HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: AN ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF NIGERIA HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION APPROACHES

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Abstract

The international community has increasingly expressed consensus on the crucial contribution of human rights education (HRE) to the realisation of human rights as well as to the long-term prevention of human rights abuses and violent conflicts. HRE is widely considered to be a major tool for promoting social responsibility and a universal culture of respect for and protection of human rights. Many National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) like the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria (NHRC) include HRE in their activities in an attempt to foster a sense of social change, yet NHRIs still grapple with how to effectively implement an HRE intervention that is sustainable and result oriented. In an attempt to provide resources and promote HRE, this paper examines the concept and models of HRE and analyse its potential for positive change. The paper considers that using an approach that is transformational and integrated into a community-based approach anchored on the principles of participation and

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empowerment and delivered through culturally appropriate channels, is effective for the promotion and protection of human rights. While growing support for the inclusion of HRE in the work of NHRIs has built a solid foundation, we must critically consider the challenges and future possibilities for an effective and participatory HRE. This paper argues that the use of the transformational human rights education model (THRED) offers a better prospect and will give the highest success rate in Commission's HRE approach.

KEYWORDS: *Human Rights Education, HRE Models, Transformational Action, Participation, Empowerment.*

Introduction

The United Nations Charter of 1945 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948 require that all states recognise, establish, protect and enforce human rights at global, regional, national and local levels. Since their adoption, the recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of every person has forced the international community to recognise and assume its responsibility in the promotion of universal respect for and protection of human rights as well as to guarantee the indivisibility of human rights and their interdependence with peace and development.[613] The Sustainable

[613] In 1948 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) created a committee which included leading intellectuals, philosophers and political scientists that sent out a questionnaire to a number of personalities (such as Mohandas Gandhi and Aldous Huxley) soliciting their opinions on the idea of a universal declaration of human rights. Based on responses received to the questionnaire a report was prepared which indicated that, despite cultural differences, Members States of the UN shared certain principles and common ideals. The results

Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by United Nations General Assembly in September, 2015 offers another crucial opportunity to promote development approaches that contribute to the protection and fulfilment of human rights, through domestic policy and resources. As a globally agreed blueprint for 2015-2030, the SDGs have become the major point of reference for development actors at all levels and will have a significant impact on the human rights agenda for years to come.[614] Human rights provide a "universally available set of standards for the dignity and integrity of all human beings".[615] The fulfilment of these standards, based on the principles of freedom, equality, solidarity, inviolability, inclusiveness, diversity, universality and participation, is directly linked to the possibilities of information, education and communication as a right. Article 19 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirmed the right to freedom of opinion and expressions, including the right to seek, receive and impart information.[616]

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of the survey facilitated the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) on December 10, 1948 in Paris.

[614] Steven L. B. Jensen, S.L.; Corkery, A and Donald, K. (2015). Center for Economic and Social Rights

[615] Hamelink, C.J. (1994). The politics of world communication: a human rights perspective, London, Sage.

[616] UNDHR Article 19 states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers".

The UDHR of 1948 underscores the importance of human rights education (HRE) in the promotion of human rights culture in its Preamble.

> Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms…..[617]
>
> Now, therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.[618]

The preamble of the UDHR further declared that 'every individual and every organ of society, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms.[619] Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights further

[617] Preamble to UDHR, para. 6
[618] Ibid @ 5 para.8
[619] Ibid @ 5 para.8

affirms that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". According to Andreopoulos and Claude, the UDHR conceptualise education as more than a tool to promote human rights:

> It is an end in itself. In positing a human right to education, the framers of the Declaration axiomatically relied on the notion that education is not value neutral. In this spirit, Article 26 [sic] states that one of the goals of education should be "the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms".[620]

While Article 26(1) deals with education as a general human right, Article 26(2) makes the development of the human personality and the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms part of the content of human rights education. Education as a basic human right cannot be any education. Its content, says the UDHR, ought to be built on a substantive understanding of the dignity of all human beings and an appreciation of the rights and freedoms to which human beings are entitled.[621]

> Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of

[620] Andreopolous, G.J. & Claude, R.P. (Eds). 1997. *Human rights education for the Twenty-first Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

[621] See the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in December 1948,

> respect for Human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace" (Article 26 (2).[622]

Most core conventions have provisions that reinforce this obligation on states to use HRE to promote knowledge of human rights standards and principles in general, and the instruments they are written into, in particular. Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) not only mandates education as an economic right, but also, in a further elaboration of Article 26 of the UDHR, links it to the importance of developing the whole person and the ability to participate effectively in a free society:[623]

> The States Parties to the present Covenant recognise the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups,

[622] Ibid @ 9

[623] Article 13 of ICESCR

> and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

The ICESCR General Comment 13 of 1999 states that the role of education is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realising other human rights, adding that [education is a] means to empowering marginalised and vulnerable groups to lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities.[624] Elaborating on the broad understanding of education in Article 26 of the UDHR, the ICESCR sees education as a process of developing the person to become a moral agent who accepts his/her own dignity, respects the rights of others, and has the ability to participate in a free society and contributes to peace. This somewhat utopian understanding of the value of education underlines the fact that the ICESCR, with its emphasis on social justice, will be an exercise in futility if the poor and marginalised do not have the social skills and knowledge to exercise their rights.

The Convention on the Eradication of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)[625] also makes education a central obligation of each state party:

> States Parties undertake to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of **teaching**, **education**, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding,

[624] The Danish Institute for Human Rights (2012). The Human Rights Education Tool Box

[625] Article 7 of Convention on the Eradication of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CEARD)

> tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups, as well as to propagating the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and this Convention.[626]

Regional instruments also emphasise the importance of human rights education in the promotion of human rights. For instance, Article 25 in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights provides that state parties have the duty to promote and ensure human rights contained in the charter through teaching, education and publication.[627] The additional protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 13, reads that education should strengthen respect for human rights, ideological pluralism, fundamental freedoms, justice and peace.[628]

Human rights education (HRE) is one strategy for applying human rights to development theory, policy and practice.[629] HRE has been described as a human right,[630] a universal priority,[631] a

[626] Ibid @ 13
[627] See African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
[628] Ibid @ 11
[629] Stephen Marks, *Health, Development and Human Rights*, *in* HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT: TOWARD A MATRIX APPROACH 124, 130 (Anna Gatti & Andrea Boggio eds., 2008).
[630] G.A. Res. 48/127, preamble ¶ 7, U.N. Doc. A/RES/48/127, (Dec. 20, 1993).
[631] *See, e.g.*, Robinson, *supra* note 3, at 80-82; Malcolm Langford, *A Poverty of Rights: Six Ways to Fix the MDGs*, 41(1) IDS BULLETIN 83-90 (2010); Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], Claiming the Millennium Development Goals: A Human Rights Approach, U.N. Doc. HR/PUB/08/3, at vii

global movement,[632] a transformative pedagogy,[633] and a strategy for development.[634] Building upon this strong international framework, many institutions and individuals have contributed, and are continuously committed to advancing respect of human rights and freedoms through HRE.[635]

In the 1970s, the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) promoted HRE, and social movements adopted human rights discourse to support legal campaigns for the realisation of human rights at the national and international levels.[636] The early approach to HRE was mostly through teaching *about* human rights (their history, mechanisms, and UN documents) rather than teaching *fo*r the practice of

(2008) [hereinafter OHCHR, Claiming the MDGs]; Ashwani Saith, *From Universal Values to Millennium Development Goals: Lost in Translation*, 37(6) DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE 1167 (2006); Gillian MacNaughton & Diane F. Frey, *Decent Work, Human Rights and the Millennium Development Goals*, 7 HASTINGS RACE AND POVERTY LAW JOURNAL 303 (2010); Thomas Pogge, *The First United Nations Millennium Development Goal: A Cause for Celebration?*, 5(3) JOURNAL OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 377 (2004).

[632] *See* Felicia Tibbitts, *Human Rights Education*, *in* ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PEACE EDUCATION (2008), *available at* http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/epe/entries.html ("Human rights education (HRE) is an international movement to promote awareness about the rights accorded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related human rights conventions, and the procedures that exist for the redress of violations of these rights (accessed Feb. 2018).

[633] 23 *See* Clarence Dias, *Human Rights Education as a Strategy for Development*, *in* HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY 51 (1997).

[634] Ibid at 20

[635] Ibid @ 9

[636]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_rights_education#Human_rights_education_and_the_United_Nations

human rights and their realisation by individual and collective action.[637]

In 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights concluded in its Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that states are duty bound "to ensure that education is aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms". It mandated:

> Educational training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms… thus contributing to, *inter alia*, the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing people with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights.[638].[639]

The leading international network of HRE, the Global Coalition for Human Rights Education formed by NGOs in 2014 to strengthen the HRE compliance of states by raising awareness and urging action, integrating HRE into UN mechanisms, and monitoring the implementation of HRE commitments, called for 2020 to be the year of assessing the achievements of

[637] Bajaj, M., Cislaghi, B. and Mackie, G. (2016). *Advancing Transformative Human Rights Education: Appendix D to the Report of the Global Citizenship Commission.* Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2016. http://dx.doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0091.13 (Accessed March, 2018)

[638] See http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/vienna.pdf

[639] See http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/vienna.pdf

governments, international institutions, and civil society in providing access to quality human rights education.

However, achieving the goals of HRE require innovative teaching strategies, with an emphasis dialogue, critical thinking and analysis of information and problem-solving. It is not simply enough for target group to learn about international, regional and national human rights law or to stay updated on current events of NHRCN. HRE content must be paired with teaching pedagogy that emphasises global responsibility and community, interconnectedness or social support, the re-humanisation of victims and perpetrators of human rights abuse, and potential for enacting solutions for positive change.[640]

The purpose of the paper therefore, is to examine the human rights education models of the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria (NHRCN). The goal of this paper is not only to promote the understanding of HRE but to assess its challenge for the sustenance of human rights culture in Nigeria. The roles of National human rights institutions (NHRIs) in HRE have been emphasised in international legal framework. The first important framework is the Paris Principle,[641] a set of international standards which frames and guide the work of NHRIs. The United Nations Resolution 48/131 in 1993 stated that:

[640] Ibid @ 25

[641] Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (The Paris Principles). Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/134 of 20th December, 1993

> The General Assembly, (…) convinced of the significant role that institutions can play at national level can play in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms and in developing and enhancing public awareness of those rights and freedoms (…..).
>
> A national institution shall, *inter alia* have the following responsibilities:
>
> F) To assist in the formulation of programmes for the teaching of, and research into, human rights and to take part in their execution in schools, universities and professional circles;
>
> G) To publicise human rights and efforts to combat all forms of discrimination, in particular racial discrimination, by increasing awareness, especially through information and education and by making use of use of all press organs.[642]

In addition to the Paris Principle, UDHR provides a strong basis for HRE.[643] The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and the World Conference on Human Rights re-affirmed the important and constructive role of NHRIs in HRE.[644] As an independent institution of accountability mandated to ensure that

[642] Ibid @ 17
[643] See Article 26(2) of the UDHR
[644] Segura, F. (2009) *Exploring Developed and Developing World Human Right Education initiatives at the Primary and Secondary School Levels*, macalester.edu

international and local commitments are upheld, the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) undoubtedly have a role to play in human rights promotion and education.[645]

Conceptual Reviews

This section review concepts that are relevant to this paper for the purpose of clarity.

Human Rights Education (HRE)

Provisions on HRE have been incorporated into many international instruments, including the UDHR, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education, and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.[646] HRE is crucial in the promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights and should not be underestimated as it represents a milestone towards a common vision of human dignity.[647]

Over the past seven decades, the theory and practice of HRE has come with differing parameters and convergence, but with broad consensus about its components. First is the agreement by practitioners and scholars that HRE must include both content

[645] Broadly defined as quasi-governmental, administrative institutions (neither judicial nor law-making), NHRIs have an on-going advisory authority in respect of human rights. See A. Corkery and D. Wilson (2014), 'Building Bridges: national human rights institutions and economic, social and cultural rights', in Riedel et al (eds.) Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in International Law: contemporary issues and challenges.

[646] Ibid @ 22

[647] See NHRC Bulletin (2017). Vol. iii. No. 10

and process related to human rights, such as the importance of using participatory methods for effectively teaching human rights.[648] Secondly, some literature discourse based on the need for HRE to include goals related to cognitive (content), attitudinal or emotive (values/skills), and action oriented components.[649] Amnesty International (AI) framework however, weaves together the process of HRE and their intended outcomes by highlighting three prepositions linking education and human rights in a comprehensive manner to include: a) education about human rights (cognitive); b) education through human rights (participatory methods that create skills for active citizenship); and c) education for human rights (fostering learner's ability to speak up and act in the face of injustices).[650]

However, the ongoing debates surrounding the definitions of HRE reflect varying conceptions of the field. The preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that 'every individual and every organ and society, keeping this Declaration in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms'.[651] Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 identifies first the right to education and second, the right to an education directed toward 'the full development of the human personality

[648] Tibbitts, F. (2005). Transformative Learning and Human Rights Education: Taking a Closer Look, 16 Intercultural Edu. 107.
[649] Ibid @ 37
[650] Amnesty International's Human Rights Friendly Schools Project , available at http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/projects-initiatives/rfsp (accessed February, 2018
[651] General Assembly, *United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education*, resolution 49/184, (23 December 1994, A/RES/49/184).

and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and social groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace".[652]

Emphasised in the United Nations definition of HRE is knowledge about human rights and tolerance/acceptance of others based on such knowledge. Most have argued however that the UN conceptualisation of HRE is directed at national policy makers, a top-down statement of what HRE is and should be. The UN definition largely reflects the role of international norms for ensuring social cohesion and peace.[653] In climes with history of dictatorship, HRE efforts are seen as both a political and pedagogical strategy to facilitate democratisation and active citizenship.[654]

The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education[655] by the resolution of the UN General Assembly Plan of Action defined HRE as "training, dissemination and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights

[652] Ibid @ 20
[653] Flowers, N (2003). What is Human Rights Education?. In Bertelsmann, V (ed) (2003). A Survey of Human Rights Education. Garth Meintjes
[654] Magendzo, A.K(2004). Problems in Planning Human Rights Education for Re-engineering Latin American Democracies. In Human Rights Education for the 21st Century, Supra note 5, at 469
[655] Ibid @ 33

through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the moulding of attitudes and directed to:

> a) The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; (b) The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity; (c) The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups; (d) The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free society; (e) The furtherance of the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.[656]

This definition is very broad. Since 1999 this definition has been regarded as the most comprehensive definition of human rights education. It seems that HRE must include human rights information on gender equality, friendship, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups aimed at building universal culture of human rights. The use of words like 'enabling' and 'participate' is emphasised as the means for implementing HRE activities.

However, the Plan of Action states that the UN Decade for HRE "shall further be directed to creating the broadest possible awareness and understanding of all of the norms, concepts and values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

[656] *See* Appendix, *Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004: Human rights education – lessons for life*, para. 2.

the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in other relevant international human rights instruments.[657] Practitioners in their recent articulations have expanded the definitions of what HRE should be and have cited a variety of goals and learners. On 19 December 2011 the UN Assembly adopted the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. Article 2 of the Declaration define HRE by providing that:

> Human rights education and training comprises all educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing to, *inter alia,* the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights.[658]

Several key points emerge from this definition. First, the Declaration clearly articulates the philosophy that HRE is about empowerment. Empowerment is an approach that describes equity in distribution of power and active grassroots participation

[657] Plan of Action for the UN Decade for HRE, *supra* note 36, para. 3.
[658] The Danish Institute for Human Rights (2012).

as the central guiding principles of learning.[659] Empowerment entails consciousness/conscientisation to promote creativity and critical reasoning as a way for participants in the learning environment to uncover the nature of their problems and their root causes of human rights violations and abuses in line with their socio-economic, political, cultural and historical context of their personal lives.[660] HRE requires participatory learning in order to transform learners into active and empowered citizens who respect and promote human rights.

A second key feature of this definition is that HRE is a preventative tool. This paper expressly acknowledges the potential of HRE to empower individuals to contribute to the prevention of human rights abuses through the building of a culture of human rights. Article 4 similarly acknowledges the preventative power of HRE through combating discrimination, racism, hatred and harmful attitudes and practices. Recognising that HRE is a valuable tool for addressing the root causes of human rights violations is a pivotal component of the definition of HRE.

Human rights education in the Plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme describes HRE as:

> "education, training and information aiming at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and moulding of attitudes directed to: (a) The

[659] Freire, P (1970). Culture and Conscientisation. Harvard Educational Review, 40 (30)
[660] Freire, P (1983) Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York Continuum.

> strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; (b) The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity; (c) The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups; (d) The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law; (e) The building and maintenance of peace; (f) The promotion of people-centred sustainable development and social justice.[661],[662]

The definition is very close to the definition in the Decade for HRE. Only one more letter emerged, the last one asking for the promotion of people-centred sustainable development and social justice. HRE contains "[k]nowledge and skills – learning about human rights and mechanisms for their protection, as well as acquiring skills to apply them in daily life; [v]alues, attitudes and behaviour – developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behaviour which uphold human rights; [a]ction – taking action to defend and promote human rights." [663] HRE entails "human

[661] General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training*, resolution 66/137, (16 February 2012, A/RES/66/137) Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2011.

[662] Readon, B. (2009). Human Rights Learning: Pedagogies and Politics of Peace, Paper presented on a lecture delivered for UNESCO Chair for Peace Education Master Conference at the University of Puerto Rico (Accessed January, 2018).
[663]General Assembly, *Revised draft plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education* (2 March 2005, A/59/525/Rev. 1).

rights through education" [664] and "human rights in education" which is in the Plan of Action referred to as "a rights-based approach to education."[665]

United Nation, Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) with a long standing commitment to promoting Human Rights Education (HRE), broadly defines it as a learning and practice of human rights.[666] According to UNESCO, HRE:

> Allows (sic) people to participate in their communities and society in a constructive and respectful way for themselves and others. It aims to deliver outcomes such as personal and social growth, the respectful conduct of citizens toward each other and the provision of opportunities for learners to develop critical thinking and life skills. [667]

UNESCO definition highlights the role of participation and the provision of opportunities for critical thinking, including life skills amongst communities as ingredient for HRE. The definition also touched on the ability of HRE to deliver personal and social growth outcomes.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) defines HRE as:

> A long term and lifelong process by which all people at all levels of development and in all strata

[664] Ibid @ 42
[665] Ibid @ 42
[666] UNESCO (2008). Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education
[667] Ibid @ 22

> of society learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies….it significantly contributes to promoting equality and sustainable development, preventing conflict and human rights violations and enhancing participation and democratic process with a view to developing societies in which all human rights are valued and respected.[668]

The definition by UNCHR highlights the crucial relation between HRE and equality, sustainable development, democracy and the prevention of conflict and human rights violations. In essence, the key role played by education in the development of societies is here occupied with core human rights values and global citizenship ethic. Amnesty International (AI) underscores the need for grassroots level involvement or participation to impact awareness about human rights and conceptualised HRE not only as a mechanism for "development of respect for human rights', but also as tool which aims to empower target audience to defend and claim their rights. AI definition has more of an activist element and brings to the fore even more evidently the elements of active citizenship and its connection to HRE:

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> Human rights education is a deliberate, participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and communities through fostering knowledge, skills, and attitude consistent with international human rights principles….its goal is to build a culture of respect for and action in the defence and promotion of human rights for all …Human rights education can also play a vital role in building social structures that support participatory democracies and the resolution of conflict, and can promote a common understanding of how to address political and social differences equitably and celebrate cultural diversity (AI, 2016). [669].[670]

The AI definition emphasises increasing the agency of individuals, groups and communities to claim their rights and to take responsibility for realising the rights of others. Both social change as an outcome, and learners becoming agents of this process of claiming their own rights and defending others' rights, are central in this definition. While the differences may be semantic and insignificant to some, approaches to HRE and models for characterising its outcomes and goals provide further clarity to the ways in which the educational reform is

[669] Amnesty International, National Human Rights Institutions, Amnesty International's recommendations for effective protection and promotion of human rights, October 2001 (accessed, Feb. 2018).

[670] Ramirez, F.O., David. S and Meyer, J.W (2007). The Worldwide Rise of Human Rights Education: School Knowledge in Comparative and Historical Perspective . CERC Studies in Comparative Education; Vol.18:2(Accessed January, 2018).

conceptualised and enacted. Over time, the state-centred concepts of HRE have gravitated towards those of the civil society actors.

Further, the Encyclopaedia of Peace Education also offers a clear explanation of the concept of HRE as 'an international movement to promote awareness about the rights accorded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and relevant human rights conventions, and the procedures that exist for the redress of violations of these rights'.[671] This definition calls upon horizontal ties (responsibilities among individuals) as well as governmental and supranational responsibilities.[672]

The Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR)[673] provides the following objectives for HRE:

1. Build knowledge, skills, values and attitudes;
2. Create action and change to build and promote a universal culture of human rights;
3. Clearly link and refer to the human rights system, instruments and standards;
4. Promote participation and empowerment;
5. Promote accountability and rule of law;
6. Promote non-discrimination, equality and the protection of vulnerable groups
7. Be learner centred;
8. Be contextualised, concrete and local;

[671] Readon, B.(2009). Human Rights Learning: Pedagogies and Politics of Peace, Paper presented on a lecture delivered for UNESCO Chair for Peace Education Master Conference at the University of Puerto Rico (Accessed January, 2018).
[672] United Nations World Conference on Human Rights, 1993, *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*, para. 33 of Section 1.
[673] Ibid @ 32

9. Apply interactive and participatory learning methodologies; and
10. Be well planned and managed.

Therefore, HRE should be understood as a lifelong learning process by which all people at all levels of development and in all areas of society learn respect for the dignity of others, and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies. HRE should also be seen as a process of participation and empowerment for people to take action in the promotion and sustenance of human rights culture. In results, it becomes apparent from these definitions that HRE, whilst aimed at fostering a universal culture of human rights, should be seen as a process aimed at enabling or empowering all persons to participate effectively in a free society, thus emphasising the principle of active citizenship in human rights promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Tibbitts "pyramidal model" of HRE formulated in 2002[674] in which three distinct models creates pyramid with regard to "the size of the target populations they each deal with" and "the degree of difficulty for each of the educational programs."[675] The pyramid base contains the Values and Awareness Model; the centre contains the Accountability Model and on top there is a Transformational Model. These models represent "an idealised framework for understanding

[674] Tibbitts, F. (2002). Understanding What We Do: Emerging Models for Human Rights Education, 48:3/4 *International Review of Education*, Education and Human Rights , p. 167.
[675] IBID @ 57

contemporary human rights education practice" and they should clarify their link with social change.[676]

The Values and Awareness Model of HRE is to transmit basic knowledge of human rights issues and to foster its integration into public values. Public education awareness campaigns and school-based curriculum typically fall within this model.[677] The goal is to build a world that respect human rights through awareness of and commitment to normative goals put forward in the UDHR and other key documents.[678] Human rights topics found under this model may include history of human rights, information about key human rights instruments and mechanism for protection, and international and national concerns. The key pedagogical engagement is to attract the attention of the learner. These methods can devolve into a lecture-oriented approach. The model is focused primarily on content knowledge and thinking skills and does not directly relate to empowerment. This model has been critiqued for placing relatively little emphasis on the development of skills.[679] A fundamental challenge for this model is how to avoid the 'banking' model of education warned of by Freire.[680] Devoid of critical thinking and conscientisation, this model takes the risk of offering a superficial exposure to the human rights field, which in the worst case, can be experienced as primarily ideological.[681] Some examples of the Values and Awareness Model are the inclusion of human rights related lessons within

[676] Ibid @ 67
[677] Ibid @ 57
[678] See UDHR, 1948
[679] Ibid @ 57
[680] Freire, p (1994). Pedagogy of the Hope. New York; Continuum
[681] Freire, p (1983). Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York; Continuum

citizenship, history, social science, and law-related education classes in schools, and infusion of human rights-related themes into both formal and informal youth programming (e.g. the arts, Human Rights Day, Human Rights School clubs and debates). Public awareness campaign involving public awareness and sensitisation, and advertising, media coverage and press releases, and community events and outreaches may also be classified under this model.

The Accountability Model (AM) is used by the professionals who are either monitoring human rights violations or who have responsibility to protect the rights of people.[682] The assumption under this model of HRE is that learners will be directly involved in the protection of individual and group rights.[683] Under this model, learners are expected to be directly or indirectly associated with the guarantee of human rights through their professional roles. HRE engagement with these target groups focuses on the ways in which their professional responsibilities involve either (a) directly monitoring human rights violations and advocating with necessary authorities, or (b) taking special care to protect the rights of people (especially vulnerable populations) for which they have some responsibility.[684] The provision of education programmes is to sensitise them about the nature of human rights violation and potentials within their professional role, not only to prevent abuses but to promote respect for human dignity.[685] Human rights training and topics are geared towards

[682] Ibid @ 57
[683] Ibid @ 57
[684] Ibid @ 57
[685] Ibid @ 57

these specialized areas, and leaner outcomes are towards content, as well as skill development. [686]

Human rights violation is a crucial component of the content of the AM. Programme that falls within the Accountability Model are the training on techniques for monitoring and documenting human rights abuses and procedures for registering grievances with appropriate national and international bodies.[687] Within this classification are in-service training for lawyers, prosecutors, judges, police officers, military and other para-military agencies, staff of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) that may include information about relevant constitutional and international law, professional conduct, supervisory and grievances mechanisms and consequences of violation.[688] Other professional groups like journalist, health and social service workers and vulnerable groups may also be the recipient of HRE programming under the Accountability model. According to Tibbitts, the AM is devoid of personal change since it is assumed that professional responsibility is sufficient for the individual having an interest in applying human rights framework.[689] Implicit in this model, however, is the goal of structurally based and legally guaranteed, norms and practices related to human rights. It is given within this model that social change is necessary, and that community-based, national and regional targets for reform can be identified.

[686] Ibid @ 57
[687] Ibid @ 57
[688] Ibid @ 57
[689] Ibid @ 57

The Transformative Human Rights Education (THRED) is a community-based approach to HRE.[690] The Transformational Model is connected to the word *empowerment.* The model is geared towards empowering individual and groups to both recognise human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention. The model targets children, youths and adults in formal or non-formal settings. It contains cognitive, affective and action-oriented elements that involve self-reflection and support within community of learners.[691] A contextualized and relevant curriculum is paired with participatory pedagogical activities to bring human rights to life and to foster in learners an awareness of global citizenship and a respect for human rights.[692] Transformative HRE exposes learners to gaps between rights and actual realities, and provokes group dialogue on the concrete action necessary to close those gaps. Learners engage in critical reflection, social dialogue, and individual and collective action to pursue the realisation of human rights locally, nationally, and globally.[693] Transformative HRE can have remarkable results for individuals and groups as related to UDHR.[694]

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690 Ibid @ 57

691 Freire, P (1970). Cultural action and Conscientization. Havard Educational Review, 40 (30)

692 White, S. A. (ed.) (1999) *The Art of Facilitating Participation: Releasing the Power of Grassroots Communication*. New Delhi: Sage.

693 Ibid @ 57

694 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 affirms that the right to education shall be directed towards 'the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and social groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Empowerment[695] is central to the process of THRED and dependent upon sustained community support of some kind (e.g peers, family members, professional groups or others). An empowerment model for HRE need to have these supports build in through the project design and implementation process (support provided by the teachers/facilitators or sustained contact among the learners).[696]

The review highlights the model of HRE and their potential to the promotion of human rights culture. While UN agencies and member states take a very favorable view of national governments' independent adoption of comprehensive human rights content and pedagogy, scholars such as Cardenas[697] have a more skeptical perspective on the role of the state in advancing HRE that may work against its own interests:

> While in principle virtually everyone takes for granted the benefits of HRE, such endeavors can be potentially costly from the perspective of a state. Human rights education is inherently revolutionary: If implemented effectively, it has the potential to generate social opposition, alongside rising demands for justice and accountability.

[695] Servaes, J. (1999) *Communication for Development: One World, Multiple Cultures.* Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

[696] Ibid @ 57

[697] Cardenas, S (2005) Constructing *Rights? Human Rights Education and the State,* 26 Int'l Pol. Sci. Rev. 363, 364 (2005).

Cardenas sees the state as resistant to incorporating HRE because of "rising demands" related to justice from those educated about human rights.[698] Other scholars in education, however, have suggested that the form of HRE, or any global education reform, that gets incorporated into national textbooks and local practice may be very different than that originally conceptualized since reforms often go through a process of "decoupling. [699] In other words, these scholars assert that by the time human rights content gets incorporated into textbooks, it may be altered such that it loses its activist-oriented approach, as human rights are presented as decoupled from the struggles that have achieved greater respect for rights. The following section assesses the human rights education approach of NHRCN.

Study Material and Methodology

This aim of this study is to assess the HRE activities of NHRCN. The study adopts documentary reviews. The use of documentary methods refers to the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon being studied.[700] Documents tell us indirectly about the organisation that created them and their perception about the phenomenon under study. Documentary sources provide what Scott characterizes as mediate access. In this study, the research carefully reviewed documents that included NHRCN Act 1995 (as amended), Annual Reports, and State of Human Rights Situation in Nigeria reports and Journals amongst several other publications of the

[698] Ibid @ 79
[699] Ibid @ 57
[700] Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Eds) (2000). Handbook of Qualitative Research, London: Sage Publications.

Commission. Other documents interacted with by the researcher were NHRCN posters, handbills, flyers and bulletins.

About the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria

The Commission was established by the National Human Rights Commission Act 1995 (as amended)[701]. This Act was reviewed due to some inadequacies and amended in 2010 through an Act of the National Assembly. The Act was passed by the National Assembly in 2010 and signed by the President in 2011 as the National Human Rights Commission Amendment Act 2010. The Commission is empowered by Act to:

> Deal with all matters relating to the promotion and protection of human rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and other International and Regional Instruments on human rights to which Nigeria is a party.[702]

[701] Decree 22 of 1995, reprinted as CAP N46, LFN 2004
[702] Ibid @ 35

The Amendment Act provides the Commission with greater autonomy, expanded powers and functions. The National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria (NHRCN) Act 1995 as amended (2011)[703] expands the functions and powers of the Commission and confers the Commission with the independence to carry out these additional responsibilities. It also grants the Commission financial autonomy. The Preamble to the Act provides for the following:-

> Independence in the conduct of the affairs of the Commission; the funds of the Commission to be a direct charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation; the establishment of the Human Rights Fund and the recognition and enforcement of the awards and recommendations of the Commission as decisions of the High Court.[704]

The UN General Assembly has confirmed the principle of independence in many resolutions.[705] Experience has indicated that it is easier to provide for financial autonomy, independence and powers of human rights institutions in national legal documents than it is easier to implement such provisions. However, to ensure the provision of what is provided is something else. [706]

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[703] See the National Human Rights Commission Amendment Act, 2011

[704] Ibid @ 87

[705] See General Assembly Resolutions 54/176 of 17th December 1999, 52/128 of 12th December1997 and 50/176 of 22 December, 1995

[706] Sekaggya, M. (2004). Value of human rights Institutions: Human Rights Commission Process. Unpublished paper presented at the Regional Workshop on Human Rights Commission and Accountability in East Africa, organized by the East

The Functions of the Commission as Provided for in the Act

The NHRCN has three main functions. These are firstly, to promote the respect for human rights and a culture of human right; secondly to promote the protection, development and attainment of human rights; and thirdly, to monitor and assess the observance of human rights in the country in line with international standards.[707]

In order to be able to carry its mandate, the Commission has been granted wide powers under the law. These include the power to investigate and report on the observance of human rights; to monitor and take steps to secure appropriate redress where human rights have been violated; to carry research; and to educate. At the same time, the Commission has a duty to various tiers of government and its organs to offer advisory services, to examine legislative provisions against international human rights standard; the publication of reports and opinions on any rights violations it decides to take up and all sorts of contributions to the implementation of international human rights standards in Nigeria.

Discussion & Analysis of HRE Functions as Provided for in the NHRCN Act

The NHRC Act empowers HRE functions of the Commission as follow:

> a) Publish and submit, from time to time, to the President, National assembly, Judiciary, State and

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African Centre for Constitutional Development, Arusha. Margaret Sekaggya is a former Chair of the Ugandan Human Rights Commission and is currently a United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders.

[707] See the NHRC Act, 1995 (as amended).

> Local Governments, reports on the state of human rights promotion and protection in Nigeria; b) Organise local and international seminars and conferences on human rights issues for public enlightenment; c) collate data and disseminate information and materials on human rights generally; d) promote an understanding of public discussions of human rights issues in Nigeria; e) Undertake research and educational programmes and such other programmes for promoting and protecting human rights.[708]

The objective of the Commission under the provisions of the amended Act to is educate the public to be aware of human rights and make sure that human rights are protected, respected and fully enforced as well as the measures to be taken where they are found to have been violated.[709]

The HRE functions of the Commission are domiciled in a department specifically created for the purpose. Renamed as the Human Rights Education and Promotion (HRE&P) and upgraded to a full department in 2013 and headed by a Director, it is generally responsible for human rights education and promotion programmes of the Commission.[710] The activities of HRE&P are:

> a)To create public awareness and sensitise the general public on human rights issues through face-to-face interactions (village square meetings,

[708] Ibid @ 35
[709] See NHRCN Act 1995 (as amended)
[710] See NHRC (2016) Report

> erection of billboards, focus group discussions, seminars, lectures, workshops and other awareness creation activities); b) To organise Television/ Radio sensitisation and promotion programmes; c) To develop and publish Information Education and Communication (IEC) printed materials like flyers, posters, books and stickers; d) To organise outreach/grassroots activities like road walks, town-hall meetings and campaigns.[711]

The 2014 Annual Report provides for the activities of HRE & P to also include the following:

> a)To promote behaviour change and culture of respect for human rights to both public and private sectors; b)To develop a National Policy for Implementation of Phase 2 of the World Programme for HRE; c) To organise planning, coordinating and implanting of HRE for target groups like civil servants, security and law enforcements agents, teachers and educators; and d) To coordinate HRE activities in basic schools, colleges and tertiary institutions with regards to facilitate curriculum review, establishing human rights clubs in schools, promoting academic programmes on HRE at all educational levels, organising training of teachers and educator and

[711] See NHRC 2016 Annual Report

> coordinating the development of educational materials.[712]

In fulfilling the statutory requirement of Section (e), the Commission commenced the annual publication of reports on the State of Human Rights in Nigeria in 2006.[713] The State of Human Rights Reports is a comprehensive compilation of the human rights situation in Nigeria for each year under review. The reports highlight actual complaints received by the Commission and the actions taken to resolve those complaints. The themes of reports cut across violations of civil and political rights (CPR), Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR), including issues of sexual and gender-based violence, access to justice, and human trafficking. Since inception, these reports continue to be a reference point for human rights defenders, public enlightenment, and academic research. Professor Jadesola Akande's[714] statement underscores the need for the report:

> The revelations in this report should hopefully, discourage officials and agencies involved in these violations, from committing further violations and create an enabling environment for accessing redress.

However, the absence of an evaluation of the actual impact of the publication on human rights situation in Nigeria, especially by State actors which has become pervasive, still remains to be seen. [715] The publications are hardly sufficient to meet the increasing

[712] See NHRC (2014) Report
[713] See NHRC State of Human Rights Report-2011-2012
[714] Ibid @ 91
[715] Ibid @ 92

demand for wider information and impact on the human rights environment in Nigeria.[716] In the 2011-2012 report on Situation of Human in Nigeria, Angwe notes as follows:[717]

> The Commission recognises the general efforts of the Nigerian human rights community that continues to struggle, at times at great personal risk, and against massive countervailing entrenched interests in favor of impunity of State actors for brazen human rights violations, for accountability and justice for all.

The fulfilment of this statutory obligation by the Commission falls within the HRE Awareness and Value model. The absence of proof that violations have reduced has rendered this approach ineffective.[718] Impunity by state actors, especially security agencies, continue to be rife.

In order to facilitate the achievement of Section (f)[719] which provides for local and international conferences, the Commission has been organising local seminars and conferences. Most conferences and seminars or workshops organised by the Commission centred around training of security agencies to enhance their capacity in addressing human rights in daily operations. The Commission also ran in-house training for staff and research for youths on human rights awareness and protection.

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[716] See NHRC State of Human Rights Report, 2009-2010
[717] Ibid @ 91: Professor Angwe Bem, former Executive Secretary of NHRCN from 2011-2016
[718] Ibid @ 95
[719] Ibid @ 88

Posters, flyers and hand bills are used by the Commission to disseminate human rights-related messages, some of which include violation and abuses and means for seeking redress.[720] Printed IEC cited are used to increase awareness on domestic violence, indiscriminate killings, killing/abandonment of infants, battering and wife beating, summary execution and domestic violence. One popular poster is 'Human Rights begin When Human lives Begin', depicting the image of a mother and child. The posters are pasted boldly throughout the Commission's offices. The picture is simple but with multifaceted messages. Although the image portrayed a mother cuddling her child, the underlying message is telling people to show love. The message is also for people to understand that love is an ingredient in human rights protection. The printed materials contain the address of the Commission's office and telephone numbers for the purposes of those seeking for redress. However, such information is now limited as it is rare to find recent billboards and posters except at the offices of the Commission.

Sections (m) and (n) of the amended Act enjoins the Commission to promote an understanding of public discussions of human rights issues and to undertake research and educational programmes for promoting and protecting human rights in Nigeria.[721] In order to achieve this objective, the Commission interfaces with local and international organisations. Over the years, the Commission engaged the United Nations High Commission for Refugees UNHCR, Network of National Human Rights Institutions in Africa (NNHRIs), United Nations Commission on the Status of

[720] Ibid @ 63
[721] See NHRC Act, 1995 (as amended)

Women (UNCSW), Ford Foundation (FF), United Nations Development Programme , (UNDP), Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), Canadian and Swiss Embassies amongst several others.[722] The aim of such engagement is to promote dialogue and consultation among critical stakeholders about human rights in Nigeria.

Pursuant to Section (m),[723] the Commission engaged in the use of interpersonal communication approach (IPC) (face-to-face interaction) across villages, communities, and in motor-parks to create awareness and educate target groups of their rights.[724] It is the conviction of the Commission that public awareness is crucial to the realisation of the enforcement, promotion and protection of human rights. According to Oti Anukpe Ovrawah, HRE remains an essential ingredient to the realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. [725] She underscores the fact that HRE will significantly promote equality, prevent conflict, and encourage democracy and peaceful coexistence because it is a prerequisite for global peace. [726]

The Commission also participates in radio/television sensitisation programmes. These programmes are meant to create awareness and educate the citizenry on their duties and obligation to human rights promotion, protection and enforcement.[727] The programmes address various issues like female genital mutilation,

[722] Ibid @ 63
[723] Ibid @ 63
[724] Ibid @ 42
[725] NHRC Bulletin (2017). Vol.iii. No.10
[726] Ibid @ 49
[727] See NHRC (2014) Report

functions of and access to the Commission for victims of human rights violations, child abuse, women rights, domestic violence, and torture. The TV/Radio programmes of the Commission also consist of coverage, interviews and press conferences or releases.[728]

Findings

It seems reasonable to argue that HRE programmes of NHRC tend to focus on values, awareness and accountability which are crucial to building a universal culture of rights and fundamental freedoms. NHRCN's HRE approach combines elements that foster knowledge about universal human rights standards and instruments, with elements that target specific professional groups using training programmes to sensitise them to human rights within their professional settings. On the one hand, this model legitimises the human rights discourse in the Nigeria's general public, strives to prevent human rights violations by governmental bodies, and enhances the capabilities of various groups of professionals to assume responsibility for monitoring and protecting human rights.[729] These efforts are commendable, since complaints brought before the Commission, particularly from 2012 to date, have doubled.[730] While this may be seen as an indication of increased public confidence in the Commission, human rights profile is still low in Nigeria with attendant rise in

[728] Ibid @ 102
[729] Ibid @ 99
[730] Gavar, Aver is a Director at NHRCN. Her comments were contained in NHRC Newspaper Compendium (2015)

violations.[731] This means that the Commission needs to change the architecture of its HRE engagement.

However, the current NHRCN HRE model lacks empowerment for vulnerable populations to be more involved and active in defending their rights. It can be argued that these models are linear, top-down and lack critical thinking, communication skills, problem-solving and negotiation, all of which are essential for effective human rights activism and participation in decision-making processes."[732] On the other hand, this model reflects a strong belief in the legal system, while overlooking its role in maintaining longstanding inequalities and practices of discrimination. The model also legitimises some of the most oppressive authoritative organisations, especially when it comes to security and military forces.[733]

The weakness in the HRE may be attributed to the absence of an explicit and authoritative definition of the term 'human rights education' by the Commission in the Nigeria context. The Commission has failed to unpack the normative content of HRE, or provide a clear path for implementation. In order to be effective, 'the scope, reach, and content of norms of HRE must be made comprehensible to their beneficiaries, as well as to those who bear the responsibility of their implementation'. Nigerians are yet to have comprehensive information on what their basic

[731] Onwubiko , E. is the National Coordinator, Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria. His views were contained in the NHRCN Newspapers Compendium (2015)
[732] Amnesty International, (1998). *SINIKO : Towards a Human Rights Culture in Africa* <www.amnestymena.org/en/Resources/EResources/ResourceView.aspx?Id=45>, visited on 24 May 2016, p. 7.
[733] Ibid @ 57

rights are and how to seek for redress.[734] The implementation of the HRE-School programme is hampered by the fact that the various documents are not easily available, and when they are, are not readable and understandable for children. Materials on the rights are few and where available are not child friendly.[735]

However, in developing countries like Nigeria, there is need for HRE to be associated with issues of sustainable development and social justice. The pedagogical nature of HRE requires technical skill for implementation. This has been an obstacle to the Commission's implementation of HRE. Many of the staff lack capacity to effectively perform their jobs.[736] The Commission's HRE emphasises civil and political rights, the issues of discrimination and promotes reforms to enhance the protection of individual rights. Therefore, we argue that from the characteristics of the Nigeria context, HRE is top-down with minimal or no participation of target audience. Like many NHRIs that have made HRE a high priority in their attempts to raise the general public awareness of human rights, NHRCN has invested in education in an effort to foster a culture of human rights. However, NHRCN's experience in promoting HRE resembles the global experience of many international organisations (e.g., UNICEF, UNESCO, HREA) in developing HRE programmes and materials.

Conclusion

For over two decades, NHRCN has done a lot to enhance its mandate of promoting and protecting human rights in Nigeria.

[734] Ibid @ 91
[735] UNICEF/Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Kaduna State
[736] Soniyi, T. in NHRCN Newspaper Compendium (2015)

With the increase in state offices, the Commission's work has expanded and its visibility and accessibility to Nigerians has expanded. However, the human rights work of the Commission being social service in nature requires much more funding than provided.[737] Though human rights promotion and protection business is capital intensive, fiscal allocation to the Commission still remains insufficient for the volume of activities it undertakes, hence the need for improved funding for the Commission to implement a comprehensive HRE in line with global standard.

The work of NHRCN represents a unique case study of HRE in a deeply ethnocratic nature rather than a democracy. In this context, HRE tends to be associated with the consolidation of the rule of law and efforts to establish the legitimacy and acceptance of the state's authorities. This context hinders individual and institutional internalisation of the basic values of HRE. NHRCN needs to incorporate economic, social and cultural rights (ESCRs) alongside civil and political rights (CPRs) in HRE themes. The Commission would do well to also move away from the linear and top-down approach to facilitate critical thinking and problem solving skills in HRE. The Commission also needs to develop a national strategic action plan for HRE and build capacity of staff and institutions for effective implementation.

[737] Prof. Bem Angwe, former Executive Secretary of the Commission, NHRCN Report, 2014