of educational courses, utilizing and contributing to the growth of professional social work (FRN, 2004).

This is the first time in the history of social work in Nigeria that the Social Welfare Development Policy acquired its legal status. The provision of social welfare is thus aimed at ensuring the self-dependence of individuals and families and their social integration. Individuals and families benefiting from the opportunities provided by social Policy and welfare system obliged to co-operate in agenda setting for solving the life problems that they are facing.

The possibility to achieve stated function of social work is however quite limited because of the Dialectical Relationships between the Stated Function, Nature and Scope of Social Work to real Functioning of Social Welfare System in Nigeria AyodeleOgundipe, (2012:40) captured this better when he alludes... *“In Nigeria, funding resources, resource systems and social workers are not there for the most part. Hence, social work education is the way it is. Social services, social security and social welfare are not there hence things are the way they are”*

There are at least three structural reasons for this limitation:

First, the entitlement for statutory social welfare provision is in Nigeria based on income criterion and not of social work base knowledge in developmental social welfare work. In its relatively poor society financial benefits have to be the main tool of statutory support. Especially in a situation of rising unemployment there is social pressure for the distribution of financial support rather than for social work services. As social workers are also responsible for the distribution of benefits, the procedures involved with this task are their main concerns and not the procedure of developing a plan support structure from a strength base approach that would make the individual embark on self-determination to coping mechanism. It does leave them with too little time for social work.

Second, in local social welfare service agencies there seems to be a norm of employing one social worker per a whole community. A typical Nigeria community has about 3,000-10,000 inhabitants. This norm does not take into account specific needs of different communities with higher population for social work. The same norm is to be maintained in a troubled community as well as in relatively well off one. This number is also incongruous to the U.N D P and IFSW ratio of...one (1) social worker to every 200 individual)

Third, public governance in Nigeria is supposed to be based on subsidiarity principle, which is also the underlying principle for the state of art social work practice for social policy and welfare service. In real policies however, the Nigeria State Governments keeps a hold on almost all public expenditures on local level. This dependent structural relationship has boomeranging effect on local self-governance. That explains why social welfare officers in the Nigerian social welfare development work have limited ability to actualize the social functioning of Social Welfare System in Nigeria. More so, social workers have limited possibilities to act according to their professional standards.

Fourth, it would be an aberration to social work not to mention how Nigerian social workers feel themselves lost between all these pressures of their daily work. That famous divide between theory and practice, seems to be immanent in the field.

Discussions

We would discuss this paper in two phases...

- i. Practical Reason for the transformation and change agenda Service Failures
- ii. Agenda Shifts and the Changing nature and scope in Professional Role

This is because; both help us to understand the dialectics involved in the development of social work in social developmental agenda setting to the current change agenda with its underpinning character. First...

Practical Reason for the Transformation and Change Agenda Service Failures

The sorry stories of service failure as it were with development plans/national agendas are not news in Nigeria. I am sure the enquiry was right to 'find fault at almost every level in every agency involved'. What is quite striking in stories of national agenda failure in Nigeria is that it is relatively rare to find outright intentions that would be regarded as morally corrupt. The defect is in the structural intentions but ineffective practices, lack of wider consultations and involvement of technical expertise, omissions, exclusions, ignorance, overwork, poor resources, lack of training, poor organizational culture, complicated environments, and so on. Reading academic papers of agenda failure I think it is fair to describe the scenario as failures of practical reason than failures of theoretical applications or abstractions. The failures, although unacceptable, are easily understandable as ordinary human limitations considering the relatively pejorative "social-technology compliant" Nigeria is.

Thus, the methods associated with the transformation and the change agendas in Nigeria are managerially biased and characterized by the poverty of the knowledge perspective of social dialectical relationships, social structural interdependence and interrelationships of individuals, communities and nations. In specifying the role of welfare professionals we should, I think, reassert and reclaim the agent perspective against the one-eyed scientism of the new managerialism. We do need binocular vision here. However, in reasserting the agent perspective we are automatically committed to the significance of professional character in agenda-setting. We should understand and welcome what is, I believe, the fact that in real life welfare professionals do not actually behave in the way prescribed by the new managerialist models neither do the new managerialist straight jacketed iron clad thinking remembers the richly endowed field of the social in social work for agenda and agenda development in Nigeria. That means that professionals' capacity to be accountable for their actions rests as much on the character of each professional as an individual person just as an attempt is made in this contribution to the knowledge of social policy to Nigerian social workers. Nigeria in a generalist mode as it does on the body of technical knowledge which the profession as a whole is supposed to possess and practice.

Recommendations

It is time for national agendas to begin to assume the structural social character forms as obtained in the Israeli Community-Based Experience Agenda, the Australian Flood Disaster Experience Agenda and the India "Simplification of Intervention Strategy Agenda" ...in micro and mezzo levels forms instead of the national outlook that has little or no reflection of the structures that informed the macro level.

The new government should bring out a new policy framework of action for the change agenda recognizing the change process in social work as a yardstick for development and change that can be measureable and replicated somewhere.

Deliberate government appropriation of human and material resources for the social worker of every agenda whether scientific, historical, political, cultural accumulated for the advancement of humanity should be part of a legislative duty. This can be achieving in the interim through legislative advocacies in Nigeria.

Specific issues should also be analyzed using relevant social justice concepts, with reference to how the issue contributes to a perpetuation of historical colonialism. The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of School of Social Work (IASSW) should include as a prerequisite for Participating in international conferences, educational or professional visits, exchanges and placements and research; the inclusion of social workers in developing national agendas in the global south. This can compel political leaders to meet up with these conditions thereby having national agendas from a well-informed position.

Social workers should develop instruments of critical evaluation of developmental agendas in Social administration crucial in shaping institutional or organizational structures which facilitate the achievement of national goals. This would allow social workers identify historical-cultural, political and socioeconomic character and intend of agendas for reviews or updated and at the same time creating new ones. This becomes developmental goals that are not restricted to welfare only, but extend over technical, economic, agricultural and whatever other desirables may be an integral part of national development.

The new government should create an immediate shift mantra from change in political slogan to change as in concrete policy to meet up with the demand on the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy as contained in Chapter II of the 1999 Constitution (as amended).

Conclusion

From the foregoing there for, it can be seen that while policy or agenda formulation is as crucial as life wire of a nation in national development, the processes in which these policy directions are articulated are defective of a sound structural imputes. While agendas could be developing from a well-informed position of social work, its apolitical nature seems to cause its remaining in the murky waters. Social work's core mandate, values and principles are hardly utilized in policy formulation. While the poverty of it led to the failed agendas, a people, driven which has led to the emergence of haphazard form in the change agenda. The paper called for a well situated agendas development for the change agenda within the social policy thrust of social work as seen in the above.

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