

Chapter 3

Freedom of Religion or Belief Integration for Sustainable Development in the Oyo State Local Government Scholarship Scheme, First Technical University, Ibadan, Nigeria*

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1 Introduction

Every society is characterised by personal and collective actions that, to some extent, have developmental consequences, either as a development process or as an outcome (Pradan and Ranjan 2016). These actions, from either citizens or governments, will either be productive in promoting development, or counterproductive, impeding or reversing development. However, activities set to enhance development can be counterproductive if they are not well contextualised. One of the known contextual elements of significance to the political, socioeconomic, and general wellbeing of a society is religion (Kim 2003; Barro and McCleary 2002), and good as a development activity may seem, if it encourages religious discrimination or restricts religious freedom, its goal and sustainability is likely to be at risk.

The increasing rate at which free choice and expression of beliefs is getting restricted on a global scale (Stefanus Alliance International 2017) and rising concerns about their threat to other civil and political rights, cannot be overemphasised. In this regard, various governments will have to ensure that their activities take freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) into account. This will further strengthen democracy and civil society (Malloch 2008). Taking freedom and the opportunities offered by modern and democratic societies for granted without due consideration of religious differences may, in certain contexts, be causing religious conflicts and democratic destabilisation.

Founded as a government development initiative, the possibility that the Oyo State Local Government Scholarship Scheme (OYSLGSS) might have taken its religious implications for granted highlighted a need for this study. Its primary focus is to deepen knowledge of how the OYSLGSS has managed to uphold FoRB in its operations. The study looked at OYSLGSS operations at the First Technical University (Tech-U) in Ibadan, the state capital, in relation to religious difference as a form of social inequality. Areas of possible FoRB integration or religious discrimination and inequalities within the scheme, and the factors responsible for such inequalities, were

identified. The study also interrogates the sustainable development policy implications of the findings and makes appropriate recommendations for fairness and equity. The outcome of this research can be a veritable tool for effective policy management and inclusive development practices in the area of higher education.

The design of the study is enquiry aimed at understanding the religious implications around the OYSLGSS.

The questions informing this study are:

- 1 How has the scheme sought to integrate FoRB into its operations?
- 2 To what extent has such integration contributed to inclusive sustainable development?
- 3 What are the possible factors responsible for FoRB integration within the scheme?
- 4 And, from the findings, what are the opportunities to adopt sustainable religious fairness and equality in the future?

This chapter argues that a scholarship scheme like OYSLGSS as a deliberate development initiative can undermine FoRB if it is not structured and managed with ensuing outcomes taken into consideration. It also delves into the associated policy management demands of such a programme, within the contemporary setting of Nigeria, by identifying its level of compliance with other related national policies. The study identified the tendency to hide under the guise of ‘democracy is a game of numbers’ to promote religious ‘majoritarianism’ (where most development decisions favour religions in the majority) as a means to justify religious discrimination/ domination in a secular society.

1.1 Freedom of religion or belief

FoRB can be described as the protection of the rights of individuals, groups, or communities to profess and practice any kind of religion or belief, or have no belief at all (UNHRC 1993). It enables the right to have, change, or practise religion or belief at will without infringing on the human rights of others.

FoRB cuts across socioeconomic, political, cultural, and security spheres of societies to nurture diversity and pluralism in such a manner that resists authoritarianism, and to keep democratic systems stronger and uphold human dignity and common good (Nowak and Vospernik 2004; Malloch 2008). When religious freedom is lacking or restricted, the discrimination, resentment, conflict, and fear that undermine tolerance, stability, wellbeing, and peace for sustainable development prevail (Glendon 2002; Grim 2007; Stefanus Alliance International 2017). Such freedom should not only be a privilege for one denomination, or the possession of one faith against others. FoRB is a universal fundamental human right that is recognised in international treaties.

FoRB is enshrined in international documents such as Article 18 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (UNGA 1948); Article 18 and General Comment 22 in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

FoRB is further enshrined in several regional or continental documents and protocols, with varying definitions and mechanisms as different Human Rights Conventions and Charters, one of which is Article 8 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Union 1981 [2016]).

2 Background

Nigeria is an African nation signatory to the above-mentioned international conventions and has also aligned with the legal instruments for the protection of religious freedom at all levels. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 8 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights are entrenched in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Section 10 of the Constitution states that 'The Government of the Federation or of a State shall not adopt any religion as State Religion' and Section 38 provides that:

- (i) Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others, and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
 - (ii) No person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instruction or to take part in or attend any religious ceremony or observance if such instruction, ceremony or observance relates to a religion other than his own, or religion not approved by his parent or guardian.
 - (iii) No religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any place of education maintained wholly by that community or denomination.
- (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, Section 38)

But despite the legal provisions and realities, what is seen in Nigeria today reflects a global picture of violations of religious rights (Rothfuss and Yakubu 2012). Religious crises in Nigeria, with their associated destruction of lives and properties (Ayantayo 2011; Sulaiman 2016; Jegede 2019), are not only increasing but becoming an intergenerational phenomenon. A report by the Pew Research Center (2017) rated Nigeria alongside Pakistan, India, Egypt, and Russia as a country where the highest overall levels of restrictions against FoRB are found. There is no nation in the world that has such a large proportion of the predominant religions, with Christians (48.1 per cent) and Muslims (50 per cent) totalling over 140 million (Onaiyekan 2009; Gramlich 2020). Efforts to live together in peace are often underrated. The activities of the Islamic extremist group Boko Haram, which opposes the secular status of the country, have further displaced millions of people and claimed many lives and properties.

Religious conflicts and insecurity have been endemic in Nigeria during the last two decades, which has threatened religious freedom, peaceful coexistence, and national security (Rothfuss and Yakubu 2012; Ushe 2015). Finding lasting solutions to the increasing rates of violent religious crises

that have impeded progress in all spheres of human endeavours in the country is of vast importance (Jegade 2019).

Poverty and injustice caused by corruption are also found to weaken social solidarity or coexistence, and keep reawakening social hatred, radicalism, and violence (Sampson 2012; Ugorji 2016; Jegede 2019). In this sense, violence involving religious groups is not always caused by religious issues, but can be sparked by issues connected to ethnicity, crime, land, politics (Olojo 2014), and political economy, which underscores the relevance of this study.

2.1 Tertiary education and scholarships

Higher education or post-secondary education is considered as a third level of formal learning or tertiary education, which may vary in nomenclature or structure from one country to the other. It can be described as a level of education where the human capital of a state or nation is emphasised. Access to this level of education is globally considered to be a right of citizens, backed up by Article 13 of the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Article 13 states that 'higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education' (OHCHR 1966a). This has also been domesticated globally with various policies to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency.

In Nigeria, Section 8 of the National Policy on Education describes tertiary education as the post-secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, and monotechnics among others. The educational goal is to contribute to national advancement through high-level relevant intellectual capability development of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments for self-reliance and national unity (NERDC 2004: Section 28, c–d).

However, higher education is known to require huge funds to be effective (James 2012). This is the reason why governments across the world mobilise external financial support in the form of scholarships, grants, endowments, etc. from the private sector for the sustainable development of tertiary education. A scholarship is a path to make higher education attainable and affordable for students in a context where the government's social spending does not support the funding of affordable higher education for students. Scholarships open doors to higher education for indigent students who might be indebted or completely disenfranchised for lack of required funds. A scholarship's impact can include reducing the financial burden of the rising costs of a college education, and allowing a student to find more time and energy to focus on studies rather than other distracting engagements, such as part-time work. It can be a part of or fully support the financial commitment that a student requires to acquire higher education in an institution. In all, scholarships enhance effective inclusion and sustainable development on the education landscape.

Scholarships can further be an instrument allowing developing countries to build human capital for development within science and technology through higher education. With the increased trade and investments in the global economy, the skill-based activities that are dependent on a large pool

of qualified human capital, which can be achieved by higher education, are also on high demand. In effect higher education is a strategic driving force of sustainable economic development. It has also become a widely accepted fact that higher education, for instance, has been critical to the emergence of India's global knowledge economy (Agarwal 2010).

Therefore, it is assumed that with the increased religious consciousness of students of tertiary institutions and the critical role of higher education in advancing sustainable development, the relevance of a peaceful atmosphere that enables FoRB cannot be overemphasised.

2.2 Oyo State scholarship scheme

OYSLGSS is a unique programme that is sponsored by a collective effort of all the 33 local government areas (LGAs) in Oyo State, and it operates at the First Technical University in Ibadan. The purpose of the scheme is to support qualified young citizens of Oyo State to access quality tertiary education. It was deliberately structured to enhance equitable tertiary educational development in the state and to sustainably develop the growth of the young state-owned universities. The scheme gives equal opportunity to all 33 LGAs by making it mandatory for every LGA to sponsor at least five students from their respective LGA. It enables the Ministry of Local Government and the Technical University to mobilise funds for upfront full payment and it has been an annual exercise for the past three academic sessions. The scheme is in line with the national policy on education by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) that encourages universities and other tertiary institutions to explore other sources of funding to supplement government funding (NERDC: Section 62).

The OYSLGSS mandate is to enhance higher education and sustainable development of Oyo State and Nigeria. Its operations have been criticised by some citizens and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for being politically and religiously biased. The mechanisms and parameters of generating the lists of scholarship awardees are not so clear to the public, and the protest letters and petitions by NGOs to the governors and commissioners on the perceived religious inequality of participation and scholarship awardees in the scheme have generated concern within the state.

For instance, the Movement for Better Oyo State, a socio-political NGO that is non-partisan, was said to be established by a group of youths to serve as a development watchdog in the state. The objection raised by this NGO was on the ratio 9:1 Muslim to Christian disparity in the nominees from Irepo LGA for the scholarship screening. Though the issue that was flagged was not reversed, it was learnt that it caught the attention of some top functionaries, and this led to the inclusion of not less than three other Christian nominees to participate in the exercise that year.

The protest against the nomination for the scheme as the 'benevolence' of the chairmen of most LGAs was the objection of the Irekari Group, a socio-political grass-roots organisation. There was no tangible response that this petition attracted in terms of review of the concerned list but was said to be noted for action. Yet this study can identify significant participants that query the transparency of the nomination process of the scheme.

Though the OYSLGSS is not a concept, its operations could have religious implications and possibly trigger a religious crisis if they are not properly managed, which will be touched upon in section 4. The issues around non-inclusion regarding the scheme's activities that have been raised by NGOs and some parents are also generating public interest and catching the attention of appropriate authorities and development stakeholders.

3 Methodology

In order to answer the research questions and establish a good understanding of the facts and dimensions of the perceptions and experiences of the research participants, a non-positivist research approach was adopted. A non-positivist research approach is the type that does not start with a hypothesis or deductively test a theory as peculiar to positivism research approaches (Saunders *et al.* 1997: 71). This choice was made because it is a flexible research process through which the subjects can express their perspectives and positions on specific social realities.

A mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods was further utilised to make the findings more robust than if limited to only one of the two. This gave the opportunity to use different methods for different purposes (*ibid.*). It was possible for the researchers to use semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) to further illuminate or investigate issues identified from the use of questionnaires and extract non-verbal data from the nuances in between (see Table 3.1). Employing this mix also afforded the advantage of using the strength of a method to strengthen the weakness of the other in triangulation, to verify and confirm the observations. This enhanced the data validation through comparison for verification from various perspectives.

To be able to access robust data, the targeted population for this study included officials from the Ministries of Education, Local Government, and Information, First Technical University (where the scholarship is operational), scholarship awardees of the scheme, parents, opinion leaders, political/government functionaries, unsuccessful scholarship applicants, civil society organisations (CSOs), development practitioners, and religious leaders across LGAs in Oyo State (no less than two LGAs from each of the seven administrative zones of Oyo State were sampled for an even spread). The study population was accessed in a number of ways: some were officially sent letters by virtue of the offices they occupy, others were contacted through the university's stakeholder meetings held at the university during the matriculation ceremony for the 2019/20 session in February 2020, and most of the remainder were contacted through the snowballing approach by referrals. Identifying the students on campus was not a problem due to their identification cards and groupings. Most parents or guardians were contacted via the students or through a fellow parent, and other participants were contacted through community/civil society coalitions and religious groups.

Without considering a formal sample frame size or sampling a specific number of participants in a specified order, the selected were purposively (for interviews and FGDs) and randomly (for questionnaire administration) sampled as convenient. This choice was dependent on the ease of access to the sampled frame for population representation and adequate inclusion

within the control and efficiency of the study. The primary data was collected from the fieldwork across the seven geopolitical administrative zones of Oyo State with mixed data collection tools of questionnaire administration, protocol interviews, and FGDs with secondary data through documentary analysis.

A questionnaire is a structured interview (Saunders *et al.* 1997) designed to extract data from respondents in a manner where each research participant responds to the same set of questions in the same order. As a quantitative research tool, it is not very flexible, and respondents are limited to options of responses. However, the use hereof in this study, was firstly utilised as a result of the descriptive and explanatory nature of the research, and it was further based on the tool's ability to capture more participants in a short time, unlike the qualitative tools (*ibid.*). It was very useful in ensuring that essential data, like the characteristics of the respondents, was collected and for the avoidance of distortion or contamination of responses or information. We categorised the different types of respondent to use one of three questionnaires: type A for students of First Technical University, type B for parents/guardians/others, and type C for university/government staff (see Annexe 1). These questionnaires were either self-administered directly by the respondents or completed through an interviewer, as applicable and convenient for the study.

Interviews as purposeful discussions between two or more people (Kahn and Cannel 1957), were found to be a very useful tool to gather valid and reliable data that is relevant to the research questions and objectives. As a more explanatory social interaction between the researcher (interviewer) and respondent (interviewee), it was found to be flexible in order to further explore and understand the highlighted questions, concepts, and issues (Whitehead 2005). In this study, every discussion was guided by an interview protocol to manage time and minimise digressions. The majority of the interviewees were interviewed at their respective houses after work, some at their workplaces, and a few at recreation places. After a review of

Table 3.1 Distribution of participants

Serial no.	Participants' categories	No.	%	Engaged with questionnaire		Engaged in interview		Engaged in FGD	
1	Students	137	35	83	21%	16	4%	38	10%
2	Parents/guardians	78	20	32	8%	47	12%		
3	Civil servants/university staff	20	5	13	3%	7	2%		
4	Opinion/community leaders	66	17	12	3%	27	7%	27	7%
5	Politicians	39	10	15	4%	13	3%	11	3%
6	Religious leaders	40	10	11	3%	20	5%	9	2%
7	CSOs	12	3					12	3%
	Total	392	100	165	42%	130	33%	97	25%

Source: Field survey, 2020.

the consent procedure and collection of demographic data, it was ensured that all the interviewees felt at ease, had a good understanding of the choice of language in which to respond (English, local, or dialect), and any judgemental process or pressure was avoided to enable free expression. None of the interview sessions lasted less than half an hour and, in some cases, it took up to an hour or more depending on the versatility and willingness of the participants.

An FGD is a naturalistic form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their attitude towards given concepts, ideas, and historical facts (Krueger and Casey 2000). The design of FGDs is to establish good conversations, with ebbs and flows from general to specific subjects, in a relaxed setting where participants/discussants tell personal stories, disagree, interrupt, and contradict themselves for greater insights. The choice of FGDs relies on eliciting verbal and non-verbal expressions of the discussants and stimulating spontaneity of responses. The number of participants per group ranged from five to nine, and the questions asked were about research-related subjects, which were discussed interactively among the group members. The fluidity of responses to the questions was high and diverse issues were freely discussed, in order to come up with answers based on the perceptions and experiences of the participants. Data extraction was also facilitated by the dynamics of responses and the researcher was able to see how it 'all fits together' as expressed by Duncan and Marotz-Baden (1999), and to interpret and document.

There was a need for anonymity to protect personal or political images that exist, and most civil servants preferred the questionnaire instead of being interviewed due to time constraints and for anonymity in defence of their career/job perhaps, since their comments would not please those in power/government. Many of the participants of this study declined being recorded and having pictures taken of them, claiming that because religion is volatile they wanted to avoid debates or discussions that are religiously inclined. Apart from religious matters being perceived as private, this may be interpreted as an indication that in the society where OYSLGSS operates (Oyo State/Nigeria), there may be freedom of worship, but most people may also not feel safe or comfortable to freely discuss or express their perceptions on religious issues.

Secondary data was sourced from reference documents that provided useful information from which the research questions were also explored. Among these are correspondences sent to some candidates, written petitions from NGOs, university records (data on scholarship awardees), and media chats. The researchers could access most of the documents on the spot where they were found and made copies of a few, as allowed by the sources. This helped in getting the actual numbers of scholarship awardees and associated data from university records. It also enabled the exploration of one of the petitions identified and substantiated some of the findings from the other methods.

The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistical tools, including frequency distribution tables, charts, and cross tabulation. This was done in a systematic progression that ordered the data as descriptive units for interpretation and information synthesis to answer the research

questions, address the objectives of the study, and draw appropriate conclusions and recommendations.

3.1 Study area

The study area is Oyo State, a constituent state of the nation of Nigeria. Before the state creation exercise of 1976 in Nigeria, it was known to be part of the Old-Western region of the country. Old Oyo state was one of the three states (Oyo, Ondo, and Ogun) created from the Old-Western region in 1976. In 1991, Osun state was carved out of the Old Oyo state and the remainder is what is now known as Oyo State. Ibadan, the capital of the Old-Western region remains the capital of the present Oyo State and the state covers about 27,460km² of land mass bounded by Ogun, Kwara, and Osun states in Nigeria and the Republic of Benin.

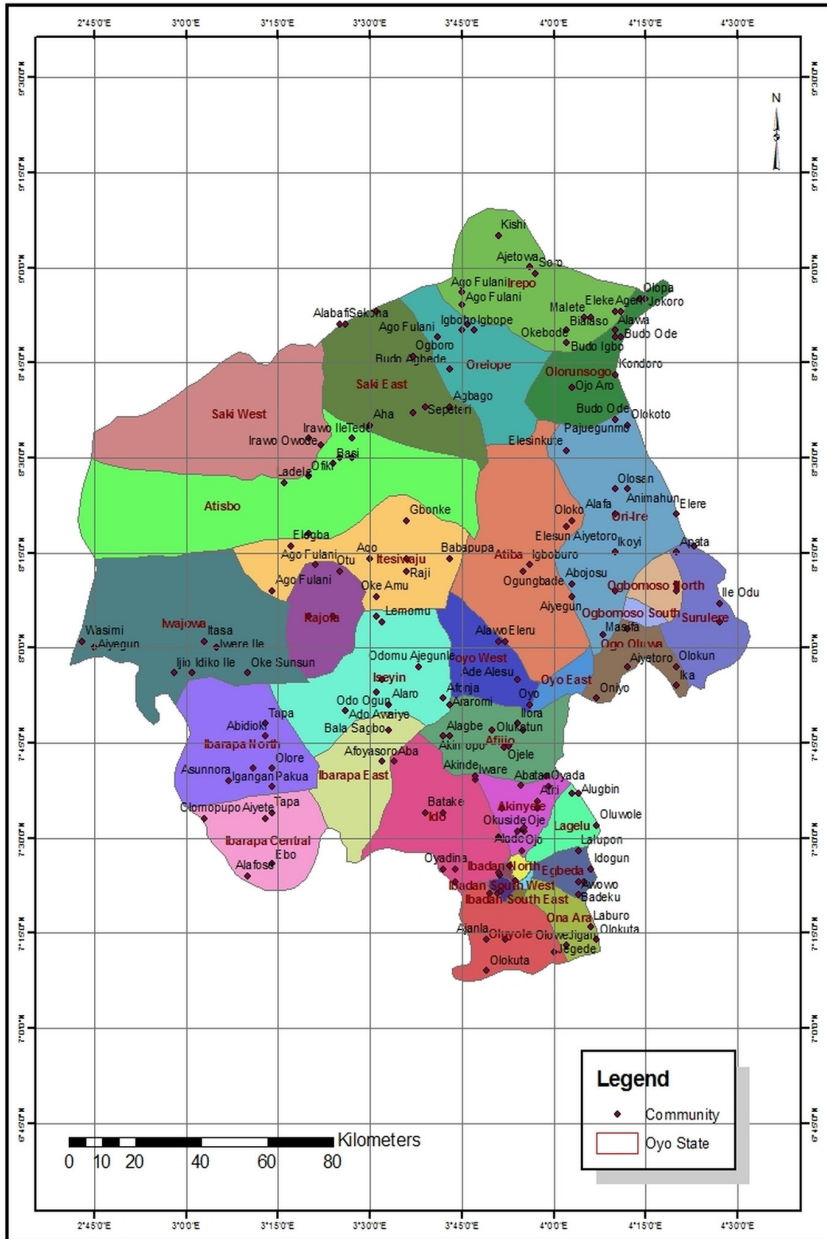
According to the National Population Census (NPC 2006), Oyo State has a population of 5,591,589 and a population density of 204 (Aderounmu 2013). It is one of the most urbanised states in the federation with agriculture as the mainstay of its economy. Oyo State is composed of 33 LGAs (see Table 3.2 and Figure 3.1) and it has a democratically elected governor as the chief executive of the state, a 32-member legislative House of Assembly and a judiciary arm as obtained in the democracy of the nation.

Table 3.2 Oyo State political delineation and educational institutions

Serial no.	Item	Quantity
1	Senatorial districts of Oyo North, Oyo Central, and Oyo South	3
2	Federal constituencies	14
3	State constituencies	32
4	LGAs	33
5	Public primary schools,	1,576
6	Public secondary schools	969
7	Colleges of nursing and midwifery	2
8	Special schools for persons with disabilities	4
9	College of health technology	1
10	College of agriculture	1
11	Technical colleges	5
12	Colleges of education	2
13	Polytechnics	3
14	Universities	2
15	Private institutions (elementary to university levels)	Many

Source: Fieldwork, 2019 and **Oyo State website**.

Figure 3.1 Map of Oyo State, Nigeria, showing the 33 LGAs



Source: Aderounmu (2013). © Procon Team, re-used with permission.

In Oyo State, both Christian and Muslim missionaries have established multiple schools, and education has been a cardinal programme of every government because it is seen as a heritage from the Old-Western region and the citizens see it as their legacy. Apart from the landmark experience of the free education programme of the Old-Western regional government, bursary and scholarship financing (local and foreign) have been a recurrent

aspect within the annual budget of successive administrations. The bursary awards could at times be for all citizens of Oyo State in tertiary institutions in Nigeria or for those pursuing selected courses such as law or medicine. Scholarships are often for citizens studying abroad or in exceptional situations at the discretion of the governor.

4 Ethnicity and religion in Oyo State

Oyo State mainly comprises the Yoruba ethnic group and settlers from other parts of Nigeria and abroad. Like the rest of Nigeria, Oyo State is a multi-religious setting with Christianity, Islam, and Traditional Religion more prominent than multiple other religious minority groups. Most of the indigenous Yoruba people of Oyo State are found within Christianity, Islam, and Traditional Religion, but the majority of settlers from Northern Nigeria are Muslims and those from Eastern Region and the middle region of the country are predominantly Christians.

From its creation in 1976 until the 1980s, Oyo State enjoyed a relatively peaceful interfaith coexistence, but since then FoRB has been challenged from time to time, resulting in intra- and inter-religious crises. These cases of religious intolerance and conflicts have not only disrupted the public peace and education but also claimed lives and destroyed valuable properties.

At the University of Ibadan, the existence of a standing cross that could be viewed from a mosque caused serious inter-religious disharmony between the Muslims and Christians within the campus and all over Nigeria (Hackett 1999). There are also records of religious conflicts at masquerade festivals at different times in Ibadan, Kisi, and other communities in Oyo State (*Daily Post* 2017; *Inside Oyo* 2017). The tradition that forbids women to see the Oloolu masquerade in Ibadan concerns other religious groups and at times disenfranchises them of their right to FoRB. According to tradition, the Oloolu move round the community during the annual Egungun (masquerade) festival, and so for the duration female citizens cannot freely travel to their respective religious engagements. The constant violence between the Muslims and Egungun worshippers in Kisi has been described as a mirror of the discrimination, accumulated grievances, and tensions among religious groups in the community in general (Abegunde *et al.* 2019).

One incident in 2003 strained interfaith relationships across Oyo State. It was caused by Muslim fundamentalists who insisted that Muslim girls wear hijab, contrary to the approved school uniform in all schools (including those that were established by Christian missionaries) in Oyo State. This situation resulted in other religions encouraging their girls to also wear religious robes to school.

There was no official statement made public on how the issue was handled or resolved but about a year later, the state government massively funded the establishment of Muslim secondary schools in many communities across the state.

(Renowned Ibadan politician and elderstatesman, age 82;

one-to-one interview, at his Ikolaba house, Ibadan, 10 March 2020)

The issue of Muslim girls wearing hijab in schools triggered another religious crisis at the International School Ibadan (ISI), University of Ibadan on 12 November 2018, when Christians and other traditional religions insisted that religious expression should be exhibited only at home and not be mixed with school education (Adeyemi and Agboluaje 2018). The Muslim parents alleged the school was discriminating against the Muslim girls, but the authorities claimed that the idea of hijab negates the section of the school's constitution that guides dressing, since the school was established in 1963 as a private property of the University of Ibadan (UCJ 2018). The Board of Governors and management engaged the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to end lessons by 1pm. Actions already made by the management to ease the practice of Islam include arranging transportation to Jumat for Friday prayers and providing special meals during Ramadan. But following a series of meetings it was agreed that while the dialogue on the matter continues, the school authority should stand firm on its principles and enforce the school rules, ensure that class allocations would not segregate the students, reinstate the dress code and include a sample of a sown uniform in a newsletter, and emphasise sanctions (Sahara Reporters 2018; Adeyemi and Agboluaje 2018). But the matter was later taken to court by the aggrieved Muslims and the case is ongoing.

The Iseyin community in Oyo State is known for the *Oro* festival, among other traditional celebrations. Similar to the above-mentioned Oloolu masquerade in Ibadan, the tradition is that during the seven-day *Oro* festival, a curfew is imposed² on women in the community to restrict them from seeing the *Oro* priest who moves round the town blaring a whistle to scare women. Some Muslims approached the court of law in the state for an injunction to prevent the adherents of *Oro* from celebrating their annual festival, planned for 22 September 2019, and this action further triggered religious dissonance between the *Oro* worshippers (of traditional religion) and Muslims (Azuh 2019).

While significant ethno-religious crises may not have existed since the creation of Oyo State, most of the violent conflicts on record are inter-religious. It is noteworthy that most of these conflicts were addressed via peace-building dialogue and alternative dispute resolution approaches that are inconclusive or only appeal to the victims to allow peace. Many of the litigations have been settled by the court and a few are still pending (*Vanguard* 2019). Of course, lives lost can never be regained; so far, no deterrents have been identified nor any case of compensation or damage paid to a religious group for destroyed properties or the like. One concern here is the effectiveness of these approaches, with the reoccurrences of such conflicts, particularly those of the same dimension as in Sepeteri (Ajayi 2013), Saki (Frontpage 2020), Kisi, and Ibadan. The current situation in Oyo State is relatively peaceful but not without risks.

5 Findings and discussions

5.1 The integration of FoRB in the operations of the scheme

There are four main stages for selecting potential scholarship awardees: eligibility; nomination/selection of candidates; ranking examination; and award of scholarship/admission. On the part of the OYSLGSS management/

administrators, it is observed that there is a belief that the scheme gives equal opportunity to everyone, as per the nation's constitution.

Eligibility

Apart from being a citizen of Oyo State, a candidate must not have more than two sittings and have at least five O Level Credit passes (including English and Mathematics) in subjects relevant to the university course of interest. He/she must also have obtained the required scores for university admission from the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) conducted by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). Candidates must be presented by his/her LGA to participate in the screening process.

Nomination/selection of candidates

The selection of eligible candidates is narrowed to a political/community ward level in most of the LGAs, which is presented by the local government to the scholarship scheme administrator. The candidates then have to write a ranking examination from which at least five candidates are selected for the award.

Considering the eligibility stage, the findings of the study reveal that most people are not aware of when and how the nomination/pre-exam stage is held. About 39 per cent (153) of the participants knew about the scheme; of whom 67 (44 per cent) learned of it through politicians, 71 (46 per cent) through current scholarship awardees, and only 15 (10 per cent) learned about it through civil servants/university staff. Most scholarship awardees who were engaged in the study claimed that they were only informed about their nominations by their parents/relations, had no prior knowledge of the scheme, and did not fill in an official application form. The interviews revealed that in a few LGAs, such as Iwajowa, Ibarapa East, Atisbo, Ogbomosho South, Akinyele, and Afijio, the local government management discretionally tried to contact some stakeholders, and there was no public announcement on the call for applications to enable interested candidates (regardless of their religious affiliation, state of physical ability, and gender) to be informed of the opportunity of the scheme.

According to the majority of the participants (about 67 per cent), only the 'privileged ones' – those that by virtue of either their position in politics or as a government official or their social status has something to do with the scheme or the opinion/community/religious leaders – heard about the opportunity of the scheme by virtue of their good fortune. The participants' perception is that the information can or will always flow from the 'privileged ones', who are likely to be members of the religious groups to which they belong.

I am sure of what I am saying in this Ibadan South-East. Most scholarship awardees have been Muslims which is the Chairman's religion and you say there is no underlining factor. We may not rule out.³

(Opinion leader, octogenarian, and traditional chief; one-to-one interview, at Mapo Hall, Ibadan, 11 March 2020)

The study reveals that the ratification of those who make the ranking examinations list is exclusively at the discretion or approval of the local government chairman or anyone who acts in that capacity.

A petition from an NGO to the state governor on such marginalisation alleged that Islam, as the religion of the ruling party, chairman, and the head of Local Government Administration, was favoured over Christianity and Traditional Religion in the Irepo LGA.

Out of the five Christian candidates whose credentials were submitted to the local government secretariat for nomination, four of them with the best UTME grades (a prerequisite for nomination) were delisted. The only reason we could find for this action is not belonging to Islam, a religion that is the majority in the LGA. Not until this action was petitioned at the state level by an NGO that the four candidates were allowed to write the exam.

(Petty trader, age 56, and mother of one of the candidates whose name was formerly delisted in Irepo LGA; FGD at Laha, Kisi, 23 March 2020)

It is a known fact within this local government [LG] that the post of an LG Chairman, traditional ruler, and community development organisation's leaders must be from a particular religion that is believed to be dominant locally: there is no fairness, no regard for competence – the same goes for this scholarship you mentioned here. How will there be true development.

(Retired public/civil servant and former Commissioner in his 70s, one-to-one interview at Ibadan, 10 March 2020)

There are LGAs in Oyo State, where the 'unwritten norm' that a particular religion must lead or dominate in every activity at the expense of competence, excellence, and fairness operates... this will lead us nowhere... check out Saki West, Ogbomoso South, Oriire, Irepo, Ibarapa North, Afijio, and the like... we should learn to respect competence and quality and the government has a duty to encourage this.

(Opinion leader, octogenarian, and traditional chief, one-to-one interview at Mapo Hall, Ibadan, 11 March 2020)

Fifty-four per cent of participants who engaged in the FGDs and 37 per cent of those who engaged in the interviews acknowledged that the nomination stage has been the most criticised aspect of the scholarship operation within their respective LGAs.

Ranking examination

The conduct of the ranking examinations for nominated candidates is the responsibility of the respective university's management. Findings show that the examinations conducted so far have been transparent in conduct and standardised. Some candidates who attempted the examination but did not make it to the final list also acknowledged the fairness of the exercise.

As there were no cases of any form of favouritism for candidates from a particular religious denomination during the examination, candidates were said to have been grouped on the basis of their LGA, and not by religion. Most respondents who have attempted the examination described it as having a level playing ground without discrimination. None of the other respondents observed any religious sentiments, discrimination, or coercion concerning the conduct of the examination.

Award of scholarship/admission

The final approval of the five candidates (at least) from each of the 33 LGAs to be selected as scholarship awardees and awarded the scholarships is carried out by the Oyo State Ministry of Local Government, based on merit. But we were told about a case where a candidate from Irepo LGA, who was initially congratulated by the university (the examiner) to have passed the ranking examination, but later was denied the scholarship offer by the ministry without any notification or reason behind the credibility of this process. His nomination generated controversy, in terms of being a non-Muslim but a Christian from Irepo LGA. The candidate said:

I had earlier been congratulated to have passed the exam, but when I went to the LGA Secretariat to collect my letter of offer it was discovered that my name had been replaced with someone else from a different religion [Islam] considered dominant within the LGA... All efforts to know why or rectify the situation were futile... it is sad that we are endangered religious group in our indigenous home community.

(Male, age 18, from Kisi, one-to-one interview at Ogbomoso, 22 March 2020)

Another participant who claimed to have been following the case said:

Religious foul play will always be suspected in Irepo LGA because of the intolerance experienced from Muslims to Christians and members of the Traditional Religion groups in the area.

(Civil servant, male, age 46, one-to-one interview at the State Secretariat, Agodi, Ibadan, 10 March 2020)

This suspicion might also be based on the antecedents of the respective LGA with records of religious crisis and discrimination, as in the case of Kisi, the seat of the Irepo LGA. For instance, Abegunde *et al.* (2019) recounted that in 1986, Christians in Kisi were attacked by Muslims for passing a major road by the Central Mosque in the heart of the town during an annual Christmas Eve procession; in 1988, the town witnessed bloodletting clashes when Egungun worshippers were attacked by one Alfa Lati and his *Omo Ile Keu* (Quranic Students) at Atipa suburb for beating *Bata* (traditional conga drum), and during their festival carnival; and in 2003, the school hijab crisis mentioned above occurred.

What I have seen for more than three decades as an opinion leader in Kisi, I can authoritatively say that religious affiliation has become

the most critical determinant of one's relevance in the scheme of things in this community.... It's only here that I see a federal health facility named after a particular religion [Muslim hospital] in a secular state where other religion faithful pay taxes with which the same facility is sustained. The last election of Executive Officers of Nigerian Union of Teachers Irepo LGA Chapter witnessed an open declaration by Muslims [as a dominant religion] that the Chairmanship of the chapter is not for non-Muslims. Since 1998, Kisi Students' Association has not really recovered from the religious crisis that led to the emergence of Christian Students' Association... you either belong to the dominant religion, which is Islam, or you accept to be a stooge in their interest. So how do I believe that they are not applying the same religion mentality in this scholarship scheme.

(Community leader, degree holder, and politician, age 68, one-to-one interview at his Kisi house, 2 May 2020)

In view of such issues, the assertion that 'religion plays a prominent role in the socio-political life of Kisi to the extent that you may not be able to hold any political post or traditional stool without playing the religious card' (Abegunde *et al.* 2019: 5) may not be out of place. You play the 'religious card' by appealing to the religious sentiments of the majority.

Since religious discrimination can directly affect access to the constitutional rights of conscience and association as citizens, the 'majority takes all syndrome' under the guise that democracy is a game of numbers, also suggests that members of the dominant religion in an LGA can discriminatorily impose their wish regarding nominations for the scholarship process on other religions at will.

We Muslims are in the majority in this LGA, so I don't see why we should not be taken [sic] the largest share of everything from the government... we are in democracy.

(Middle-aged Muslim trader and community mobiliser, FGD at Isale-Taba, Saki, 26 March 2020)

The study found that most participants considered the examination to be well conducted, but that the final selection is not transparent enough.

Our experience with this scholarship scheme has shown that the final selection is not completely on merit. How will you explain situations here where candidates got telephone messages that they passed and later it was their colleagues who never had such message that were given the scholarship... where is the sincerity?

(Olu Ajao, age 58, farmer and volunteer with civil society organisations, interview, at Aremo Ibadan, 9 March 2020)

5.2 Factors responsible for the current perceptions of FoRB integration in the scheme

One of the factors identified from this study as being pivotal for the perceptions of FoRB integration within the scheme, is the low level of

awareness about it, because of the obvious lack of publicity for applications/nominations at the beginning of each edition of the scheme. The below average number of participants who were aware of the scheme (39 per cent) could be an indication of low publicity. Some claimed to have heard about the scheme only by coincidence: one interviewee said, 'I just overheard someone say it at a bar' (Oseni Rasaan, age 62, from Isale-Akao, Igangan, one-to-one interview at Igangan, 5 May 2020). This indicates that the lack of clearly defined and open channels of communication that adequately informs potential scholarship awardees and enables more indigenous people to participate on an equitable platform is an issue for attention.

Hoarding information about the scheme and the nomination process for undue advantage is identified as another factor that informed the perceptions about the OYSLGSS, which could be inferred from the observation that 95 of the 153 respondents who knew of the scheme claimed to have heard about it as discrete/confidential information from politicians or government officials. Upon interrogation, some opined that information on the scheme may be deliberately gagged to restrict it to either political loyalists or loved ones, which could include religious colleagues of those that had the information. These assertions of favouritism are a subject for further research, but its anti-FoRB implications that it could disenfranchise others from being aware of the scheme is noteworthy.

Beyond seeing religion as a private matter, the idea of avoiding commenting on any issue that has a religious taint for safety reasons indicates that FoRB is not well applied in the state. This degree of FoRB shows that most participants do not feel they can freely express their subjective views on issues that have certain religious or belief inclinations. As much as the security status of a society determines how FoRB can be fairly implemented, feeling insecure to freely discuss perceptions of religious issues is a factor that indicates people's perceptions about how FoRB is integrated within the OYSLGSS.

Politicisation of religion is another factor identified for the prevailing FoRB implications of the scheme. The process of nominations for the scholarship in some LGAs where the dominant religion must be imposed on the public and share with or give opportunity(ies) to other religions at will by virtue of being the majority betrays fairness and may lead to a crisis. In this case the government is obliged to take proactive steps that prevent further occurrences (UNGA 1948; OHCHR 1966b).

There was also inconsistency in the ranking examination, with the final admission lists of scholarship awardees not being appropriately communicated. Most sympathetic is the case of the previously mentioned candidate who had been congratulated on passing the examination and later found out that his name had been replaced with a name from another religious denomination on the final admission list. The candidate stated:

All I was told by the officials there was that this was how the list was sent from the coordinating ministry at the state level and there is nothing anyone can do about it.

(Male, age 18, from Kisi, one-to-one interview at Ogbomoso,
22 March 2020)

The lack of correlation between the examination and the award list does not question the essence of such an examination, but it gives room for all manner of suspicion and the particular substitution of a Christian candidate with a Muslim in Irepo LGA is obviously of FoRB concern. This kind of disconnect in the selection process of scholarship awardees demands a critical look with a 'policy lens'.

5.3 The policy and sustainable development implications

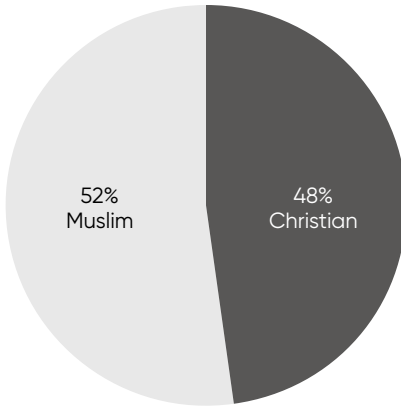
There is a general belief that the scholarship scheme policies operate under the statutory provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and it is therefore expected that the clauses on social inclusion, as it relates to gender, FoRB, and persons with disabilities are respected. From the study data, OYSLGSS was rated high in achieving the objective of supporting the citizens of the state to have tertiary education, but the observed or alleged religious favouritism, in such incidents that were petitioned, implies that the scheme is seen to be non-compliant with the provisions of the nation's constitution.

Though there seems to be no conscious or official attention given to religion at the stage of nomination for the ranking examination, the religious profile of candidates is mainly shared between the two major religions, Christianity and Islam. The average ratio of Christian to Muslim scholarship awardees of the OYSLGSS at the Tech-U so far is 48 per cent to 52 per cent (see Figure 3.2), with no scholarship awardees from any other religious group. This may not necessarily indicate that the minority religions were not likely to receive 'official' recognition, because from this study, there was no applicant to the scheme from indigenous religions identified who met the selection criteria but who was denied the award. However, having only Christians and Muslims without members of any other religion as scholarship awardees, suggests that considerations are most likely given to adherents of Islam and Christianity at the nomination stage. While this may not be deliberate, it could be a reflection of the dominance of Islam and Christianity over the indigenous religions in the study area, or the exclusion of minority religions from policy managements, or simply their low representation in politics and governance.

In relation to FoRB, one would expect to see other religious groups included apart from Christians and Muslims (Figure 3.2). However, it was found that the nomination process had been verbally questioned or petitioned by the LGAs (such as Irepo, Kajola, Ibadan South-East, Afijio, Saki West and Ibadan North-West) as not being religiously inclusive, indicating that the process may have loosely given room for religious favouritism as particularly claimed in the petition written to the governor on Irepo LGA (Adebisi 2019).

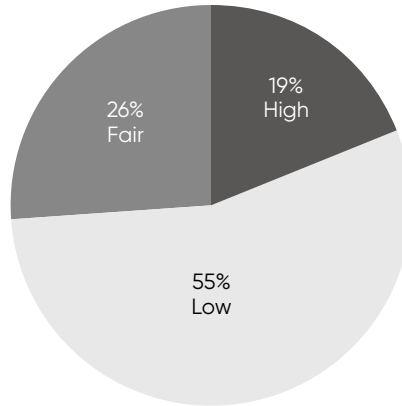
It is easy to see in Figure 3.3 that 55 per cent of participants rated FoRB integration in the scheme as low, despite there being a fair religious balance between accepted grantees (Figure 3.2). It is possible that their responses refer to the perceptions of the discriminating experiences during the nomination process, where the selection was not made open for all eligible candidates to apply. This means that the existing list of scholarship awardees (Figure 3.2) that emerged by the prevailing nomination or pre-exam process alone may not be fully adequate to assess the FoRB status

Figure 3.2 The OYSLGSS scholarship awardees religion distribution



Source: Field survey, 2020.

Figure 3.3 Respondents' perceptions on FoRB in the OYSLGSS

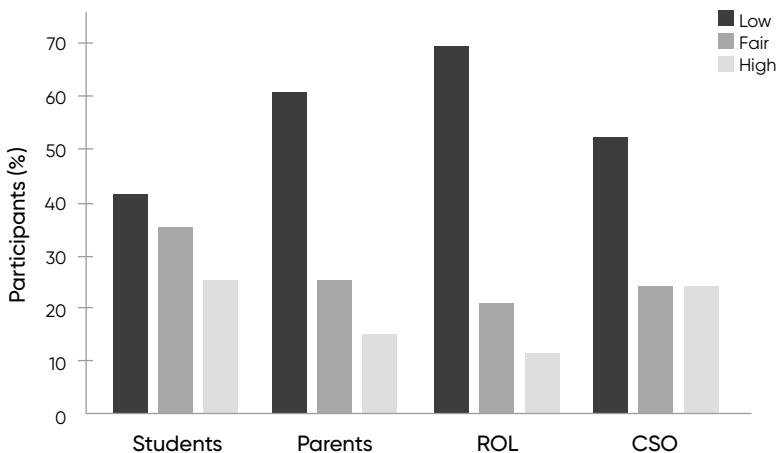


Source: Field survey, 2020.

of the scheme. It is also likely that perceptions are informed by the fact that only two religions are benefiting. The reflections on past experiences of residual religious sentiments and perceptions exhibited either in the form of religious discrimination or violent crises, might also be responsible for their responses.

Figure 3.4 shows that the perception of the student awardees, parents, religious/opinion leaders, and CSOs is that FoRB integration into the OYSLGSS is relatively low. This view is even stronger among the religious/opinion leaders that are assumed to be aware of any development within society. In further probing of what informed their perception, all of them could only refer to the experiences and news about the nomination process and the religious distribution of the existing scholarship awardees in

Figure 3.4 Participants' group perceptions on FoRB in OYSLGSS



Notes: ROL: religious and opinion leaders; CSO: civil society organisations.
Source: Field survey, 2020.

their respective LGAs. Generally, when people's own religion is favoured, FoRB is found to be well integrated, a view that prevails significantly with the participants.

Primordial sentiments are also identified as dangerous factors influencing these wrong religious perceptions attached to the scholarship scheme. For instance, the perceptions of some Muslim participants in Kajola LGA that the last selection process of the scheme favoured Christians because they have more people represented among the elites turned out to be untrue because the data from the university shows that more Muslims from the LGA actually benefited from this exercise. Similarly, some members of the Christian Association of Nigeria in Afijio also believed that there is no religious fairness in the scheme since Muslims supposedly benefit more than other religions. But this claim also turned out to be unfounded because the data reflects that most scholarship awardees in Afijio LGA are Christians.

The identification of religious discrimination in some LGAs, raised by most participants of minority religions in their respective area (particularly those from Christianity and traditional religions), is recognised as a latent threat to the sustainability of the scholarship scheme. This is because the religious discrimination against non-dominant religious groups to appropriately have nominees participate in the ranking examination has been seen to be a form of discrimination that could also trigger crisis and retard the development of such areas. A respondent affirmed:

Except if there comes an improved approach from the government, the existing process is influenced in our area by religious sentiments and this may truncate the programme.⁴

(Secondary school teacher, female, one-to-one interview at Ogbomoso, 5 May 2020)

With various conceptions of merit, one of the highly contentious policy issues is having inclusive participation in higher education without conflict (James 2012). So, the implications of religious crisis that can engulf a system devoid of a proactive and contextual FoRB policy cannot be taken for granted. The formal social inclusion and integration of FoRB, disability, and gender provisions that is seen to be lacking in the scheme's operations needs conscious deliberate consideration.

However, the national policy on tertiary education empowers the JAMB to coordinate a UTME (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1989; NERDC: Section 28, c–d) that qualifies any candidate that meets the requirements to be offered admission to any tertiary institution in Nigeria. This study reveals that a comfortable pass in the UTME and O Level School Certificate Examination are prerequisites for the scholarship nomination, which complies with the national policy and JAMB Act (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1989). The 'cut-off' marks set for university admission and a minimum of five O Level Credit passes in the relevant subjects (including English and Mathematics), must be met by all candidates. Further, no candidates can be offered admission in more than one institution at a time. In the words of a parent interviewed,

My child was denied the benefit of OYSLGSS after he was congratulated to have passed the ranking examination, because JAMB already offered him an admission to another institution and no single candidate can have more than one admission through the board.

(Politician, age 61, from Ilora, one-to-one interview at Oyo, 24 February 2020)

This indicates that the OYSLGSS is not a standalone programme outside the national policy, and the guidelines for admission to tertiary institutions shall be required to continuously match the practices directed by national policy (NERDC: Section 28, c–d).

5.4 Options for sustainable religious fairness and equality

As opined by James (2012), conceptions of equity in higher education revolve around ability, access, and selection on merit without any discrimination, where all people have the same opportunities. Seventy-six per cent of interviewees in the study advocated for the need to institutionalise an open, socially inclusive, and standardised application process, rather than nominations that may not be free from issues of religious sentiment and other types of social exclusion. The open process is believed to be a more transparent procedure based on merit and it could be monitored for sustainable religious fairness and equality.

The need for a value-based reorientation to educate, enlighten, and encourage religious tolerance as the most critical step towards establishing FoRB in each society, was identified by participants. The perception of religious intolerance noticed by participants in a few of the LGAs can undermine the purpose of the scheme and make it unsustainable if adequate attention is not given.

It is also noteworthy that about 80 per cent of the religious leaders who participated in this study hold that prayer is still the key to attain religious fairness and equality in any society.

For me, I believe that to achieve a good religious balance in whatever we do in this country, we need serious prayers and divine intervention.

(Pentecostal church pastor, age 56, FGD with religious leaders at Iseyin, 19 March 2020)

It will be very difficult to have any fairness in religious matters if the evil spirits causing conflicts among us are not dealt with in prayers.

(Female cleric of a spiritual church, age 67, FGD with religious leaders at Kosobo, 18 February 2020)

An Islamic scholar/cleric and member of League of Imam and Alfa, Oyo State said: ‘Everything we do in life demands prayer, and a peaceful relationship among us cannot be an exemption’ (FGD with religious leaders at Moniya, 8 March 2020). This situation implies an existing knowledge gap about FoRB among the religious leaders, which further underscores

the need for awareness and education on the concept of FoRB. The need to promote equality and better inclusion by increasing the number of scholarship awardees per LGA is another popular suggestion from a significant number of interviewees. While some suggested that having one scholarship awardee (not based on any religion affiliation) per ward would accommodate more people and probably include more religions, others opined that one scholarship awardee per ward could be a benchmark and even encourage the LGAs to do more.

An apolitical nomination process that gives equal slots of nominees to the majority religions (i.e. Islam and Christianity) is also identified as an option. If the nomination of candidates for the scholarship is done equally among the major religious groups that are often at loggerheads, without any political influence, probably a fairer and more stable process could be reached. But this is also seen by some respondents to have inter-/intra-religion discriminatory risks, which raises the question of how will some community wards not be short-changed? Be that as it may, the whole idea also excludes the traditional religions from the scheme, and will be against the principles of FoRB.

Though the high influence of the state on local government administrations is also recognised as a contributory factor to the existing selection process, most participants who engaged in interviews and FGDs opined that a policy of one scholarship awardee per LGA ward could ease the strain for equity and enhance FoRB, transparency, and fairness. In this case, each ward in the LGA would select their two best qualified candidates through an open and inclusive mechanism to go and participate in the ranking examination of the scheme and whoever has the highest score becomes the scholarship awardee by merit.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

The overall goal of establishing the OYSLGSS is to enhance sustainable tertiary educational development in Oyo State and sustainably develop the growth of the young state-owned First Technical University, Ibadan. It is the first full scholarship scheme in Nigeria to be so well structured and to involve all local governments in the state to mandatorily sponsor at least five students to attend the university. Required funds are pooled from the local governments for upfront remittance to the university.

The pre-exam stage presents at least ten candidates from each LGA for the ranking examination. The conduct of the ranking examinations by the university has been of a standard quality devoid of any religious discrimination. OYSLGSS does not undermine the national policies on tertiary education as regards UTME and O Level certificates as prerequisites. A nomination process that gives equal slots of nominees to the majority religion can be discriminatory and counterproductive, but the idea of a scholarship awardee per LGA ward, based on merit, could ease the strain by increasing equity and fairness.

However, no formal document for any religious consideration or FoRB compliance model was identified in the scheme's operations: nomination is left to chance and discretion of the chairman/head of the LGAs – a situation which can encourage shades of favouritism and majoritarian discrimination. There is a low level of awareness about OYSLGSS and a

need to advance the advocacy and public awareness of its operations for a well-defined pre-exam selection stage that will be objectively inclusive without any political or religious sentiments.

Despite the good quality and conduct of the qualifying examination of the scheme, as informed by most of the respondents, the examination scores were never published and determination of the final list of successful candidates was not sufficiently transparent. FoRB is not well integrated into the scheme's operations due to alleged information hoarding regarding nomination of candidates and the domination of religious groups by the majority religions. As opined by Aderounmu (2014), getting on board any development engagement on the basis of religious sentiment can be catastrophic. The suspected abuse of office and the attempt to appease the powers 'that be' particularly identified by the political actors at the pre-exam stage of the selection process can undermine FoRB and the general sustainability of the scheme.

The lack of scholarship awardees from religions other than from Islam and Christianity could be a product of suspected discrimination by members of dominant religions during the nomination/pre-exam stage and calls for an appropriate and non-discriminatory approach or policy to make the scheme sustainable. In another view, this issue of having only Christian and Muslim scholarship awardees over the years could be further investigated. Perhaps other religions lacked interested/qualified candidates to participate in the scheme.

The high rate at which most informants avoided talking to the researchers on themes revolving around religion for its volatility, and how most that took part in interviews/FGDs sought anonymity, is significant to implicate their consciousness of the crisis that is latent in matters of religious discrimination or inequality. The desire for an increased number of scholarship awardees across each of the local government wards in equity is recognised as a possible improvement that will require a commitment of more funds. This suggests that no LGA will have less than ten scholarship awardees, which doubles the current five scholarship awardees per LGA. As this creates more chances for effective inclusion, it does not foreclose the need to make the processes more open and transparent.

As for all the issues mentioned above, the scheme deserves a deliberate policy enhancement that will be conscious of FoRB, without compromising merit for sustainability. The government is obliged to respect, protect, and promote human rights of which FoRB is a part (Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief 2011). So, the state and local governments need to show interest in challenging perceptions and incidence of discrimination in order not to undermine the long-term vision of the scheme among other developmental interventions. If the government does not act decisively on such vital sociocultural issues, it could imply that the government allows the circumstances to encourage politicisation and majoritarian manifestations against the principles of FoRB, as enshrined in the ICCPR Declaration of 1966. Such a strategic policy review could also prevent any gap that could make the scheme unsustainable or stain the profile of Oyo State as a 'pace-setting' state.

To create more inclusive participation, as for standard scholarship programmes, the application for OYSLGSS must be open to all eligible

candidates through an institutionalised, accessible, and standardised application process, which is based on merit and equity, and put in place by the authorities. This would address issues of religious sentiment and other social exclusory perceptions regarding the scheme and other activities in the state. The transparency of the entire process must be established by making public the results of the ranking examination and indicating that scholarship awardees are based on merit, to prevent any action suspected to be shrouded in the present method of operation.

Religious fairness and equality in the scheme can be promoted through an institutionalised inclusive monitoring and evaluation system that allows non-governmental and non-religious watchdogs to act on manipulation or any abuse of the process. Education, specific awareness-raising about FoRB, and advocacy intervention are required as critical steps to encouraging FoRB in Oyo State to have an effect on the scheme's operations in the interest of sustainable development. It will also be worthwhile to investigate the discrimination processes by the majority religion and the fate of other religions in developmental participation in relation to FoRB, with possible intervention support for strategic FoRB education and advocacy.

Further, research needs to be encouraged and supported on LGAs where there is an unwritten norm that endorses traditional and public positions for particular religions and disenfranchises others, and also on mobilising support for FoRB advocacy and capacity development interventions in Oyo State.

Annexe 1 Questionnaires

Type A

This questionnaire is designed to effect candid responses of the stakeholders on the Social Inclusiveness and Sustainability of the Oyo State Local Governments' Scholarship Scheme domiciled in the First Technical University, Ibadan. It is exclusively for research purposes to be treated with utmost anonymity for confidentiality.

- 1 Title of the respondent: Mr Miss Mrs Others (specify) -----
- 2 Sex: Male Female
- 3 Current Academic Level: 300 200 100
- 4 Course of Study: -----
- 5 Local Govt. & State of Origin: -----
- 6 Religion Affiliation: Islam Christianity Traditionalism
 Others (Specify) -----
- 7 Age range: 15–24 years 25 years above
- 8 Are you aware of OSLGSS operating in First TechU? Yes No
- 9 If yes to (8) above, how did you get to know of OSLGSS?
 News Media Friends Politician Civil Servant
 Faith Organisation Others (specify) -----
- 10 Are you a scholarship awardee of OSLGSS? Yes No
- 11 Did you write any application to OSLGSS? Yes No
- 12 Did you participate in any exam to qualify for OSLGSS? Yes No
- 13 Did you get to know your score in the exam? Yes No
- 14 How were you informed of the final list of the scholarship?
 Internet/School Website Local Govt. Secretariat Politician
 Others (specify) -----
- 15 Which area do you notice a non-inclusion/inequality? Gender
 Religion physically challenged Others (specify) -----
- 16 Rate the freedom of religion in the scholarship scheme
 Very Low Low High Very High
- 17 Do you notice any non-indigenes of Oyo State benefiting the scholarship? Yes No
- 18 Can you say that the selection process was strictly on merit?
 Yes No
- 19 In your own view, are the scholarship awardees really indigent?
 Most Average Few
- 20 Which of these is highly represented in your department or level?
 Islam Christianity Traditionalism Others (Specify) -----

Type B

This questionnaire is designed to effect candid responses of the stakeholders on the Social Inclusiveness and Sustainability of the Oyo State Local Governments' Scholarship Scheme domiciled in the First Technical University, Ibadan. It is exclusively for research purposes to be treated with utmost anonymity for confidentiality.

- 1 Title of the respondent: Mr Mrs Others (specify) -----
- 2 Sex: Male Female
- 3 Your Highest Education qualification:
 Degree Diploma School Cert./Primary No Formal Education
- 4 Occupation: Civil Servant Farmer Petty Trader Artisan
Pensioner Contractor Other (Specify) -----
- 5 Do you participate in partisan politics? Yes No
- 6 Local Govt./State of Origin: -----
- 7 Religion Affiliation: Islam Christianity Traditionalism
 Others (Specify) -----
- 8 Are you aware of OSLGSS operating in First TechU? Yes No
- 9 If yes in to the above, how did you get to know of OSLGSS?
 News Media Friends Politician Civil Servant
 Faith Organisation Others (specify) -----
- 10 Has your child/ward tried to benefit from OSLGSS? Yes No
- 11 Did s/he write any application to OSLGSS? Yes No
- 12 Did s/he participate in any exam to qualify for OSLGSS? Yes No
- 13 Did you get to know his/her score in the exam? Yes No
- 14 How were you informed of final list of the scholarship?
 Internet/School Website Local Govt. Secretariat Politician
 Others (specify) -----
- 15 Which area do you notice a non-inclusion/inequality? Gender
 Religion physically challenged Others (specify) -----
- 16 Rate the freedom of religion in the scholarship scheme
 Very Low Low High Very High
- 17 Can you say that the selection process was strictly on merit?
 Yes No
- 18 In your own view, are the scholarship awardees really indigent?
 Most Average Few

Type C

This questionnaire is designed to effect candid responses of the stakeholders on the Social Inclusiveness and Sustainability of the Oyo State Local Governments' Scholarship Scheme domiciled in the First Technical University, Ibadan. It is exclusively for research to be treated with utmost anonymity for confidentiality.

- 1 Title of the respondent: Mr Mrs Others (specify) -----
- 2 Sex: Male Female
- 3 Your Designation -----
- 4 Religion Affiliation: Islam Christianity Traditionalism
 Others (Specify) -----
- 5 Which of these ministries are officially involved in the administration of the scheme?
 Education Local Govt. Information Social Welfare Youth
- 6 How is the scheme funded by the Local Governments?
 Allocations IGR
- 7 How open is the application to eligible candidates?
 Low fair High
- 8 Can you say that the selection process was strictly on merit?
 Yes No
- 9 Is the cut-off mark made public? Yes No
- 10 Who ratifies the final list?
 Tech-U State Government Local Govt. Other
- 11 How is the final list of the scholarship made known?
 Internet/School Website Local Govt. Secretariat Politician
 Others (specify) -----
- 12 So far which area do you notice a non-inclusion/inequality gap?
 Gender Religion Physically Challenged Indigents
 Others (specify) -----
- 13 Rate the freedom of religion in the scholarship scheme
 Very Low Low High Very High
- 14 Do you notice any non-indigenes of Oyo State applied for the scholarship? Yes No
- 15 Has any non-indigene of Oyo State benefited in the scheme?
 Yes No
- 16 In your own view, are the scholarship awardees really indigent?
 Most Average Few
- 17 What is the level of political influence on the selection process?
 Low High
- 18 In your assessment, which secondary school students have benefited most? Rural Sub-Urban Urban/City Outside Oyo State

Notes

- * This book has been produced as part of the Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development (CREID) programme, funded with UK aid from the UK government. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views or official policies of our funder or IDS. This is an Open Access book distributed under the terms of the **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence** (CC BY), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original authors and source are credited and any modifications or adaptations are indicated.
- 1 Olumide Adebimpe Aderounmu, Head Operations, Development Practice Academy (DEPRA), Abuja, Nigeria.
 - 2 Imposed by the 'Oro' priest through the palace of the traditional ruler of the community.
 - 3 Translation: *Emi mo ohun ti mo nso ni Ibadan South-East yio. Esin Musulumi ti Alaga wa nse ni o poju ninu awon omo ti won nmu. E wa ni ejo ko lowo ninu. A o le yo esin kuro.*
 - 4 Translation: *Bi ijoba ko ba yi ona ti won ngba yan awon akopa ninu eto yi i, ki won o wa ona ti ko fi ni ni owo esin ninu ladugbo wa yio, ko le tojo.*

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