



Uluslararası Sosyal Arařtırmalar Dergisi

The Journal of International Social Research

Cilt: 4 Sayı: 17

Volume: 4 Issue: 17

Bahar 2011

Spring 2011

JOHN STUART MILL'S "HARM PRINCIPLE" AS THE FOUNDATION FOR HEALTHY SOCIAL RELATIONS

Dotun OGUNKOYA*

Abstract

This paper examines John Stuart Mill's theory of liberty in the light of the contemporary society. It argues the thesis that Mill's "Harm Principle", to a large extent, provides the foundation for the emergence of healthy social relations, harmonious life, as well as the enhancement of arrangements, aimed at fastening together, the broken pieces of the already polarized and disintegrated society. The "Harm Principle" is an outcome and essential part of Mill's theory of liberty as expressed in his famous essay, *On Liberty*. Thus, our task in this paper consists of a deep analysis of Mill's "Harm principle", as well as the identification of certain areas of social relations (such as socio-political relations as found in Nigeria, and inter-group relations as found amongst religious sects), where this principle can be applied for societal harmony. Since our interest in the application of "Mill's Harm Principle" is provoked by the problems of our immediate environment (Nigeria), examples of our analysis of unhealthy social relations shall be drawn from Nigeria as a representative of plural societies. However, this endeavour does not pretend that such a theory is infinite and that its application would be done without some cautions against certain difficulties. It is against this background that the work promises to distill the limits to which the "Harm principle" is adoptable to regulate human behaviour.

Key Words: John Stuart Mill, Harm Principle.

Introduction

The most potent way of determining the usefulness of any good theory is to apply it to reality in order to know the extent to which it can accommodate the existing realities in society. John Stuart Mill's theory of liberty represents one of such theories. It is incontestable that the lessons from Mill's theory of liberty, in conjunction with other postulates from other philosophers, have helped to shape up the frame of thought of the founding fathers of many constitutions in human history. This is evident in the premium paid by such constitutions to certain concepts like, freedom, liberty and equality. Our

* Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos

effort in this paper, therefore, is to further identify other grey areas in human social life where a part of Mill's theory of liberty could serve as a panacea. To this end, our concern is to determine the efficacy of what is termed Mill's "Harm Principle" which summarizes the focus of his theory of liberty.

It must be noted, however, that Mill himself did not give this name to any aspect of his theory of liberty. Rather, it was a nomenclature given by his readers and commentators to refer to that section of his theory of liberty which spells out the conditions that ought to determine human actions. For the purpose of clarity, it may be necessary to start our inquiry with the analysis of the main thrusts of his theory of liberty.

John Stuart Mill's Theory of Liberty

John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873) the son of James Mill had thought that for a viable socio-political stability and harmonious existence of all in society the limit of liberty of the individuals and the power of the state must be defined. The product of this ideological vision was Mill's essay *On Liberty*, published in 1859. Since Mill's position on liberty is expressed in his essay *On Liberty*, the treatment of his position on liberty is directly or indirectly the treatment of this work. Thus, in his bid to impress his views on the minds of his readers in clearer terms, he divides the book into five parts - it starts with an introduction; a chapter is on "liberty of discussion"; a chapter is devoted to "The defense of individuality"; another chapter talks "Of the Limits to the Authority of Society over the Individual"; and the last chapter is on "Applications".

We also need to note that Mill's position in the *On Liberty* was a child of circumstance. The book was written at the time of crises in Europe. It was at the time when Europe was living under the influence of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars and the growth of the revolutionaries who were spreading the Napoleonic principles of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity. It was the time when the spirit of representative democracy was beginning to spread all over Europe. The idea of *On Liberty* probably came at the time of Mill's visit to France after his mental distress and the reform Act of 1832. It was at this time that he discovered that the extension of the suffrage (representative government), though very significant and necessary, could not alone prevent the recurrence of display of egocentric nature of the ruling class. This was the origin of his feelings against the tyranny of the majority, which is well expressed in his essay *On Liberty*.

To be specific, in the *On Liberty* Mill is concerned about the effect of democratization as a better government compared to the autocratic governments of the time of antiquity. He makes a brief survey of the changing roles of liberty as a political ideal or concept, and how it has been subjected to varied degrees of denial and persecution. But the coming of democracy has made the power of the rulers distinguishable from those of the people, and so, there arose the need to find a limit to the power of the ruler in order to prevent unnecessary infringement of the rulers on the liberty of the people. It has now been realized that the so-called majority rule is the rule of the people amongst themselves, and as such, it poses another problem – "the tyranny of the majority".

It is indeed a fact that of all systems of government, democratic system in our days seems to be the fairest in terms of the status of individual liberty and the extent of the power of the ruler. But sad enough, its practice does not completely remove the vestiges of tyranny in governance. Thus, the existence of democracy in a society does not remove injustice from the land. The fact that 'the people' make the laws does not rule out the possibility that the majority will pass laws, which will oppress, or are otherwise unfair to, the minority. Mill therefore regards the tyranny of the majority as a monster or evil, which we need to guard against. This tyranny of the majority may express itself either in formal structure of legal enactment or in form of government policy.

Thus, in his essay *On Liberty* Mill identifies two major concepts to which attention should be paid in order to enhance progress in a civilized society, namely: (i) complete liberty of thought and discussion within a particular political order, and (ii) the free development of individuality. Mill centers his focus on these two main independent aspects of human life. Consequently, the main spirit behind the writing of *On Liberty*, according to Mill, was:

...to assert one very simple principle, (which is) entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual...That principle is that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection. That the purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. (Mill, 1947: 9)

On that note it seems proper for us to state unequivocally that Mill's essay *On Liberty* is concerned with the question of the nature and limits of power, which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. Mill proposes a thesis that considerable amount of power be reserved for the citizens while the limits of the state intervention in individual liberty as well as the limits of public opinion as a way of ensuring good conduct of the citizens, be determined.

Mill's unique concern in socio-political thought is epitomized in his strong warning against the "tyranny of the majority". Hence, he declares: "the tyranny of the majority is now generally included among the evils against which society requires to be on its guard" (Mill, 1947: 4). Consequently, the institutionalization of democratic machinery and principles is not enough for a shield against tyranny, because there is always the dread of tyranny in any form of government. Mill acknowledges this by saying that, "like other tyrannies, the tyranny of the majority...is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of public authority" (Mill, 1947: 4). But the existence of tyranny transcends the actions of public authority or political functionaries. Tyranny can also manifest in the activities of society itself, more so, since it is society that executes its own mandate. If, therefore, the society issues a wrong mandate or any mandate at all with which it ought not to interfere, it, by so doing, practices "social tyranny". This kind of tyranny, for Mill, is more formidable than many kinds of political oppression. This is one of the main antecedents of crisis in the world today. Such a wrong mandate may simply be

issued even though with “good intentions” and may not be immediately recognized as a wrong mandate until crisis looms and breaks out.

Mill’s proposal regarding the solution to the problem is not directed towards a total removal of tyranny from the seat of power because he recognizes the inevitability of tyranny in any form of government administered by men. Rather than a complete extinction of tyranny, Mill proposes “protection against all forms of tyranny”. But being mindful of the in-exhaustiveness of the application of tyranny in human affairs, Mill highlights the areas where protection against tyranny is needed in order to protect liberty and pave the way for the enthronement of societal peace in the following words:

Protection therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough: there need be protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by other means, than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves up the model of its own (Mill, 1947: 4-4).

The business of providing a formidable protection against the tyranny of the majority involves setting a limit to which “collective opinion” or the majority can legitimately interfere with the independence of the individual citizens in a community.

But how and where in human affairs will the limit be placed? Mill realizes that man, as a moral agent needs to be restrained in his actions because, “all that makes existence valuable to anyone depends on the enforcement of restraints upon the actions of the people” (Mill, 1947: 5) living together in a community. Such restraints are possible by placing some restrictions on man’s liberty as a means of regulating his conduct for a harmonious existence with others in society. As Johnston puts it,

[Mill] does not argue that we have a basic right to these freedoms, or that the government is under some sort of moral obligation to maximize our freedom or that such freedoms are divine commandments. His argument is a thoroughly utilitarian one: he argues that adopting his principle will bring direct social benefits for everyone, they will permit faster progress in all sectors of society...Without such principles, Mill believes, society is in danger of stagnating...[For] people will not threaten the stability of society if we give them much more freedom than they presently possess (Johnston, 2002: 8).

Mill acknowledges these restrictions as a function of “law” and “opinion”. “Therefore” says Mill “some rules of conduct, must be imposed, by law in the first place, and by opinion on many things which are not fit subjects for the operation of law” (Mill, 1947: 5). The problems with this position are recurrent issues in legal studies or jurisprudence.

When is the state qualified to interfere in the liberty of the individuals? Or on what grounds can the state prohibit or permit individuals from acting as they wish or “force” the individuals to act against their desires? Before attempting solutions to these questions, we must understand the stance of Mill on freedom and human conduct. For Mill, such an issue bordering on the freedom and conduct of man can only be properly considered by

jettisoning custom and popular morality for what is now known as “Mill’s Harm Principle”.

John Stuart Mill’s “Harm Principle”

John Stuart Mill’s “Harm principle” is the central concept on which we shall justify the viability of his theory of liberty in the area of healthy social relations and societal harmony. Mill believes that the only ground for which the state is justified to interfere in the liberties of the individual is to prevent harm to others. Thus, Mill claimed that his aim in his *On Liberty* was to assert one very simple principle, which is qualified to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual. This principle is that the only reason that warrants any individual or a group of individuals to interfere with the liberty of action of any other individual or a group of individuals, is self-protection because the purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will is to prevent harm to others. More importantly, according to Mill, a great evil is committed if the individual is denied his or her liberty. This denial of liberty is done either by action or inaction. This principle of liberty of Mill can be summarized as follows: (i) That everybody should be bound to observe a certain line of conduct towards the rest. (ii) That this conduct should consist in not injuring the interests of one another.

One important thing to note here is that this principle of liberty by Mill transcends the Machiavellian “consequentialism” and even Immanuel Kant’s imperatives. For instance, if the suicide bombers of the World Trade Center in Washington on September 11, 2001 had based their actions on Kantian imperatives, it is most likely that they might be encouraging those embittered with authorities to take the same measure when confronted with similar problems that made them strike. But if such is accepted as the universal principle it will generate more crises rather than resolving them. That explains why Mill’s Harm principle stands distinct from such anarchism.

The Paradoxes of John Stuart Mill’s “Harm Principle”

At this point, it is proper to consider the questions raised earlier on concerning the justifications of the state for interfering in the peoples’ liberty of action. Following our line of argument, it is obvious that the approach to the said questions, *a la* Mill, depends largely on: first what is construed as “harm”, and second on the way of life of the affected society (that is, likes and dislikes, including the spatio-temporal realities of the society in question). Thus, solutions to these problems vary from one society to another. In certain societies, some religious groups are proscribed and membership of such religious sects is prohibited. In such societies, any attempt by any one to practice any of the proscribed religions is regarded as inflicting “harm” on the society and punishable under the legal provisions of the land. In certain other societies, secularism is provided for in their constitutions. But this, at times, does not remove intolerance as the activities of each of the religious groups may constitute “harm” or discomfort to others. The introduction of Sharia laws in some Northern states of Nigeria is viewed by non-Moslem religious groups in Nigeria as a threat (harm) to their beliefs.

Furthermore, in certain societies, the government may impose censorship of the press and other media if they are found to constitute harm or discomfort to the government. Nigeria, for example, witnessed this type of media restriction during the time of the military regimes. Besides, some societies outlaw certain sexual practices, which ordinarily are not considered illegal in some other societies. For example, while homosexuality is permissible in the United States of America, it attracts strict legal penalties in a place like Saudi Arabia. This is probably because the practice is opposed to, better still, harmful to the injunctions of Islam, which is the state religion in Saudi Arabia. But since there is no such thing as a state religion in America and the American constitution allows for liberty of association, any opposition to such a practice as homosexuality can only be done on moral grounds with the support of the constitution.

Similarly, the connotation of the term "harm" varies individually. On one hand, homosexual practices may not constitute harm to others, especially if they are done with the consent of the parties involved. In this case, the power of the government or the state to force the individuals concerned to act against their wishes can be contested, more so as the duty of the state involves the evolvment or creation of conditions for the generation of happiness of all the citizens. This can be achieved by protecting their interests (within the confines of constitutional provisions). But on the other hand, the effect of such an action of one or more persons on the generality of the people may be negative. By so doing, the action may not only constitute harm to some individuals, but also a menace to the whole society. This is opposed to the principle of utilitarianism to which Mill earlier subscribed. In this wise, the action rather than producing happiness to the highest number of people produces "harm" or unhappiness, and therefore, it may be considered a bad action. This argument holds sway, especially in some religious communities where certain practices are considered infectious and harmful to their religious faith. For example, homosexual practices, gambling, drunkenness and other social ills may affect the morals of the religious people in a community. It may also affect the values of younger generation of men who ordinarily may not have considered such practices. Mill recommends that such practices should be put under check. But he queries why law should not repress all social ills and practices that are injurious to happiness, and which constitute a hindrance to societal progress.

Our response to Mill's query can best be thought of if we first acknowledge the disparities in the treatment of issues in different societies. Indeed, there are many actions of men (such as prostitution, polygamy, bigamy etc.), which have attracted varied treatment in different countries. As Wolff, (1996: 116) correctly observes "homosexual acts between men were illegal until as recently as 1960s in Britain. It remains against the law for a prostitute to solicit for customers". In a plural society like Nigeria, the legality or illegality of polygamy depends largely on one's religious belief and under what law the marriage in question has been contracted. Even in democracies, there is no uniformity in the rules of conduct, and hence the effects of such rules vary. Indeed, this lack of uniformity in the determination of which action produces harm, and the extent to which the state can be justified to interfere in the liberties of the individual in the performance of such actions, constitutes the primary concern of Mill in his *On Liberty*.

More light is further thrown on the understanding and application of Mill's "Harm Principle" when we realize that each human society undergoes transformation of ideas and customs. As such, an idea or a custom that is held in a particular epoch may be totally dropped or modified in the next epoch. Mill is aware of this fact as he remarks that "for the majority of the eminent of every past generation held many opinions now known to be erroneous, and did or approved numerous things which no one would now justify" (Mill, 1947: 19). Indeed, it is a fact of history that, "for centuries people have been persecuted for worshipping the wrong god or for not worshipping at all" (Wolff, 1996: 117); but today "Freedom of Association" – a universal principle - obliges man the freedom to choose to worship or not to worship at all. Neither will human memory forget the barbaric persecution suffered by the pioneers of science, some of who were burnt at stake because of their discoveries. Giordano Bruno "the first martyr of science" was burnt at the stake in the year 1600; Kepler was also burnt at the stake because of his scientific discovery; Copernicus was regarded as stupid as well as subversive for giving the world his heliocentric theory; and Galileo was forced to recant for insisting that the earth moves. But what harm did these people actually do to others? Are the tables not turned today to exhibit and appreciate the ingenious intelligence of these scientists? Today, the scientist is regarded as a "miracle man" and is often venerated in a manner strikingly reminiscent of the homage given to the kings and princes of old. But then, we must note that those who were persecuted for worshipping certain gods suffered in the hands of the laws which supported such penalties for those who contravened the law; those who pioneered science suffered under the Roman Catholic laws which strictly guarded against any discovery other than that which could be ascribed to God. In both cases, the harm was not to individuals but to the authorities in control.

However, it may be a little difficult to allow an individual to act only in a way that his actions will not harm others, and to prevent him from acting only when his action will harm others. Does a man who wants to commit suicide need to be prevented from doing so? Will his action harm others? Suicide is a criminal offence and against Biblical injunctions. It is true that if he does, the harm is directly to himself, but his death may as well constitute problems for others. When a man dies, he has thrown others into anguish. His relations, wife, and children and the community may be adversely affected by his death or action (suicide). Mill himself reiterates that:

No person is an entirely isolated being; it is impossible for a person to do anything seriously or permanently hurtful to himself, without mischief reaching at least to his connections, and often fans beyond them. If he injures his property, he does harm to those who directly or indirectly derived support from it, and usually diminishes by a greater or less amount, the general resources of the community. If he deteriorates his body or mental faculties, he not only brings evil upon all who depended on him for any portion of their happiness, but disqualifies himself for rendering the services which he owes to his fellow creatures generally; perhaps becomes a burden on their affection or benevolence; and if such conduct were very frequent, hardly any offence that is committed would detract more from the general sum of good. Finally, if by his vices or follies a person does no direct harm to others, he is nevertheless (it may be said) injurious by his example; and ought to be compelled to control himself, for the sake of those whom the sight or knowledge of his conduct might corrupt or mislead (Mill, 1947: 80-81).

Indeed, it is difficult to pinpoint a particular society and instance in which Mill's harm principle at the level of such serious matters, has ever applied, neither is it plausible to think of designing a society in which its practicability will easily be put to bear or be identifiable. But Mill was probably trying to put to bear his proposal of designing and determining the limit of human freedom by showing that it is proper for one to think of the effects of his action before it is performed. This can only be possible by allowing reason its proper role.

We must also note that Mill has limited scope in the application of this principle as he emphasizes that the principle only applies to the maturity of the peoples' faculties. The principle does not apply to children who do not have sufficient development of their faculties to think and act on their own. This implies that the application and practicability of Mill's liberty principle are conditional. Except those conditions are present, the exercise of one's liberty will lead to great harm. As it applies to individuals, so also it is with society. Mill says: "despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with the barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end" (Mill, 1947: 10). Therefore, for the action of society to be regulated by Mill's Liberty Principle, it must transcend the premature stage into a civilized level.

Indeed, being an ideal principle on which the conduct of the state and human affairs should be regulated, the liberty principle of Mill advances an argument as suggestively summarized by Stephen, that:

Let everyman please himself without hurting his neighbour; and every moral system which aimed at more than this, either to obtain benefits for society at large other than protection against injury or to do good to the persons affected, would be wrong in principle" (Stephen, 1966: 43).

We reason therefore that the foundation for progressive and healthy social relations is rooted in "Mill's Harm Principle" which epitomizes his theory of liberty and which holds that the exercise of an individual freedom should not, as much as possible, constitute harm to others. The ingenuity of this position can better be appreciated by first considering some areas of social relations where freedom is often exercised with the accompanying consequences on the others. For this purpose, let us consider socio-political relations and inter-group relations with special reference to religious intolerance.

Socio-political Relations and "Mill's Harm Principle"

Society is a system comprising human beings who are social and political "animals". The idea of society therefore necessarily suggests some sort of social relations. Through different theses of various political thinkers on the origin, purpose and nature of society, we become conscious of the place of the individual in society and that the acceptance of membership of a society or state presupposes a corresponding acceptance of certain responsibilities. It is this important position of the individual that necessitates socio-political relations, which may either be cordial or strained. Factors responsible for the lack of cordial socio-political relations among members of society include: the lack of integration, ethnic domination, faulty socio-political structure, etc.

Social integration can only occur when there is mutual trust and respect for the freedom of others. The need for social integration is more important in a plural society like Nigeria. This is because "Nigeria is a land of contrasts" (Akinyele, 2001: 59). Iwuchukwu, (2001: 111) sees Nigeria as "a confederation of diverse ethnic nationalities, each of which considers itself autonomous, self-conscious and to some extent, independent". Also, the problems of deprivation and domination are characteristics of the Nigerian society. As a plural society, Nigeria is polarized into majority and minority groups. The three ethnic groups, who are in the majority, often exhibit a sense of superiority and domination over the minority ethnic groups so much so, that there are cries of neglect and marginalization by the latter, especially as the former has dominated the political and social scene of the country since independence. The issue of integrating the ethnic minorities, which is an indicator of national development, has not been addressed seriously by the Nigerian leadership. Most of the measures taken to address this issue have actually reinforced ethnicity rather than integration (cf. Iwuchukwu, 2001).

As far back as 1954, Nigeria had started operating a federal system of government, comprising three regions which were created in line with the three major ethnic groups, namely, the north, Southeast and Southwest. At independence in 1960, this arrangement was retained until 1963 when the system was re-arranged and the fourth region was carved out from Southwestern region. The regions became four – Northern, Eastern, Western and Mid-Western, regions. The struggle against domination led to the secessionist attempt of the Chukwumeka Ojukwu-led Republic of Biafra from the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1967. Consequently, the Federal Military Government appeased the minorities by further dividing Nigeria into twelve states. In a way, this development corrected a flagrant territorial imbalance that had been a major cause of political instability, but retained the vestiges of domination and deprivation which increased the tempo of pressure and agitation by different ethnic groups for local autonomy. Thus, the Federal Republic of Nigeria began to create more states – 19 states in 1976, 21 states in 1987, 30 states in 1991 and 36 states in 1996.

Although, the creation of states seemed to satisfy the yearnings of its agitators by creating some measure of local autonomy, it nevertheless created another form of crisis, which Sklar, (2002) identifies as an array of weak and financially unviable states that function as conduits for the transmission of federal resources and services to local authorities. This development reinforced ethnic consciousness (ethnocentrism) and strained the relationship between the Federal Government and its constituent parts so much so that the unity of the country was threatened.

According to W.G. Sumner (1940: 13) ethnocentrism refers to that "view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it". In practice, ethnocentrism is expressed in many ways, – "mythology, condescension and a double standard of morality in social relations" (Noel, 1973: 20). In mythology, the ethnic group expresses stories of its valiance, uniqueness as well as its superiority over any ethnic group. In condescension the group expresses arrogance and justifications for treating others with disdain. Becker (1956) sees double standard as a "dual ethnic" in which in-group standards apply only to transactions with members of the

in-group. The inevitable implications of ethnocentrism therefore are exploitation, preferential treatment, rejection or downgrading of all out-groups.

However, "ethnocentrism in itself need not lead to either interethnic or ethnic stratification" (Noel, 1973: 21). As a matter of fact, ethnocentrism is a universal characteristic of autonomous societies or ethnic groups. The presence of competition among the ethnic groups does not provide sufficient explanation for ethnic crisis. Rather, crises erupt when ethnocentrism involves itself in unhealthy competitions and rivalries in the presence of unequal opportunities and capacities to develop which often lead to violent agitations, breakdown of law and order, ethnic cleansing, usurpation of power, exploitation, oppression and retardation of societal development. Under such circumstances, the options will be either total integration or disintegration. In Nigeria, for example, the crises among ethnic groups led people to call for convocation of a sovereign national conference of all ethnic nationalities and other recognized groups to decide the fate of the continuous staying together of the ethnic groups.

This paper supports dialogue of the type of the sovereign national conference. But greater consideration should be given to the nature of man as a human being. Inter-group conflict that is founded on hatred for a particular ethnic group is unjustifiable. It is a well known fact that an Igbo person is different from Yoruba, from Hausa, from Tiv, from Edo etc. It is incontrovertible that no member of any of these groups has the power over his or her choice of membership of his or her group. It is possible for one to be a "detrified" person who does not discriminate. While it is also possible for someone to refuse to align with a particular action of his or her ethnic group, it does not suffice to mean that he or she has no ethnic affiliation. Interethnic relations can become strained in the presence of marginalization as it is in the case of Nigeria. This occurs when there is absence of interethnic cohesion or social integration. Indeed, interethnic cohesion or integration will lead to the emergence of what Babawale (2003^a: 66) calls "a supernational entity that would be superior to multiple ethnicities and nationalities that proliferate the Nigerian State". It is possible that certain groups are not adequately represented and their opinions are silenced. Thus, Mill warns us to beware of the tyranny of the majority which often occurs when some ethnic groups are not fairly treated in the affairs of society. Mill maintains that the evil done by government to the minorities may be either by action or inaction. Through action, the government may exploit a section or an ethnic group in favour of the others, as we have in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. Through inaction, the government may refuse to listen to the cries of the people on matters affecting their affairs. Both options abound in developing societies, especially in Africa where the people are either exploited and/or neglected. To lay the foundation for healthy social relations and peace in these places, Mill's theory of liberty can be applied to formulate government policies which do not constitute harm to society.

Besides, Mill advocates the toleration of opinions. Any modern government that is insensitive to the cry of the people, to the requests of the people, and to the interests of its citizens is incubating crises. The Federal Government of Nigeria for example, has been insensitive to the voice of the people, thereby being indifferent to people's opinions and causing evil through its inaction. Even with the enthronement of democracy, the Federal government's insensitivity to the people problems, often results in devastating crises,

especially ethnic clashes. Ethnic clashes in Nigeria are partly motivated by the deprivation of political freedom. In the Niger Delta, “the Ijaw and Itsekiri were locked in a protracted and gruelling war over the location of Warri South Local Government Council” (Akinboye, 2001: 161, and see Babawale, 2003^a: 70). Others like the Ife-Modakeke crisis in South-West Nigeria (see Babawale, 2003^a), and the Zango-Kataf crisis in North-Central Nigeria, the Umuleri and Aguleri in Anambra state of Nigeria, and the Tiv-Jukun crisis in Benue State over local government elections also fall into this category.

It must be noted that ethnic conflict is not peculiar to Nigeria. Olukotun notes that:

Ethnic and communal conflicts, whether in the guise of genocidal ethnic cleansing or of low-intensity conflict have become a staple feature of contemporary politics since 1990s. Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia, and Liberia represent one notorious face of this phenomenon. In Africa, the resurgence of identity conflicts, the breakdown of the post colonial state into its constituent, feuding parts as well as the rise of sectarian and religious movements have become familiar to students of the continent (Olukotun, 2003: 7).

As noted earlier on, in Nigeria today, almost all ethnic groups feel marginalized, especially in the allocation of social amenities and political positions. Indeed, “ethnic differences are natural” (Babawale, 2003^b: ix), but trouble starts when the ethnic groups are oppressed or manipulated. As a way of seeking redress and protecting their interests, they may constitute themselves into ethnic militias. Such developments in Nigeria have led to the evolution and growth of ethnic militias. In the Southwest, there is the Odua Peoples’ Congress (OPC), in the north, there is the Arewa People’s Congress (APC), in the south-south there is the Egbesu Boys of Africa, and in the Southeast there is the Bakassi Boys and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB). Though their protests are often violent, each group sees itself as interacting and belonging to a socio-cultural group with specific interests to be achieved within the larger society.

We agree with Bolaji Akinyemi (2003: 16), that “the rise of militia is a feature of plural societies: societies which have fractured structurally and where the laid down mechanism for dealing with such pluralism has failed or is in the process of failing”. Gani Adams a leader of a faction of OPC expresses clearly this point as he says:

...disorder at street level is not common to Nigeria. It can be seen and located in Britain, Spain, Kenya, South Africa, Chile, Brazil, India, South Korea to mention but a few. Thus, like the Irish Republic Army (IRA) in Great Britain or the Mau-Mau movement led by Jomo Kenyata in Kenya and the ANC in South Africa, we in OPC, having also understood the contradictions and prevailing crisis in Nigeria, took the pains to challenge the forces responsible for the massive repression, injustice, victimization and gross underdevelopment of our fatherland. It is, therefore, clear that before there could be a fertile ground for any militia to germinate there must be a perceived or real injustice by one section of society who has no way of expressing themselves other than means recognized by international community as stated in No. 2 of Article 20 of the African Charter on Human Rights to which Nigeria is a signatory: “Colonized or oppressed peoples shall have the right to free themselves from the bonds or domination by resorting to any means recognized by the international community” (Adams, 2003: 97).

Consequently, we align with T. Babawale (2003^b) that the proliferation of ethnic militias under the present dispensation suggests that many things are wrong with Nigeria. As he puts it:

Ethnic differences should not necessarily lead to conflicts of a negative nature. When the ethnic conflicts are viewed as a necessary outcome of inter-group interactions, they can be easily resolved, but when such conflicts are demonized and manipulated, we move further away from the point of resolution - the phenomenon of ethnic militias in Nigeria is attributable to multiplicity of factors. These include: the manipulation of ethnicity by the ruling elite; the mismanagement of ethnic grievances by the Nigerian state and its agents; the diffusion of violence into Nigerian society by prolonged military rule; the general discontentment of the competent units of the federation with the allocation of power and resources; the increasing level of poverty and unemployment; the collapse of state welfare programmes and the growing ineptitude of the state security apparatus (Babawale, 2003^b: ix).

The panacea to the problem of ethnic clashes in plural society is the institutionalization of liberalism as proposed by Mill. Mill advocates freedom of expression and the free development of individuality which are the necessary ingredients for social harmony and peace in a plural society like Nigeria. The presence of violent ethnic militias is sign of oppression, deprivation, neglect and lack of inter-group cohesion or integration. We submit that ethnic clashes are caused by the denial or excessive exercise of freedom. This means that the prevention of ethnic clashes, inter-group conflicts, and intra-group conflicts is a function of our freedom. Government must be responsive rather than being coercive. With the coming of democracy in the Fourth Republic of Nigeria, it is expected that Nigerian government would be more responsive to the agitations of the people. Unfortunately, this has not happened. For example, under the pretext of quelling revolt, President Obasanjo authorized the Nigerian Army to carry out massacres that took place in Odi as a reprisal for the death of some policemen and in Zaki-Biam for the death of 19 soldiers. A similar assignment was given to the army recently by President Umaru Yar Adua to deal ruthlessly with the Niger Delta militants. These instances demonstrate a high level of irresponsiveness of a democratic government. It is interesting to note that most of the violent crises in Nigeria started with signals and warnings which ought to have been addressed by government before the crises became magnified or uncontrollable. Thus, the evil is done by the inaction of government. That is why Mill insists that order to ensure a harmonious relationship we must not perform actions that will constitute harm to others. Thus, in all our actions in social relations we must be mindful of the freedom of others.

Mill emphasizes that it is evil to silence the expression of opinions because "it is robbing the human race; prosperity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth..." (Mill, 1947: 16). We must note that freedom to express opinion and the method(s) and management of opinions are different things. The minority should be able to express their opinions. Such opinions of the minority often carry details of their interests and complaints, which if attended to in time, can prevent the eruption of crisis. For example, the Niger Delta crises could have been prevented if the thesis of this work had been adopted. The Modakeke/Ife crisis could

have also been averted if the thesis of this paper had been in place. A responsible government with necessary infrastructure does not wait till crises mature before acting on the agitations of the people. In order to ensure peace and harmony in society, this paper recommends the toleration of opinions of the opponents. The adoption of this principle would no doubt remove or reduce the occurrence of conflict in interpersonal, intergroup, interstate and international relationships.

Religious inter-group Relations and “Mill’s Harm Principle”

Tolerance is the foundation of a harmonious relationship. Most of the problems in the world today are caused by intolerance. But it may be asked: why intolerance? This question has many answers. It could be answered by saying that: it is because of the discriminatory and egoistic nature of man, or that some people feel that they are created superior to others (e.g. the Israelites as the God’s chosen race, or the claim of Hitler that the German race is superior to others, or the colour bar between the white and the black); or that some people are better endowed than the others; or that one way of life is right while all others are wrong; or because of competition for scarce resources, etc. All these are negative indices of social relations motivated by either greed or ignorance. Sometimes, a social relation may be founded on faulty pillars which may generate intolerance, especially if the plurality of society is not put into consideration. For example, the opening statement of the *Fourth Republic Constitution of Nigeria (1999)* declares that:

We the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria having firmly and solemnly resolved: To live in unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble Sovereign Nation under God dedicated to promotion of inter-African solidarity, world peace, international co-operation and understanding: And to provide for a Constitution for the purpose of promoting good government and welfare of all persons in our country on the principles of Freedom, Equality and Justice, and for the purpose of consolidating the Unity of our people: do hereby make , enact and give to ourselves the following Constitution.

Ordinarily, one may be tempted to believe that this declarative statement summarizes the commitment and acceptance of the citizens of Nigeria to be ruled under the said constitution. But it is far from being so because the declaration from the first word to the last, shows the insincerity of the “Founding Fathers” of the constitution, thereby laying the foundation for intolerance.

First, the phrase “We the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria” portrays the constitution as a brainchild of every citizen of Nigeria, whereas it was drafted and imposed by the last military government, without involving the people of Nigeria in its formulation. Thus, the purpose for which the constitution was made as promised in the second to the last segment of the statement – “for the purpose of promoting the good government and welfare of all persons in our country on the principle of Freedom, Equality and Justice” - is defeated.

Second, the principles of equality and freedom, though emphasized in the declaration, were not put to bear in the exercise of drafting the constitution because not all the segments in the country were represented. Third, the phrase “Sovereign Nation under God” does not reflect the multi-religious nature of Nigeria, for it is not only theists who make up Nigeria; there are a considerable number of atheists whose beliefs have no place

for God. These and other related problems emanating from faulty planning and implementation are responsible for cases of crisis in Nigeria after the enthronement of democracy.

Furthermore, the Nigerian leadership has not effectively addressed the issue of intolerance among the Nigerian people. Even, political activities in Nigeria have more or less encouraged the strengthening of the sectional diversities and the accompanying intolerance among different groups of the Nigerian society. For example, in party politics in Nigeria, the leaders have planted the seeds of intolerance. Since 1922, when the elective principle was introduced into Nigerian politics, most political parties have been formed along ethnic lines. In 1923, Herbert Macaulay founded the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). This party was based in Lagos. This was followed in 1944 by the Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe-led National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC). In 1951, the Obafemi Awolowo-led Action Group (AG) for the Yoruba was founded, and also in the same 1951 the Ahmadu Bello led Northern People's Congress (NPC) which was based in the north was founded. Since then, party formations in Nigeria have followed this trend so much that it is sometimes argued that the subsequent political parties in Nigeria are mere metamorphoses of the first crop of political parties that started ethnic intolerance in Nigerian politics.

More serious occurrences of intolerance happen in sectarian affairs. Religion is expected to bring peace and happiness to mankind, but instead it has brought disunity, unhappiness and war, and is also tearing mankind to pieces. This is because of religious intolerance. In Nigeria, religious intolerance is as a result of fanaticism and fundamentalism. Momoh defines fanaticism as it applies to religion as:

... the belief by an adherent that his own religion is the only one favoured by God and therefore, superior to the others; as a mark of gratitude to God for conferring this exclusive privilege and superiority on his own religion, the adherent is prepared to go to any length using all means – civilized or crude, peaceful or violent – to defend his religion or impose it on others. Incidentally, a fanatic's knowledge and learning in his own religion may not be very profound. The fanatic is outward looking (Momoh, 2003: 37).

Unlike the fanatic, the fundamentalist is first and foremost concerned about the basic tenets of his religion. Momoh also defines fundamentalism as:

...the belief by adherent that his own sect within his own religion is the one that truly and correctly espouses, interprets and lives by tenets, injunctions and doctrines of that religion; members of the other sects are either ignorant of the true teachings of their Founder or they are simply tendentiously being swayed by impurity, materialism and worldly pride. The fundamentalist makes it known that he is prepared to go to any length using all means – civilized or crude, peaceful or violent – to defend his sect or impose it on others (Momoh, 2003: 38).

The activities of fanatics and the fundamentalists led to many violent religious crises in Nigeria. On 9 June, 2003, the killing of a Christian woman preacher alleged to have been carried out by a Muslim hawker in Numan, Adamawa state (Northeast Nigeria) sparked off religious violence in which two persons were reportedly killed, and many churches, mosques, houses and vehicles were burnt. On 11 November, 2003, an intra-

religious clash involving an Islamic group called "Salafi Muslims" and a "Zaria-based Nigerian Islamic Movement" occurred in Zaria, Kaduna State over differences arising from issues relating to the Islamic mode of worship (cf. Ottan, 2003).

Intolerance has further found expression in the structure of Nigerian State, leading to the emergence of a dual legal system. Prior to 1999, Nigeria had a uniform legal system which was based on the English Civil law, even though the North has, in addition, been adopting an Islamic penal code since independence. The penal code is mainly based on that of Sudan. Towards the end of 1999, the government of Zamfara state introduced shari'a as the official legal system of the state. Since that time, more northern states have taken the step to fuse religion and governance, thereby practicing theocracy. The state governments decided that shari'a would supersede the penal code and all other laws insofar as Muslim residents in those states are concerned. This action has nullified the historic compromise of 1960 which confined the application of Muslim law to personal, family and civil cases, and also violates Section 10 of the Constitution which prohibits the adoption of official religion by either the Federal Government or any of its constituent states (Sklar, 2002). Since the introduction of shari'a, many Muslims have been flogged publicly for drinking alcohol, some have been subjected to hand amputation for stealing, leg amputation for armed robbery, and women are placed under strict restrictions.

Fayemi (2002) sees the emergence of shari'a in Nigeria as a response by so-called Islamic fundamentalism to a growing Christian fundamentalism under a "born-again" Christian president. According to him, the advent and proliferation of Pentecostal Christianity as a powerful social and political force in Nigeria represents a growing concern amongst doctrinaire Moslems and orthodox Christians alike. In addition, there is a sense in which it is believed that Christians have now appropriated the current government as their own God's government. The problem is that this Pentecostal strain is intolerant and fundamentalist and viscerally opposed to Islam. This has created genuine tension in Moslem community in Nigeria. Many Christians have become more confident and outspoken, and it would appear that there is a level of discomfort in the Moslem community about this moreso when ministers openly accuse opponents as "anti-Christ and anti-religious" who want to destroy God's anointed government. For Momoh (2003), some Nigerian Muslims and Christians have formal institutionalized vehicles by which they seem to fan the embers of confrontation, fanaticism, intolerance and bigotry. Thus, he submits that the CAN (Northern zone) and JNLC are the two main vehicles of religious bigotry and intolerance in Nigeria. The Muslim Council is steered by comparatively tolerant and clear-minded leaders who react sometimes to check Christian excesses. The sermons on radio, television, and in public by both Muslims and Christians are provocative and inciting. Worse is the idea of loud preaching and sermons in the mosques and churches which tend to condemn opponents. At places of work, at home in employment, in educational activities and most affairs of man, religious intolerance is exhibited. What then is the solution to this problem?

The solution to religious crises is tolerance, which according to Momoh (1994, and 2003), is superior to peaceful co-existence, dialogue and toleration. For him also, tolerance is not the same thing as toleration (Momoh, 2003), but can be found in "Naretism" which is "the philosophy that every religion has positive soul-redeeming messages which ought

to be propagated formally and informally in order to promote a culture of religious tolerance in a multi-religious society. But peace can only thrive in the mind that avoids crises. And as von Mises (2001) remarks, if peace is not to be disturbed, all incentives for aggression must be eliminated; a world order must be established in which nations and national groups are so satisfied with living conditions that will not feel impelled to resort to the desperate expedient of war. von Mises sees the ambition of the liberal as not abolishing war by preaching and moralizing, but to create the social conditions that will eliminate the causes of war. We conceive an aspect of these conditions as the institutionalization and promotion of tolerance. This is also in line with Mill's thesis.

Consequently, if religion is viewed as a personal affair, there will be peace in society. It is wrong for the government of a plural society to be involved in religious matters except if its practice constitutes harm to others. Mill's insistence on freedom of speech, toleration of opinion, and free development of individuality is relevant to the attainment of religious peace. The objective perception of others is important in any social relation because it is that which will enable one to acknowledge the humanity in others with whom he or she must relate. Negative perception results in negative actions and crises. Objective perception is a phenomenological attitude which encourages judgment devoid of bias or presupposition. To avoid crisis no religion should be viewed as superior to the other.

Specifically, "Mill's Harm Principle" proffers solutions to religious crises in Nigeria. First Mill proposes that classification should be made between matters of private affairs and those in the area of public affairs. On those things that fall within the area of private affairs, such as religious beliefs, the individual has absolute freedom, provided his actions do not constitute harm to others. Secondly, Mill also proposes that the consequences of our actions be viewed proactively in order to determine whether or not it will constitute harm to others. Thirdly, any such actions that constitute harm to others be subjected to control. And finally, since there are many sides to truth, to refuse a hearing to an opinion because it is assumed to be false is to assume that its certainty is the same thing as absolute certainty (Mill, 1947). Therefore, the toleration of different religious beliefs, especially in a multi-religious state is necessary in order to avoid religious crises. Mill (1947: 8) himself says, "So natural to mankind is intolerance in whatever they really care about, that religious freedom has hardly anywhere been practically realized, except where religious indifference, which dislikes to have its peace disturbed by theological quarrels, has added its weight to the scale". The unhealthy rivalry between religious factions or sects or groups or denominations is due to the lack of tolerance amongst the believers. Religion is a "contagious malady", and there seems to be joy in madness which can only be understood and best enjoyed by those who are mad. This is because everybody seems to be mad with his or her belief, and as he or she clings to it as the only truth, others who do not share the same belief with him or her are considered to be unbelievers or sinners or outcasts. This is usually one of the causes of religious crises in society.

However, this submission does not intend to destroy religion *a la* Marx and his allies, but to advocate tolerance as an essential condition for preventing religious crises like the type which greeted the introduction of the Shari'a legal system in some northern states of Nigeria. This essential condition is rooted in tolerance amongst different religious

sects. To this end, the government should legislate against any means capable of inciting one religion against others in society.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the idea of societal harmony is a product of healthy social relations while the reverse produces crisis. The cause of unhealthy social relations therefore in any society can, in a way, be summed up to be the product of either the excessive exercise of liberty or absence of avenue to exercise liberty or arbitrary placement of restraints on the peoples' freedom in one or more areas of common interest within that particular society. For example, when people are denied economic liberty to which they are entitled, as in the case of the Niger Delta of Nigeria; or when the peoples' political liberties are constrained, as in the case of the apartheid South Africa, crises are inevitable.

Furthermore, the unhealthy rivalry between religious factions or sects or groups or denominations is caused by lack of tolerance amongst their believers. This is usually one of the causes of religious crises in society. We do not intend to destroy religion *a la* Marx and his allies, but to advocate tolerance as an essential condition for preventing religious crises in society.

REFERENCES

- ADAMS, G. (2003). "Politics and Agenda of Ethnic Militias: the Case of OPC" in T. Babawale *Urban Violence, Ethnic Militias and The Challenge of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria*, Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.
- AKINBOYE, S.O. (2001). "The Matrix of Ethnicity and Ethno-Religious Crises in Nigeria's Nascent Democracy" in A.E. Eruvbetine (ed.) *The Humanistic Management of Pluralism: A Formula for Development in Nigeria*, (Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos Conference Proceedings).
- AKINYELE, R.T. (2001). "Ethnic Militias and National Stability in Nigeria: History as Tool for Managing the Problems of Cultural Pluralism" in A.E. Eruvbetine (ed.) *The Humanistic Management of Pluralism: A Formula for Development in Nigeria*, (Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos Conference Proceedings).
- AKINYEMI, B. (2003). "Ethnic Militias and National Question in Nigeria" in T. Babawale *Urban Violence, Ethnic Militias and the Challenge of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria*, Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.
- ANSCHUTZ, R.P. (1953). *The Philosophy of J.S. Mill*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- ATKINSON, R.F. (1957). "J.S. Mill's 'Proof' of the Principle of Utility", *Philosophy*, 32.
- BABAWALE, T. (2003)^a, "Globalisation, Conflicts and the Challenges of Nationhood in Nigeria" in *Journal of Contemporary Studies (JCS)*, vol. 1, no. 3.
- BABAWALE, T. (ed.) (2003)^b *Urban Violence, Ethnic Militias and the Challenge of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria*, Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.
- BARCALOW, E. (1991). *Moral Philosophy, Theory and Issues*, Belmont California: Wordsworth Publishing Company.
- BECKER, H.P. (1956). *Man in Reciprocity*, New York: Praeger.
- BRITTON, K.W. (1969). *John Stuart Mill: Life and Philosophy*, New York: Dover Publications, Inc.
- CASTELL, A. (ed.) (1947). *On Liberty*, New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, Inc.
- CLAUSEWITZ, C. (1996), *On War*, (edited & translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- COOPER, N. (1969). "Mill's Proof of the Principle of Utility", *Mind*, 78.
- DAY, J.P. (1970). "On Liberty and the Real Will", *Philosophy*, 45.
- DOYLE, M.W. (1997). *Ways of War and Peace*, New York: W.W. Norton.
- FALAIYE, O.A. (1998). "Homosexuality and the Question of Tolerance" in Fadahunsi (ed.) *Journal of Philosophy and Development*, vol. 1, No.
- FAYEMI, J.K. (2002). "Deepening Democracy to Prevent Conflict in Nigeria: Structural Issues in constitutional Governance" in *Nigeria: Unity, Governance, Law, and Conflict*, Cambridge: John F. Kennedy School of Government).
- GALTUNG, J. (1969). "Violence, Peace and Research Peace", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. VIII, no. 2.
- GELFAND, D.E and Lee, R.D (ed.) (1973). *Ethnic Conflict and Power: A Cross-National Perspective*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- GILDIN, H. (1964). "Mill's On Liberty" in J. Cropsey (ed.), *Ancient and Moderns: Essay on the Tradition of Political Philosophy in Honor of Leo Strauss*, New York: Basic Books.

- GLESITSCH, N.P. (ed.) (2003). *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 40, no. 1, London: Sage Publications/PRIO.
- GONSALVES, M.A. (1989). *Fagothey's Right Reason: Ethics in Theory and Practice*, Columbus, Toronto, London: Merrill Publishing Company.
- HASSAN, R. (1998). "On the Islamic View of Rights and Duties" in K.R. Christensen, *Philosophy and Choice, Selected Readings From around The World*, London: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- HAYEK, F.A. (1951). *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- IWUCHUKWU, I. (2001). "Integrating Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria for National Development: Ola Rotimi's Experiment in *If and Hopes of the Living Dead*" in A.E. Erubetina (ed.) *The Humanistic Management of Pluralism: A Formula for Development in Nigeria*, (Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos Conference Proceedings).
- JOHNSTON, I. (2002). *Lecture Notes on Mill's On Liberty*. These notes are the basis of a lecture delivered in LBST on Wednesday, February 10, 1999 by Ian Johnston of Malaspina University- College. This document is in the public domain, released in February 1999, and may be used, in whole or in part, by anyone without permission and without charge. The text was extensively revised in December 2001 and slightly revised in December 2002. (<http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/mill2.htm>).
- JORDAN, B. (1989). *The Common Good: Citizenship, Morality and Self-Interest*, New York: Basil Blackwell..
- KUNG, H. (1991). *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Order*, London: SCM Press Limited.
- LEVI, A. W. (ed.) (1963). *Six Great Humanistic Essays of J.S. Mill*, New York: Washington Square Press.
- LEVI, A.W. (1966). "The Value of Freedom: Mill's Liberty (1859-1959) in P. Radcliff (ed.) *Limits of Liberty: Studies of Mill's On Liberty*, Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.
- MARSHALL, C. (ed.) (1961). *The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill*, , New York: Modern Library.
- MILL, J. S. (1947). *On Liberty*, edited by Alburey Castell, New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, Inc.
- MILL, J. S. (1971). *Autobiography*, edited by J. Stillinger, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- MOMOH, C.S. (2003). "Global Principles of Religious an Ethnic Tolerance" in *Journal of Contemporary Studies (JCS)*, vol. 1, no. 3.
- MOMOH, C.S. et. al.(eds.). (1988). *Nigerian Studies in Religious Tolerance*, vol. I, (Religious & their Doctrines), Lagos: CBAAC & NARETO.
- MOMOH, C.S. et. al. (eds.). (1988). *Nigerian Studies in Religious Tolerance*, vol. II, (Religion and Morality), Lagos: CBAAC & NARETO.
- MOMOH, C.S. et. al. (eds.) (1988). *Nigerian Studies in Religious Tolerance*, vol. III, (Religion and Nation Building), Lagos: CBAAC & NARETO.
- MOMOH, C.S. et. al. (eds.) (1988). *Nigerian Studies in Religious Tolerance*, vol. IV, (Philosophy of Religious Tolerance), Lagos: CBAAC & NRETO.
- NARVESON, J. (1973). *Morality and Utility*, Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.
- NOEL, D.L. (1973). "The Theory of the Origin of Ethnic Stratification" in D.E. Gelfand and R.D. Lee, *Ethnic Conflict and Power: A Cross-National Perspective*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- NWOSU, E.J. (1985). *Achieving Even Development in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing.
- OKOYE, M. (1985). "Even Development: Problems and Solutions" in E.J. Nwosu, *Achieving Even Development in Nigeria: Problems and Prospect* Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- OLUKOTUN, A. (2003). "Ethnic Militias and Democracy in Nigeria: A Media Perspective" in T. Babawale *Urban Violence, Ethnic Militias and The Challenge of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria*, Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.
- ONYEKPE, J.G.N. (1998). "Politics and Political Power in Nigeria: nature, Dynamics and Determinations" in M. Dukor (ed.) *Philosophy of Politics: Discourse on Value and Power in Africa*, Lagos: Obaro and Ogbinaka Publishers.
- ONYEKPE, J.G.N. (2001). "Managing Forms and Problems of Inequality for Social Justice" in A.E. Erubetina (ed.), *The Humanistic Management of Pluralism: A Formula for Development in Nigeria*, (Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos Conference Proceedings).
- OSUNTOKUN, A. (2000). "The Niger-Delta and Nigeria's Environmental Problems" in A. Osuntokun (ed.), *Environmental Problems of the Niger-Delta*, Lagos: Friedrich Ebert Foundation.
- OSUNTOKUN, A. (2001). "Governance and the Environment" in A.E. Erubetina (ed.), *The Humanistic Management of Pluralism: A Formula for Development in Nigeria*, (Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos Conference Proceedings).
- OTTAN, A. (2003). *Annual Report on Violent Conflict in Nigeria 2003*, Peace and Development Projects (PEDEP) and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).
- RADCLIFF, P. (1966). *Limits of Liberty: Studies of Mill's On Liberty* Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- RYAN, A. (1974). *J.S. Mill*, London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- SKLAR, R.L. (2002). "Nationality and Unity in Nigeria Today" in *Nigeria: Unity, Governance, Law and Conflict*, Cambridge: John F. Kennedy School of Government
- STEPHEN, J.F. (2003). *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, London: Smith, Elder, & Co.
- STEPHEN, J.F. (1966). "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity", in Peter Radcliff *limits of Liberty: Studies of Mill's On Liberty*, Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.
- SUMNER, W.G. (1940). *Folkways*, Boston: Cinn.
- VON MISES, L. (2001). "Liberal Foreign Policy" in *Liberalism*, (<http://www.mises.org>).
- WOLFF, J. (1996). *An Introduction to Political Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.