

Discrimination and Modern Societies, Especially Developing Economies: The Indigene and Non-Indigene in Urban Centers

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Abstract

The spate of segregation among societies, especially societies with diverse ethnic orientation is becoming worrisome. This condition hampers unity especially among the leaders that come from various ethnic groups. Civilizations should have been able to overcome this trait in the environment. This article recognizes prevalent measures some groups use in treating those they think does not belong to their group. Some of these measures can be calculated as discrepancy or discrimination. These measures are often opinionated and not consistent with the approved rule. Why then must it continue to rear its ugly head in public order? A few examples have been located, especially those that bother on public or social standing of a State. There are various types of discrimination but this study focuses on the discrepancy between indigene and non-indigene. Suggestions have been given on what can help reduce its influence because of its detrimental set backs on developing economies.

Key words: Discrimination; Indigene; Non-Indigene

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INTRODUCTION

Among other human negative traits, discrimination happens to be one of such traits that tend to bring problems among human interaction or relationships; it stifles unity

amongst people of different traditions, coexisting in an environment. Civilization brought about the advent of urban centers. These centers are often populated by people of diverse cultures, diverse languages and ways of life. Culture shock is not unpopular with the metropolis. Most of the problems of the developing countries apart from other areas of growth is discrimination in their urban centers. Thus, there are problems of decent, state, origin or migration. The fact that civilization has come very far in human development and technology seems to make it even worse, especially in the developing countries where people will always want to be identified with their kind, natural resources, religion and tradition. The discrimination of race, religion, economic status, education and employment is not strange considering the nature of class struggle in the society. Nevertheless this study looks at discrimination in terms of who is an indigene and who is not. How it indirectly or directly pull back what would have been healthy relationship among people of various tribes or ethnic groups.

Discrimination has so many dimensions. Some are psychological and can be treated by psychotherapeutic means. Some involve mental stress against undue preferences. It could be inspired by mere thought. It is of course in the domain of thoughts that these preferences could be checked. For example one may have hatred for another without knowing why. It could be a group ideology which is negative. But a general tendency is that we are all biologically the same. Language, culture, religion or other differences should not bring undue separation among those that claim to be civil, educated or developed. Man is by nature selfish. Most people hide under this natural tendency of man to indulge in discrepancies through criteria's such as ethnic, religious or other reasons.

The Abridged English Oxford Mini-Dictionary defined discrimination, "as to make an unfair difference in ones treatment of people." In such conditions people

may be treated unjustly. And it is often a case where the law and even the task force for ensuring equity ignore implementation of the rule because either they are members of the oppressing group, partisan or they are afraid of reprisal, losing their position or other fears.

The terms non-indigene and indigene is derogatory in the context of this study. The non-indigene is regarded as a “stranger,” thus lacks protection and treated as a second class by the indigenes. Whatever happens to him, good or bad does not matter much because he is a “stranger.” He is exploited, humiliated, intimidated and even killed. The same people who do this ask for justice when it is their turn to cry for mercy. This is human nature. Civilization through positive education has made this consciousness less effective especially to developed worlds. Any society still engaged in this treatment of people is still backward both in thinking and in living. This situation and some other cases needs clarification so that clear examples may make room for reason to avoid not using such discriminatory or such languages of discrimination. Individuals have to accept each other as one people. Nevertheless, one must not be subject to one’s discrepancy but must obey the rules that guides total association or order of existence in a society, because most of these discrepancies are personal. Some only use some avenues of grouping to perpetuate their negative predilection like party politics, racial acclaim of superiority, gender, nature or physical appearance, religion, language or tribe or social status, position, service or other measures that cannot be adjudged appropriate as means of achieving a discriminatory position.

The uniqueness of a State lies in its patriotism where discrimination is curbed by laws akin to it. Another definition sees discrimination as “the practice of treating somebody or a particular group in a society less fairly than others. A state means a country considered as an organised political community controlled by one government. Country is also known as a nation-state. The state of unity and peace cannot thrive on the platform of discrimination based on ethnic group. This behavior is worse in most of the developed urban centers. Yet there are government laws that condemns discrimination against ethnic origin. Policies have condemned using hate language on one another. It is an insult to National unity which is ingrained in the National anthem, pledge and the Federal Character provisions of many countries.

THE SENSE OF DISCRIMINATION

Employment: Here one may be employed not based on the rule but what might be regarded as use of discretion, favoring one group against the other. This is discrimination. For example, two people have the same qualification but they are employed with one level higher than the other. If one may ask why, they may give the

reason that one who is older should be given a higher position when in the actual sense such a condition was not stated in the policy. Yet they use the same policy to maltreat whoever they want to discriminate against.

Gender: This can also happen especially in leadership where groups that have not experienced such react to the challenge, refusing to accept whoever seats on a position regardless of merit.

The developed centers are an endowment of nature. No one single individual planted these centers where they are nor is it the efforts of a group of people. It is not a private or an indigenous achievement. Therefore why can it not be shared since the unifying groups found it there? The United Nations Charter on the Declaration of Human Rights provides that one is free to live wherever one makes a living. Whether it is private or public, the individual in a nation state knows no boundaries in where to survive or sojourn. Of course, rapid development is known to have been engineered by mainly private individuals who through their research has brought civilization this far, to the digital world. It is not news that most of the inventors in the western world of Europe and America were mainly, “non-indigenes.” Albert Einstein is an example.

Some Problems Caused by Discrimination

- **Lack of trust:** Fear of each other: People lack trust when they are discriminated against. Politics, religion and other social relationships is affected. It makes the people divided internally when on the outside it seems as if they are united. What you see on outside then is false representation. And there is no true State in this condition.

- **Intimidation:** When it involves intimidation, cheating or exploitation, the one on the receiving end will develop survival strategy inspired by the assailant.

- **Corruption:** This is an attitudinal virus that can easily be influenced by discrimination. It encourages selfishness, divided loyalty and unpatriotic services, mutiny and inconsistency and deliberate incompetence.

- **Religious bigotry:** It is no news when crusaders are influenced by discrimination.

DISCRIMINATION AS NEGATIVE PERCEPTION

Perception has to do with mindset, belief, way or concept of life. Some people’s perception rule their societies, especially in autocratically governed system. This is also usual with traditional societies. But civilization brought the enlightenment that individual perception cannot override contributions and agreement of ideas from participating groups or members of the party. Although there are laws against some unhealthy perception of ethnic groups, it should not override the constituted authority that sacrificed resources and time to achieve a government. It is the anarchy in edicts and dictatorial leadership that led modern societies to seek for democracy and adopt the

overriding will of the people than the individual where general rule binds the people. If a nation State continues to go by the perception of a individual idea then that means the very substance which have survived and pervaded the strife, stress and bloodshed of many years ago has been thrown away.

EXAMPLES OF DISCRIMINATORY SITUATION

*The use of the language, indigene and non-indigene. This involves hate language and other insinuating characteristics.

Religion: this has to be conducted in such a way that it overrides none, not even the law.

Land matters: arbitrary claim of land based on indigenous positions and not the right of ownership is against the law and should be recognized as that. A piece of land genuinely bought has been transferred to the new owner whether he is an indigene or not.

Politics: Partisan politics has been ruled out by most governments.

National Resources: this should be maintained and shared equitably.

The Use of Language: It is often assumed that because one do not or cannot speak the language, that one do not belong. It is also true that knowing another language is an advantage as a migrant. When a migrant is called mere stranger it becomes derogatory. Others may use abusive language the moment they notice that one is not of the same language. Yet others call their fellows "stranger," out rightly. When the term stranger is used, that means one does not belong. For this reason most settlers that are not indigenes suffer a lot from this discriminatory attitude from the indigenes even after inhabiting an area for a long period. Property are destroyed or regarded as abandoned, snatched, stolen or mismanaged just because one is called "stranger," by the dissident group. This should not be the case in urban communities. Rural areas tend to be more hospitable than the developed urban centers that benefit so much from government attention. Social amenities and other government based infrastructures tend to dominate these centers that attract population from everywhere for business, employment, education and so many other attractions; but because of this kind of treatment many are discouraged and could close down business to relocate. Because of job demand, they endure subdued engagement with the people. Such individuals cannot give their best on the job. This is the negative underpinning of "stranger" tag which should be dropped so that there could be a harmonious growth amongst patriotic citizens wherever they are.

Religion: This institution has been over carried especially by fundamentalists and its mayhem is written everywhere. It may be an inhibition to good governance.

Even among people of the same faith. Segregation of all types is prevalent, pampered and kept. For example, in accepting migrants or settlers establishing their religious faith often meet with dead lock. Because they are not sons of the soil they are prohibited from certain benefits. Most of these issues are not out rightly and adequately provided in the law in such a way that it will be effectively be implemented.

Land Matters: There are cases where the land owner deliberately sell and resell their land to different people. They believe that because he is a stranger, that it does not matter what happens to him. He should pay tax to the community and not only to government because he is a stranger. After all the land belongs to the indigenes and they must live by it. The feeling that, "It is ours; we can do what we like with it," cannot be accepted in a democratic society. Democracy does not only point to the government or leadership but also to the individuals to the common man. There is the "matching ground or bush entry," and other levies outside government rule on land. This attitude cannot encourage rapid development or contribution of individuals to building up a place. It cannot support selfless service from the so called "stranger." After selling a property, the same vendors may initiate a problem to take back the property or not to give certificate of occupancy. This is a breach of trust in a relationship among differing groups.

Politics: it is no news when the term "son of the soil," is used. Thus, it becomes difficult for a stranger to contest election and win in the urban area where he had lived forages. Politics should be conducted like a football game, home and away. No victor no vanquish is usually a theory when the chips are down. Whoever wins should be the mind of the people. Although in politics whoever wins is neither right nor wrong but what is more important is the right perspective towards positive development. In a democratic government, leadership is service and the individual at the hem of affairs is being watched because he is in a position of trust. Why should people fear or try to reject him when he stands the chance of leading the people aright in terms of bringing development, and other benefits with his influence. Protection and welfare of the people is paramount and should be the priority of the people in any positive government. Where this condition is lacking will always derail in moving forward because a lot of contradistinction will slow down progress especially when discrimination is prevalent. This problem has kept many societies backwards because they indirectly reject what would have been the source of the end to their problems. They prefer to choose the individual who may add more problems provided he is their own.

National Resources: Some indigenes feel that they have the prerogative of some national or natural resources because it is in their place. Thus some will say, "This is Federal, it is only for indigenes here." This is ignorance

to the law and Federal Character principle. Some State governments feels that the Federal road in their state is not their responsibility and so they leave them untouched and unmemorable, not maintained even when it has gone so very bad. It has brought accidents, traffic congestion, armed robbery target spot, motor break down. Some feel that every Federal property or service in their place must be manned by their people. When a government want to repair, expand or construct a road, the indigenes may begin to demand for ransom or what is termed settlement or compensation. Otherwise the project stagnates and for a long time such projects is unattended to, so that what would have been done in months may take years to come by. This blocks development.

National Interest: Because he is not our man people lose interest and do not support the incumbent. Instead they facilitate problems and plan for the downfall of the opposition.

Tribe: if you are looking for a house or need a private job or some special favour, some so called indigene will first of all ask one his tribe. The money you will pay will not be the same with the money the other person from another tribe will pay. Even when one is aware of this measure, they do not care and the individual termed “stranger,” will not have what he wants until he agrees with the terms. In most cases, this happens even in the adjudication of cases and among the law enforcement agents. A boy was beaten because he was accused of not having money to give his mates who are indigenes. If all the strangers or settlers in the developed urban centers should vacate and go home or elsewhere, the city may remain empty of people. A typical example is what happens during Christmas Holidays when many people travel home to see their people on holidays.

Ethnic Origin: This is almost the same with tribe but differ in community of origin or orientation. Tribal sentiment could often escalate to sorting out differences among people. Thus ethnic politics results. It is like in a family where there is a form of discrimination or the other; where the mother may prefer the males and favour them more than the girls. Among other things this term is the same in meaning as that of tribal difference but on a larger scale. Arinze, A. E. (2006) puts it thus about what he called Ethnic Bigotry:

The direct consequence of ethnic bigotry...is that it gives birth to and promotes TRIBL LEADERS. When people are asked to cast their vote, they simply vote their tribal brother or sister. This promotes mediocre in every department of our lives. It means that the State [sic] cannot play with the 1st eleven. Excellence is sacrificed and mediocre extolled. What do you expect when people occupy positions not because of what they can offer the system but because of where they come from.

As Dagogo. A. J. (2006) stated, “Most of the problems encountered...are not social, political or economic problems but are “attitude,” problems. Ibrahim, S. S.

(2006) further stressed this when he wrote that attitudes between individuals, among differing religious sects, inter-tribal attitudes linking the responsibilities of the government and citizens to one another... We should embrace without shred of abhorrence, the notion of loving one another regardless of tribe as necessary as eating daily meals; for faces we are with eyebrows if we fail to rise to such challenge.”

The national anthem states thus: “though tribes and tongues may differ, in brotherhood we stand.” The society has to stick to Federal Character. As Adole (2006) stated “,...divisive tendencies amongst the citizenry encourage ethnic, tribal and religious crises. When these happens, development is stagnated...” Leo also lend more light to nationhood in this statement, “Nation building and national development, I believe is a collective responsibility of all well-meaning citizens.... Also Akunyili, D. (2010) puts it thus: “tribalism and nepotism which have permeated all facets of our system, and are fast becoming institutionalized, will worsen their present state, if we do not make concrete efforts to reverse this ugly trend.” As Ibrahim, S. S. (2006) also stated: “Tribalism has become an integral part of our culture, that an apparently educated recognize his fellow of different tribe as hostile alien...each tribe without reasonable criterion looks down at his sister tribe as an inferior entity.”

When one is reminded that one does not belong and the usual reaction is to shrink back. The psychological impact to this cannot make one comfortable. One knows that he is not free in that environment to associate as a relation or as a brother in one polity. But this situation cannot encourage good will for the environment both for the indigene and the so called stranger.

SUGGESTIONS

Man is naturally selfish. When one who suffers discriminations given the opportunity to admit another who is not of the same group into their group, one may also discriminate against him for the same reasons of selfishness. Other risk factors like domination and intimidation where a particular group is more especially in sharing natural or national resources breeds’ problem. But there are inflated situations when indigenes begin to treat migrants unjustly like over taxing, stealing, vandalizing or destruction of migrants possessions, creating situations of dos and don’ts, or terms of relationship that are not migrant friendly. These situations have made rules necessary especially in a democratically elected government, but seems not effective.

1. Laws concerning treatment of non-indigenes or immigrants should be revisited and amended where they falter, considering the new development in human relationships, treatment of one another according to time and demand.

2. Policies on such matters as mentioned have been drafted to the best interest of the citizens but their implementation seems to be weak. Task force on these rules has to be honest and prove their presence and civilized orientation.

3. Supervisory or monitoring roles have been neglected. It is only when a case is reported that it can receive attention. But there are many who do not know their rights and out of fear cannot report ill treatment. Public awareness on this should be made a priority attention by the National Orientation arm of government.

4. Also Human Rights agency should be adequately protected.

5. The federal Character principle should be holistic where it exists. It seems to be most proficient on political appointments and employment.

CONCLUSION

Laws have been created and policies instituted to curb this behavior but the situation still persists. Most often, when the affected individual wants to react it may bring more harm than good to his existence in that environment. It

does not show the enlightenment which the people claim, instead it portrays an undeveloped, or underdeveloped mindset. This perception should not defy the law otherwise, common good will no more be common and it will continue to elude both the indigene and non-indigene. With this prevailing situation, it will take such a society long time to achieve a fully developed and civilized nation state. Progress often survive in hope but if hope becomes hopeless, progress will become powerless or reduce the rate of its movement.

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