



DEREGULATED GERONTOCRACY AND ADULT-YOUTHS CONFLICT IN CENTRAL SENATORIAL ZONE OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT :

The problem identification of this research derives from the realization that in the present world environment, that there is a glaring generational gap between the young and old in all affairs of the society. This gap manifests in the question of leadership role between the old and young which presents the question of equity and fairness in sharing and distribution of power and resources.

In the traditional Africa society as elsewhere, the elders or older generations hold the reign of power or authority. How this instrument is wielded and what is the resultant implication is the fundamental basis of the problem statement of this study. This study is justified on the basis of its importance in directing attention to the issue of social justice and fairness, creation of societal peace and harmony, social sustainability and equity and so on.

The objectives boarder on an understanding of the true perspective of gerontocracy in their place specific contexts, understanding the youths opinion and position, and the specific incidents of conflicts in different communities under investigation. The literature explored the basic tenets of Gerontocracy in the pristine contexts of African society and the ingrained elements of this system in the current monetized economy of the developing countries and the introduction of gerontocracy into politics. The methodology consists relevant themes under research design, study area, study population, instruments for data collection, method of data collection and data analysis technique. In line with the objectives two hypothesis were formulated and statistically tested using measures of analysis of variance (hypothesis I) and technique of Chi-Square distribution (hypothesis II) for both hypotheses. The decision rule favoured upholding of the null hypotheses.

Thus, for hypothesis 1, there is no significant variation in the prevalence rate of conflict in the area implicitly conflict incidents are of similar magnitude in the all the areas. Hypothesis II held that there is no significant difference in the respondents affirmation over adult causes of youths conflict in the area. The general conclusion is that adult/youths conflict is significantly prevalent in the area.

INTRODUCTION:

Prior to the advent of democratic governance introduced by the British Colonial Administration in Nigeria, there was a distinct traditional system of oligarchy prevailing in the indigenous communities. In other words the African traditional Political System preceded the Western system of Democratic governance. This system was rather christened, "Gerontocracy; which means a system of rulership by elders. In the words of Omotade (2011), "Gerontocracy is a form of political system, a form of oligarchical rule whereby a small group of elderly individuals are in control of power". In a paraphrase, it is called a rule by old men.

A similitude of this form of leadership has been recognized in the communist states especially in the Soviet Union going by Omota report gleaned from works such as Gerned & Hedland (1987) and post (2004). In this latter case, it was reported that individuals who were significantly older than most of the adult population were in leadership position.

Another injection of meaning to the conception of "Gerontocracy" is credited to George Sefa Deii who was quoted as saying is the traditional African respect for the authority of elderly persons for their wisdom, knowledge of community affairs, and closeness to the ancestors (Dei 1994).

The communist tenets of this form of leadership were provided with respect to some rulers in some states who ruled outside the context of their generation such as: (1) President Kim Il-sang of North Korea who ruled up to the age of 82, (i) President Josip Broz Tito who died at the age of 88 ruling Czechoslovakia and (iii) President Husale Gustave who resigned at the age of 76 ruling his country. Many other instances of communists Gerontocracy abound which vividly reflect the African traditional system of leadership.

In its earliest form, gerontocracy was premised on absolute recognition of the old as a deity not just a human leader. His words were final and deemed to be true and fair. Absolutism was the watchword. Communism braided with entrenched spirit of unity was held tenaciously. Interest of the general supersedes individual interests. —The leaders or Gerontocratist were brazenly objective and non discriminatory. There were naturalists who detest

hedonism or epicurean inclination. In this context, kings or priests as they are recognized adopt some prescribed abhorrence as dictated by the societal norms and practices. A grave misdemeanour in the original African Gerontocratic system is equivocation and/or false Witnessing which was punishable by ostracising or death. Also a significant aspect of the old system is love of neighbour and communal spiritism.

Essentially feudalism was the hallmark of the society ruled by Gerontocracy. Today the incidence of colonial incursion and exportation of Western ideals have perturbed the entire social fabric of the African original culture. Globalization and its brainchild of monetization have engendered the whole scale rupturing of societal harmony or oneness that prevailed in the old African communal system. These emerging scenarios are capped by the tenets of individualism or egocentrism.

Elders who are supposed to be custodians of the African cultural heritage have abandoned their esteemed responsibility due to the lure for material things. Truth no longer prevails in the issues of property rights and protection of lives.

The youths on their part have amassed prodigious authorities in the direction of asserting their right of place as enshrined in the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria. This trend results in the production of the true perspective of the problem statement of this research.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM/JUSTIFICATION :

Statement of the problem

The fundamental starting point of our problem definition in this study relates to the existing rifts/conflicts that exists between the older generation of people and younger generation in most rural communities in Cross River State and particularly the central senatorial zone of Cross River State of Nigeria. What may be called a "Generational Gap" is all pervading in the rural communities of Cross River State. This gap is exacerbated by the new crop of Gerontocratic leaders who have trite disregard for truth, fairness and equity.

From the point of view of truth and fairness local traditional justice had been bastardized by the custodians who are the elders. There is absolute drift of interest to immediate materials gains or favouritism. Then the equity factor is the most trodden or trampled upon. This position can clearly be substantiated by the very essence of land property acquisition and resource sharing in general. In this sense, the sustainability principle of inter and intra-generational equity is displaced for immediate aggrandizement by few opportunist leaders who wound their way to this position with the mindset of material gains. This system kindles the real fire of objectification among the down trodden youths. This phenomenon produces a hydra-headed problem that may eventually over spill the community level to extent of intercommunal crises. The current episodic incidence of communal and intercommunal crises is founded on the real basis of this displaced Gerontocratic leadership.

This research is focused on probing to the roots of those problematic in a bid to knowing the general perspective of events across the areas explored by the study as well as understanding the peculiar circumstances of this system in their place contexts.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This study is primarily justified based on the simple recognition that issues of societal harmony cannot be glossed over. For peace and progress of every society, truth, fairness and mutual understanding must be held uppermost. Where leadership is bereft of its fundamental ingredients the society is there at the verge of a total decay or collapse.

Today, the plethora of intrafamily and interfamily conflicts as well as intra communal and intercommunal crises will be brought to the barest minimum if there is a kind of understanding between the elders in authority and the youths. Provided the youths are satisfied with the system of leadership in all its ramifications there will be peace, harmony and progress- As long as the elders are neglecting the haws and cries of the younger generations, there will be continuous chaos and conflicts. This study therefore has its foremost direction based on the dire necessity of creating reversal in thinking among the communities.

The methodology considers relevant themes under research design, study area, population of the study, instruments for data collection, method of data collection and data analysis technique. Additionally the anticipated results or outcome are equally categorically stated as well as the time line of the duration or the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research work is backed up with the following specific objectives:

1. An understanding of the general image of conflicts prevailing in different communities.
2. An evaluation of the basic tenets of youths agitation against adults in the general community affairs

LITERATURE REVIEW

An Overview

The widely acceptable definition of Gerontocracy by several authorities in the field is that it is a form of leadership by elders Primordially, Gerontocracy is deemed to be rooted in Africa but a deep insight to the whole gamut of the problematic is that Gerontocracy is consciously or unconsciously ubiquitous (diverse) in scope. Omotade (2011) has already succinctly illustrated that it finds relevance in the communists oligarchy Quoting Gerner and Heolund (1989) he illustrated how a number communist rulers ruled outside their generational relevance or how they assumed office of leadership in borrowed times. Some of the cases in point were president Kimu Sung of North Korea who ruled and died at the age of 82 years,

Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia that died ruling at the age of 87, Leonid Brezhnev who at the age of 71 became chairman of the presidium and many others too many to outline.

Soviet Union does not in the least hold the wholesale monopoly of political Gerontocracy. It is the hallmark of most political machinery in different parts of the world, including Africa and especially so Nigeria. In past and present time, American system is replete with it.

Eve Peuser (2020) drawing on the scenario of American democracy in current times recounts thus: "At 78 Joe Biden became the oldest president of America; older than Ronald Regan when he left office and older than his predecessors besides Jimmy Carter". Additionally according to the Narrative "Nancy Pelosi, House speaker, is 80 as is majority whip, Jim Clyburn, while majority leader, Steny Hoyer is 81. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Chuck Grassley as well as Alaska's lone representative, Don Young are all 87 "The people are not young enough to baby boomers". They are part of a silent generation. Back to Africa and in Nigeria in particular, Gerontocracy is ingrained in the body polity. Obasanjo assumed office as president of Nigeria at his late seventies. So also is president Mohammed Buhari who took over from President Jonathan Goodluck at the age of senility. Currently, the youths/elders saga is looming about the choice of Peter Obi and Bola Tinubu caused by the popular voice of the people supporting Peter Obi for a change from tenacity in Gerontocratic hegemony. In Cameroon, Paul Biya has held onto power for over three decades and equally in Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe colonized politics as president for an unreasonable length of time (Agba 2020).

AFRICAN GERONTOCRACY THEN AND NOW

In its pristine form African gerontocracy is rooted in communalism, love, oneness, truth and fear of God. Agba (2020) provided an elaborate account of the original Africa gerontocracy. She "said in its purest form, the council of elders govern for the greater good of the community". That the factors of age and elderhood in gerontocracy are derived from the family ideal that old siblings cared for the younger ones, and as a kinship, the eldest who led was compelled by his ideal to be a good leader.

Furthermore, that dictatorship was out of the question because all the family heads met and deliberated on matters that concerned the compound, family, hamlet or clan community, she added that due to the value placed on age in Gerontocratic societies, elder members have influential positions. And it presupposes that elders due to their advancement in age, had more experience and power to take care of the people.

Using the conception of ethno-linguistic ideals of gerontocracy, Omotade cited instances of certain cultural ascription of old age. In the words of Dei (2009) there is in Africa, a general belief that old age comes with wisdom. Also Ayayo (1976) deriving inspiration from the Luo people of Guinea-Bissau, where old age is also seen as a basis of wisdom.

In the Yoruba literary notion as cited by De Lano (1979) "An elder cannot be present in the market and let the head of a baby on its mother's back twist to one side". This goes to mean that elders due to their old age and experience, are required in all situations to ensure that conflicts and misunderstanding which may end up in chaos are arrested and quelled.

From the above premise elders were seen as the custodians of the entire societal fabrics. They had the final say in religious, political, economic and other spheres of life. In this light Geest (2001) held that "Elderhood as a social and political category, a position which one reserves respect and exercises power because they have lived longer and knows which seems universal.

In Agba's (2000) observation, the reverse is the case today. Accordingly she held, "Elderhood in the light of age is no longer considered an attainment, but abusively an achievement, especially for politics in Africa in the present day Africa". This statement was anchored by another author's proposition that, that "the abuse of the traditional connection between age and authority has led to Africa's underdevelopment" (Ogola 2006).

The above statements substantiate the true perspective of the problem statement of this research study. The situation today in all African societies brings to bear on the book title written by Chinua Achebe, "Things fall apart". Things have certainly fallen apart and the centre can no longer hold: In the rural areas as elsewhere Gerontocracy has been abused in all its ramifications. In family and community resources control and other related matters justice and fair play have been abused. Ethnicism, favouritism, nepotism and all manner of biased dispensation of justice remain the order of the day. This situation reiterates Agba (2020) postulate that "Gerontocracy in contemporary Africa has taken a completely different dimension as it was in the traditional African society.

Inferring from an early work by Blunt (2016), concerning the Kikuyu of Kenya. She reported that introduction of money into the economy has led to the upturning of every formal way of traditional norms and practices. Going further, she added that the corrosive powers of money has shaken on the Kikuyus' traditional value of trust that propelled good leadership.

For all this disappoints the entire society and the youths are expected to wait and applaud the leaders (elders) who constitute a select few in the population anytime, anywhere. This scenario agrees with the view that Gerontocracy is symbolic of authoritarian traditions in traditional Africa which are responsible for the lack of sustained curiosity to look at issues from different perspectives (Adegbindin (2010). This presents a conservative approach to realities due principally to the fact that the world is dynamic not static and therefore issues and trends must align with the changing, trends of events for adequate adjustments.

This brings in the true perspective of Babala (2006) inference that, if it is mostly the elders and old who are in control of religious, political, social and economic powers without balancing up with the youth, then it means African societies are crowded with weak leaders. This introduces the real essence of adult/youths conflict in all matters.

THE YOUTHS ADULTS DEBATE OVER POWER

For a long time the youths have been clamouring for recognition or belongingness but to no avail. At all levels and in all circumstances they are abandoned to their lot. This phenomenon results in objectification, rancour, chaos and all forms of subtle and/or full blown revolution. The "end SASS" incidence a few years ago is a case in point. In the words of Annih (1997) "The youths are great hero worshippers. This means that they respond to leadership easily. They are malleable, they obey, they cooperate if the leader does not disappoint them".

On the other hand Annih (1997) added that "if you have the misfortune of letting them down, you count yourself a wet log". Sincerely all through, the youths have been relegated to the background as may be illustrated by this narrative mounted by a journalist mentee.

On the 31st of May 2018, the president of Nigeria Muhamadu, Buhari assented to the Bill "Not too young to run". This bill was to give the youths a level playground in Nigerian politics. The bill was passed by the National Assembly in 2017. With this mind, as the race for the 2023 election drew nearer, it was expected that the youths will be at the forefront of the major political parties. It wasn't that way, the youths were relegated to the background while the old took the starting line up of the major political parties. This means Nigeria is running a gerontocratic government in a democracy.

Further on, that Geronts are arrogating power, leaving the youths in the country to be clamouring to rule, but the older generations have refused to budge. The above narrative is a vivid portrayal of what goes on in at levels in the society of the developing world today and it has fostered the phenomenon of objectification and all sorts of societal maladies. This needs approaches towards as reversal which the results of this study stand to provide.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The methodology comprises the following:

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is an exploratory field survey design aimed at Data collection from respondents to elicit information towards understanding of the inherent elements of Gerontocracy and youths Adults conflict in the area of study. This is a form of cohort design aimed at acquiring prospective and retrospective data.

AREA OF STUDY

The area of study is central senatorial zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. This zone is one of the three geopolitical zones that embodied the three geopolitical senatorial entities of the state; others being North and South senatorial zones respectively. These zones are Federal constituency units at the upper legislative entities of Nigeria. The senatorial zone comprises six local governments areas namely Boki, Ikom, Etung, Obubra, Yakurr and Abi Local Government Areas. It is called central based on its location with the Northern senatorial zone to its geographic north and correspondingly the southern senatorial zone to its geographic south. These zones are political administrative creations for representative governance.

The area comprises multi-ethnic entities with Mosaics of cultures and traditions but all bearing on gerontocracy as the system of rulership by elders.

POPULATION

The population comprises adults and adolescent residents of the area who have resided up to five years and above. This is informed by the nature of the research design which is focused on retrospective and prospective data collection.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sampling procedure adopted multistage technique based on the followings:

- I. Representative cluster selection where all the local geopolitical units were considered based on population or demographic criterion.
- II. The next stage entailed systematic sampling where the households to be interviewed were selected systematically using the serpentine mode of selection.
- III. The third stage adopted stratified approach based on selection on the basis of sex and age e.g. male/female and adults/adolescents or youths.

INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The instruments employed are the questionnaire and oral interview. Case histories of incidents of conflicts and or rivalries were entertained.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Systematic approach to data collection will be employed such as

- I. Field reconnaissance or field legibility visit to acquire familiarity with area.
- II. The next stages was field mapping or sampling for delineation of representative population for the study.
- III. Following this was the main field entry where sampled location was engaged as a pilot study.
- IV. Then the final stage was field data collection with the aid of field assistants for administration of instruments and in situ retrieval.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed using the techniques of chi-square distribution and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Data presentation and Analysis**Hypothesis I**

There is no significant variation in the conflict incident ratings/prevalence in the central senatorial zone of Cross River State.

The field data collected were presented in tables as follows

Table 1: prevalent youth conflicts/objectifications in the areas (Youths conflict incident matrix for the zone)

S/No.	Conflicts incident	Prevalent rates in the areas						Total
		Yakurr	Obubra	Abi	Etung	Ikom	Boki	
1.	Youth Violence	12	20	19	22	18	21	
2.	Adult/youths affronts	14	16	17	21	16	19	
3.	Frequent Inter-communal crises	18	23	18	12	12	14	
4.	Looting or plundering of Resources	11	21	15	16	18	16	
5.	Deposing/Derobing of traditional chiefs	14	16	12	23	11	18	
6.	Conflicts or disagreement over resource sharing	19	13	12	16	15	19	
7.	Riots/vandalization of public utilities	17	12	15	19	23	17	

Note: table 1 above conveys information generated through questionnaire interviews administered in the field in all the Local Government areas that constitute the central senatorial zone. The six Local Government Areas have represented accordingly and the incident categories and ratings clearly depicted. In each Local Government Area, a maximum of twenty five respondent were interviewed and the responses shown on the table against each Local Government Area. Following a formulated null hypothesis the data is analysed using the technique of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The total scores against each violence incidence represent aggregate affirmation representing the factor loading of the incidence as will be discussed under findings/results below.

Anova: Two-Factor Without Replication

SUMMARY	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Adult/youths affronts	6	103	17.16667	6.166667
Frequent Inter-communal crises	6	97	16.16667	18.56667
Looting or plundering of Resources	6	97	16.16667	10.96667
Deposing/Derobing of traditional chiefs	6	94	15.66667	19.46667
Conflicts or disagreement over resource sharing	6	94	15.66667	8.666667
Riots/vandalization of public utilities	6	103	17.16667	13.76667
12	6	93	15.5	9.1
20	6	101	16.83333	18.96667
19	6	89	14.83333	6.166667
22	6	107	17.83333	15.76667
18	6	95	15.83333	18.96667
21	6	103	17.16667	3.766667

ANOVA

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	14	5	2.8	0.200191	0.959373	2.602987
Columns	38.33333	5	7.666667	0.548141	0.738174	2.602987
Error	349.6667	25	13.98667			

Total

402

35

* 0.05 alpha Level

Decision Rule:

Accept the null hypothesis, since $F_{crit} (2.60298) > F (0.20019)$. There is no significant variation in the prevalence rate of conflicts incidents encountered over the study locale investigated.

Hypothesis Two

Ho: There is no significant difference in the respondents affirmation over adult causes of youths conflicts in the area.

Table III: Adult/Youths Predicates of conflict incidence prevalent in the zone (Adult based conflict rating)

S/No.	Incident predicates affirmation by respondents	Prevalent rates in the areas						Total
		Yakurr	Obubra	Abi	Etung	Ikom	Boki	
1.	Youth Violence	14	19	16	21	17	22	109
2.	Adult/youths affronts	15	18	17	23	20	22	115
3.	Frequency of Inter-communal crises	22	24	19	23	16	21	124
4.	Incidents of Intra-communal crises	16	21	20	24	17	20	118
5.	Looting/plundering	17	18	21	16	18	20	110
6.	Chieftaincy Deposition	11	19	17	14	19	21	101
6.	Conflicts over resource sharing	16	20	21	22	17	16	112
7.	Riots/vandalization	17	16	14	13	19	21	100

Note: The values represented above based on the respondent's affirmation that deregulation gerontocracy is responsible for the identified incidents prevalence. Following table I Above, the number of respondents mobilised were twenty five. Their positive affirmation responses are scored accordingly for each incidence in the row and Local Government Area in the Columns. Here the technique of chi-square distribution was employed to test the hypothesis stated in the null form below.

Table iv: Observed Values

S/No.	Incident predicates affirmation by respondents	Prevalent rates in the areas						Total
		Yakurr	Obubra	Abi	Etung	Ikom	Boki	
1.	Youth Violence	14	19	16	21	17	22	109
2.	Adult/youths affronts	15	18	17	23	20	22	115
3.	Frequency of Inter-communal crises	22	24	19	23	16	21	124
4.	Incidents of Intra-communal crises	16	21	20	24	17	20	118
5.	Looting/plundering	17	18	21	16	18	20	110
6.	Chieftaincy Deposition	11	19	17	14	19	21	101
6.	Conflicts over resource sharing	16	20	21	22	17	16	112
7.	Riots/vandalization	17	16	14	13	19	21	100

Table v: EXPECTED VALUE

S/No.	Incident predicates affirmation by respondents	Prevalent rates in the areas						Total
		Yakurr	Obubra	Abi	Etung	Ikom	Boki	
1	Youth Violence	15.68	18.98	18.98	18.98	18.98	18.98	110.6
2	Adult/youths affronts	16.54	20.028	20.03	20.03	20.03	20.03	116.7

3	Frequency of Inter-communal crises	17.978	21.77	21.77	21.77	21.77	21.77	126.8
4	Incidents of Intra-communal crises	16.97	20.55	20.55	20.55	20.55	20.55	119.7
5	Looting/plundering	15.82	19.16	19.16	19.16	19.16	19.16	111.6
6	Chieftaincy Deposition	14.53	17.59	17.59	17.59	17.59	17.59	102.5
6	Conflicts over resource sharing	16.11	19.51	19.51	19.51	19.51	19.51	113.6
7	Riots/vandalization	14.38	17.42	17.42	17.42	17.43	17.42	101.5

TABLE VI: (O-E)2/E

S/No.	Incident predicates affirmation by respondents	Prevalent rates in the areas						
		Yakurr	Obubra	Abi	Etung	Ikom	Boki	Total
1	Youth Violence	0.214	0.002	0.314	0.212	0.209	0.318	0.205
2	Adult/youths affronts	0.186	0.203	0.302	0.297	0.003	0.197	0.200
3	Frequency of Inter-communal crises	0.448	0.205	0.254	0.113	0.530	0.071	0.090
4	Incidents of Intra-communal crises	0.114	0.044	0.054	0.336	0.346	0.054	0.188
5	Looting/plundering	0.149	0.121	0.192	0.330	0.121	0.088	0.142
	Chieftaincy Deposition	0.485	0.160	0.067	0.408	0.160	0.388	0.252
6	Conflicts over resource sharing	0.013	0.051	0.153	0.256	0.257	0.359	0.170
7	Riots/vandalization	0.364	0.163	0.392	0.507	0.182	0.412	0.104
		0.053	0.024	1.038	0.031	1.123	0.918	1.351

$$X^2 = 1.351$$

Decision Rule:

For an alpha level of 0.05 and thirty-four degrees of freedom, the critical statistic is 48.60, which is greater than our obtained statistic of 1.351. Hence we can accept our null hypothesis because the critical statistic is less than obtained statistic. We therefore conclude that there is no significant difference in the respondents affirmation over adult causes of youths conflicts in the area. Impliedly, conflict or objectification is a common feature predicated on adults Youths rivalry in the study area.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

Hypothesis I focuses on investigation of prevalence of incidents of conflict in the area of study. Seven parameters of conflict indicators were employed in the field data collection process and reports presented on table I. Against each incident, the factor loadings are presented as totals representing the incidents scaling rate. Following the factor loads distribution, riots/vandalization of public utilities scaled modally with the total of 113 followed closely by adult/youths affront with the total of 112 factor load. The third conflict incident highlights looting or plundering of resources. Overall the conflict matrix as shown by the table reflects a condition typical of an area replete with disharmony and absolute absence of peace.

Accordingly, following the statistical decision rule in line with the hypothesis statement, the null hypothesis was upheld indicating that there is no significant variation in conflict incidence prevalence across the geographical spread of the area explored in the process of field survey. This signifies that the entire domain is under conflict siege as evident by the sporadic and frequent occurrence of volatile and subtle skirmishes or feuds across the area. This condition generally epitomizes the current state of affairs in the geopolitical entities across the state. This situation defies Greest's (2001) conception that "Elderhood as a social and political category, is a position where one reserves respect and exercises Power because they have lived longer and know which seems Universal". Ironically, the existing scenario negates the tenets of Universality of issues based on common good has been relegated to the background. Agba's (2000) position on the current state of African Gerontocracy is upheld by the situation in our society. In this sense, she held that "Elderhood in the light of age is no longer considered an attainment, especially for politics in Africa in the present day".

Further on, Agba's (2000) enunciation on the original prototype of African Gerontocracy which "said in its purest form the council of elders govern for the greater good of the community" has been obliterated by the findings of this study in the area investigated. Overall, the situation is not circumspect

the area investigated but rather wide spread malady in numerous traditional societies in South eastern Nigeria which has been primordially characterized by republican gerontocracy as opposed to that of feudalistic or communist in orientation.

A further bolster to this orientation was equally brought up by Agba (2000) concerning the Kikuyu People of Kenya in the erosion of the original traditional culture of truth and commonality of interest. On this not, she reported that introduction of money into the economy of the people has led to the up turning of the formal way of the peoples traditional norms and practices. Additionally, she reported that the corrosive powers of money have shaken the Kikuyu's traditional values of trust that propelled good leadership.

Inherently, this new orientation is a common feature of the existing societal malaise in most communities in the Niger Delta region of South-South Nigeria where many elders cannot be true to their words caused by monetary aggrandizements. Following these findings, the advocacy of this study is for a reversal of this trend by some subtle or coercive process.

Hypothesis II

This hypothesis directs attention to an understanding of the co-connection between youths violence and deregulated adult gerontocracy in the area. Following the decision rule, the null hypothesis was upheld indicating that there is no significant variations in respondents affirmation on the predicates of adult's youth conflict in the area. This result is conformal with that provided by hypothesis I which explored the spatial prevalence of adult/youths conflict in the area. The findings lend strong support to the prevailing pool opinion that adult leadership disorientation is grievously the sole bane of social dis harmony in the area. Here as elsewhere, the main bone of contention remains the fact that only a select group of the majority of adults are in control. This position has already been substantiated by Omotade (2011) who held that "Gerontocracy is a form of political system, a form of alignment rule whereby a small group of elderly individuals are in control of power". Here equity, fair play and the overall relevance of the rule of law is absolutely negated. This provides the sole basis for objectification and confrontation. The overwhelming support of the fact that adult dictatorship is the primary precursor of conflicts in the different communities is seen by the close ranking of the factor loading in table II from where the statistical testing was carried out. Incidence of intercommunal crises (item 3) ranked highest with a factor load of 124, followed closely by item 4 with a load of 118. Ranking third is incidence of adult/youths affronts with a factor load of 115. Other incidents featured and investigated did not stagger far behind these model incidents. The general inference derivable from the findings is that peace and harmony are eluding the communities caused by a number of adult pronged incidents which have heading to rend the societies apart.

By and large, it has been clearly unraveled that misguided adult rule and non representative participation in the current system of traditional leadership in most African traditional societies is responsible for the emergence of conflict and objectification.

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