WIVES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL IN NIGERIAN BARRACKS, 1905-1999: A SOCIO-ECONOMIC HISTORY.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the glory of God, my parents, beloved wife and children.

List of Selected Abbreviations

AWA	-	Army Wives Association
AWA	-	Airmen Wives Association
BLP	-	Better Life Programme
CO	-	Commanding Officer
DEPOWA	-	Defence and Police Officers' Wives Association
ECOMOG	-	Economic Community of West Africa Monitoring Group
FEAP	-	Family Economic Advancement Programme
FSP	-	Family Support Programme
ISO	-	Internal Security Operations
NAFOWA	-	Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association
NAE	-	National Archives Enugu
NAI	-	National Archives Ibadan
NAK	-	National Archives Kaduna
NCOs	-	Non Commissioned Officers
NAOWA	-	Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association
NOK	-	Next-of-kin
NOWA	-	Naval Officers' Wives Association
PKO	-	Peacekeeping Operation
PSOs	-	Peace Support Operations
RSM	-	Regimental Sergeant Major
SWA	-	Soldiers' Wives Association
WASA	-	West Africa Social Activity

WAFF - West African Frontier Force

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the history of wives of military personnel in Nigerian barracks from 1905-1999. It focuses specifically on the origins, political, economic, and social organisation of wives of military personnel in the barracks during the colonial and post-colonial periods. The work also highlights the burden of civil war and peacekeeping missions on wives of military personnel in Nigeria. Over the years women's participation in military camps did not only promote the social system but the general well-being of combatants. For instance, in pre-colonial Yoruba wars, women contributed effectively to the economy, politics and social life of the camps. This development has stimulated interest and generated debates among members of the public who have sought to understand the position, power, and influence of wives of military personnel in contemporary barracks. It is against this backdrop that this study focuses on wives of military personnel in Nigerian barracks. It examines the social identity, power relations and interdependence between wives and their military husbands. To illuminate our understanding, the work exploits Susan Moller Okin's liberal feminist approach of "Power as a Resource" and Talcott Parsons' *Theory of Social System*. The two theories are central to the analysis, especially in clarifying the role and contributions of wives of military personnel in the barracks. The study adopts an interdisciplinary approach by utilising information from cognate disciplines. It specifically relies on primary and secondary data collected from military formations, archives and Nigerian universities. It also exploited the advantage of documentary programmes and films for the insight they provide. The study demonstrates that some of the women had a stronghold not only in Officers' Wives Associations but in other aspects of military affairs. It also establishes that wives of military personnel have contributed to the peace of the nation by providing conducive and habitable environment for their spouses, since it is only a settled soldier that can secure his country. It further demonstrates that contrary to the views of some critics that wives of military personnel have no history worth studying; this study shows that the activities of wives of military personnel over the years did not only complement the efforts of their military husbands but promoted barracks culture and inter-group relations. It equally discovered that wives of military personnel have had distinct experiences over the years arising from their unique social environment; an understanding of their history presented in this work exposes an important section of Nigerian women and by extension gender historiography. The study therefore recommends that military authorities should establish welfare and juvenile departments for wives and dependants to complement the effort of military wives associations. Similarly, authorities should adequately cater for the needs of wives of military personnel before deployment of their husbands to mission areas and internal security operations to alleviate their sufferings. It is also important for military authorities to sensitize wives of military personnel through seminars and conferences with a view to re-positioning them in the new democratisation process.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

There are many neglected themes in Nigerian history; perhaps, only a few are as neglected as the role and contribution of wives of military personnel to the barracks system and national development in general. This study, therefore, is an attempt to explore the history of these women and contribute to the growing literature on women and gender studies.

The history of the Nigerian army can be traced to the many forces formed by the British in the second half of the nineteenth century to complement their conquest of the part of Africa now called Nigeria.[1] Available records indicate that Sir John Glover of the Royal Navy and Governor of Lagos, created one of these formidable forces in 1863 known as the "Glover's Hausas or Hausa Militia"[2] Prior to the emergence of the Hausa militia, the West India Regiment was in-charge of garrison duties in Lagos. As time progressed it became expedient for the constabulary to take over the responsibility from the West India Regiment as part of its reform.

The constabulary started with a population of 40 men which was later increased to 600 in October 1863.[3] It subsequently transformed into the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) as a result of external incursions and challenges of the time. Corroborating the view S.C.Ukpabi notes that "the West African Frontier Force, a child of circumstance came into existence in 1897 as a counter against the French during the critical period of the Anglo-French rivalry on

the Niger."[4] Thus, on November 8, 1897, Lord Frederick Lugard established his headquarters at Jebba and appointed Colonel James Willcox, Assistant Commandant.[5]

The West African Frontier Force later metamorphosed into the Nigerian Regiment in 1914. This was partly caused by a number of factors which include, the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Nigeria in January in 1914, the threat of the First World War and changes in the international system.

The Nigerian Regiment participated in the First and Second World Wars defending the nation and British interests. In 1960, the regiment changed its name to the Nigerian Army following the declaration of independence. This also led to the formation of the Nigerian Navy and the Nigerian Air Force. Since the 1960s, the Nigerian armed forces have witnessed astronomical changes in population, infrastructure, traditions, and culture. It has also participated in a number of peacekeeping operations (PKOs) within and outside Nigeria.

On the other hand, "barracks," refers to a military station or a group of buildings where soldiers and their dependants live and execute their daily functions. According to H.M.Lai "barracks could be seen as a pluralistic setting and a "melting pot" designed to accommodate combatants, non-combatants and a few civilians irrespective of background or ethnic affiliation."[6] In the United States of America as Morris Janowitz has shown, "military barracks is a world of its own and a relatively closed community where professional and residential life has been completely intermingled."[7] In the early years of the military force, soldiers live in tents and bush huts which were generally not conducive for the well-being of troops.[8] After much agitation, the construction of new barracks began in Zaria in 1904,[9] and later spread to Ibadan in Western Nigeria in 1927,[10] since then, Nigerian barracks has

undergone tremendous changes in architecture, layout and designs. Warfare in most traditional African societies was characterised by the establishment of camps which often transformed into permanent settlements. Records show that women played important role in male-dominated settlements, cooking for their husbands, providing sex, logistics, and engaging in the political and socio-economic life of the camp.

Women also participated in actual warfare, sometimes, leading combatants to the front line and occasionally demonstrating their invisibility before the enemies. For instance, the amazon soldiers of Dahomey were known to have fought with great courage in the Egba/Dahomey war of 1851.[11] Jacob U. Egharevba, also pointed out that Queen Idia (Iyoba) of Bini Kingdom, mother of Oba Esigie, was instrumental to the defeat of the Idah Armies in c.1515-1516.[12] In an exciting piece, Simon Ottenberg contends that "women played multiple roles in all of Africa's post-independence civil wars engaging the enemy as fighters, supplying food and goods to the military forces and providing entertainment for their fighters."[13]

The history of women in modern barracks in Nigeria began in 1905, following the approval of the Colonial Office for the inclusion of indigenous soldiers' wives in the community.[14] However; the coming of British officers' wives did not receive attention in the colonies until 1920 when the policy was ratified.[15] With the evolution of the Nigerian state, wives of military personnel became as important as their husbands since this group has helped them to rule the nation. Their presence also helped to strengthen their husbands during the civil war, peacekeeping mission and internal security operations. Even while some of their spouses indulged in heavy drinking, womanizing, and pool-betting, some of the women remained

homemakers and supportive housewives.[16] Since then, the role and influence of wives of military personnel had been complementary in the system.

They were also known to have initiated wide-ranging empowerment projects such as the Better Life Programme (BLP),[17] Family Support Programme (FSP) and Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) which enhanced the well-being of soldiers' wives and some rural women.[18] The activities of military wives associations have equally impacted on the barracks and the socio-economic life of women and dependants. Some "military wives" as Tim Hsia notes, also played active role not just in their spouses' decisions but also in decisions that affect their spouses' military unit."[19]

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, there has been a general lack of understanding of the activities of wives of military personnel in Nigerian barracks by the public in spite of their participation in governance and nation building. The increased role of non-governmental organisations, political activists, and the outcome of the United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing have also not attracted the attention of the populace to the contributions of women in the barracks. In recent times also, debates and conferences on the position of Nigerian women in politics and economy have equally underplayed the achievements of women in the barracks. This development has contributed to the assumption that wives of military personnel were idle and incapable of directing affairs either in the private or public sphere.

Since the emergence of wives of military personnel in the barracks, this group has remained invisible and overlooked in major debates on the experiences and plight of women in Nigeria.

The history of these women also is yet to be studied even though they were stakeholders in the military organisation, contributing effectively to the development of the home, politics, and socio-economic activities of the barracks. The lifestyle and leisure of these women were equally different from that of the larger society because of environment, traditions and values of military system.[20] Perhaps, it is for this reason that Maryam Babangida declared that some members of the public portray the life of a military wife as one of glamour, prestige and plenty.[21]

In the early years of the military, the barracks was seen as a masculine world where women had no part because they would interfere in their husbands' work or prevent them from travelling on official duties. [22] This notion as propagated by 'older officials' in the force[23] had its roots in the Victorian gender ideology of separate spheres.[24] This situation changed in the first and second decades of the twentieth century when indigenous soldiers' wives and their European counterparts were mandated to join their spouses in the colonies to forestall desertion of troops and homesickness.

Therefore, how did these women achieve social identity and inclusion in the barracks to create what Elizabeth Prevost called new space(s) of authority."[25] In the early years of the barracks, women were involved in domesticity and reproduction, cultivation of compound gardens, craft and food processing and livestock management. As the years progressed, some British officers' wives became active in the philanthropic and humanitarian activities of the barracks through women's associations such as, the Ladies Progressive Club, Ikoyi Club, and Corona Women's Club.[26] These gathering provided outlets through which they created spaces and social identity in the society.

The inter-war years also introduced radical changes, which did not only redraw but redefined women's roles and social identity in Nigerian barracks and some parts of the world. First, the period inspired women to move beyond the boundaries of traditional sex roles. Second, it led to the conscription of some European officers' wives in the colonies into the force where they assisted in military duties and secretarial functions.[27] Their involvement in military duties suggest the indispensability of women in a gendered space. It also explains the nature of relationship between military men and their wives in time of war and peace.

At Nigeria's independence, the Army Wives' Association (AWA), established in 1959, fell under the control of indigenous officers' wives and since then, the association had become a social identity and a rallying point for wives of military personnel in many respects. Immediately after independence, the association became more influential which led to the transformation from the Army Wives' Association to the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) in the 1960s.

The participation of wives of military men in governance in the 1980s and 1990s improved the image of wives of military personnel in public space. With the establishment of Better Life Programme and Family Support Programme, wives of military personnel created an elaborate social relationship within and outside the community. The study notes that this gender group succeeded because of barracks culture and conventions, especially, "the notion that the rank of a husband is the rank of his wife if not one step ahead."[28] However, these social achievements have been overlooked because of societal perception and stereotypes. This development has become worrisome thereby compelling a study of "Wives of Military Personnel in Nigerian Barracks 1905-1999: A Socio-Economic History."

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this research is to examine the history of wives of military personnel in Nigerian barracks in colonial and post-colonial periods. Since the emergence of wives of military personnel in the barracks, their role and contributions have remained obscure and underplayed in major discourse on the experiences of Nigerian women. This reality underscores the importance of our study. Specific objectives of the study are to:

(1) Explore the nature and composition of the Nigerian military barracks over the period.

(2) Investigate the political, economic and social life of wives of military personnel in colonial barracks

(3) Examine the role of wives of military personnel in the political, economic and social activities of the barracks after independence.

(4) Evaluate the contributions of Military Wives' Associations (NAOWA/NAFOWA/NOWA) to the development of the barracks.

(5) Highlight the nature and impact of Nigerian Civil War, coup d'état, and peacekeeping missions on wives of military personnel.

Significance of the study

The study is a contribution to women and gender studies in Nigeria. It is the first major work on wives of military personnel in Nigeria, to the best of our knowledge no detailed study has been conducted on the socio-economic and political culture of wives of military personnel in Nigeria. This study is important contrary to the commonly held view that wives of military personnel had no past or history worth studying because their activities centred on domesticity and reproduction. Specific significance of the study includes the following:

(1) It brings to the fore some of the influences, which wives have had on soldiers, which is not yet in the public domain.

(2) It highlights the development efforts of Military Wives' Associations (NAOWA/NAFOWA/NOWA) within and outside the barracks environment.

(3) It will assist the government in repositioning wives of military personnel in the new democratisation process.

(4) It will contribute to the development of knowledge in the field of women and gender studies.

(5) It will assist the authorities in developing a programme of action for dependants, particularly in the area of capacity building and human development.

(6) It will be beneficial to scholars, researchers and the general public.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study spans a period of ninety-four years, from 1905 to 1999. The commencement date is unique because it was the year the Colonial Office in London through the West African Frontier Force mandated all African troops to bring their wives into the barracks to avoid desertion, homesickness as well as improve the quality of food consumed.[29]

The terminal date is significant because it marked the end of a long military era in Nigeria and the beginning of a new democratic civilian government under President Olusegun Obasanjo, after a short-lived civilian administration of 1979-1983. The terminal date is also remarkable because it was the year the Armed Forces Decree 105 known as the Armed Forces Act was incorporated into the Nigerian Constitution. The period of the research is convenient because it captures important episodes and contributions of wives of military personnel to national development.

Area of Study: The study covers the military formations located in Kaduna, Lagos and Enugu. The choice of these formations is because of their common features. First, Kaduna developed in dual capacity as a garrison town and the capital city of Northern Nigeria from 1917 after the capital had been transferred from Lokoja to Jebba and Zungeru respectively. Kaduna has the greatest concentration of military installations and troops in Nigeria. These include; the Nigerian Defence Academy, Air Force Training Centre and Ordnance Depot, among others.[30] Apart from being the capital city of Northern Nigeria, it later assumed a cosmopolitan status as an industrial and commercial centre from about 1957. It also became the home of some retired and serving military generals and the emergent bourgeois class informally known as the Kaduna Mafia.

Enugu became the headquarters of Eastern provinces from the discovery of coal in 1927 when the capital was transferred from Calabar. With the introduction of regionalism by Arthur Richards (1943-47), Enugu became the capital of Eastern Region and remained so till 1967 when new states were created. It is also a commercial coal state and a home for all Igbo people at home and abroad especially retired military officers, Judges and business magnates. It has a good number of military barracks similar to Kaduna, as most of the regional military installations of the Army and Air Force are located in the state. It is today the capital of Enugu State.

Lagos became a crown colony in 1861. However, the series of events in its formative years prompted its annexation by the British Government. Because of its strategic location, a decision was made to raise a military force to supplement the company of the West Indian Regiment, which then constituted its garrison. Hence, a dispatch by Stanhope Freeman, Governor of the British West African Possessions resident in Sierra-Leone was made to the Duke of Newcastle

dated 9th October, 1862.[31] This development led to the establishment of the "Glover's Hausas"[32] which subsequently merged with the Lagos Constabulary.

In 1914 Lagos became the capital of Nigeria following the amalgamation of the North and South by the British. By this status, Lagos became the operational headquarters of all the military formations in the country with a concentration of military installations, training grounds and barracks for the Army, the Navy and the Air Force scattered all over the state. However, Lagos ceased to be the operational headquarters of the Armed Forces in 1990 following the transfer of the seat of government to Abuja. In conclusion, the choice of the three principal capitals is important because they have the major military formations in the country.

Research Questions

Research questions are meant to guide researchers in the interpretation and analysis of the data. Therefore this study is essentially guided by the following questions:

(1) What was the nature and composition of Nigerian military barracks over the period?

(2) To what extent were wives of military personnel involved in the political, economic, and social life of colonial barracks?

(3) What role did wives of military personnel play in the political, economic and social activities of the barracks after independence?

(4) What were the contributions of Military Wives' Associations (NAOWA/NAFOWA/ NOWA to the development of the barracks and bases?

(5) To what extent were wives of military personnel affected by the Nigerian Civil War, coup d'état and peacekeeping missions?

Operational Definition of Terms

It is important to provide a working definition of the key terms that are germane to this study. This becomes necessary in view of the fact that some of them are sometimes contested and controversial

Barracks – Refers to a group of building where soldiers and their families live. It is also a location for military activities.

Cantonments - Refers to military establishment containing many barracks, formations and garrisons.

Barracks Culture - The term as used in this study refers to the totality of the way of life of military personnel, wives and civilians living in the barracks.

Wives of military personnel - Refers to women married to officers and other ranks in the force resident in the barracks who are non-arms bearers but dependants.

Ex-soldiers' wives – Means officers and non-commissioned officers' wives whose spouses were discharged or retired from service.

Servicewomen – These are women in military service of the army, Navy and Air Force.

Mess – This is a place of relaxation and social activities for officers and other ranks in the barracks. It also serves as an accommodation for newly posted personnel.

Magajiya - This is an Hausa word referring to women representatives of the non-commissioned officers' wives.

***Mammy* Markets** – These are markets located in military barracks for commercial activities of residents.

Theoretical Framework

This is a study of women's history on the one hand and an aspect of military history on the other. Thus, as Peter Burke declares: "Without the combination of history and theory we are

unlikely to understand either the past or the present."[33] Therefore, the study exploits two theories, Susan Moller Okin's Liberal Feminist Approach of "Power as a Resource"[34] and Talcott Parsons' *Theory of Social System.*[35]

The conception of "Power as a Resource" is contained in Okin's exciting work entitled *Justice, Gender and the Family.* Her notion of power as a resource is a critique of modern theories of justice. The theory explains that those who conceptualize power as a resource understand it as a positive social good that is unequally distributed among women and men. She also argues that the contemporary gender-structured family unjustly distributes the benefits and burdens of familial life among husbands and wives. Okin includes power on her list of benefits which she calls "critical social goods."

According to her, "when we look seriously at the distribution between husbands and wives of such critical social goods as work (paid and unpaid), power, prestige, self-esteem, opportunities for self-development, and both physical and economic security, we find socially constructed inequalities between them, right down the list."[36] The goal therefore is to redistribute this resource in a more equitable way so that women will have power equal to men.

However, Okin's theory has been criticized by some scholars including Iris Marion Young, who argued that this model might be appropriate for some forms of domination.[37] Despite the criticisms, the "theory of power as a resource" offers a good theoretical explanation to this study, especially in understanding the social relations and interdependence between military men and their wives, on the one hand, and the power of some of these women to influence decisions, postings, and promotions in service politics. Since the position of wives of military personnel were that of dependants there could be no equality between military men and their

spouses in the barracks. Similarly, Okin's idea on freedom and gender neutrality cannot apply to this group because of military traditions and values, hence, Military Wives' Associations have concentrated their efforts in the empowerment programme of women in the barracks and bases.

On the other hand, Parsons asserts that a *social system* consists of

> a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect, actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the optimization of gratification and whose relation to their situations including each other is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols.[38]

Parsons derived his four concepts from the idea that there are certain fundamental things that must be done in every social system, large or small (that is, in every group, every organisation, every country) if it is to endure.[39] The four major needs are adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and pattern maintenance, or as Parsons later renamed it, latent pattern maintenance – tension management. He viewed the society or the social system as a large square that can be divided into four equal parts. These parts are the four functional system problems represented by the letters 'AGIL'[40]

Figure 1: **Parsons' Four Functional Systems**

A — adaptation

G — goal attainment

Economic	Political
Educational Religious Family	Legal

L — latent pattern maintenance – tension management

I — integration

Source: Ruth A. Wallace and Alison Wolf, *Contemporary Sociological Theory: Expanding the Classical Tradition* (U.S.A: Pearson Prentice Hall Ltd, 2006), 38.

According to Parsons, “actor” can be interpreted as individual or collective, depending upon the focus of interest. That the military conforms to this definition requires no detailed explanation because the military consists of a large number of people (officers, warrant officers, sergeants, corporals, civilian employees and dependants) who function as individuals as well as collective actors (units, offices, families). The base of operations - the environment is usually a specific military installation and is always defined, though in general terms, in military regulations.

The activity of each actor varies but it is usually related to achieving organisational and, simultaneously, personal goals, such as assuring the country’s defence, developing proficiency as a man-machine weapon, living as a family, assuring one’s masculinity by participating in “manly” pursuits, or completing a selective service obligation “optimization of gratification.” An obvious aspect of the military is its ordering through the use of symbols such as uniforms, insignia, hierarchical structure, and regulations which seem to cover all possible situations and contingencies.

Two characteristics of systems, implicit in Parsons’ definition, require elaboration because of their significance to this study. The first characteristic has to do with the identification of a system and its interrelationships with its component parts. The military in this study is viewed as a system in relation to which the military family functions as a sub-system. While the family has considerable autonomy, it neither becomes nor ceases to be a military family outside of the definition established by the military. The value of the military to the family is apparent when considered in employer-employee terms. The military family can be considered a part of armed forces “maintenance” subsystem. Its major purposes in that role are to meet the needs of the soldier-husband/father in the areas of affection, heterosexual expression, and parenthood, while he is simultaneously a member of the military. As a concept, the military family can also be

viewed as a part of the "supportive" sub-system, for without the option of family life while serving within the system, fewer individuals would find the prospects of a military career appealing.

The *Theory of Social System* has been utilised in various studies. Notable among these were: N.W. Bell and E. F.Vogel's "Towards a Framework for the Functional Analysis of Family Behaviour."[41] F. Montalvo's "Family Separation in the Army: A Study of the Problem Encountered and the Caretaking Resources Used by Career Army Families Undergoing Military Separation"[42] and Samuel I. Dixon's *Working with People in Crises: Theory and Practice*,[43] to mention but a few.

In some of the works, the authors suggest that any social system must solve certain functional problems concerned with adaptation, goal gratification, integration, and pattern-maintenance of the system. For each problem, an exchange between a "sub-system of society" and the family is suggested.[44] These can be considered as assets and liabilities, advantages and disadvantages, or stresses and opportunities. The stresses include periodic residential moves, accommodation to different and varying social sub-cultural, economic, and physical living conditions and separation of husband and father from the family for extended periods.[45]

Also embedded in Parsons' social system is the principle of 'social stratification.' The theory explains that a certain degree of order and stability is essential for the operation of social systems. According to Parsons, order, stability and cooperation in society are based on value consensus, that is, a general agreement by members of society concerning what is good and worthwhile. Therefore if values exist, then it follows that individuals will be evaluated and placed in some form of rank order. This simply means that those who perform successfully in

terms of society's values will be ranked highly and they will be likely to earn a variety of rewards and prestige.[46]

Parsons also contends that social stratification is both inevitable and functional for society. It is inevitable because it derives from shared values which are a necessary part of all social systems. At the same time, it is functional because it serves to integrate various groups in society.[47] Though, Parsons' theory has been criticised by Melvin Tumin, who questioned the adequacy of the measurement of the functional importance of positions. "He also argued that some labour force of unskilled workmen is as important and as indispensable to the factory as some labour force."[48] In spite of the criticisms, the theory of social stratification offers a good theoretical understanding of military organisation. This is because the military profession is a highly stratified system with ranks, protocols and precedence. It is also dictated by orders, traditions, ethics and values.

The power and influence that some wives of military personnel wielded can be explained within the framework of a "supportive" sub-system. Even though the barracks system maintains certain conventions, those in the system understood how to communicate their desire without infringing on the social system. These theories can assist us to understand the interaction of gender, power and status in the barracks. It will also sharpen our knowledge on why and how power and prestige are unevenly distributed between officers and other ranks on the one hand, and officers' wives and wives of other ranks on the other.

Literature Review

The study adopts a thematic approach in the review of relevant literature and these are categorised into three broad headings. The first category discusses the social origins and

development of the Nigerian military since 1863. The second explores the role and contributions of wives of military personnel in both colonial and post-colonial periods as well as the memoirs of some European and indigenous wives. While the third comprises generalised works on women and gender studies.

Literature on the Origins and Development of the Nigerian Military

The literature in the first category include: H.M Kirk-Greene's "A Preliminary Note on New Sources for Nigerian Military,"[49] S.C Ukpabi's "The Origins of the West African Frontier Force,"[50] *The History of the Nigerian Army 1863*-1994,[51] and N. J. Miner's *The Nigerian Army 1956*-1966,[52] The authors provide illuminating themes as stated in the titles of their works. These works are certainly useful to this study because they explore the origins and development of the constabulary force up till the evolution of the Nigerian Army. Kirk-Greene notes that colonial barracks were located in strategic areas in the country, but more significant in his analysis was the fact that some were created to check the incursions of the rival French colonial imperialists as well as provide internal security against the hostility of the local people. Such military barracks were located in Ilorin, Jebba, Lokoja, Zaria, Bida, Calabar, Kano, Zaria, Zungeru, Enugu, Sapele, and Asaba among others.

Ukpabi's effort corroborates the above claim but emphasizes that the history of Northern Nigeria from 1897-1906 could be written in terms of the West African Frontier Force, while the Niger Coast Protectorate Force otherwise known as the Oil Rivers Irregulars was raised in 1892 by Sir Ralph Moor. However, because of its brutality to friends and foes alike it was locally known as the forty thieves. This idea was taken further in the detailed study of the Nigeria Army entitled, *The History of the Nigerian Army 1863-1994* which provides an authoritative account of the origins of the barracks and development of the Nigerian Army up till 1994.

Apart from exploring the early beginning and formative years of the military, the work also highlights the role of the Nigerian Army in international peacekeeping operations since the 1960s.

Discussing the state of the Nigerian military from 1956-1966, N.J. Miner underscores the historical development and the series of military transformation in the country since the period. The author also discusses the factors that contributed to the Nigerian civil war and its attendant effects on the nation. However, as informative as these works are, the authors ignored the political and socio-cultural activities of wives of military personnel in the community, which is the focus of this study.

Other works in the first category include that of Samson C. Ukpabi's "Military Recruitment and Social Mobility in Nineteenth Century British West Africa,"[53] F. D. Lugard's *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical* Africa,[54] A. Haywood and F.A.S. Clarke's *The History of the Royal West Africa Frontier Force,* [55] and L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan's *The Rulers of British Africa 1870-1914.* [56] These are efforts that sharpened our understanding of the early years of the military force and the organisation of wives of military personnel in Nigeria. Ukpabi and Lugard's works appear distinct in the sense that while Ukpabi establishes the events that led to the emergence of indigenous wives of military personnel in the barracks in 1905, Lugard's effort provides a rich study on the debate that led to the evolution of European wives in the barracks in 1920. According to the author, the policy stipulates that "married life should be the rule rather than the exception in the Crown colonies and protectorates."[57]

Haywood and Clarke's "Between the Wars" and Gann and Duignan's "Military Organisation and Campaigns" are illuminating chapters in their separate works that generate a lot of

information useful to this study. The authors painstakingly underline the socio-political organisation of women in the barracks. They also observe that "all African troops, except recruits, had 'wives' in barracks who cooked for their lords and kept the huts and lines clean. Each company had a head-woman called the *magajyia*; they wore a sergeant's red sash in the north while in Southern Nigeria, a khaki drill jacket with Sergeant's stripes."[58]

Extending the discourse, Gann and Duignan underscore the negative image of wives of military personnel which they trace to the initial conception of some British officers who contend that military barracks were 'masculine domain' and no place for women. The negative image of women according to the authors was heightened by myths, and works of literature such as the classic works of Joyce Cary titled, *Mister* Johnson, [59] E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*,[60] and George Orwell's *Burmese Days*,[61] to mention but a few. These works portray wives of military personnel as high-handed individuals and unwelcome group in a male-centred world. These efforts are central to this study because they provide useful guide on the disposition of wives of military personnel in the colonies.

Selected Literature and Memoirs on the Activities of European Wives

Literature in the second category which make interesting review because of their rich insight on the role and contributions of wives of military personnel in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria include: Helen Callaway's *Gender, Culture and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria*,[62] Bryan Sharwood Smith's "*But Always As Friends" Northern Nigeria and the Cameroons, 1921*-1957,[63] Constance Larymore's *A Resident's Wife in Nigeria*,[64] Alan Burns' *Colonial Civil Servant*,[65] and R. D. Pearce's "Violet Bourdillon : Colonial Governor's Wife."[66] The interesting aspect of these studies lies in the fact that most of the authors were on ground documenting the events as eyewitnesses.

Beginning with Callaway's effort, which examines the theme stated in her work, she emphasises why women were restricted in the colonies and protectorates at the early stage of the force because the very "Old Coasters" perceived British wives of military personnel as intruders in a man's country. The work also discusses the imperial culture in Nigeria as well as the role of wives in the career of their spouses. Though the work covers lot of grounds, yet, it glossed over the social activities of wives of indigenous soldiers and their relationship with British officers' wives.

Smith's work also highlights the exploits of British colonial officers in the colony. The aspect that relates to this study is the chapter on 'The War Years 1939-1944." This is informative because it deals with the cultural activities of indigenous people and the disposition of some European wives to the local inhabitants. Smith further encapsulates the role of wives of military personnel in World War II thereby corroborating the views of Callaway stated above. The work also discusses the leisure and pleasure of European wives in horse riding, durbars, birthday parties, West Africa Social Activities (WASA), and Social calls, among others.

Larymore, on the other hand, reveals in detail the difficulties encountered by European wives in the early years of the barracks in Lokoja, Jebba and Zungeru. The author explains the difficulties in the way of wives of military personnel accompanying their husbands to distant stations, especially, the effect of weather and climate on European women as well as the attack of wild animals in the barracks. This memoir captures the activities of wives of military personnel in gardening, animal husbandry and recreation. The work is particularly useful because it sheds lights on the nature of markets within the environs.

Burns' work highlights the dilemma of some European wives who joined their spouses in the early years of the colonies without approval. The work also encapsulates the indifference and hostility of British military officers to their plight. The chapter on "Nigeria" is germane to the study because it corroborates most of the information contained in the works of Helen Callaway, especially, the reasons behind the initial rejection of women in colonial barracks as well as other gender snobbery. He further underscores the series of attempt by wives of military personnel to form women association in the colonies, since women were rejected out-right in *Lagos Club* except *Ikoyi Club*. The author notes that approval was later granted for the establishment of *Women Corona Club* in Nigeria.

The interesting aspect of the work is that it affirms that the activities of wives of military personnel in colonial Nigeria were conspicuous in both the private and public domain. For instance, Burns stresses that Lady Clifford saw to the refurbishing of Government House, which was something like a barn when she arrived and the style of entertainment at Government House was much improved. Similarly, Lady Cameron did most of the housekeeping, making it possible for Sir Donald Cameron to depend very little on his private secretary.

Pearce's effort is also illuminating because it brought to the fore the contributions of Violet Bourdillon to Nigeria. At the public sphere, she endeared for her constructive interest in the welfare of women and children in the colony. This was demonstrated when she visited the Emir's harem in Zaria, talking in Arabic with the Alkali to the delight of everyone present. Apart from being a registered member of other organisations here in Nigeria, she was an active member of the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA). Her personality became profound when she hosted the Lagos market women and danced with them.

In politics, Lady Bourdillon was popular for taking command of protocols in one of their visits to Niger Province in January 1939 when her husband was running temperature forcing him to retire to bed. The information generated in this literature no doubt is useful to the understanding of the study. However, the foregoing analysis explains that women participated meaningfully in the military formations and their experiences were significant to the growth and development of the community. The limitation in these studies was the inability of the authors to explore the social division between British officers' wives and wives of other ranks in the barracks. The other shortcoming in the works was the inability to discuss the involvement of soldiers' wives in the affairs of the barracks as contained in the works of Gann and Duignan, and Haywood and Clarke mentioned above.

Contemporary Memoirs Written by Indigenous Wives of Military Personnel

Other works in the second category include: Maryam Babangida's memoir titled *The Home Front*: *Nigerian Army Officers and their Wives*,[67] Mariam Rukevwe Agisogu, *The Toughest Job in the Armed Forces*,[68] and Oluremi Obasanjo's *Bitter Sweet, My Life with Obasanjo*.[69] These studies deal with personal experiences of these women and the challenges of environment and adjustment.

Babangida's effort discusses among others the life of an officer's wife in the barracks, marriage protocols and courtesies among others. She emphasises that her tenure as the president of the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) gave her a deeper understanding into the problems faced by officers' wives and women in general. The chapter on "The Pains and Glamour" deals with the harrowing experience of Army officers' wives during wartime and conflict situations.

It also explores the role of feminine touch on the stern-faced military officers. However, Babangida argues that it is also interesting to know that some women plead often times with their husbands not to go to war front or take part in coups. On the social sphere, the author highlights the utility of Army Officers' Mess, which she called "officers' second home" and the series of social engagement in which officers and wives participate as members of a community.

Agisogu's memoir discusses the challenges and dilemma of a military wife. As a soldier's daughter and an officer's wife, her wealth of experience provided her the advantage to look at issues affecting wives in the barracks. The author argues that the toughest job in the armed forces was not how to plan and win a battle but how well the home front fared. The chapters are not only illuminating but also concise, beginning with "The Family," "The home front," and "Don't Take Your Marriage for Granted" are rich exhortation to wives of military personnel. Despite this insight on how military community could be effectively managed and harmonious, the work ignored the role of Officers' Wives Associations in national development as well as the poverty alleviation programme of the community, which are meaningful to this study.

Oluremi Obasanjo's memoir explores in detail the author's personal encounter within and outside the barracks. It also underlines the challenges of marriage in a polygamous setting. The author further paints a portrait of violence and abuse against wives of military personnel by their spouses on the one hand and the neglect of their children's welfare on the other. One major contribution of these works is the insight on the role of women in military organisation. They also succeeded in bringing to the fore the social interaction and the dilemma of an officer's wife in the discharge of her duty.

These works are germane to this study because the authors underscore their personal experiences as wives of military personnel and attempt to invalidate some assumptions by the civilians. However, useful as these works are, they underplay the various ways through which wives of military personnel could be empowered or be self-reliant in a democratic environment. Similarly, these efforts do not elaborate on the institutions that promote friendship and cooperation among wives of personnel and their civilian counterparts, which this study intends to explore.

Morris Janowitz's work titled "Style of Life in the Military"[70] is a lucid exposition of the professional soldiers and their families. The author argues that the military setting is a relatively closed community where professional and residential life has been completely intermingled. The traditional military community, he observes, moulded family life to the requirements of the profession; hence, the lives of officers' wives were consciously involved in the careers of their husbands. Janowitz affirms that wives of military personnel had been involved in the various layers of barracks culture, such as the transmission of military tradition to the new brides in the community and occasional interference in the politics of the barracks.

Another valuable effort is Hilary Callan's article titled, "The Premiss of Dedication: Notes towards an Ethnography of Diplomats' Wives."[71] The author discusses the position of wives who accompanied their spouses to foreign missions and the attendant challenges of protocol and identity. The work is a useful guide because it exposes the position of wives who accompany their spouses on Foreign Service. Callan also examines the contradictions of rank, status and privileges of wives in mission areas.

Generalised Works on Women and Gender Studies

The third category of works include: Lai Olurode's edited work titled *Women and Social Change in Nigeria,*[72] Michael Kevane's *Women and Development in Africa: How Gender Works,*[73] Lynne Brydon and Sylvia Chant's *Women in the Third World: Gender issues in Rural and Urban Areas,*[74] and April A. Gordon and Donald Gordon's edited work *Understanding Contemporary Africa.*[75] Basically examine contemporary issues on gender and social relations which is meaningful to the study.

Olurode's edited work is a contribution on gender, power and social change in Nigeria. The authors affirm that the reason why women were restricted to the background of social change is not necessarily because of biologically established inferiority but because of social prejudice. The work also identifies the various activities of women and the attendant perception of gender category in productive economic life.

Kevane's effort epitomizes some of the arguments pointed out in Olurode's edited work. He encapsulates the nature and impact of underdevelopment in Africa. The work further underscores some of the factors responsible for women's marginalization in the economy such as, land tenure system, patriarchy, and lack of collateral for loans. Similarly, Lynne Brydon and Sylvia Chants' effort cogently explore women's roles and status in contemporary developing world. The authors focused on four major themes which are illuminating to the study - gender and household, reproduction, production and policy as well as migration. These works are germane to the study because they provide deeper understanding of gender and household as well as contemporary debates on women's study.

Other works in this category include: Fatile J. Olufemi's "Women and National Development,"[76] Jane Guyer's "Female Farming in Anthropology and African History"[77] Eno Blankson Ikpe's "Compound Gardens in Ibibio Food Culture and Economy 1850-2000,"[78] and Remi Adeyemo's "Women in Rural Areas: A Case Study of Southwestern Nigeria"[79] and C.U.Okoye and M.O. Ijere's "Role of the Better Life Programme in National Development"[80] These works are significant because they examine cogent but related themes, particularly, on the contributions of Nigerian women in the informal and formal spheres.

On his part, Olufemi explains the critical areas of women's productive life and the factors that inhibit them from realizing their objectives. To achieve visible participation in the economy, the author suggests a number of factors that could turn around the development of the nation through womenfolk. These include education, access to the factors of production as well as participation in politics. Writing in the same vein, Guyer underlines the role of female farmers among the Beti speaking peoples of Cameroon, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. The work provides an understanding on the sexual division of labour between men and women. Above all, it offers the researcher penetrating insight into the nature of female farming in the barracks.

Related to the above is Ikpe's "Compound Gardens in Ibibio Food Culture and Economy 1850-2000." The work traces the origins, nature and impact of compound gardens on Ibibio society. It discusses among others the content and nutritional value of the crops as well as the commercial benefits to the people. Adeyemo's effort on the other hand, investigates the activities of women in rural areas. She observes that in the rural space, trading, farming, and related activities constitute the major pre-occupation of the labour force. Corroborating the views of Guyer, the author notes that women constitute a majority of the farming population, and were also engaged in dyeing, weaving and handcrafts.

The work is informative despite its shortcomings. But more importantly is the revelation that women's activity in farming had its root in the rural areas.

C.U.Okoye and M.O. Ijere's work explore in detail the objectives of the Better Life Programme which include among others: to encourage and stimulate rural women towards improving their standards of living and to inculcate the spirit of self-development, politics and economy. The work is useful a guide to the study, especially in the analysis of wives of military personnel and national development. The limitation in these works lies in the fact that the authors do not discuss the impact of these programmes on wives of military personnel, which this study intends to highlight. Nevertheless, the works are meaningful in that they suggest significant steps to the empowerment of wives of military personnel in Nigeria.

Finally, Oyeniyi Bukola Adeyemi's "From Liberia with Love: Officers' Wives Confronting HIV/AIDS"[81] is an exciting work which examines three different but mutually related issues. The first has to do with the initial reactions of wives of ECOMOG soldiers who returned from mission with HIV/AIDS, the second deals with people's perception of the pandemic disease and finally, the various strategies adopted by women to overcome the challenges in the face of official neglect. The work is highly informative because it touches on some controversial but hidden events in the military.

Research Methodology

Women's and gender history is an emerging sub-discipline within the larger discipline of history. Thus, the methodology of studying this aspect of history will continue to develop as more doctoral theses are devoted to this study area. In filling this gap, therefore, the study

adopts an inter-disciplinary approach; first, it employs the historical method of data collection, analysis and interpretation from primary and secondary sources.

The primary sources include archival materials obtained from military archives in Ikeja Cantonment, Lagos. The study also benefited from information gathered from national archives in Kaduna (NAK), Ibadan (NAI) and Enugu (NAE) respectively. Materials obtained from these places were analysed and interpreted with a view to clarifying and complementing information from oral interviews and documentary evidence.

The study also profited from oral evidence collected through structured interviews from respondents (a) wives of military personnel and dependants (b) civilian men and women who lived or worked in the barracks (c) serving and retired military personnel in both colonial and post-colonial barracks. The reliance on oral evidence arose from the dearth of documentary evidence on the activities of wives of military personnel in the post-World War II period and early years of 1970s. Above all, it provides valuable clue that complements other sources and enriches the work.

The study generated information from a pool of secondary sources, including newspapers, magazines, bulletins and other related documents especially (in-house publications of military units) such as *The New Soja magazine, Nigerian Defence magazine, Nigerian Airman magazine, The Sailor magazine, and Part I and Part II Orders.* These documents were mined for purposes of verifying existing data. Most of the information was obtained from military libraries and training institutions such as, the Nigerian Air Force Library, Lagos, Nigerian Army Library, Ikeja Cantonment, Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre Library, Oshodi, and Nigerian Defence Academy Library, Kaduna State. Others include, University of

Lagos, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nigerian Army Education Corps and School (NAECS) and Directorate of Army Public Relations, Lagos.

The researcher equally utilised the memoirs of wives of European officers and those of their Nigerian counterparts for the invaluable information they contain on the lives of wives of military personnel. The study also exploited the advantage of films, particularly, the films on United States Army wives titled "*Army Wives Seasons* 1-6" based on the book *Under the Sabers*: *The Unwritten Codes of Army Wives* by Tanya Biank. The film explores the lives of four army wives, one army husband, and their families at fictional Fort Marshall Naval Base in South Carolina. The films are useful because they help in reconciling grey areas in the activities of wives of military personnel in Nigeria.

Similarly, the researcher benefited from discussions and documentaries on radio and television relating to the empowerment of Nigerian women over the time. The study is also enriched through photographs, calendars, and albums of Officers' Wives Associations placed in their Secretariats, which corroborated most of their activities within and outside the barracks. More importantly was the privilege of personal and participant observation of the researcher, who lived and worked in strategic departments of the military for two decades. This privilege provided enormous advantage in the fieldwork locations.

Secondary sources were also utilised in this study consisting mainly of books, journal articles, theses, dissertations, monographs and other unpublished works. In the analysis and interpretation of data, the study incorporated concepts from cognate disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, English literature, and political science, which helped in explaining and defining the social system, political and economic organisations as well as images of wives

of military personnel over the time. The fieldwork was conducted in military barracks in Lagos, Enugu and Kaduna. This also assisted the researcher in clarifying information obtained from other sources.

Conclusion

The literature review as categorised in this section offers a lot of advantage to this study. This is because it provides information uncommon to other sources. It also helped in clarifying and substantiating information obtained from the archives relating to the origins, economic and political development of wives of military personnel during the colonial and post-colonial periods. These studies equally yeilded information on the social and religious life of wives of military personnel and by extension their involvement in wars.

The study indicates that most of the works on Nigerian military were written by men, thus the activities of women were either sketchy or at the periphery. Consequently, the study relied extensively on memoirs of European wives and their Nigerian counterparts in colonial and post-colonial periods. Though literature on women and gender studies are inexhaustible, these works are a mine of information on the experiences of wives of military personnel in Nigeria. Indeed, women's history is an emerging sub-discipline of history, as more academic research are devoted to this area of scholarship, more works will continue to be discovered and explored.

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CHAPTER TWO

EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIAN MILITARY AND AN OVERVIEW OF MILITARY BARRACKS 1863-1999.

Introduction

This chapter examines the origins and development of the Nigerian military since 1863. It also discusses the evolution of modern barracks and the nature of traditional camps in pre-colonial period. Additionally, it considers the role of the Nigerian Armed forces in peace support operations since independence. Finally, the chapter explores the composition of barracks inhabitants and the population of wives of military personnel. A discourse on Nigerian Barracks is imperative because it has remained a changing and dynamic environment both in infrastructure and composition. It has also been the locus of politics, economy, and social life of wives of military personnel in Nigeria. To illuminate our understanding of this section, it is necessary to discuss in detail the origins of the Nigerian armed forces because of the series of transformation it has undergone.

The Origin of the Nigerian Armed Forces

The evolution of Nigerian armed forces, according to Mohammadu Ribadu, as quoted by A.H.M. Kirk-Greene:

> Is traced through the Hausa Militia (1863), the Royal Niger Constabulary (1893), the West African Frontier Force (1897), the Northern and Southern Nigeria Regiments (1900), the Nigeria Regiment (1914), The Royal West African Frontier Force (1928), the Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment and the Nigerian Military Forces (1956), the Royal Nigerian Military Forces (1959) and Army (1960) down to the Nigeria Army (1963).[1]

The Nigerian military force had its humble beginning in the nineteenth century when European imperialism in Africa was at its zenith. The administrative changes and challenges in the force at different times in the history of the country contributed to its transformation

and adjustment. These changes were also caused by reactions and responses in the international or world system, especially the First and Second World Wars. The history of the Nigerian military in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries revolved around the West India Regiment, the Glover Hausas, the West African Frontier Force, the Nigerian Regiments, Queens Own Nigerian Regiment, Royal Nigerian Army, Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy and the Nigerian Air Force.

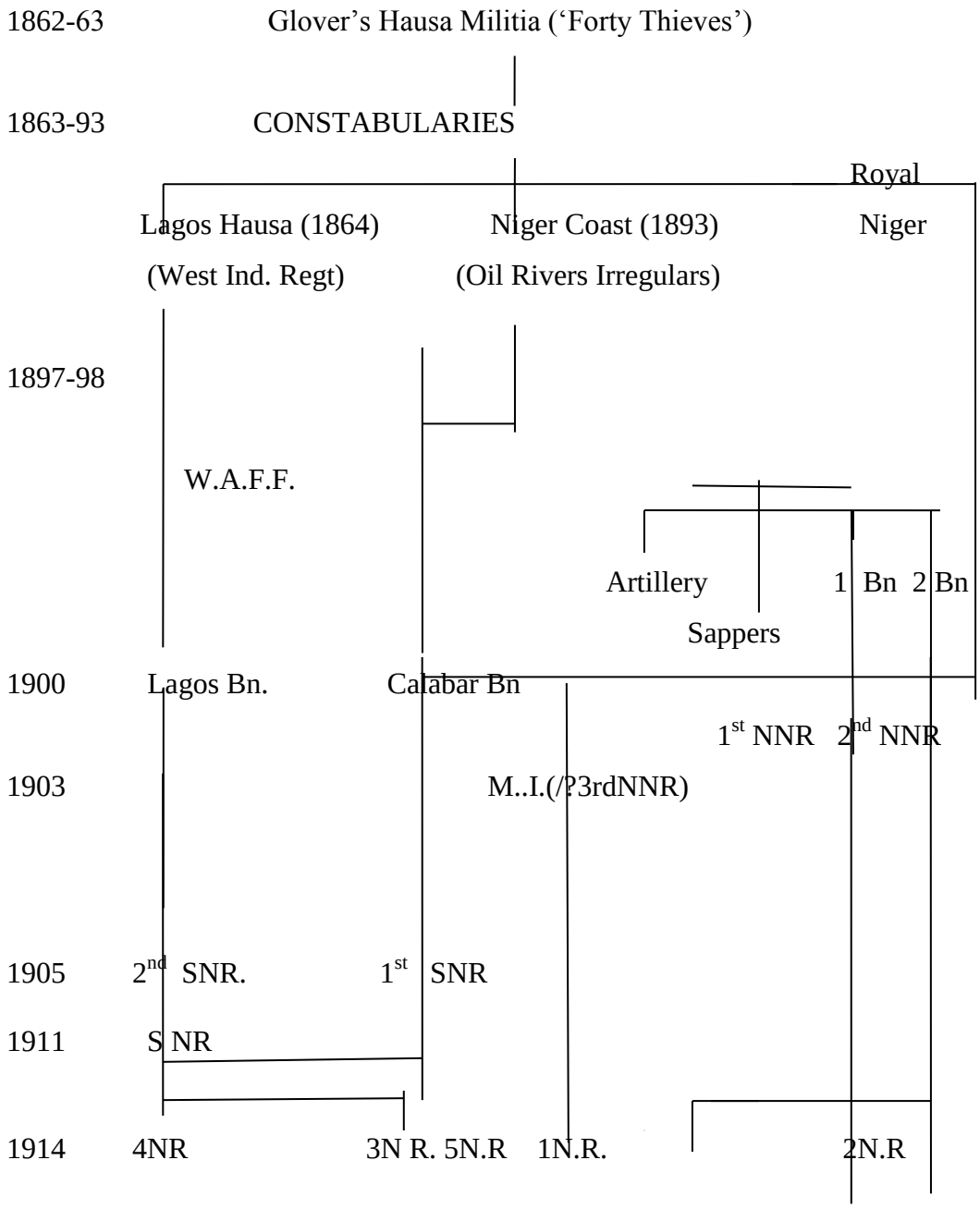
Prior to the establishment of the Nigerian constabulary, the West India Regiment was responsible for the defence of most British commercial interests. This was at a time when most British possessions were restricted to the coastal areas of Sierra-Leone, the forts of Gold Coast, and Lagos. The West India Regiment was an imperial force, funded and responsible to the War Office in London.

However, the force had some limitations as most British administrators and authors contested. First, most of the troops sent to West Africa were ex-convicts, undesirable elements, flat-footed, and devoid of military bearing. Second, it was difficult for them to penetrate the West African forests in pursuit of enemies. Third, they were adversely affected by the harsh weather condition and malaria fever which led to high death rate. This is corroborated by Philip Curtin in the following lines:

> In the late 18th century European death rate on the West Coast [of Africa] was between 300 and 700 per thousand per annum, amongst newcomers, and that among the old 'West Coasters' it could still be as high as between 80 and 120 per thousand, the most prevalent type of malaria *Plasmodium Fulciparum* was far more fatal than its counterpart *PlasmodiumVivax*. Even in the 19th Century, the death rate of Europeans was still disquieting. The fault did not lie so much in the lack, as in the inadequate use of quinine prophylaxis.[2]

Figure 2

A CENTURY OF REGIMENTAL ANTECEDENTS



1928 RWAFF (order of Precedence from 1903=NNR; SNR; G.C Rgt; Lagos Bn; S.L.Bn,; Gambia Coy.)
1956 Q.O.N.R + N.M.F. (break up of W.A. Command and RWAFF)
1959 R.N.M.F
1960 R.N.A.
1963 N.A

Source: A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, "A Preliminary Note on New Sources For Nigerian Military History", *Journal Of the Historical Society of Nigeria* vol.111, no.1 December, 1964, 130.

Consequently, Henry Thornton, Chairman of the Court of Directors recommended the employment of Negro West India Regiment to substitute European troops to forestall high death rate. On the same matter, "The West India Regiment" declared McCallum, the governor of Lagos, "are too well fed even to match"[3] and by extension wrong material altogether for an African Army, for they could not subsist on the food of the country in which they serve. However, the main complaint revolved around the favourable terms of service granted to the West Indian troops which was looked upon as a bad example for the African troops of the West African Frontier Force who were maintained cheaply and utilized for all sorts of duties including manual labour and services in the homes of their superior officers.[4]

It could safely be argued that most of the criticisms against the troops arose from high cost of maintenance and logistics which was then perceived as burdensome to the War Office coupled with the prejudice and discrimination by European senior officers. However, it is understandable that military incompetence was never a factor during the period because troops had been performing bush warfare and other regimental duties efficiently prior to the arrival of Lord Lugard in 1898.

It is against this backdrop that the British government decided to recruit indigenous force to protect its imperial conglomerates. This arrangement offered a number of benefits to Britain and the colonial adventurers; first, local inhabitants were able to resist the hostile climate as well as the harsh terrain. Second, recruitment of indigenous Africans were seen as cheaper in terms of cost, maintenance, and remuneration.[5] Finally, European officers saw indigenous soldiers as willing tools capable of being used for military and domestic duties. The question that attracts attention is what necessitated the inclusion of the Glover Hausas in the military force?

The primary responsibility of the military, as most scholars have shown was to fight and win wars. A secondary responsibility was to support the civil authority in humanitarian and peace-building operations. And in extreme cases where internal conflicts, natural or man-made disasters threatened national security or established order, the military was called upon as a last resort, especially where the primary agencies charged with such responsibilities failed.

Writing on the Nigerian military, Paul Dike notes:

> The Nigerian military is important to all of us for the obvious reason that wittingly or unwittingly no other institution of the Nigerian State had played the far-reaching and enduring role that the military has played in the political history of the country. It is not surprising, therefore, that there has been, and there are still, a lot of misconceptions, myths and phobia about the military both as a profession and as an establishment of the state.[6]

Indeed, the place of Lieutenant John Glover of the Royal Navy, the then Governor of Lagos cannot be overemphasized in the history of the Nigerian military. He came to Africa on a voyage of exploration with Dr Baike in 1863 when their ship, the *Dayspring* was wrecked at Jebba.[7] Consequently, he travelled overland to Lagos and in the course of the journey, came in contact with some slaves who fled from their masters and thereafter decided to obtain their freedom. These slaves, it was observed were mostly of Hausa extraction. "While in Lagos, he organised them into a local force known as the Glover's Hausas or Hausa Militia,"[8] as indicated in chapter One.

Meanwhile, the West India Regiment was responsible for garrison duties in Lagos but was subsequently replaced by the Lagos constabulary force. "The decision to raise an armed force in Lagos" as A.H.M. Kirk-Greene argues "arose from a despatch by Stanhope Freeman, the then Governor of the British West African possessions resident in Sierra Leone to the Duke

of Newcastle, dated 9th October, 1862."[9] The strength of the force was subsequently increased in October 1863 by Sir John Glover, with the concurrence of Governor Freeman. It was further observed that "the expense of this establishment [of 600 men] is about one-fifth of what a similar number of regular troops would cost the Imperial Government, and the force [of Hausa Constabulary] is more efficient than the West India Regiment"[10]

It was later discovered that the new force was primarily raised to subjugate local enemies who opposed British rule in Nigeria as well as an imperial force against the French in the Anglo-French rivalry in Nigeria.[11] In an article on "The Origins of the West African Frontier Force," S.C.Ukpabi noted that "the local forces called the constabulary only existed in name as there was little distinction between a constabulary and a regular army unit. It was called a constabulary in order to re-assure those objectors who would have accused the government of naked aggression in the colonies."[12] However, the events that characterized the period led to the evolution of the West African Frontier Force.

The West Africa Frontier Force (W.A.F.F) came into existence by chance, this, perhaps, was due to the representation of Joseph Chamberlain, the then Secretary for Colonies who expressed an urgent need for a counter force to defend British territory against French incursion. According to Chamberlain as quoted by Ukpabi:

> We have thought it necessary to raise what has been called a Frontier Force. The present forces on the Gold Coast and Lagos are almost entirely required for the mere policing of the coast districts, and if we are to occupy, as evidently it is necessary that we should occupy, these territories over which we have assumed a protectorate, we must have a force capable of that duty. Accordingly, it has been decided to create and establish such a force which on the Lagos side will be under the command of Colonel Lugard…the creation of that force was necessary and will be necessary whether the differences with the French are arranged satisfactorily or not.[13]

Indeed, Chamberlain in a Parliamentary debate argued that "if this force, [W.A.F.F] of which I have been speaking is established and if it answers the expectations we have formed with regard to it, we believe that we shall be able, in the carrying out whatever expeditions may be necessary to dispense altogether with the employment of the West India Regiments."[14] On the same matter, Frederick Lugard opines that it should be "an army available for all parts of Africa…a homogeneous imperial force available for an emergency."[15]

The W.A.F.F was a regular military force, recruited from the nucleus of officers and men of the Royal Nigerian Constabulary. It was supplemented by regular army officers and newly enlisted Hausas, Yorubas and Nupes. Added to the structure, were officers and British N.C.O.s seconded from the British regiments for short periods. Colonel Frederick Dealtry Lugard became the first Commandant of the force, *gazetted* on 26th August, 1897.[16]

On November 18, 1898, Lugard was appointed the Governor and High Commissioner for Northern Nigeria. In concert with the office, he recommended the creation of a new Battalion with Headquarters in Calabar. This was subsequently approved and known as 3 Battalion W.A.F.F. In the succeeding years, W.A.F. F was conferred the title "Royal" by King George V in 1928.[17] Meanwhile, Gold Coast retained its status as the first regional command of the W.A.F.F because it was the operational headquarters of the West Africa Command responsible to the Colonial Office in London until it transformed into national regiments in 1956. The West Africa Frontier Force initiated lots of changes in the military system. According to William Gutteridge, "At the regional level, it introduced the establishment of a combined training school to co-ordinate major training programmes, the essence of which was to ensure an acceptable level of professionalism among West African soldiers."[18] It also promoted social relations between and among military leaders and troops of various

countries. As part of Lord Lugard's transformation agenda, on the 8th November 1897, he succeeded in setting up his headquarters at Jebba, appointing Lt Col James Wilcocks as his Assistant Commandant.[19]

The last quarter of the nineteenth century marked a turning point in the British administration of Nigeria. First, was the appointment of Joseph Chamberlain as Colonial Secretary which intensified Colonial policy on the Niger territory. Second, was the relocation of military headquarters to Zungeru, about 200 miles north-west of Lokoja, the original capital and 150 miles north-east of Jebba due to strategic reasons.[20]

The importance of the West Africa Frontier Force could be located in the fact that it was a force capable of dealing with compelling problems requiring military solution in West Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. It was also possible that the Colonial Office was committed to the establishment of a military power that could overcome visible and perceived enemies especially the local inhabitants. Contrary to speculations, the creation of the West African Frontier Force was an admission of the inadequacy of military experimentation of the British on the West African coast during the latter half of the 19th Century. This is aptly encapsulated by Ukpabi:

> If the Royal Niger Company had been strong enough militarily to defend the areas of Borgu and the rest of Northern Nigeria the story would have been different and the Royal Niger Company itself might have had a longer lease of life…hence, from 1898 the West African Frontier Force came to stay as a driving force in the history of Anglophone West Africa and fully justified the confidence of those who fashioned it as a war-machine.[21]

On 1st January 1900, Lugard took over the Royal Niger Constabulary, incorporating it into the 1, 2, and 3 Battalion W.A.F.F., the 1 and 2 Battalions being the Northern Regiment, while the 3 Battalion formerly, Niger Coast Protectorate was designated Southern Nigeria Regiment

with Brevet –Major C.H.P Carter in command.[22] The over-all contribution of the W.A.F.F in the defence of British interest was seen in the fiery incursion against the French army. This was also evident in their internal security and campaign efforts, especially, the Munshi expedition which subdued the local people obstructing the passage of caravans to and from Nassarawa to Keffi. It was also designed to restore peace in the area and consolidate British Administration. This mission was led by Captain Carrol between February and March 1900.[23]

Although the factors that led to the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 has been adequately discussed in major studies of which economic and political factors were central. The question therefore is what was the position of Nigerian states before the formation of the Nigeria Regiment and why was it necessary? As James .S. Coleman has shown, "the area now known as Nigeria was divided into three separate colonial territories in 1900; these were the Colony of Lagos, and the Protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria. They were independently administered by three different administrators directly responsible to the United Kingdom."[24]

In fact, in the year 1904, the two Southern administrations were unified under the leadership of Sir Walter Egerton. Also, the Lagos colony and protectorate was amalgamated with the protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1906. Thus, the colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria came under a united colonial bureaucracy in readiness for the imminent transition. According to Haywood and Clarke "The final reorganisation of the West African Frontier Force (W.A.F.F) was completed with the amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigeria Regiment into the Nigeria Regiment in 1914."[25] The idea was further substantiated by Akinjide Osuntokun who observes in his informative article that the Nigeria Regiment had a single brigade of five battalions with a total strength of about 5,000 under the command of 172 British Officers, a police force of 2,100 Nigerians with 33 British officers."[26]

On the other hand, Kirk-Greene emphasizes that "The Nigeria Regiment consists of five Infantry Battalions and one Battery of Field Artillery. The Battalions are numbered from one to five, and the Battery is the 1st Field Battery W.A. Artillery. The whole Regiment was responsible to the General Officer Commanding Nigeria District, who also doubled as the Commandant of the Nigeria Regiment."[27]

The establishment of the Nigerian Regiment was important because it facilitated the process of amalgamation. As a fighting force, it was designed to complete the process of pacification and consolidation of conquered territories contrary to the activities of the West Africa Frontier Force (WAFF) which was created to protect British imperial interests and subjugate opposing enemies. The establishment of the Nigerian Regiment as a national army, perhaps, was in readiness of the First World War. It was also a confirmation that the political and economic power of Nigeria was safely in the hands of the British colonial government. This argument became evident in the intervening years of the British colonial administration in the country.

The involvement of the Nigerian Regiment in the First World War was necessitated by its stature as a British colonial army. The First World War ended November 11, 1918, with innumerable number of casualties and loss of property. However, the burden of the European powers was on how to make the First World War, a war to end all wars. Thus, "in 1920 the regiment was re-organized into a peace time army of four battalions and peace time training for internal security."[28] In addition, by 1928 the regiment joined the other arm of W.A.F.F to form the Royal West Africa Frontier Force (RWAFF) with the King of England as the Colonel-in-Chief. By this status, the Nigeria Regiment gained prominence and benefited in all manner of welfare for staff, arms and branches of the Service.

Thereafter, a re-organization was effected in which "the Army in Nigeria was administered as a whole by Headquarters Nigeria District, situated in Lagos. While Headquarters North Eastern Sub-District at Kaduna administered units in Kaduna, Zaria, Enugu and Jos. Units in other stations also came directly under Headquarters Nigeria District."[29]

The organizational pattern of the Nigerian Regiment was similar to that of the WAFF. The policy took cognisance of the martial regions in its selection because indigenes of other regions despised military service for reasons stated elsewhere in the study, despite, government sensitization policy. Thus, at the outbreak of war, three-fifths of the Regiments were still composed of Hausas and Yorubas who had earned for themselves high reputations as soldiers.[30] The question therefore is why was it a regimental policy after-all? It was a regimental policy because colonial administration had no choice but to restrict recruitment in Nigeria to the Hausa and Yoruba to the exclusion of other ethnic groups who did not play much role during the period of crisis.

The other explanation centred on the fact that recruitment among the non-Muslim ethnic groups had not properly taken off for lack of awareness and exposure which militated against their enlistment to a greater extent.[31] Finally, the poor perception of soldiers as well as their wages were issues of great concern in Yoruba country for which soldiering was associated with slavery, hence, the epithet "*Afamako* and *Abobaku*."[32] Therefore to make up for this deficiency, on 5 August 1914, a proclamation was issued calling on the educated inhabitants of Lagos to enlist as special constables so that the Police could be released for military duties.[33] To achieve its mandate, and the exigency of the time, it became necessary for colonial authorities to establish three enlistment centres, one in Zaria, Enugu, and Ibadan.[34]

However, when Burma war ended in the early part of 1946 most of the troops were demobilized, following a despatch to King George V1 by the 82 West Africa Division. Some of the demobilized troops were paid gratuities ranging from about thirty pounds for a Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) who had served through the war outside Nigeria, to about fourteen pounds for a Private soldier who did not complete his tenure.[35] A few of the discharged troops were retained in government sectors. But the expectations of the people were not met as a result of rising standards of living which aggravated immediately after the Second World War.[36] Thus; there were unrests in some military units within Lagos as a result of poor administration and a general lack of attention to the welfare of troops. This revolt was later contained by the General Officer Commanding using infantry troops.[37]

Following the indifference of Colonial Government some of the ex-servicemen decided to engage in private sectors of the economy, while others found their way to government offices using the trade acquired in service to function in white collar jobs and other departments.[38] Thereafter, some of the ex-servicemen began to display their traits, and habits imbibed in various theatres of war which included, the display of old military uniforms in market squares and villages. This uncharitable attitude caused a few to upset with impunity the traditions and norms of the villages. Several others encroached on the political system of their communities by removing incumbent leaders and contesting for chieftaincy stools.[39]

Nigerian Regiment and Post-World War II Development

The question therefore is what was the nature of development in post-World War II and how did it impact on Nigerian State and her army? In the post-World War II period wide-ranging and far-reaching policies were initiated in most countries of the world and in Nigeria in particular. Notable among the policies was a framework for self-government and

decolonisation of colonies and empires. Consequently, West African colonies ceased to be the exclusive preserve of colonial powers following the signing of the Atlantic Charter by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. This document provides in its third clause "the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they would live."[40]

Similarly, Chapter X1 of the United Nations Charter, promulgated at the end of the war was vital to the colonial peoples of the world, this is because it stipulates among other things that "members of the United Nations who were responsible for the administration of non-self governing countries recognised solemnly an obligation to ensure the political, social and economic advancement of their inhabitants."[41]

In view of these constitutional changes in West African colonies, the Defence Committee in August 1946 recommended that the East and West African Forces be maintained at strength sufficient for expansion in war but argued that maintenance cost would henceforth be met from the Service votes. This idea was precipitated by the British post-war manpower crisis which led to the introduction of conscription. At the West African Forces Conference in Lagos in 1953, it was decided that each territory must accept the principle of bearing the entire cost of its armed forces in exchange for greater territorial control over military issues. In response to this policy, the West African Heads of Government declared in strong terms that "its military forces were the national forces of their territories established for the purpose of securing the defence of their sub-region.[42]

Since the formation of the Nigerian Regiment and all through the First and Second World Wars, no Nigerian military personnel received commission as an officer in the regiment.[43] This among other factors aggravated nationalist agitation for the Nigerianization and

commissioning of indigenous ranks into the officer cadre preparatory to taking over from the British since Nigeria's independence was imminent. Thus, the first Nigerian to be granted Short Service Commission was Lt L.V Ugboma in 1948. W.U Bassey, Sey, J.T.U. Aguiyi Ironsi, and S.A .Ademulegun were commissioned Lieutenants in 1949, while R.A. Shodeinde and Lt Wellington were commissioned in 1950 and 1952 respectively.

Unfortunately, some of these commissioned officers did not endure long in the Nigerian Regiment.[44] "By 1952, Lt Sey had resigned his commission while Lt Ugboma and Lt Wellington were no longer in the Nigeria Regiment by 1953, thus leaving Lt Bassey as the most senior army officer in the Nigeria Regiment."[45] The Nigeria Regiment also commissioned Lt B A Ogundipe and Lt RA Adebayo in 1953, while Lt CDC Nwawo and Lt FA Fajuyi were commissioned in 1954.

By 1953 the Colonial Office had decided as a matter of policy to establish the Regular Officers Special Training School (ROSTS) at Teshie, Gold Coast as a recruiting and preparatory centre for all Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF) Officer Cadets for six months before proceeding to the United Kingdom for the complete commission training at any of the Cadet training institutions.[46] In order to encourage the enlistment of boys from the wealthy class and also improve the image of the army, some public schools were selected as Cadet Units, these included Government College Umuahia, Government College Zaria, King's College Lagos, and Government College Ughelli representing the different ethnic groups in the country.[47] In 1954, the Nigerian Military School (NMS) Zaria was set up as a "Boys Company." Formerly; it was an arm of the Nigeria Recruitment Training Centre (NRTC) Zaria, where boys of about fourteen years of age were given both secondary and military education for four years similar to *Ecole Militaire* in France.

The Boys Company targeted children of serving military personnel living in the barracks. As such, the bulk of the first set of intake came from the barracks. The school turned out skilled tradesmen who became proficient after further training in the United Kingdom. It also produced men who became officers, and at a time, most of the elite of the Nigerian Officers Corps were trained at the Nigeria Military School (NMS).[48]

The Nigerianization programmes of the Nigerian Military also made provisions for the training of officer cadets in Sandhurst for which Nigeria benefited as a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Similarly, serving NCOs and warrant officers were given concessions to be trained for sixteen weeks at Mons or Eaton Hall Officer Cadet Schools in England in what was known as the "Short Service Commission." These military programmes were designed to enable the local army take over command of their territories preparatory to independence.[49]

The visit of Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain in 1956 was remarkable because it was part of the programmes marking the Nigerianization of the force and self-determination. As the Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal West African Frontier Force, her visit was necessary in order to finalize the hand-over process. Consequently, She conferred on the Nigeria Regiment, the title "Queen's Own Nigerian Regiment" (QONR).[50] The five Battalions of the regiment became unified and by 1957 the Constitutional Conference resolved to hand over the control of the military force in Nigeria to the Nigerian Government with effect from 1st April 1958. Nevertheless, the events in the years leading to independence revealed that the War Office in London had been a major obstacle in the process of Nigerianization. This is because as N.J. Miner puts it, "the War Office was far away from Nigeria where agitation was effectively mounting on colonial government by the nationalist…. On the other hand, the army was

unaffected by the shortage of expatriate staff as qualified manpower were already on ground."[51] By 1958, two years away from independence, the issue of creating a truly national army, capable of fulfilling its roles in an emerging new nation, began to be seriously considered at various levels of debate. It was quite obvious to many observers that colonial army as existed in Nigeria had certain defects which must first be corrected or eliminated before self-government.[52] The same year, the Nigerian military force ceased to be under the control of the War Office in London thereby handing over the responsibility of welfare, maintenance and organizational programmes to Nigerians similar to the actions of Ghana which had just obtained her independence.[53]

However, much re-engineering was done in other departments of the force with a view to giving it a national outlook. Hitherto, the British adopted a policy of recruitment which favoured the enlistment of the infantry from Northern Nigeria, while the artisans or technical units came from Southern Nigeria. As Ukpabi notes, "this did not make for the development of I'esprit de corps in the army and there were occasions when the colonial government found it necessary to use the fighting troops from one region against the technical ones from other regions."[54] This re-engineering perhaps was to forestall a similar event as occurred in 1952 when hundred soldiers of the Command Ordnance Depot, Yaba staged a mutiny to protest against their living accommodation, burning army property and wounding two European officers, this mutiny was suppressed by a detachment of infantry and military police of Northern extraction.[55]

The other problem associated with the formation of a national army at the time was the uneven recruitment of the officer corps. This issue became worrisome so much that from 1958 concerted efforts were made by the military authorities to balance the recruitment and

deployment of not only the officers' cadre but other ranks. Therefore, orders were given to effect changes in the composition of the force. It was also stipulated that each unit should not be allowed to stay too long in a place as this could make them to fraternize with civilians and possibly erode military standards.[56] This policy therefore introduced the quota system into the Nigerian polity, which gave the North 50 percent and 25 percent each from the East and West. The policy also emphasized that all military barracks and formations should comprise of officers and men of different ethnic groups.[57]

In independence period, Nigerian military made gradual but steady progress before the civil war. One of such advancements was the orientation of the force to meet up with global challenges. The other was the transformation programme of the force geared towards Nigerianization of officers and men as British officers were gradually demobilized.[58] There was also the gradual implementation of quota system in the recruitment exercise of officers and men along ethnic lines, by the time the British Army Council relinquished the control of the Nigerian Military Forces to the Nigerian Government, the strength of the force had risen from 6,400 to 7,600.[59]

Similarly, battalions were restructured to include, 1 Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment, 2 Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment, 3 Queen's Own Regiment, 4 Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment, 5 Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment until 1963.[60] This was in order to meet up with the realities of decolonization. The Queen's Own Nigerian Regiment (QONR) was subsequently designated the Nigerian Military Force (NMF), and at independence the name was changed to the Royal Nigerian Army, the present designation, Nigerian Army (NA), came into use soon as Nigeria assumed Republic status in 1963.[61]

In fact, by January 1, 1960, there were 228 British Officers, 48 Nigerian Officers with Combatant Commission and 2 Non-Combatant Officers.[62] On 1st October 1960, the Army became known as the Royal Nigerian Army (RNA), ill-equipped, comprising 7,500 men with only 50 Nigerian officers, forming 18% of the officer corps holding ranks not higher than that of Major. Immediately after June 1963, the battalions were commanded by Nigerians and by 1965 the last British Commander of the Nigerian Army, Major-General Welby-Everard had disengaged from Service alongside the other British Officers.[63]

Despite the frantic attempt to address existing imbalance in the military force, it was apparent that officers of Igbo origin still dominated the corps. Even though there were criticisms from members of the general public and the media in particular, some others had reservation. According to the *The West Africa Pilot*, dated February13, 1964: "The effect of the institution of regional quotas for officers was 'to send sub-grade people' for training merely to satisfy regional as opposed to National interests." [64] To some observers, the North did not have the required manpower for military exigency considering the gap in Western education but simply wanted to lord it over the nation.

On the same matter, Ukpabi notes:

> Since the introduction of the quota system, at the officer and ordinary ranks levels, it was likely that many soldiers thought that they owed their presence in the army to their region of origin. This consideration might have led some of them to be more sympathetic to the views of their regional governments or of their political spokesmen especially in such national issues as the census, and federal elections.[65]

This debate became unhealthy in the early 1960s due to the abuse of power and privileges by the political class of the day. In view of this ugly development some military officers led by Major Chukwuma Nzeogwu decided to stop the polity through a military coup. This action

provoked chain of reactions culminating in the counter coup of July 1966 and the Nigerian civil war which lasted from May 1967 to January 1970.[66] Ukpabi also states that "the changed role of the army in January 1966 was very popular with the Nigerian Public...After the coup, many things were said and done to discredit the former politicians, thus, some Nigerians prayed for many years of military rule."[67]

From this time onwards, the military directed all facets of national life till 1979. The death of General Murtala Mohammed brought Olusegun Obasanjo to power till 1979 when a handover was made to a democratically elected civilian government under Alhaji Shehu Shagari. The administration was later truncated by General Mohammed Buhari's coup of December 31, 1983 and this was followed by another infamous military administration under General Badamosi Babangida which lasted till the 1990s when power was passed to the Interim National Government of Chief Ernest Shonekan. Following the political problem of the period, General Sanni Abacha took over power until his untimely death which ushered in Lt General Abdulsallam Abubakar's military government that successfully handed over power to a democratically elected civilian government in 1999.

The Nigerian Navy

Another arm of the military was the Nigerian Navy. It owes its origin to the Nigerian Marine, established in 1914 after the amalgamation of the then Northern and Southern protectorates of Nigeria.[68] Indeed, the Lagos Marines began in 1887 under the supervision of the British Colonial Government following the charter granted to the Royal Niger Company in 1886. In 1893, the Lagos Marines was transformed into the Southern Nigerian Marine while its Northern Nigeria counterpart was set up in 1900. The Nigerian Marine as it was known after 1914 was a quasi-military organisation responsible for marine security.[69]

The role of the Marine at the time was enormous, but more importantly its focus was the administration of ports and harbours, dredging of channels and buoyage, and lighting. Other supporting functions include, operating of ferry services, touring launches and other small craft that plied the various creeks and inland waterways.[70] At its formative stage, the Royal Navy provided the necessary military security as part of its overall military defence of the British Empire, though, its main operations within the period centred on coast guard and ancillary duties.[71]

The Nigerian Marine participated in the First World War as part of the British military exploits against the German held Cameroon. "This Organization remained the only maritime outfit in Nigeria until 1955 when the British colonial authorities carried out a major re-organisation of Nigeria's maritime administration in order to improve efficiency."[72] The restructuring policy of government introduced major changes in the sector, notable among the changes was the establishment of three new organizations to undertake the various functions hitherto carried out by the Marine Department. The first of these organisations was the Nigerian Ports Authority charged with the responsibility of administering the ports and ensuring safe navigation. The second organisation was the Inland Waterways Department charged with the running of ferries and touring launches. The third was the Nigerian Naval Force, composed mostly of reserved Royal Navy Officers and ex-service personnel who were transferred to the Nigerian Ports Authorities from the defunct Nigerian Marine.

In April, 1955, the Nigerian Ports Authority commenced operations with 25 Ex-Marine Officers and 200 men seconded to it.[73] Available records indicate that these officers and men did not favour the transfer, but pressed the Colonial authorities to re-constitute them as the nucleus of the future Nigerian Navy. Prior to this development, there was much debate by the

nationalists on the future potentials of a Nigerian Navy if established. Therefore, in line with the nationalist agitation for an indigenous force, on March 26, 1956, the Sessional Paper No.6 was forwarded for consent and approval. Consequently, on June 1, 1956, the much awaited Sessional Paper No.6 was approved for the establishment of Nigerian Naval Force as an arm of the Nigerian military.[74]

The force commenced operations with assorted ships and crafts such as; Survey Ship (Pathfinder), Sea-going Survey Launch (Petrel), Customs Preventive Patrol boat (Challenger), Governor-General Yacht (Viliant), Governor-General Barge (Frances), Dockyard Tug (Trojan), Training boat and others.[75] The First Naval Legislation was passed on August 1, 1956, by the House of Representatives and assented by Sir James Robertson on the September 5, 1956. This is known as the Nigerian Navy Ordinance. The Ordinance assigned the following functions to the Nigerian Navy:

a. The Naval defence of Nigeria within its territorial waters
b. To maintain a Custom's preventive patrol
c. To assist in carrying out surveys in the approaches to the ports of Nigeria
d. To train new entries to the Navy
e. Training in Maritime and Naval duties.[76]

In view of these changes, on July 1959, the Nigerian Naval Force was transformed into a full-fledged Navy following the approval of the Queen of England for the force to use the title "Royal Nigerian Navy. Thereafter the title was changed to Nigerian Navy in 1963 immediately after Nigeria became a republic.[77]

The constitutional task of the Navy was expanded in 1964 after the repeal of the 1958 Ordinance. The new law known as the Navy Act of 1964 for the first time tasked the Navy with the responsibility of Naval Defence of Nigeria. Other tasks delegated to the Navy by the Act of 1964 were essentially coast guard duties such as assisting in law enforcement of Custom Laws, making of hydrographical surveys and training of officers and men for naval operations.[78]

By the end of 1964, Nigerian Navy ships consisted of ex-Royal Naval Ships and NNS Ogoja which was also an old Naval Patrol boat that was bequeathed to the Nigerian Navy by the Royal Dutch Navy as a part of the procurement package of Nigerian Navy's first frigate, NNS Nigeria, (now NNS Obuma) on order from a Duty Shipyard in 1964, the ship joined the fleet in 1965.[79] The 1960s could be described as the early years of the Nigerian Navy and on July 1 1966, the eve of the Nigerian Civil War, the Navy acquired three additional old Seaward Defence Boats (SDBs) namely, NNS Benin, NNS Ibadan 11, and NNS Kaduna, from Vickers Shipyard in the United Kingdom. The boats were of the same class and the backbone of the Nigerian Navy fleet that fought the Nigerian Civil.[80]

Immediately after the Nigerian Civil War, the Navy demobilised for peace time activities. Thus the construction of living quarters and establishment of barracks in strategic areas became pressing priorities. The other challenge was the recruitment of officers and ratings to replace the decreased strength of the force occasioned by the Nigerian Civil War. In the succeeding years, efforts were made at different command to participate in international engagements and trainings. This later paid off and since the 1980s NNS Aradu has participated in International Fleet Review and Navy exhibitions both at home and abroad.

Meanwhile, to achieve its mandate as well as its obligation in the global system, Naval Authorities began to mount pressure on government to streamline its constitutional role. The agitation yielded some dividend in 1993 under a new Law called the Armed Forces Decree 105, now known as the Armed Forces Act which was incorporated into the 1999 Nigerian Constitution. Thus the Nigerian Navy was entrusted with expanded military roles, especially in the oil and gas sectors of the nation's maritime economy.[81] The role of the Nigerian Navy in Nigerian Civil War and other peacekeeping operations in West Africa has been adequately documented by scholars but the activities of the Nigerian navy in oil industry and peace mission in Nigerian communities need scholarly investigation similar to that of the Nigerian army.

The Nigerian Air Force

The last military force to be established in Nigeria was the Nigerian Air Force. It can be argued that none of the existing force in Nigeria elicited controversy like the creation of the Air Force in the early years of independence. This is aptly underscored by William Gutheridge in the following lines:

> The largely undocumented struggle over the development of an air force was a reflection of the tensions which existed [in Nigeria]. Late in 1961, a British mission was invited to make recommendations on the establishment of such a force in conjunction with the reconstitution of officer training for the army: a defence academy would provide basic training for officers of all the three services. Lengthy negotiations and the provisional appointment of a British Commander for the defence academy followed, but in the end the arrangement broke down. West Germans and Indians at one stage filled the relevant roles... More important, was the fact that a main bone of contention in Nigeria was the choice of an appropriate site for the Air Force training school in which technical considerations concerning weather and flying conditions were of first importance.[82]

Apart from the factors of geography and topography which were considered important in the location of an air force, there was also the overwhelming political consideration of Kaduna as a choice. This was observed in the determination of some Northern political class whose interest was to keep under surveillance important developments which could affect the power structure in Nigeria. This argument is noted by William Gutheridge, "there was also the desire and conviction by Northern elite to feel that the whole paraphernalia of the Nigerian State was capable of appropriate manipulation."[83] This resulted not only in the overheating of the polity but aggressive politicking by some members of the ruling class who vowed to concentrate the country's military might in the Northern part of the country. It is for this reason that William Gutheridge described the rivalry of the time as the tragedy of Nigeria.[84]

The historical development of the Nigerian Air Force can be summarized accordingly;

> The historical evolution of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) could be broken down into five distinct eras: its early development (1961-1967), the Nigerian Civil War period (1967-1970), the post-civil war years (1970-1980), the era of consolidation (1980-1990) and 1990 to the present day.[85]

The idea to establish an Air Force in Nigeria was first mooted in 1961 following the nation's participation in peace-keeping operations in Congo and Tanganyika (now Tanzania). Ironically, during the missions, foreign air forces were deployed to airlift the Nigerian regiment to and from the theatres of operation.[86]

In view of this development, the Nigerian Government saw the need to establish an air force, equipped and supported with modern facilities to enhance the nation's military capability. Thus, in 1962 the Government agreed in principle that the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) be established.[87] Prior to government's approval, wide-ranging consultations were held with some foreign heads of government such as, Canada, Germany, India and Ethiopia.

The Government of Ethiopia was the first to respond positively in assisting Nigeria. Therefore on June 11, 1962, His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Sellasie 11 granted the approval of 10 scholarship slots to train Nigerian NAF pilots in Ethiopia. The first batch of 10 cadets was enlisted to undergo training with the Ethiopian Air Force in July 1962. A second batch of 16 cadets was subsequently released in February 1963 to train at the Royal Canadian Air force, while 6 other cadets were sent to the Indian Air Force simultaneously.[88]

The Germans also show great interest in the welfare of the country, which led to a series of agreement between the two countries in 1964. The agreement on friendship and cooperation was aimed at engaging the German Air Force Assistant Group (GAFAG). The GAFAG immediately assumed responsibility of building the Nigerian Air Force to meet up with the challenges of the time.[89] Thus the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) was officially established by a statutory Act of Parliament in April 1964 to serve four main purposes:

a. To achieve a full complement of the military defence system of the Federal Republic of Nigeria both in the air and on ground.

b. To ensure a fast versatile mobility of the Armed forces.

c. To provide close air support for the ground forces in all phases of operation and to ensure the territorial integrity of a united Nigeria.

d. To give the country the deserved prestige that is invaluable in international matters.[90]

Section 217(2) of the Nigerian constitution of 1999 on the other hand, charged the NAF as well as other arms of the Nigerian military with the responsibilities of;

1. Defending Nigeria from external aggression.

2. Maintaining its territorial integrity and securing its borders from violation by land, sea and air.

3. Suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon by the president; subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly; and

4. Performing such other functions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.

Similarly, three legal strands, the Nigeria-German agreement, Nigerian Air Force Act and the Nigerian Constitution provide the framework for the formulation of the NAF mission, which stipulates:

(a) To ensure the integrity of the airspace by gaining and maintaining control of the air, while retaining a credible capacity to fulfil other air power tasks demanded by national defence and security.[91]

The task of steering the infant NAF fell on the shoulders of Col G.Kahtz, being the first Chief of Air Staff in Nigeria from May 1963 to November 1965. He was succeeded by Col.W. Timming, who became the Air Force Chief from November 1965 to January 1966. These two men were assisted by other German officers too numerous to mention[92]

Nevertheless, the Nigerian Air Force participated in the Nigerian Civil War even though its strength at the time was limited in weaponry and armament. But immediately after the war there was substantial recruitment of airmen to fill the exigencies of security in the country, consequently, the construction of barracks was intensified in the 1970s and 90s for officers and men. The 1980s and 1990s could be considered a period of consolidation because it marked a turning point in the participation of the force in global events and the building of sophisticated air force capable of defending Nigeria's posture and prestige at regional and

sub-regional levels. The period also witnessed the involvement of Nigerian Air Force in international peace-keeping mission and internal security initiatives.[93]

However, the end of 1990s was marred by government neglect as a result of politicization of the military and leadership question. Available literature indicates that during the all time military regime headed by the Army, there was deliberate attempt to undermine the Nigerian Air Force so that it would not be relevant as a counter force against army coup plotters since it was obvious that military air strikes were stronger than infantry might. To support the argument, over three decades of military regime, no air force officer was made Commander-in-Chief and Head of state in Nigeria; this showed the dilemma of the service in the period under review.

The Nigerian Air Force was made up of three Commands namely, Tactical Air Command, Training Command and Logistics Command.[94] Presently, the Nigerian Air Force had bases in Kaduna being the oldest, Lagos, Markurdi, PortHarcourt and a few other locations. During the military regime, some Air Force officers functioned in different capacities as military governors, administrators, ministers, ambassadors and members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council. In present day civilian government, majority of them had contributed their knowledge and expertise in different spheres of national development.

The Role of the Nigerian Armed Forces in Peace Support Operations, 1960-1999

The participation of Nigeria in peacekeeping mission began in 1960 following the deployment of troops to Congo. Since then Nigeria had actively participated in others in Africa. For instance, the conflict in Liberia in 1990 attracted the Nigerian-led sub-regional peacekeeping force, known as ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to

intervene in the war. The escalation of hostilities compelled the sub-regional allies to alter its mandate from peacekeeping to Peace Enforcement. This is because some of the belligerents in the sub-regional conflict were not prepared to give their consent even as the civil population was indiscriminately attacked and killed.[95]

Immediately after the Liberian crisis, Nigerian contingents were deployed to Sierra Leone under the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) following the spread of conflicts in that country in 1999. According to Major General Nuhu Bamalli:

> The Nigerian Contingent (NIGCON) arrived mission area in November, 1999 with two Battalions, eight Staff Officers and four Military Observers. With the increase in strength by the United Nations, Nigeria's contribution also increased to over 3,000 personnel making her the largest troop contributing country (T.C.C) in the mission at the time."[96]

However, the involvement of Nigeria in Peace Support Operation was not without consequences to her military and nation in general. First it led to the untimely death of some officers and men in action. Second, the psychological trauma of war affected most soldiers immediately after demobilization. Additionally, the adjustment of military men and wives due to prolonged absence from home contributed to cases of divorce and by extension the evolution of foreign wives. And finally, there was huge financial commitment on the part of Nigerian government to the restoration of peace in most war torn areas.

On the way forward for the Nigerian Military, Air Chief Marshal, Paul Dike underscores the fact that "any military organization that intends to remain professional and relevant to its calling has no business meddling in the political affairs of the country."[97] Thus it must be emphasised that military coup was no longer fashionable in the new world order and any attempt to truncate a democratically elected government in any part of Africa would be seen as primitive and setting the country backward.

Traditional Camps and Nature of Barracks in the Early Years 1863-1904

A discussion of military camps in pre-colonial period is important in a study of this nature. This is because the activities of women were visible and complementary to the efforts of men, especially in the political and socio-economic life of the society. Military camps were indispensable in most African warfare because of the protection it offered to warriors, camp followers, and armaments. Writing in the same vein, Robert S. Smith asserts that earlier evidence suggests that sieges and the formation of permanent and semi-permanent camps as military bases in enemy territory were long-standing and permanent features of West Africa warfare.[98]

For instance, Ibadan was founded around 1828 primarily as a settlement for the soldiers who drove the Egba from the forest. By the middle of the nineteenth century, this settlement had been transformed from a mere military base into a prosperous town.[99] As a garrison town and a military republic,[100] she was closely followed by Imesi-Ile, Igbajo and other camps believed to have been established by the *Ekiti-Parapo*, a military confederacy of the period. The Egba military class also developed Ijaiye, Abeokuta, and Ado as camps. Describing the military camp of the Ekiti-parapo, S.A. Akintoye posits:

> The Confederate camp at its largest extent was a stragglingly built town with wide spaces between groups of huts… The huts were built around different leading chiefs until the population of the camp began to increase tremendously from about 1879 to the closing years of the 1880s… most of the "huts in the camp were built simply with wooden pillars, bamboo walls and thatched roofs while only a few were permanent mud houses.[101]

Akintoye observes further that "by 1886, however, the confederate camp had not only grown into regular walls but also in size from a population of 40, 000 to 60,000 inhabitants, made up of the children, wives, and other attendants of the fighting men."[102] The establishment of Ijaiye, Abeokuta, and Ado as military settlements by the Egba were also remarkable. These

camps had certain features which included straggling houses, worship centres, and arms and ammunition depots among others. Another feature of traditional camps was the setting up of market(s) within the perimeter of the camp. As Robert Smith explains:

> Women came up to the rear to hold their markets... the prices asked at these markets for staple foods, such as cassava, provided an index to the state of supplies in the storehouses of the camp. Women also played a considerable role inside a besieged town, bringing to the wall the warriors' food and military supplies."[103]

Smith notes further:

> A Nupe camp which Clapperton also visited was built of small bee-hive like huts, thatched with straw, having four large broad streets' and a square near the emir's quarters. Apart from the armed men and beating of drums, it seemed no different from any ordinary large village. Here are to be seen weavers, taylors, (*sic*) women spinning cotton, others reeling off, some selling foo-foo and occasions, other carrying yams and paste, little markets at every green trees.[104]

The layout and physical construction of camps in pre-colonial period were also unique. As S. A. Akintoye rightly observes, the huts in the Confederate camp were mostly built simply with wooden pillars, bamboo walls and thatched roofs. Only a few huts had the more permanent structure of a mud wall. This assertion, as has been suggested, was due to the acquisition of breach-loading guns by the Confederates during the war."[105]

The Egba camp was also popular for its layout, apart from the defensive walls, there were surrounding ditches or trenches on both sides of the wall. The entrance to the camp were two, the main gate and the minor exit door, it was for this reason that the warriors of Dahomey met impregnable defence when they attempted scaling these walls in 1851.[106] This analysis has shown that military settlement was not a recent development in most African societies, particularly, in places where modern barracks had evolved and developed contrary to the position of some European scholars that African history is the history of colonialism.

Scholarly literature also establishes that the nature of barracks in the early years of British administration was far from comfort, not only to the indigenous troops but also to the British military officers and their wives. The question therefore is why were these settlements said to be far from comfort? Perhaps, they were far from comfort because most of the stations were located in the forest since it was a period of conquest and pacification. Indeed, barracks began to appear in the nineteenth century following the consolidation of the West African Frontier Force (WAFF). Between the years, constabulary stations and forts were set up, first, in Jebba[107] and later in Lokoja in consideration of climate and strategic reasons. In addition, there was the attempt to check-mate Anglo-French rivalry on the Niger,[108] in a case popularly known as the race to Nikki.[109]

Describing the colonial barracks in Nigeria in the early years, Haywood and Clarke indicate:

> It may be opportune here to describe very briefly the conditions under which in these early days, the Force lived in cantonments and on service. These conditions were such as made it essential to offer good pay and live in order to attract suitable officers and British N.C.O.s. They generally lived in tents or bush huts. Fresh food was mostly not available, so diet had to be supplemented by tinned provisions usually packed in 'chop-boxes' consisting of 60-lb.load of shape and weight convenient to accommodate a native carrier.[110]

In a personal correspondence to Joseph Chamberlain, dated September 1902, Flora Shaw notes: "Two years ago there was nothing in the whole of this vast country but a military cantonment and trading store at Lokoja, something of the same sort at Jebba and an advanced line which held a frontier against the French in Borgu. The officers of the force were living huddled together in the smallest huts which could protect them from weather."[111] P.F. Princhard's experience at Ibadan was also worthy of mention. According to him: "we lived in bush houses, that is, houses built of mud, with grass roofs and matting doors and window

covering since we received five pounds a month bush allowance, for this we were contented enough."[112] Furthermore, Frederick Lugard asserts:

> When I recall the deplorable conditions which existed in 1898 and subsequent years, the measure of progress is striking. British officers in Northern Nigeria then lived in temporary grass-huts–not rain-proof, and liable to be carried away by the violent tornadoes of the Niger valley, and very inferior to the thatched mud wall native house.[113]

Relating her experience in Lokoja Cantonment in 1902, Constance Larymore writes:

> Mr Gollan escorted us to our quarters, a massively built doubled-storeyed stone house, known as 'Preperanda' which had previously been the Mess-house of the Northern Nigeria Regiment, but was now in a very bad state of repair. The rooms below were used as offices and those above as a dwelling house. The veranda was in a ruinous condition and most of the glass had vanished from the doors and windows; even the shutters had fallen off, so that, when the tornadoes came, as they did with annoying frequency, salvation lay in one direction only, to collect all one's belonging in frantic haste in a heap in the centre of the floor, cover them with waterproof sheets, and sit firmly on them till the storm had spent itself.[114]

These illustrations are important because they provide insight into the nature and character of barracks in the early years of imperial administration in Nigeria.

The Evolution of Modern Barracks in Nigeria 1904-1999

Several factors influenced the location of modern barracks in Nigeria. Some of these include nature of the terrain, strategic location of the area, easy movement and deployment of troops, availability of means of communication and transportation, to mention but a few. Lagos, Enugu, and Kaduna were chosen as Administrative headquarters and garrison towns based on these factors. Kaduna was chosen in 1912 as administrative headquarters after Zungeru, following the report of a committee instituted by Lord Lugard.[115] The choice was obvious as Ishaku Y. Mallo declared, "barracks are located in areas of flat topography on the crest slopes where characteristic slope sites are relatively higher than the surrounding areas and serve as vantage points for effective military manoeuvre."[116]

In colonial period, most British officers and their wives complained extensively about the poor state of military accommodation in the country. For instance, Lord Lugard and his wife made frantic effort to convince the War Office on the need for habitable accommodation for troops in the colonies, but these attempts did not receive favourable consideration. Similarly, Sir Hugh Clifford and his wife committed enormous time, labour and resources in ensuring that Government House was habitable for visitors and official engagements. On the other hand, indigenous non-commissioned officers and their wives were also reported to have agitated for better living condition as this was one of the factors that hindered the coming of British officers' wives into the barracks.

Consequently, the construction of modern barracks began at different times and places in the country. For example, the construction of quarters for the mounted infantry began in Zaria in 1904 and was completed same year with provision for 10 British Officers, 10 British Non-Commissioned Officers (B.N.C.O.s), 250 men and 250 horses[117] indicated earlier in this study. Likewise, by the first quarter of 1915, construction of accommodation for the 1st Nigeria Regiment (formerly WAFF) had been completed, and troops allocated respective apartments which made them abandon temporary camps at Kaduna junction. Extending the idea, Enock Oyedele observes that "the houses along the Bank road were occupied by Sergeants and Sergeant majors while those along Kanta, West African Frontier Force, and Lafia Roads were occupied by officers of various ranks.[118]

In the inter-war years also, the Nigeria Regiment made concerted effort at providing quarters for officers and men. This attempt yielded desired result, "thus by 1935 'bush houses' had ceased to exist from all units and small stations in Zaria and its environs except the old bush mess, fondly called 'Heath Robinson building' which colonial authority left as a matter of

policy, perhaps, to serve as an "ancient monument."[119] By 1939 some of the local troops in the northern part of the country had been successfully accommodated in Mogadishu Barracks. However, with the escalation of hostilities in the Second World War, there was an increase in the level of enlistment into the army which contributed to another round of shortage of accommodation for recruits. Thus, the authority directed returnees of World War II earlier stationed at Kawo, known as Kalapanzin Barracks to move to Unguwan Shanu while waiting further directives. This action motivated the authorities to initiate changes in infrastructure and improved communication in Kaduna metropolis.[120]

Similarly, the construction of modern barracks in Southern Nigeria began in Ibadan in 1927, though, it should be recalled that the arrival of the Prince of Wales in 1925 prompted the provision of "roomy and airy Officers' Mess and a squash court."[121] Since the closing years of the 1920s and 1930s, most barracks in Ibadan metropolis has undergone tremendous changes and modifications, particularly in the accommodation of officers and men. It was the same experience in 'Jos Leave Camp,' established in 1942 as a rendezvous and a convalescent station. The camp later assumed prominence after the Second World War as a 'Military Leave Camp' where both British officers and British non-commissioned officers and their families travelled for relaxation because of its temperate climate and perfect surroundings.[122] The question of accommodation for troops had been a continuous debate for reasons of comfort, and increased military strength.

Since 1904 when the construction of new barracks began, accommodation for troops had spread to different locations in the country. These include: *The Myohaung* Barracks, *Abalti* Barracks, *Marda* Barracks, *Dodan* Barracks, *Arakan* Barracks, all in Lagos. *Letmauk* Barracks, Ibadan, *Mogadishu* B*arracks*, Abuja, *Chindit* Barracks, *Kalapanzin* Barracks, and

Bukavu Barracks, Kaduna, to mention but a few. Some barracks named after important personalities included: *Ribadu* Barracks, Kaduna, *Jallo Waziri* Cantonment, Yola, *Fajuyi* Cantonment, Ibadan, *Shittu Alao* Barracks, Keffi, *Maxwell Khobe* Barracks, Jos. *Maimallari* Barracks, Maiduguri, *Nkwagu* Barracks, Markurdi, *Sam Ethnan* Air Force Base Ikeja, *Sani Abacha* Barracks, Abuja, *Shehu Musa Yar'Adua* Barracks, Abuja, *Ogorode* Naval Base, Sapele, *David Ejoor Barracks*, Effurun, Warri, *Yakubu Gowon* Barracks, Abuja, and *Chari Maigumeri* Barracks, Lokoja among others. Up till 1956 grievances were still rife in some quarters by officers and men on the poor state of their barracks. Writing on the same matter, N.J. Miners observed that when a Nigerian became Minister of Defence he affirmed that "Our inheritance consisted by and large in a lot of temporary buildings and mud huts."[123]

Throughout the colonial period, barracks were not fenced with high walls as was the case in modern times but with barbed wires to forestall the intrusion and encroachment of unauthorised persons into the environment. It would be recalled that it was in one of the Parliamentary Sessions that Chief Akintola, former Premier of the West, pleaded passionately with the Chief Secretary to move army units out of Lagos. In his words, "the proximity of some of these army headquarters to the areas where civilians live is most embarrassing to us. So many barbed wires"[124]

The question therefore is what did Nigerian government do to solve the housing problems of troops since there was lack of interest on the part of colonial government? Secondly, to what extent did this effort ameliorate troops' accommodation? As Miners puts it:

> The Nigerian Government had taken over responsibility for buildings from the War Office after the 1953 Conference, and in 1954 a ten-year programme had been drawn up. But implementation of the plans was slow; funds were not made available by government and progress was hindered by shortage of staff in the Public Works Department.[125]

Consequently, the army estimates had to be increased from £1,698,000 in March 1957 to £3, 306,000 in March 1958[126] due to exigency in the construction of barracks. This development brought hope and relief to troops, particularly those in the northern part of the country, where the weather and climate were unfavourable. Though, it should be stressed that since 1904 when the construction of modern barracks began there had been steady changes and modifications both in the pattern of housing and barracks layout.

With the availability of funds and government determination to bring about improved welfare of troops, reconstruction work began in the cantonments of the then 2nd Battalion, Northern Nigeria Regiment, Lokoja, which was initially "a massively built double-storeyed stone house ... in a very bad state of repair" [127] Apart from changes in the pattern of buildings, the layout and structure had also undergone significant changes compared to 1902 when Constance Larymore described the 'camp' as "the survival of the days when the soldiers existed in wretched discomfort, under canvas"[128] Situated in the same environs in modern times was the imposing *Chari Maigumeri* Barracks, with about 2,000 soldiers and dependants, sports centres, schools, corridors and pathways which were non-existent in bush camps.

Between 1960 and 1961, the army budget was further increased by £600,000 due to complaint.[129] Thereafter, an additional £1,000,000 was approved for barracks development in the supplementary estimates of December 1960.[130] Thus, the *Marda* Barracks, Yaba, Lagos and *Dalet* Barracks, Kaduna, and a few others constructed immediately after the Second World War were revamped as part of decolonisation effort. These barracks now had new structure with modern size markets, and playgrounds.

Between 1962 and 1968, a Six -Year Plan was drawn up by the government and an allocation of £30,000,000 was made for capital expenditure on defence.[131] This was intended to make national security a priority for an emerging nation as Nigeria. Extending the discourse, Miner stresses that, "almost every barracks had been rebuilt in the past six years. The old style colonial uniforms had been done away with and almost all the obsolescent weapons and equipment had been replaced."[132]

Indeed from the 1970 to 1990 most of the barracks had either undergone renovation or completely reconstructed into different patterns. Necessity had also made it possible in contemporary times for most barracks to be fenced with concrete walls as military personnel settled for peace time activities. This state of affairs was not peculiar to Nigeria alone, in post-World War II period, as Morris Janowitz writes: "The military community has been more sharply segregated from civilian life in the United States than in the major nations of Western Europe. The social isolation helped the military profession to maintain its distinctive characteristics and values."[133] This has been the position of the military barracks in post-colonial Nigeria.

Immediately after the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70), barracks were demarcated into sections irrespective of its operational establishment or functions. There were the living quarters, administrative blocks, workshops, vocational offices, armoury, mechanical installations, training grounds, schools and hospitals. Others included restricted undergrounds or basement, recreation and sports sections, as well as *mammy* markets. The layout of barracks was different from other estates and reservation areas. This perhaps, had to do with its strategic importance as the backbone and defence of a nation. First, there was the entrance or access way, made up of entry and exit gates.

There were also adjunct gates created for pedestrians to ease traffic along the corridor of the major gates. This however depended to a greater extent on the size of the military unit or battalion. The major gates were usually closed in periods of insecurity or threats to the barracks and its environs, while the pedestrian gates served the purpose of necessity.

All the gates in contemporary barracks were manned by security operatives detailed to ensure the safety of life and property in the barracks. As part of their duty, they were mandated to observe the movement of people and goods to and from the barracks, arrest anyone found wanting or constituting security breach in the barracks. At the same time, vehicles in and out of the barracks were subjected to thorough inspection at both ends of the gates to prevent unauthorised individuals or prohibited goods into the barracks. To streamline the process, therefore, Gate passes and tallies were issued at both ends of the gates to vehicle owners and motor cycle riders except where an individual had earlier been issued with Official permit which superseded tallies.

Modern barracks also had long corridors and pedestrian walkways; designed to prevent pedestrians from trespassing on military installations, armouries, and training pitches, hence, the signs “Out of bounds” found in strategic places. The environment was generally beautified with flowers and trees. Trees, on the other hand, were useful in military locations because it served as wind breakers and shades, but more importantly was the fact that it concealed the size of barracks and military installations from enemy attack.

Troops’ accommodation in modern barracks was divided into two separate sections - the officers’ quarters and the non-commissioned officers’ quarters. The officers’ quarters were distanced from non-commissioned officers’ quarters because of their status as the elitist

group of the force. The non-commissioned officers' quarters were also separated into the Senior Non-Commissioned Officers' (SNCO) Quarters and Corporal Below Quarters (CBQ) all closely located. Far away from living quarters, was a section of the *mammy* market, auditorium, catering and kitchen department, as obtained in most training units. There were also the arms stores (Armoury), guard-room, administrative blocks, medical centre, and Officers' Mess, Warrant Officers and Sergeant Messes and Corporal Below Club, or Servicemen Club.

Another strategic area of importance to the authorities and the units in particular was the Centre Quarter Guard. It was believed to be the spirit of military formations and units. The Quarter Guard was also a 'sacred ground and the strength of troops because various flags representing different arms, units, services, and corps of the military were hoisted there as a symbol of togetherness and valour. It is for this reason that visitors and unauthorised persons were forbidden to step on the platform of the Quarter Guard and whenever a military Quarter Guard was captured by enemy troops the barracks was said to have fallen.

Quarter Guard duties commenced at 0600-2200 hours every day[134] and it was mandatory for Commanding Officers of units and formations to carry out daily inspection of troops at the Quarter Guard. Offenders of such routines were punished and sent to the guard-room for appropriate discipline. At 0600 hours the bugle calls sounded to signal the hoisting of flags and the commencement of daily routine. At 1800 hours flags were lowered to signal the end of the day's routine and the commencement of Mess activities at the Officers' Mess, Warrant Officers / Sergeants' Mess as well as Servicemen Club.[135]

The last post-bugle call sounded at 2200 hours for the light out, this signalled the end of all social activities in the barracks for the day. Immediately after the official disruption of power, the regimental Provosts (RPs) commenced the patrol of barracks with a view to arresting criminals and illegal occupants.[136]

It should be clear from the above discussion that the British colonial government was reluctant to invest in the development of her colonies - Nigeria, Gold Coast, the Gambia and India, probably because of British policy of colonialism or the spirit of the time. The construction and renovation of modern quarters in Nigeria was only intensified in the 1960s as a result of government determination to improve the lots of military men and families. The increase in defence budget since independence also enhanced the structure and pattern of buildings in the barracks.

However, more barracks were established in post-War Nigeria and these were particularly fitted with modern infrastructure as a result of sustained peace in the country. Some barracks became cosmopolitan in nature due to the concentration of training facilities, exchange programmes of the army with foreign countries and civilian workers of the Ministry of Defence. This synergy and contact have also encouraged changes and modification in the planning and design of barracks in contemporary times. The policy of confining of military personnel to their barracks in modern times has minimised clashes and contentions with members of the public. This idea was taken further by S.C.Ukpabi in the following lines: "The presence of soldiers in a neighbourhood was seen, not as a reminder of the so-called British 'civilizing' mission but as a sign of trouble if not outright disaster."[137] In retrospect, the encounter between the Ijebu and the Lagos Constabulary in the last quarter of the

nineteenth century remained indelible in the minds of the people. According to *The Lagos Standard Newspaper* dated, March 6, 1895:

> From Ijebu to the further interior, there is one painful cry echoing from town to town, from city to city, of the evil deeds of the Lagos Constabulary Force. Goods were seized from traders; maidens have been assaulted, youths have been plundered; men have been browbeaten and women have been robbed. Neither the family alter nor the family hearth has escaped their daring.[138]

Barracks and its Inhabitants

The main inhabitants of colonial barracks were the British officers and non-commissioned officers and their wives, indigenous soldiers and their families, European civil servants, (missionaries, medical and veterinary officers, education officers, local servants and cooks.) Corroborating the view, Constance Larymore asserts, "We made friends too with the small community of white people in the stations, the nursing sisters, Northern Nigeria Regiment (NNR) officers, and civilian officials and many were the helping hands."[139] One notable exception of the period was the absence of female soldiers in the barracks, the reason behind this, probably could be located in the ideology of separate spheres.

Post-colonial barracks, on the other hand, was composed of servicemen and women, wives of military personnel, civilian spouses of female soldiers (army husbands), children of military personnel, families and relations, staff of Ministry of Defence, traders and artisans in the *mammy* markets among others. These categories of people were known as stakeholders in the barracks system and distinctions were made in their personal identification card by the military authorities. Apart from servicemen and female soldiers, wives of military personnel had been defined in varied terms by scholars either as incorporated wife,[140] intruders,[141] unwelcome appendages,[142] or civilians in the military system. Similarly, the authorities recognised wives of military personnel and children as 'military dependants'[143] consequent

upon “dependant’s identity cards” being issued to them. These titles were created in the barracks for easy identification, and perhaps, as a mark of social distinction. It is also reinforced by the fact that the community operated a sub-culture different from the culture of the larger society.

As a plural setting, the community was governed by military laws, traditions and values as well as respect for authority and protocols. For this cause, there was social division in the activities of the classes of people in the environment. The officer elite, for example, were known as the upper-class or the high echelon in the barracks. Their position was informed by training and commission, as well as the responsibility to make laws and enforce regimentation. Thus the officer cadre enjoyed a lot of privileges uncommon to non-commissioned officers both in accommodation and welfare.

The second level of authority in the barracks was the non-commissioned officers or the “other ranks” as used in military parlance. They were indispensable in their own command structure because the system stipulates a clear cut role between the two levels of authority, that is officers and other ranks, even though, the military system made them accountable to the officers as contained in the Terms and Condition of Service and military laws. Because of their utility in the military force, they out-numbered the officer cadre in population and departments.

The other group of people in the system, who sometimes lived in the barracks were the civilian staff employed by the Ministry of Defence. These employees never felt any different or marginalized in the community because they perceived themselves as colleagues in the system, working alongside military personnel irrespective of training and uniform.

Their autonomy was also distinct in the social structure because they were responsible only to the Ministry of Defence from where their salaries were paid. The military only provided the environment and infrastructure within which to carry out their responsibilities. Sometimes, a clash of authority and personal interest occurred as a result of overlapping responsibilities. For this reason, cases of disobedience or truancy on the part of civilian staff were reported to the Ministry of Defence Headquarters because military personnel had no powers of their own to try or punish erring civilian staff based on the Civil and Public Service Rules.

The other residents in the barracks were relations of military personnel otherwise known as 'immediate families'. The family relations of military personnel sometimes lived in the community on the privileges and personal recognition of officers and men. Their actions in the barracks were restricted but tied to the rank of the officer who accommodated them. Thus they had little or nothing to contribute to the barracks system.

However, the position of military authorities was clear on the issue of dependants. For instance, at age 18, all dependants of serving military personnel whether male or female were expected to vacate the barracks because they were recognised in the system as adults.[144] The eviction of this category of people was usually greeted with sorrow by their parents. And this had provoked some military personnel including officers to disengage their service. To them, the military career was in vain without their children whom they owed much obligation.

The study emphasises that 'eviction orders' was not observed to the letter in recent times as some officers' children far above 18 years lived in the barracks, while others enjoyed their university holidays in the community. It was only in extreme cases of criminality or insecurity in the barracks that eviction orders were invoked against them. But eviction was a

common experience in the lives of other ranks' children as their parents did not belong to the elitist class. The last category of people in the community comprised illegal occupants. In this group were either civilians or military retirees who encroached on the community as a result of surplus sleeping spaces in some barracks. This was often perfected through gratification by some officers and men of the Quartermaster (QM) in-charge of accommodation. The illegal occupants were sometimes evicted by the authorities to avoid criminal tendencies and recruitment of children of military personnel as cannon fodder. In recent times, however, majority of the people were used in sanitation and sundry duties as their presence in the barracks was not in agreement with military traditions.

The question therefore is what is the nature of inter-dependence and social relationship among the inhabitants and how does the environment impact on them? "Living in military community" as H.M. Lai explains, "had direct impact on the socio-cultural orientation of personnel, families and upbringing of children. But contrary to expectations, "life in the barracks was not nasty and brutish in the Hobbesian sense, but certainly not as rosy either."[145]

The inhabitants of the barracks behaved as a family in their day to day routine, despite disagreements which occurred from time to time. This interplay promoted cooperation and collaboration within the ranks, it also made it possible for officers and men to build confidence in one another, so much that the welfare of their families were sometimes entrusted in the hands of family friends whenever assigned on foreign mission or internal security operations (ISO). It was common in the barracks to find wives of officers and men being assisted by their husband's friends during banking transactions, processing of admission of wards into Command Primary or Command Secondary Schools or in time of admission in the hospital.

This understanding between and among military families was more evident in time of death of an officer or those of other ranks. In this circumstance, the burden of burial arrangement was often shouldered by friends in the air force, navy, and army in concert with the deceased serviceman's family. It was sometimes reported that friends of deceased soldiers often made efforts aimed at ensuring that entitlements of their friends were paid in good time to avoid the burden of maintaining deceased families.

This level of inter-dependence also had its disadvantages. First, it encouraged promiscuity and amoral behaviour across ranks, as some men took advantage of this intimacy to engage their friends' wives and daughters. Second, familiarity between and among class-mates in the force sometimes encouraged conspiracy, coup plotting, drinking and licentiousness. This scenario has been discussed in Chapter Eight.

In broad perspective, relationships between and among military families and friends were strengthened by the ability to speak one another's language. Hence, it was common to find military personnel and their families speaking fluently, two or three major Nigerian languages (Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa). This practice had also extended to names given to children born in the barracks, mode of dressing, and food culture. It was not uncommon to hear children of military personnel from Niger Delta being called Bose, Bimbo, Yinka, Bunmi, Adeleke, Adetokunbo, Ayomide, and others; while children born in the barracks in Northern part of the country were given names such as Mustapha, Musa, Yakubu, Mohammed, Bature, and others. The females also were not left out, as some of them born in the north had names such as Aisha, Laraba, Maryam, Binta, and Amina. Similarly, children of Yoruba parents in barracks in eastern Nigeria answered such names as Ngozi, Chichi, Chinasa, Amarachi, and Ada, among others.

Having such names sometimes made it difficult to make out the state of origin of such families in the barracks. On the other hand, proficiency in other people's language and culture mix had often inspired some of the young people in the barracks to venture into arts and music, which had become profitable to many in contemporary times. It also encouraged co-operation and exchange of ideas wherever they found themselves.

The barracks as a mini-Nigeria also provided opportunities for children of military personnel to dress in various costumes - Igbo, Hausa or Yoruba and this had often reflected in the social life of their parents, as it was normal to find an Igbo in the barracks dressed in *Kaftan*, or *Agbada*, while it was fashionable for a soldier of Yoruba origin to be clad in Niger Delta attire or the royal regalia of the chiefs. This tradition had also extended to Command Children Schools in the barracks where a day had been set aside in their school calendar for 'cultural day'. This occasion provided opportunity for school children to dress in traditional or cultural costume of any ethnic group as a symbol of unity. On the food culture of the barracks, H.M. Lai observes:

> Military personnel of northern Nigeria and their families conveniently learnt to drink and eat local meals, *palm-wine*, *amala* and *ewedo* soup, while serving in the Western part of the country, and also learnt how to eat *garri* and egusi or *ogbono* soup while serving in the South-South East. Those of Southern origin learnt how to eat *tuwon shinkafa*, *suya* meat and drink *burukutu* while serving in the North. It was for this reason that barracks were referred to as mini-Nigeria.[146]

Furthermore, children born in the barracks believed in the barracks communal spirit which helped them inadvertently to develop traits of soldiering as they grew up. Some of them ended up being commissioned officers because of the privileges of education through Command Primary Schools, Command Secondary Schools or the Nigerian Military School.

The opportunity for scholarship and learning equally laid the foundation for life partners and future prospects in the system. Marriages were sometimes contracted and arranged by children of military personnel sometimes to the joy or chagrin of their parents. It was reported that conjugal arrangements involving daughters of military personnel were often repulsed by mothers, especially where the marriage had to do with a soldier, that is, a non-commissioned officer. The contention of some mothers could be located in the fact that frequent absence of military men from home was inimical to the welfare of women and children. This they claimed affected their well-being one way or the other.

Similarly, such contemplation was sometimes rejected by some soldiers and parents who argued that most soldiers' daughters were only suitable for friendship as against life partners. Objections were sometimes hidden on the premise that the would-be wife had acquired traits of barracks culture which was not convenient for family development. With regards to officers' children, opposition was also rife and stronger because commissioned officers in most cases never consented to the marriage of their daughters or sons by children of non-commissioned officers and vice-versa.

The argument was echoed in the philosophy that non-commissioned officers were tools to the used in the military force. Therefore, marriages between their children were seen as a social anomaly that must be opposed and repulsed in the community. In a desperate attempt to dissuade their children from early stage of life, commissioned officers from time to time drew contrasting examples of the life of an officer and the attendant opportunities and privileges which was uncommon in the families of non-commissioned officers. This early education and lifestyle inculcated in the minds of the officers' children the philosophy of superiority and class over non-commissioned officers' children.

Thus, marriages between non-commissioned officers' children were permissible but sometimes thrived on disagreement. In time and space, attempts by officers' children to marry non-commissioned officers' daughters or sons only succeeded with a few irrespective of religion or social affiliation of parents. However, this dichotomy has gradually changed in recent times due to opportunities and talents opened in various human endeavours.

Social Stratification in Nigerian Barracks

Since the colonial times, there has been a marked social stratification in Nigerian military barracks. This idea made it difficult for women to join their spouses in the early years of the force because they were regarded as appendages in the organisation. This dichotomy was also visible in the relationship between European wives and indigenous soldiers' wives throughout the colonial period. Perhaps, this was due to the nature of the institution and the organization of the service.

The Nigeria military structure since inception was hierarchical and centralized. This arrangement conferred power and privileges to the officer corps of the force which was also extended to their wives. The social cleavage in the force was sustained by wide-ranging rules and regulations designed to support the officers' cadre in particular, their wives, and the establishment in general. To this end, a few mechanisms were instituted to checkmate the dichotomy while maintaining order and stability in the system. Beginning with the privileges of accommodation, officers' quarters were separated from the accommodation of other ranks indicated earlier. This was intended to create superiority and separateness. The distance between the quarters was far away and obvious, so much that families of other ranks would not by chance interact with officers' families.

Similarly, in size and design, the officers' apartments were more spacious, with detachable boys' quarters for dependants and bat-men which was lacking in the accommodations of other ranks. Military officers also enjoyed other privileges uncommon to other ranks in the barracks. A few of these include car loans, appointments, and courses abroad, among others. There was also a marked difference between the officers' uniform and that of other ranks. This was visible in the texture of uniforms and design, barge of ranks and epaulets on the shoulder, shoe design, and ceremonial dresses.

The officers' cadre also enjoyed the services of orderlies and bat-men on attaining commanding heights. The duties of the orderlies were wide-ranging and far-reaching, despite the fact that they were other ranks in the force. Orderlies were first and foremost responsible to the office they were assigned as gate-keepers to the senior officers. Second, orderlies were entrusted with the functions of receiving and despatching correspondences from the office of his boss to the main office or any office directed by his boss. In addition, orderlies had the mandate to screen and interrogate every visitor intending to see or interact with their bosses. At the same time, they had the powers and authority to debar any officer(s) whose stance was a threat to the boss. Lastly, orderlies were under obligations to attend to personal errands of their bosses so long as such errands never contravened military ethics and values.

On the other hand, the duties of bat-men were important in the military organisation. This is because a bat-man must be a serving non-commissioned officer below the rank of a sergeant. He was under compulsion to live in the officer's house as a house-assistant whether the officer had a wife or not. He was also entitled to work all day round in the house depending on the nature of task before him. The duties include, washing of the officer's uniforms, cars, cutting of grasses and trimming of flowers, sometimes visiting the officers' children in

schools and colleges, attending to visitors and the officer's dependants, among others. It is for this reason that a bat-man was regarded as a member of the officer's household; thus, he was in most cases not discriminated against by any member of the officers' family.

In the early years of the colonial force, the position of a bat-man was jealously guarded because it was perceived as a rare privilege and an esteemed status working in the compound of a British military officer. As military traditions demanded, whenever the officer was to depart on posting, or retirement, the bat-man was given the opportunity to retain some of his personal effects / belongings depending on the character and disposition of the military officer. In addition to these items, a bat-man enjoyed promotion to the next rank without stress once recommended to the next rank by his boss, particularly, on the grounds of loyalty and dedication to duty. A resident bat-man was entitled to work with the in-coming officer(s) only when his loyalty was not in doubt but this must be in agreement with the recommendations of the out-going officer(s). These were some of the advantages and glamour surrounding the office of the bat-man in the military system.

However, in contemporary times, most recruits despised the job of a bat-man in the military, basically on the grounds that it was an extension of servitude which far outweighed its benefit and gratification. According to an informant[147] it was reported in the military circles that quite a good number of bat-men had either been reduced in rank or absconded from duty for deliberately disobeying officers' wives who tried to reduce the office of bat-men to personal servants in violation of military ethics. An informant[148] notes that this development became worrisome in the 1980s thereby compelling the military to issue a policy abrogating the office of the bat-man in the military. This is not to deny the fact that it still exist informally in the organisation, but at the discretion and volition of the soldier.

Apart from the use of orderlies and bat-men which was introduced in colonial period, military officers also enjoyed the privilege of attending courses abroad accompanied by wives and four children for a period of nine months or more. This opportunity started in the 1960s when a corps of Nigerian officers began their training in United Kingdom and India. The presence of the officer's wife and children was to place the officer on a good stead without undue worries about the home-front or developments in his country.

Sometimes, while on foreign mission, the officer earned his promotion alongside his counterparts in his country. It was after much agitation by other ranks that this provision was put forward for consideration as part of their welfare. Prior to this time, the soldiers were simply retained as personnel of the Nigerian High Commission or Consulate Office, this anomaly had been questioned for so long in the system, yet, the authority remained indifferent but since the 1990s this policy had been rectified. Similarly, recommendations and promotions of other ranks on peacekeeping operation had also been streamlined because they were on national assignment.

The other aspect of social stratification in the barracks was the nature of messes. The Officers' Mess, for instance, was distinct from that of the Sergeant and Warrant Officers' Mess, and the Corporal-Below Mess. Generally, in all the messes, officers and men engaged in eating and drinking at the close of work as it was an offence to indulge in any social activity during working hours.[149] Civilian workers in the establishments as well as businessmen were enrolled as honorary members of the mess. They participated in the activities of the mess and also arranged their own functions in the place. As members of the mess, they were entitled to pay mess dues as well as contribute to the development of the mess.[150]

Nevertheless, the social division in the mess also affected officers and non-commissioned officers' wives. This is because officers' wives were only allowed to attend social functions organised in the officers' mess, while wives of non-commissioned officers were equally restricted to other ranks' messes. This was the mess tradition in colonial barracks and it had continued even in contemporary times. As N.J.Miners asserts:

> Social relationships between white and black officers in the mess were superficially friendly. The customs of the mess were the same as those to be found in British stations all over the world; British food was normally served and all the mess subscribed to various British newspapers as well as Nigerian ones. Until after Independence Nigerian officers formed a small minority in all units. Some who had spent a long period of training in England found this entirely to their liking, and were practically 'black Englishmen'.[151]

Tentative Population of Wives of Military Personnel in Nigeria

The population of military men in Nigeria has been rehearsed extensively in different publications but the situation was not the same with wives of military personnel. Therefore, this calls for investigation in a work of this scope. The population of wives of military personnel since the colonial period cannot be ascertained with statistical precision due to paucity of verifiable data in all the military formations, museums and archives visited in the course of this study. Available evidence suggests that this encounter was not only peculiar to contemporary researchers but as past scholars who surveyed aspects of military history faced the same difficulty. Perhaps, it is for this reason that Akintoye's *Revolution and Power Politics in Yorubaland 1840*-1893[152] and R.S.Smith's Warfare *and* Diplomacy *in Pre-Colonial West Africa*[153] generalized the population of Ekiti camp to be 40,000 and 60,000 for Ibadan camp. Nevertheless, Enock Oyedele's insightful work titled "The Military Factor in the Rise and Development of Kaduna Metroplis"[154] provides a sketchy guide on the figures of military men and women in Kaduna alone based on the census figures of the past years.

Questions have been asked as to why the military had copious data on officers and non-commissioned officers without statistical information relating to their wives. According to an informant,[155] it was possible for military authorities to maintain the nominal rolls of soldiers of the West Africa Frontier Force (WAFF) from each of the West African sub-region because of exigencies of deployment, logistics, and replacement of casualties.

Second, the strength of each battalion was important to the Colonial Office because it helped the system to ascertain the number of men to be recruited from time to time and region to region. An informant[156] argued that enumeration of military wives in the force was not consequential because women were homemakers who had no role in combat operations. It is understandable that there can be no statistics unless someone has first done the enumeration. Therefore, the study emphasises that the population of wives would be difficult to establish due to the following reasons; First, some military personnel especially those with Muslim background had more than one wife, one in the barracks, two or three in the village(s). Second, cases of divorce were rampart in the early and formative years of the force up till the 1970s. Third, colonial soldiers were mandated to disengage from service every two years or so. Consequently, demobilization of troops were recorded in the following years, 1907,[157] 1916,[158] 1919,[159] 1922,[160] 1946,[161] 1975,[162] 1981,[163] 1991[164] and 1999.

Finally, there was the cultural factor which forbade the counting of women and children in most Nigerian societies. It should be recalled that the Aba Women's Riot of 1929 was caused partly by this factor. The difficulty in establishing the population of women in the barracks was further worsened by first, bureaucratic bottlenecks in the military system, second, paucity of records on military dependants from battalions and units. And finally, prohibition of independent researchers from the use of official and classified documents based on the

"doctrine of the need to know" and the "doctrine of the need to hold." Nevertheless, the population of wives resident in the barracks from 1905 to 1999 had been estimated to have been about 578,000.[165] But an informant[166] notes that the population of wives of military personnel from 1905 to 1999 was about 500,000.

Conclusion

The Nigerian military force began in 1863 and since then, it has shown some element of change and continuity both in policy, tradition and culture. The Nigerian Army, though an embryo of the West African Frontier Force was enlarged in the second half of the nineteen century following the absorption of the Glover Hausas. The Nigerian Navy and Air Force only assumed prominence in the 1960s when they participated in the Nigerian Civil War. The Nigerian military has equally participated in a number of international engagements and peace-keeping mission. This role has made the country popular in global affairs, particularly in the West African sub-region where she provided leadership and example.

The evolution of Nigerian barracks and its inhabitants have remained an unending debate. From the analysis several factors favoured the location of barracks in an area. These include the absence of diseases and epidemics, tsetse flies, waterlog and swamps. Others were availability of road networks, portable drinking water, and favourable landscape. In the early years of the military force, troops lived in mud houses, thatched tents, shanties popularly called bush huts as a result of scarcity of living quarters. This problem affected the force in many ways. First, it affected the well-being of troops. Second, it contributed to the rejection of women in the barracks due to the absence of comfort. Third, it hampered the evolution of a robust barracks culture and other institutions. Finally, it made military-civil relations difficult as soldiers were rarely seen except during conflicts.

Nevertheless, the construction of modern barracks began in 1904, in northern Nigeria before it spread to western part of the country in 1927. Since then, much progress has been made in the provision of quarters for military personnel throughout the country. It was also observed that since the 1990s the layout and pattern of accommodation has changed drastically given way to spacious flats and bungalows. It should be clear from the above discussion that the construction of modern barracks was an afterthought of the Colonial Office because the period from 1863 to 1904 could be considered a reasonable time for the provision of habitable accommodation for troops. But the underlying assumption was that the British imperial authority never wanted to invest in such huge ventures which they termed a waste of public funds. Besides, they wanted to make their colonial enterprise transitory but the events leading to the First World War in addition to the economic profile of colonial Nigeria increased their desire to prolong their administration.

Nigerian barracks were composed of military men, dependants (wives and children), and civilian workers. Others included men and women traders in the *mammy* markets as well as artisans and craftsmen. The social stratification in the barracks made it possible for officers' wives to live far apart from wives of non-commissioned officers, a tradition which began in colonial period when it was alleged that the local soldiers and dependants shared their apartments with goats and other domestic animals which made them carriers of malaria fever and dangerous sicknesses. Indeed, the study establishes the fact that the idea was simply propagated to put local soldiers in bad light. What seemed obvious at the time was that colonial administrators simply attempted to create a separate reservation in order to promote segregation and racial inequality.

It is clear from the analysis that the population of wives of military personnel cannot be ascertained with statistical precision because of the following; first, paucity of data as most barracks never kept record of wives of personnel in their domain. Second, some Nigerian customs and traditions encouraged the marriage of many wives. Finally, cases of divorce in the early years of the force as well as the demobilization programmes of the force. Thus, the population of wives since 1905 to 1999 was tentatively put at about 500, 000.

Talcott parsons' theory of social system is relevant to this discussion, especially when he argues that a social system consists of a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect. The military is a good example of a social system and the actors could be individual or collective working for the defence of the nation. The barracks, on the other hand, is the environment with military installations. In military system, soldiers and their dependants internalize the values of the organisation, that is, they made the social values of the cultural system their own by learning from other actors in the organisation what is expected of them. In other words, they learned role expectations and become full participants in the community.

The idea of social stratification is also important to the sustenance of military life. The major function of unequal rewards is to motivate talented individuals and allocate them to the functionally most important positions. It is this functional role that officers and their wives fulfil which gave them power and prestige (critical social goods) to control other structures in the system. The concept of social stratification in the military has also provided order, stability and pattern maintenance and this is why the organisation has survived.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE ORIGINS OF WIVES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL IN NIGERIA

Introduction

The role of Nigerian women in politics and economy has been adequately examined and documented in some academic literature and journals. But "the contributions of women, either as warriors' wives, camp followers, arms carriers, or facilitators have either been glossed over, under-analysed or absent from all but the edges of the description."[1] It is against this backdrop that this chapter investigates the following: First, the role of women in some traditional military camps in Nigeria, the essence of this background is to provide an introduction to the analysis of wives of military personnel in modern barracks.

It is also in response to the views of two great scholars, Stephen Ellis and John Iliffe in their separate arguments "that the writing of contemporary history sometimes requires going much further into the past than forty or fifty years ago... the objective is to penetrate the thinking of those who were implicated in the events of the past."[2] Second, it discusses the emergence of wives of military personnel in colonial barracks and the challenges of early years. Additionally, it highlights the social relations between officers' wives and wives of other ranks. Finally, the chapter explores some of the images of wives of military personnel over time.

The Role of Women in Traditional Camps

"Throughout history," as Lucinda Peach notes, "war has been a theatre in which men could prove their masculinity and in which masculinity has been deemed a necessary pre-requisite to success."[3] However, women as a matter of fact have been part of military system since

antiquity either as combatants, warriors' wives, or camp followers. This is also captured in the account of the Bible, myths, and oral traditions of some societies. For instance, Deborah was a renowned female prophetess who led the people of Israel to war as recorded in the Book of Judges 4:4-9.[4] The Yoruba mythology also mentions one Moremi as a warrior of her time and age. Madam Tinubu of Egba and Iyalode Efunsetan of Ibadan were camp followers and prominent traders in their communities.

Few questions stand to elucidate the idea attempted in this chapter. First, why was it imperative for women to be involved in a predominantly male domain such as military camp? Were the views of women so critical as to have them involved in male assembly where decisions of war or peace were taken? Can it therefore be argued that some scholars who contend that wars impacted more on women than men in matters they neither caused nor contribute to; need to re-examine the theme of war and women in some traditional camps?

Generally in most traditional societies, evidence abounds on the power and influence of some female camp followers and warriors' wives which they deployed effectively to advantage. Some of them were also reported to have been involved in major resolutions of the camp, especially in matters relating to the politics of war and restoration of peace. They equally participated in logistics, espionage, war economy, rebuilding of walls, treatment of wounded combatants and carrying of victuals to warriors along front lines. Much of these responsibilities were still being carried out by some women in contemporary barracks.

The nineteenth century Yoruba wars, for instance, brought to the fore women's power relations with men; at a time when conflict was the exclusive preserve of men. The Egba war introduced a few camp women into prominence because of their involvement in decision

making, social responsibility and trade. The views of these women were imperative in the general assembly because they were predominantly traders who engaged in inter and intra market activities. And since conflict was a barrier to the free flow of goods and services, oftentimes leading to the closure of road networks or the opening of alternative trade routes, the consensus of these women were indispensable.

The efforts of a few Yoruba women elite and some interest groups in the war years, identified in this study as "female camp followers" for reasons of their dedication, patriotism and loyalty to their people cannot be underplayed in a study of this nature. This is because their efforts contributed to the survival of their camps and the attendant victory of the time. Describing the *Ogboni* institution in Egbaland, Saburi Biobaku declared that "it is a society of wealthy and influential men and a few old women, who could be relied upon to place duty above sentiment and to maintain secrecy."[5] These women, (the *Erelu*) were the elitist group that represented womenfolk in matters of politics and administration. Their roles were also conspicuous in legislative and judicial matters.

One of the outstanding female camp followers in Abeokuta at the time was Madam Tinubu, a prominent trader and community leader. Available records have not yielded enough information whether she was a member of Erelu or not, what seems obvious was that she participated in major decisions that affected the camp, but more importantly was her role in co-ordinating the women of the camp during the Dahomey/Abeokuta war of 1851.[6] Similarly, Madam Tinubu's involvement in the economic and social life of her people in the nineteenth century were remarkable because it gave her power and influence.

Also writing on the institution of *Iyalode* in the history of Ibadan, Bolanle Awe explained that they were "the political head of the women in the nineteenth century and only a sprinkling number were offered the title in recognition of their contribution to the war effort of their towns."[7] It was during this period that *Iyalode* Efunsetan of Ibadan emerged as a symbol of wealth and power in Ibadan military republic. Her contributions to the people of Ibadan earned her the title *Iyalode,* or mother in charge of external affairs.[8]

The study reveals that *Iyalode* Efunsetan and Madam Tinubu deployed their influence, power and wealth to create identity in male-dominated camps where they were neither wives of combatants nor female warriors. Perhaps, it is for this reason that Balanle Awe described some of the women as "saviours of their societies."[9] The above illustration is important because a lot of people assumed that declaration of war; conflict resolution, and peace-building were the sole responsibility of men in African societies. It has also shown that most of the victories recorded by men in warfare and conflict involved the efforts of women.

The role of warriors' wives in traditional camps cannot be overemphasized. This is because they helped in the stabilization of household and socialization. The question therefore is to what extent did warriors' wives contribute to the development of the camp(s) in particular and the camp culture in general? According to Bolanle Awe and Omotayo Olutoye, "their functions were traditionally based because they provided essential services to make military life tolerable, most of them provided comfort for their husbands at home after a long absence to the battle ground."[10] For instance, Father Holley who visited Ogedengbe at the Ekitiparapo camp observed that, "in the middle of the heap of arms the General-in-chief ruled modestly; surrounded by his wives and children. Such was the condition in which many of the war leaders lived."[11] Their wives cooked for them, looked after their general welfare, while others

were devoted to procreation and home management. On the other hand, the oral traditions of the people of Oye (Ilupeju) in present-day Ekiti State explain how young maidens went about nude to vouch their sincerity against the poisoning of food prepared for Lugbosun Fajembola, for which Adeboyejo, one of his daughters volunteered to stay with her father throughout the Kiriji War. Similarly, W.K.R. Hallam pointed out that "on the line of march, Rabih usually had a vanguard of horsemen followed by a baggage party accompanied by his women and slaves."[12] It was evident that these women prepared the food and other victuals consumed by the combatants.

In the same vein, some warriors' wives functioned as traditional healers using local herbs in the treatment of combatants while others combined their effort with mystical or supernatural powers. History is replete with the activities of Orisaleke, wife of Ogedengbe who was reported to have provided mystical support to her husband for which she was described as Ogedengbe's mascot.[13] The magical powers made it possible for her to control unseen forces on the battle ground thereby making it feasible for him (her husband) to obtain quick and easy victory in most of the wars. Reiterating the fact, Awe and Olutoye affirm that, "she was a master in the preparation of potent charms to protect Ogedengbe and give him victory over his enemies."[14]

The application of mystical power was not only limited to Ogedengbe's wife, it had been a common phenomenon in time and space. Oral traditions equally tell of women who called on supernatural agents to aid their men in war. For instance, in Oye town there was one Molebi, nicknamed *'ElegberunIbon*' (the owner of 1000 guns) who was known to have fought single-handedly against the Ibadan soldiers at night and rendered them vulnerable to Ekitiparapo attacks the following day.[15]

Similarly, "a female deity, *Aisegba*, was reported to have gone to war selling poisoned food to the Ibadan, and at strategic times conjured rain on them."[16] Nevertheless, there was another female deity at Ara, known as *Owarunula* believed also to have acted as the saviour of her people at critical times.[17] Apart from mystical power, another phenomenon common with wives of warriors was the carrying out of sacrifices to the gods to enable their husbands return safely, immune against guns and other lethal weapons.

In the area of logistics, some warriors' wives went to the front line to ensure adequate supply of arms and ammunition to their spouses. They also provided information on the movement and position of enemy troops. Traditions have it that some wives went to the extent of sleeping with their husband's enemies in order to extort information on the strategy and strength of enemy forces.

Female Warriors in Traditional Camps

Women's involvement in actual warfare as warriors was not common in most traditional camps in the nineteenth century; perhaps research effort had not been co-ordinated in this direction as was the case with the Amazons of Dahomey who doubled as fighters and wives to the king of Dahomey.[18] According to Bolanle Awe and Omotayo Olutayo:

> There were a few instances of Yoruba women resorting to war and facing the heat of battle. Such female warriors were often women of distinction and noble birth whose circumstances made it possible for them to do away with tradition and assume unconventional roles, such as *Omosa*, a wealthy woman and daughter of *Bashorun Ogunmola*. She often donned her late father's battle dress to lead Ibadan forces personnaly on horseback against the Ijebu soldiers.[19]

The other prominent woman of the period was *Wabodu*, daughter of *Derin Ologbenla*, who was always dressed in combat readiness carrying a gun,[20] and sometimes volunteered to lead troops against enemies of Ekitiparapo.

Also, Queen *Idia* (the Iyoba) of Benin kingdom was a warrior of repute who contributed to the defeat of Idah armies. Her achievements were remembered in Benin history and traditions so much that in contemporary times, schools and other monuments were named after her. According to Jacob Egharevba's informative study on Benin history, "*Ose,* the mother of *Oba Obanosa* of Benin kingdom was notorious because she joined the enemies of her son during the Benin wars."[21]

The question therefore is to what extent did the sight of these female warriors affect or influence traditional warfare? The sight of these female warriors on the battle ground was often misconstrued in some circles as supernatural or mystical, since war was exclusively an adventure for men. But suffice to state that their presence posed a lot of challenges to male combatants, sometimes spurring them to face their opponents with great determination because of presumed invincibility of the women. The other argument centred on the fact that their defeat was capable of attracting derogatory songs from camp women.

Women in the camp also contributed to knowledge and learning in the Sokoto Caliphate, a notable example was Nana Asma'u, wife of Vizier Gidado.b. Laima. She organised women within and outside the camp for classes of Islamic instructions in her home and by 1838 she co-authored a work with her husband titled *Karamat* of the *Sheik and Muhammad Bello* in which they formalised oral tradition. Another remarkable feat was her steadfastness in translating the work into Fulfulde verse which made it accessible and memorable to the faithful.[22] The above analysis is important because it shows that women's role in the camp, either as camp followers, female warriors, or wives of warriors had been existing since pre-colonial period. The beauty of the age was that women were not restricted to politics and socio-economic activities of the camps. Thus, they played notable roles in actual wars,

logistics and espionage. The study notes that there was a flourishing political, economic, and social culture of wives in most traditional military camps and other societies. However, the emergence of the British imperial administration marked the end of traditional camps and state wars in Nigeria. It also brought about the involvement of women in colonial barracks in Nigeria.

Background to the Evolution of Women in Colonial Barracks

The general public might not really understand the integral workings of military organisation or perhaps the position of a wife of military personnel in the barracks. The question that has repeatedly been asked is, who is a wife of military personnel and how did she come to have a place in the barracks? The general thinking is that a wife of military personnel is any woman found in the barracks or married to a military man. This idea, to say the least, glossed over the technical meaning of the concept.

A wife of military personnel, for the purpose of this study is one who is legally married to service personnel in the army, navy or the air force and officially recognized as a 'dependant' of the military. She lived a mobile life as a result of the military assignment of her spouse which demanded that he be posted from time to time irrespective of boundaries and domestic challenges. Similarly, the life of a wife of a soldier is beset with prolonged separation from her husband which required continuous adaptation and "instant involvement" in the activities of Military Wives' Association and its affiliates.

It is also a life that close relationship with extended family of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins was seldom possible because of the highly mobile nuclear military exigency.[23] Besides, a wife of military personnel is guided by barracks traditions and conventions and a

violation of any section was likely to affect the career of her spouse. Perhaps, it is for these and other reasons that this category were referred to as dependants. The position of wives of military personnel could be said to be captivating in a way because "the military cannot force a dependant to do anything she does not want to do"[24] unlike her husband who is seen as a 'military asset.' This is corroborated by General William C.Westmoreland:

> Serving one's country as a military man is a rewarding experience. It is nevertheless a life of constraint. A military man serves within carefully prescribed limits, be it as enlisted man, junior officer, battalion commander, division commander, even senior field commander even in time of war. The freedom to speak out in the manner of a private citizen, journalist, politician, and legislator has no part in the assignment.[25]

As military dependants or the 'silent ranks,' the military cannot violate the spouses' sovereign rights.[26] Hence, "they rewarded spouses who played by the appropriate rule...giving up one's personal lives, goals, dreams and desires in order to put the military, front and centre in their lives."[27] Extending the thinking, O.Ophiolite argues:

> The fact of the matter is that as long as military spouses are satisfied with "jobs" instead of careers, by defining themselves as "spouses" instead of by their very real contributions to society, they will continue to be walked all over by the military. The military knows that until a woman has obtained the education and experience necessary to command significant earning potential, the spouse will play ball as a financial survival tactic, particularly in uncertain times."[28]

The Emergence of Indigenous Soldiers' Wives in Colonial Barracks

The emergence of wives in modern barracks began on a gradual scale. First, it started with the army wives as other arms of the military had not evolved. The Navy of the period was known as the Nigerian Marine and had no barracks, while the Nigerian Air Force had not been established until the 1960s. In the intervening years before 1905, series of attempts were made to incorporate women into the barracks but without success. According to Gabriel O. Olusanya, efforts were made in the last decade of the nineteenth century in this regard, "as for

women freed from slavery, the practice at first was to give them out as wives or concubines to soldiers or others or turn them adrift to the town to lead a life of prostitution, as this was deplorable an alternative had to be sought."[29]

S.C.Ukpabi also indicates that another attempt was made in October 1900 by Captain Lynch in one of his expeditions to recruit soldiers from Gombe area. In like manner, the enterprise proved abortive because most of the soldiers were unable to convince their wives and immediate families on the need to live in the barracks, even when the Commanding Officer mounted pressure on the men, the women refused to join them in the barracks.[30] The refusal of the women at the time was partly due to a number of factors - the question of accommodation as most soldiers lived in barracks made of "tents and bush huts."[31] The rampant cases of hostility by the local people against soldiers and their families as well as the problem of low wages.

Consequently, the situation created wide ranging problems for the Colonial Office in the successive years. Of great challenge was the drastic reduction in the strength of the force in most barracks, attributed to increased desertion of troops especially in the last decade of the nineteenth century. This experience was most worrisome in military units located in boundary areas known as "Operational Units." These Units were responsible for checking local rising and external incursions in the country. For instance, in 1898 alone, over 100 soldiers absconded from duty posts in military barracks located in Western Nigeria.

The problem was also heightened by unfounded rumour of an impending attack on Ilorin by the Jihadists which the Colonial Office denied.[32] Indeed, this did not go down well with the people, thus immediately after the Anglo-Asante War of 1900 cases of desertion reached

worrisome proportion in the Gold Coast Regiment as majority of the troops abandoned their uniforms and weapons to escape detection.[33] Apart from the fact that some of the soldiers were married before enlistment and their wives living in different villages and towns, there were other underlying factors that contributed to the absconding of troops even when women had emerged in the barracks. These included; poor remuneration of troops, negative perception of soldiers by some members of the public who used such epithet as *afamako* and *abobaku*[34] coupled with complaints of victims of forced conscription who accused the West African Frontier Force of highhandedness, and finally, reports of indifference by victims of war and influenza epidemic of 1918.[35]

Thus, desertion became a fundamental issue at the Headquarters of West African Frontier Force in Gold Coast and to uncover the remote and immediate cause, a Board of Inquiry was established, headed by Lt Col Wilkinson. The Wilkinson's Commission on Desertion in the Gold Coast regiment marked a turning point in the military system and culture because it led to the emergence of wives of military personnel in the barracks of the former British West African territories in 1905.

Summarising the findings of the Board, Ukpabi writes:

> It found that among the causes were changes in diets and separation of the soldiers from their families, and that desertion was most common among soldiers recruited outside the Gold Coast, of whom the Yoruba and the Mende were in the majority. Yams, the staple food of the Yoruba, were limited in quantity in Asante, while the Mende from Sierra Leone could not obtain enough rice except when the government sold damaged rice from its store in Kumasi. In many instances, the wives could not be persuaded to leave either Sierra Leone, Senegal [the Gambia] or Nigeria to join their husbands in the Gold Coast.[36]

As a remedy, the Committee recommended among others that every effort be made to encourage women to join their husbands in the cantonments while captured deserters should be subjected to severe corporal punishment so as not to forget their drill if imprisoned. In addition, recruits should be enlisted locally, since it would be much easier to detect a local deserter than one who had left the colony.[37]

The Advent of European Wives in Colonial Barracks

Amidst the jubilant mood of officers and men in the regiment on this pronouncement, the policy, however, did not include European wives. It should be recalled that at the beginning of colonial rule only very senior British officers were allowed to bring their wives in the colonies and this arrangement was based on personal recognition and not exceeding a reasonable time. In Nigeria, these visits were mostly on temporary basis as Colonial Office had not ratified the policy on European women in the colonies. Supporting this standpoint was a letter dated 1899 from Sir William MacGregor, Governor of Lagos which reads:

> I am very solitary, tristissimo, alone. My wife and daughter came out here for about three months, but the risk was too great and I felt immense relief when I got them both away alive. They left nearly a month ago, and I have heard nothing of them since, so that I am not yet free of anxiety for our fever frequently kills between Lagos and Liverpool.[38]

Similarly, confidential correspondence between Lord Lugard and the Colonial Office in 1904 reveals the argument on the 'objection and rejection' of European wives in the colonies. The question therefore is what were the arguments or rationale behind the objection? First, most officers were supposedly required to travel extensively and the presence of their wives was perceived as capable of obstructing their career. Second, the cost of providing suitable accommodation and health care were seen to be enormous to the Colonial Office.[39] Additionally, the ideological posture of the "hardened old coasters was equally a factor

because women were seen as 'intruders' in what had been essentially a bachelor's paradise, [that is the barracks] where a man could dress as he pleased, drink as much as he liked, and be easy in his morals without causing scandals."[40] Indeed, from the official view point, "wives are often a nuisance in West Africa.... Husbands are reluctant to take them travelling in bad country or bad weather and equally reluctant to leave them behind; therefore they travel less than they should."[41] Therefore, "Lady Lugard, who, being an invalid was unable to join him in Nigeria. Every week they exchanged telegrams; and if her telegrams were a day or two late in arriving, as sometimes happened during the war, he was distracted with anxiety."[42] Apart from this policy and the attendant problem of distance, his [Lugard] earlier marriage to Celia Lugard was unsuccessful due to unspecified character problems before his re-marriage to Flora Shaw in 1902.[43]

Writing on the same matter, Margery Perham asserts: Celia died at about the time of the marriage [to Flora Shaw] but just before her death ended the long unrest she had brought into Lugard's life, she did what she could to wreck the marriage by writing letters of bitter reproach and self justification….[44] However, the study reveals that colonial policy on the restriction of women in the early years of the colonies contributed to disagreements in many homes which affected a lot of marriages.

An informant[45] explains that the major factor responsible for the rejection of women in the early years was the frequent failing in health as well as the problems of pregnancy in a place where medical service was poor or totally not in existence. Besides, it was argued that some women had a culture of nagging which directly or indirectly affected men's output and working relations with others. Corroborating the assertion, Alan Burns argues that "a wife

sometimes quarrels with her husband's brother officers or their wives in a small community where one meets socially in the evening the same people one works with during the day, this is disastrous."[46] This situation remained a source of concern in most modern barracks, sometimes, compelling the Regimental Sergeant Majors (RSM) to arrest offenders or effect a change in their accommodation.

Nevertheless, the severity of government action did not only provoke criticisms but discouraged a lot of colonial officers including those who believed that their wives were useful and indispensable in their primary assignments. In view of this development, granting of privileges and permission to officers to enable their wives pay a visit became the order of the day in most colonies. Describing his dilemma, Alan Burns asserts:

> When I returned to Nigeria for my third tour I was accompanied by my wife. I had to obtain special permission for her to accompany me, and throughout the tour we lived in constant fear that, owing to the shortage of quarters for married men, the wife of so junior an officer would have to be sent back to England."[47]

Lord Lugard's interest in wives of military personnel, perhaps, arose from criticisms of friends and associates who knew that his wife, Flora Shaw, was an epitome of comfort to him in Zungeru barracks, the then capital of Nigeria. It could also be argued that Lugard saw the benefit and advantage of having an assistant as well as a confidant in a woman, hence his marriage in 1902. On the same matter, Flora Shaw notes:

> We were counting up how many people we ought to ask if we gave a big inaugural dinner and we found that there are over thirty civil and military officers of sort. There are also the non-commissioned officers and subordinates in the civil departments....Everyone now is asking me about bringing their wives out and there is a general set toward civilisation.[48]

Subsequently, arguments and official discontent in various locations prompted the imperial government to review its earlier decision as regards European wives but without any formal declaration. Ironically, opposition began to mount even from unsuspecting military officers in charge of colonies on the recalcitrant attitude of Colonial Office on minor debate over wives of military men. This argument was further substantiated by Alan Burns:

> The officer who has his wife with him (unless she is entirely unsuitable as a wife) lives a better and happier life, and eats better food, than he can possibly do as a grass-widower. I attribute my good health after so many years' service in West Africa, to the fact that my wife was with me nearly every tour. The officer who is healthy and comfortable must be of more value to his employers than one who is worried by compulsory separation from his wife.[49]

Similarly, the absence of European wives in Lokoja, Jebba and Zungeru cantonments in the early years motivated Flora Shaw to write to Joseph Chamberlain, the then Secretary of State for Colonies as thus, "The principal, perhaps the only serious obstacle to the successful development of the country appears to me to be the effect of the climate upon Europeans...There can be no trustworthy continuity of administration until men can safely bring their wives and families to the country."[50]

In 1920, the Colonial Office decided that married life should be the rule rather than the exception in the Crown colonies and protectorates.[51] This expectation was declared by Colonel Amery, the spokesperson of the Colonial Office in London. The arrival of European wives was gradual due to the much feared climate, diseases, attitude of local people, language barrier and frequent postings of spouses to mention but a few. Prior to the official announcement, most European wives were involved in different aspects of work as "career women" in Europe, perhaps, preparatory to colonial duties.

On arrival in Nigeria, most of them functioned in dual capacity as helpers as well as assistants to their military husbands, while others remained full-time housewives and cultivator of gardens in the barracks.

The much contended question is why did these women refer to themselves as European wives in the colonies rather than wives of military personnel? Tracing the development, Helen Callaway's illuminating work reveals that "these women in their talks and writings refered to themselves as mainly Europeans' a self-designation which entered the British colonial lexicon at an earlier stage in India and continued in Nigeria where it was used in opposition to 'African' or 'Native."[52]

In modern barracks also such titles has continued to exist as a mark of social stratification. For instance, officers' wives established the Officers' Wives Association in order to create distinction in the social life of women in the barracks; in like manner, non-commissioned officers' wives refused to be addressed as barracks women because, to them, it was a derogatory title. It is for this reason; therefore, that the title of this study is apt. This illustration is important because it shows how wives perceived their status and identity in the barracks since the early times.

While in the colonies some European officers' wives came in contact with other women already working as nursing sisters, missionaries, and agents of big trading houses. "These women took on new roles for themselves and as a group in the Colonial Service and the affairs of the Nigerian society."[53] Corroborating the view, A.H.M. Kirk-Greene observes that an album of photograph taken by Colour Sergeant Brownie of the Royal Niger Constabulary

presently displayed in military museum, Kaduna had two nursing sisters who worked in Lokoja between 1896 and 1898.[54]

It was a few years later that some outstanding European wives came into the barracks, these included, Flora Shaw, *The Times* Correspondent in the 1890s who later became Lady Lugard, Lady Glover who wrote the biography of her husband titled, *Life of Sir John Hawley Glover* (*1897*), Mary Elizabeth Oake who travelled with her husband to the British Cameroons, then administered as an extension of Nigeria, Lady Rex Niven who arrived Nigeria in 1925 and later joined her husband in Lokoja where she was reported to have been told that "the barracks was not a place for women"[55] Lady Alan Burns was known to have assisted her husband in some aspects of military duties and official social engagements, Sylvia Leith-Ross, the great Anthropologist, who lost her husband in Zungeru Cantonment, Constance Larymore, whose reminiscences was documented in her memoir, *A Resident's Wife in Nigeria*, (*1902*).

Others include, Lady Clifford who saw to the furnishing of Government House in Lagos, [56] Lady Donald Cameron, Lady Bryan Sharwood Smith, and Violet Bourdillon, to mention but a few. These women were dependants who lived and worked in different times in colonial barracks. Though, the policy of 1920 was a major landmark in the history of European wives in the colonies, but it could not have come at a better time than that because of other policies and proclamations in Britain. First, was the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1918 which enjoined British women to resume their traditional occupations such as nursing, dressmaking and designs, Women's Volunteer Reserve and Women's Police Force, farm work and other activities because the First World War had eventually ended.[57]

Second, was the 1919 Annulment of Sex Disqualification which hitherto prohibited women from administrative branch of Colonial Service. The new regulation was accepted because it was applicable to newly-appointed officers as well as the old hands in the regiments. According to Alan Burns, "the main attraction of the new conditions, which inclined the older officers to accept them, was the payment by government of the passages of officers' wives."[58] These initiatives contributed greatly to the increase in the number of British officers' and non-commissioned officers' wives who joined their spouses in the colonies. This was highlighted by Captain Sharwood Smith, "I thought to myself, I will at least draw what dividends I may from this sudden turn in events, and within the hour a cable was on its way to my wife telling her to join me as soon as she could get a passage...It was in Kontagora that my wife joined me a few weeks later."[59]

This section emphasises that the emergence of European wives in addition to the wives of indigenous soldiers already on ground since 1905 marked the evolution of women in the barracks. The period was also significant in the history of the Nigerian military for so many reasons. First, it motivated the Colonial Office to commence the immediate construction of quarters for troops. Second; it restored the battered image of British Government in tropical dependencies and finally, it introduced respectability and gentlemanliness in the barracks as men began to wear starched shifts and discontinued the habit of swearing in public.[60]

The Status of Wives of Military Personnel in the Barracks

The citizenship of wives of military personnel was mainly derived from military laws and conventions. These rights and privileges had been in existence since the colonial period, and over the years, it had undergone revision and harmonised with the procedures of other armed forces. Citizenship as used in this context denotes the status and membership of a person in a

community. The question is, what position (s) did military wives occupy in the barracks and how were their citizenship legitimized? The position of wives in the barracks as dependants, helpers, producers, and mothers is indispensable. This is because their role in the system cut across formal and informal duties. This is aptly encapsulated by Elizabeth Finlayson:

> For the officer's wife it is a life of many roles. To the husband she is a wife, to her children she is a mother, during separation she is both mother and father. To the army she is a dependant, and her privileges and responsibilities are pre-determined to a great extent by her husband's rank and assignment and to her civilian neighbours, she represents the military and when on foreign soil, she is a diplomat, a representative of her nation.[61]

Literature on army dependants emphasises that "the position of military wives was not only necessary, honourable and good but also the epitome of womanhood and always she complements the high calling of her husband."[62] It is for this and other reasons that wives of military personnel were fondly called *Whiskey* in the military parlance.[63] To this extent, Finlayson opined that the notion that "the woman's place is in the home" is an outdated cliché.[64] This is because most wives found satisfaction and fulfilment not only in their homes but in the public space.

Indeed, an officers' wife combined both rank and authority in her day to day routine in the barracks. The power to exercise authority by this group had to do with the recognition accorded them in the institution as "One rank above their spouses."[65] Thus, when a military officer was of the rank of a Colonel, the wife was a Brigadier General, and where the officer was a Brigadier General, the wife was purported to be a Major General or its equivalent in other armed services. Perhaps, it is for this reason that officers' wives participated in the official decoration/pipping of their spouses once promoted in rank as well as the pull-out ceremony. This study discovered that in the interaction of gender and power between wives and their husbands in the barracks, women have had to use their imaginary ranks of one step

ahead of their husbands to checkmate patriarchal power and control in the system, as well as the recognition of female authority by other ranks. Respect for military wives was also epitomised in the 'Cross sword ceremony' an interesting occasion in the barracks that required the officer to receive two swords from the authorities on his wedding day for the protection of his wife (*the Whiskey*) and also for the cutting of the cake. This aspect of social event has been discussed elsewhere in the study.

Indeed, a wife of military personnel was a citizen of the barracks by marriage and her rights and privileges were embedded and legitimized in the military laws and status of her husband. Her citizenship rights conferred on her some benefits uncommon to her counterparts outside the barracks. Some of these include:

- Notification and publication of marriage in bulletins, *Part I* and *Part 2 Orders*.
- Dependant Identification Card
- Rights and Privileges to be interred in military cemetery
- Publication of death in military magazines and *Orders*
- Membership of Military Wives' Association
- Publication of birth of children
- Mandate to know her husband's Service number.

Corroborating the view, Maryam Babangida notes:

> It is customary for the officer to register his spouse's name with Army Headquarters [Command Headquarters] soon after marriage. He does this through his unit. This enables the Army to acknowledge the officer's new status as well as bestow on the wife a formal presence within the military establishment and if an officer remarries after a divorce, he should make amendments in the records accordingly.[66]

Nevertheless, the status of a wife of military personnel was bound to terminate in two ways. First, on the dissolution of the marriage, that is to say, the marriage could suffer divorce especially when both partners became weary of each other not minding the number of

children the marriage had produced. Second, the death of the military husband also ended her rights and privileges in the community; thereafter she would be known and addressed as ex-soldier's wife.

The evolution of wives of military personnel in 1905 was significant because their contributions were conspicuous in politics, economy and social life of the barracks. These achievements were made possible by several factors, (1) increase in the strength of the force (2) Mass recruitment in the war years and post-Civil War period. (3) The relaxation of stringent measures on marriage by military authorities which hitherto hindered commissioned and non-commissioned officers except on fulfilment of the '*First Caller Service*,' which means compulsory and unbreakable 5-6 years in service before applying for marriage. This tradition was echoed in an old British Army adage; "Lieutenants can't marry, Captains may marry, Major should marry, Colonels must marry."[67] Third, the relatively long peace experienced in the country after the Nigerian Civil War as well as the successful confinement of military personnel to the barracks since democratic government.

Similarly, military wives had been celebrated and eulogized through poems, as L/Cpl Oguh George writes:

Every soldier is polygamous
Married to the rifle and the 'other'
Our union with the other we pray not to remember
At a solitary trench you are remembered.
This separation is a child of necessity
The amiable Angelic face
Just like an apparition
But do I love the war- front more than you?
Oh! We are one.

Partners in progress
Taking good care of the wards at home – front
Keeping the barracks clean

Our place of abode
Partner in crime
Assisting me at times to kill
Your Service support even at the front-line
Does the magic
Your courage to give death a conscious romance
Portrays our oneness
In Peace we jolly together
At detention camp we guard- room together
On the battle-front we fire together

I commend this effort
I don't compromise
Marital arithmetical jargon says
1+1 =1 Our re-union I pray for
So that we will be one as we were.[68]

Similarly, politicians and statesmen were also involved in extolling the virtues of military wives. Perhaps, the most unusual ovation for a European wife came from Nnamdi Azikiwe who printed a prose poem in the *West African Pilot*; dated May 15, 1943 in honour of Lady Bourdillon entitled 'She Stands Unique'

Eight years ago she came here
The inevitable questions were asked - what is she like?
Will she be interested in the people?
I wonder if she will be friendly....
She rose above the people's wildest imaginations, she was a friend to all who would be friendly, she was every inch as charming with the highest as with the lowest in the community.
Never did she hesitate to visit a home where she knew her presence would give joy and comfort to an invalid woman.
She would go armed with gifts of magazines and flowers and a pleasant
smile....
Never had Government House seen such scenes as she caused to be created there, nor was Government House ever visited by so many members of the community.
Such a lady could excite nothing but the love and affection of all who came in contact with her....
Lady Bourdillon is a born leader, she is very affable, her tactfulness in organising can well be envied, she is gentle, kind and true.... [69]

In the case of Constance Larymore, she was bestowed with the title "*Uwamu* by the people of Katagum, meaning 'Our Mother'. To her, this was the highest expression of respect and affection that the African man can offer to a woman." [70] Similarly, the Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello praised some senior military officers' wives for their contributions and personal achievements. Notable among them was Lady Sharwood Smith, wife of the Governor of Northern Nigeria, 1952-1957, "Of her, we shall always retain the most affectionate memories. Her knowledge of the country, her understanding of the people and her proficiency in the Hausa language entitle her to a position of her own in our hearts."[71]

The challenges of wives of military personnel in the early years of the barracks cannot be overlooked. This is because of the inherent problems associated with British colonies and protectorates, the local people, and the profession in particular. The predicaments of the period were myriad and largely caused by the initial composition of the military force. The question therefore is what was the social composition of the barracks before the introduction of women?

At the beginning of colonial administration in Nigeria, the force revolved round men-folk. For instance, male clerks carried out office and secretarial duties, men-servants did domestic chores for European officers, some indigenous women provided sexual favour, colleagues at work became fellow players at polo, or tennis games, while others were fellow guests at dinner parties and clubs. Hence, there was little spatial separation between professional and private life as the European Cantonments enclosing both offices and housing were set in an area apart from African habitation.[72]

This arrangement and other institutional hazards in the force created challenges for wives. As some scholars rightly observed, "up until the 1920s all the Colonial Governments in the tropics had suffered alike from losses of staff due to illness, dissatisfaction of various kinds and, especially in earlier years a mortality rate higher than that of the other overseas services."[73] Along the same line, Pamella Moran, an Army officer's wife stresses: "We all gave up a lot when we chose this career because for a military wife the army comes first."[74]

The second question that attracts attention is to what extent were military wives affected by the career and military traditions of their spouses in colonial barracks? Much literature indicates that military wives were affected in various ways by the career and military traditions of their spouses. For instance, in the early years, women's adjustment and adaptation in the colonies were difficult and hazardous. This was compounded by incessant postings of spouses to locations far away from places of initial assignments, a dominant feature of Colonial Service. Maintaining the same standpoint, Lisa Lindsay observes:

> Transfers were particularly difficult because usually they required the establishment of two households (more in the case of polygamous men), either temporarily or indefinitely. Transferred men could leave their wives and children and establish a separate household in the new place of work; or they could go ahead, look for a new home for their families, and eventually bring the wives and children to the new location. Complicating matters were women's trade, which often inclined wives not to move, children's education, which was difficult to establish and provided disincentives to relocating.[75]

The situation was difficult during the period because family affairs in the colonies were not taken into consideration when postings of military men were published in the Colonial Office. In the contemporary period, it has become a catchphrase among officers and men that "military duty superseded family engagements."

Gender inequality was another predicament suffered by women in the early and formative years of the barracks. This practice was so visible that it caused the rejection of wives in the early years of the force because women were perceived as 'unwelcome appendages'[76] and private individuals in a masculine system. Additionally, women were depicted as distracting agents in the career of men. Contesting in favour of gender inequality, Reuben Hill pointed out that "military system would have less trouble if it could restrict membership to celibates whose only family responsibilities were filial obligations to parents...for there is no escaping the necessity for the military system to cope with the claims of these families on their military member for something more than their pay checks"[77]

The diary of Laura Boyle, wife of a District Commissioner puts it succinctly:

> The majority of men out here ...don't believe in women coming out to the coast…they don't want them; they'd only get ill and be a nuisance. Even if they do come out as I have ...they are politely received but always with the sort of suppressed view. Poor beggar, it's a pity she is here, but, come on, let's be kind to her. In the coast towns...it is different, for they can be packed off home easily ...but even then they are not so far really wanted.[78]

This pejorative stereotype had its foundation from the British military ideology, which discouraged officers and men from marrying while young. For this reason, "the Colonial Office – like the army – was apt to consider that an officer married was an officer marred." [79] Stanhope White's informative study titled, *Dan Bana: The Memoirs of a Nigerian Official* notes that, "we had signed contracts as cadets which bound us not to get married for three years, so that we could serve in stations where no white woman could live."[80]

Amidst the poor prestige of wives, the unwavering commitments of majority of them were remarkable. Prior to the First World War, quite a good number of them visited their spouses in the colonies for months leaving their children in their home country because they were not

allowed in the colonies at the time. Pregnant women were not left out as they suffered similar fate and had to be sent home well in advance of their expected delivery dates.[81]

Rex Niven's informative memoir aptly captures the maternal indiscretion of a European wife in the following lines:

> She kept her pregnancy very secret and in the end even the doctor was taken by surprise. The story was that the baby was delivered on the doctor's breakfast table in a tiny African hospital in Bauchi with no nursing sister, and the maternity officer had to do all the work. She was sent home as soon as she could move.[82]

The dilemma of Ian Brook was not different; he noted that a Resident Officer had to reprimand him for his inability to provide adequate information regarding the arrival of his pregnant wife and children. Eventually, when she left for the delivery of the baby, the resident phoned to inquire about her and advised that her condition should not be allowed to interfere with his military duties.[83]

The negative perception of women was the same all over the colonies. Officials in Northern Nigeria as John Smith explained appeared to have been even less hospitable to wives and children. According to him:

> I was told the story of the cadet who had been unwise to arrive the previous year with a wife, and worse still two children. When sent on tour he inquired about his family because cadets in Kano were not given houses. He was sarcastically told by his boss, 'buy a horse for your wife and a donkey for your children.[84]

Under such circumstances, it could be argued that the intention of the British imperial administration was for women in the colonies to be childless or permanently separated from their children, because their roles were not incorporated into military duties. It is also possible that Colonial Office wanted marriages in the colonies to be transient; this perhaps, is informed by the fact that the British system never prosecuted military officers implicated in

concubinage. The other problem that beset women immediately approval was granted to join their spouses was the absence of incentives or welfare grants capable of facilitating their movement into the colonies, except for the 'welfare passage' allowance hitherto approved in 1919. In view of this circumstance, it became difficult for most British Non-Commissioned Officers (BNCO) to support the expenses of their dependants. Some others, who intended to leave their children in Britain for lack of schools in the colonies, had to shoulder the cost of school fees and other maintenance allowances.

In consequence of this, most women became homesick and disillusioned, while others were invalided to Europe for treatment and change of weather. One of such victims was Lady Flora Lugard who was taken to Europe for recuperation and necessary adjustment. This difficulty on the one hand, led to frequent vacation of officers to Britain to see their families and on the other, a consequential demand for extra hands to keep the actual minimum of military duties. But contrary to the hard-line policy of the colonial administrators, most wives desired to be with their spouses irrespective of condition of service in the colonies. Thus Constance Larymore stresses:

> It has been a very great pleasure to me to know that my experience has been of some practical use to several of my country-women who have shared their husbands' exile. The difficulties in the way of wives accompanying their husbands to far-distant stations must still exist; but it seems to me that the following words, from the pen of Miss Mary Gaunt, are worthy of earnest consideration. Tropical Africa is for the civilized nation that can take its women along with it.[85]

Literature on European wives in the colonies also pointed out the problem of social stratification created by colonial policy. This dichotomy between British officers' wives and wives of indigenous troops, perceived as 'lesser queens' continued throughout the period.

In consequence of this, European wives utilised the office of the *Magajiya* in passing official and informal instructions on barracks sanitation and behaviour of indigenous children. But the real argument for social division in the barracks between the two groups is encapsulated in Lord Lugard's *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, in which he states that "the native peasant often shares his/her hut with goat, or sheep, or fowls [and] he loves to drum at night, which deprives the Europeans of sleep."[86]

The reasons for discrimination were much stronger when European wives were told that "malarial germs - and at times those of yellow-fever ... are present in the blood of most natives, especially the native children."[87] Consequently, European wives began to maintain social distance, coupled with their racial posture and language. Events in the succeeding years show that a more plausible excuse was located in the reaction and hostility of European wives towards indigenous soldiers' children. Majority of whom they perceived as nuisance in the quarters for disturbing their comfort and drumming at night. According to a source[88] "we, the soldiers' wives did not like European women because they had no children in the barracks and it was only wicked women that had no children. They hated our children and accused them of noisemaking." This problem later degenerated into racial segregation in most parts of Africa provoking the political elite and other nationalist to criticise the colonial government.

Indeed, the problem of rank and class between the two groups of women worsened in the inter-war years, when European wives were compulsorily enlisted into the force to fill existing gap in military duties. Thus the position of European wives in the community became significant since they assisted their spouses to defend the colonies. Prior to the period, colonial authority had already divided the barracks into European officers' quarters and indigenous non-commissioned officers' quarters to widen the social space between the

two classes of people. To reinforce the dichotomy, a policy on Government Reservation Area (GRA) and barracks arrangement was ratified by the colonial government despite mounting criticisms from interest groups and patriotic individuals who saw it as a "manifestation of racial arrogance and prejudice."[89]

However, the agitation for harmonious relationship could not work out based on the aforementioned argument by Lugard and the position of some European medical doctors who advised European officers and their wives not to sleep in proximity of the local people in order to avoid infection.[90] Therefore, imperial officers decided to form a hedge between European officers' family and the local soldiers' dependants because of "their social activities, drumming and dancing at night which often deprived European families of sleep."[91] This development marked the beginning of racial segregation in the barracks as British officers and their wives began to live in accommodation far away from that of indigenous soldiers and their wives in Lokoja and Zungeru barracks.

To reinforce the divide, a non-residential area of 440 yards in breadth was created in both the Government Reservation Areas and the barracks with a belt of cleared ground which intervened between the two quarters. This was designed to form an effective fire-guard because it was also alleged that wives of local soldiers and their children were fond of making bon-fire which disturbed colonial wives in their apartments. Most of the space was later converted to recreational or parade grounds to prevent close contact between officers' wives and wives of other ranks.[92] The policy of segregation was also supported by Lord Milner, who asserts that it was intended to provide social comfort and convenience than those of health and sanitation.[93]

Since Nigeria's independence, the character of the two groups (officers and non-commissioned officers' wives) had continued with much space and privileges to the advantage of officers' wives, who had become a class in their own rights.

The other problem that confronted wives in the early years of the barracks was the shortage of accommodation. This predicament was generally attributed to the indifference of British government and the lack of planning by the Colonial Office. To alleviate the sufferings of the people, efforts were made to construct block houses to replace tents and bush huts for military families across Nigeria. This is aptly encapsulated by Lugard Lugard:

> When I recall the deplorable conditions which existed in 1898 and subsequent years, the measure of progress is striking. British officers in Northern Nigeria then lived in temporary grass-huts – not rain proof, and liable to be carried away by the violent tornadoes of the Niger Valley, and very inferior to the well-thatched mud-walled native house.[94]

In a private correspondence to Joseph Chamberlains dated, September 1902, Flora Lugard wrote:

> Two years ago there was nothing in the whole of this vast country but a military cantonment and trading store at Lokoja, something of the same sort in Jebba and an advanced line which held a frontier against the French in Borgu. The officers of the force were living huddled together in the smallest huts which could protect them from the weather.[95]

Writing on the state of accommodation in parts of Northern Nigeria, Bryan Sharwood Smith asserts: "But there were many things to think of, first, we must somehow mitigate the squalor of our surroundings, the rest house, like so many of its kind in the remote northern Bornu bush, was badly thatched and extremely filthy."[96] The appalling condition of barracks was the same throughout Colonial Nigeria.

Rosemary Hollis' experience in Azare, Northern Nigeria, was also striking:

> My lot seemed relative luxury in comparison with that of another wife assigned to a 'bush rest house' about forty miles away. She was raising two small children in a house with no doors or windows, but only holes in the walls allowing the wind to roar through, bringing dust or rain according to the season. 'There were hardly any necessities, let alone luxuries; but I took my hat off to her-she never grumbled.[97]

Worried by this circumstance, Lugard once more wrote to the War Office in 1902 lamenting the deplorable condition as thus, "if the British nation is not prepared to bear the cost of an enterprise which promises good returns, and already shows substantial progress, it were better that it had never undertaken it."[98] However, reaction from the British imperial government as to the request was not favourable, for this reason, Lugard decided to draw up his list of requirements "down to a tin-tack" for the force.[99] Apart from the effort of Lugard, Hugh Clifford also described the existing accommodation as comfortless and vowed not to allow his officials to reside in what he called "dignified seclusion camp."[100]

In Ibadan, for instance, as I have shown elsewhere in this study, there was no difference in the condition of military families. This is because "they lived in bush houses and houses built of mud with grass roofs, matting doors and window coverings."[101] Consequently, most colonial officers began to wonder whether this atmosphere was the best the imperial government could offer its regiment in the quest for empire.

However, the construction of modern barracks in selected areas in 1904 was a major progress because it increased the number of women in the barracks, as more soldiers were encouraged to marry because marriage was afterwards seen as a sign of being a gentleman. To meet the exigencies of the force and subsequent transition to self-government, construction of more barracks became a cardinal objective of government in the 1950s.

This perhaps was due to complaints from different quarters on the ethnic imbalance in the regiment. Since the 1970s more barracks had been built while others were at different stages of completion throughout the country. It is clear from the discussion that the reluctance of the British imperial government to authorise women to join their spouses in the barracks, especially the European wives was not so much of gender inequality or the spirit of the Victorian age but the unwillingness of the imperial administration to invest in the colonies.

The other challenge that confronted women in the early years of the barracks was the prevalence of vermin and diseases. It was more endemic to European wives compared to wives of indigenous troops, so much so that many died within a space of time. These sicknesses included malaria fever, dysentery, and black-water fever to mention but a few. It is for this reason that S.C. Ukpabi supported the view of a renowned Nigerian nationalist who suggested that "this nation should erect a statue in gratitude to the anopheles mosquitoes for its prevalence in this part of Africa which disrupted European adventurism during the period."[102] Despite the scientific breakthrough in the use of quinine, mosquitoes and vermin continued to ravage lives in the barracks. According to Margery Perham "I shared my rest-house with rats, lizards, bats and a mist of mosquitoes. I had to retire early because fever was still troubling me in West Africa."[103]

In the same manner, Haywood and Clarke note: "in Lagos in 1896, 28 out of 150 Europeans died within a few months. In 1926, out of an estimated European population for the whole of Nigeria of just under 5,000, there were only 42 deaths."[104] Apart from malaria disease, there was also the spread of dysentery in the barracks. Joan Sharwood Smith recounts her ordeal with amoebic dysentery which unfortunately coincided with the experience of another officer's wife. According to her, "we were discharged from the hospital in Jos looking like

shadows of our former selves."[105] It was during the period that Sylvia Leith-Ross lost her husband as a result of black-water fever in Zungeru Cantonment.[106]

The influenza epidemic of 1918 also caused much havoc in military formations throughout the country. Worse hit were military barracks in Lagos, Kaduna, Zaria and Ibadan. According to D.C. Ohadike, "it occurred soon after the end of the First World War and soldiers returning from the war fronts are said to have brought the disease. In West Africa the disease was called 'Spanish Influenza', not only by the Africans but also by British colonial officials."[107] The epidemic ran through officers, men and their families. Ohadike observes further that soon as the epidemic broke out, the people everywhere attempted to escape the disease by running away[108] but to no avail. Consequently, a lot of soldiers' wives became widowed while children turned orphan as they lost father or mother or both in the circumstance. The death toll of wives of military personnel in the succeeding years equally became worrisome thereby provoking discontent, desertion, and disenchantment among military men in Nigeria.[109]

The incidence of dangerous animals and reptiles was also worrisome during the period. For example, Anne Macdonald was reported to have been beaten twice by a snake, and after treatment was advised to take a glass of sherry and stay the night in hospital. She also suffered from the tropical disease causing jigger.[110] Later in Kafanchan; she was attacked by a rabid bush dog and ferociously bitten on the arms, hands and legs in which she was driven to Jos hospital for 21 days injections.[111]

In another development, Sharwood Smith reflects:

> My wife, too, a stranger to the African bush and a little spell bound by the friendliness of the people and of her surroundings, found it difficult to believe me when I told her that it was unwise to wander unaccompanied any distance from the house, especially after sunset. But as the dry season advanced, the rasping cough of a wandering leopard and the sound of a lion roaring mightily, night after night, on the ridge between us and the mission gave point to my warning.[112]

Writing on a similar matter, Constance Larymore notes, "that night, I woke up suddenly, listening intently, to hear, for the first time, the roar of a lion..., echoing again and again in the depths of the silent forest, followed by a deep hoarse cough, and [that] made one consider our thatched shelter somewhat inadequate."[113]

The account of Flora Lugard was not different. According to her, "I was a little nervous beforehand as a hyena had paid one or two surreptitious visits to our cook house and I feared lest he should walk off with the turkeys or with the cook which would have been still worse! But fortunately no contretemps of the sort took place."[114] Apart from these problems, the effect of tropical climate was another hitch to the effective adaptation of European wives in the colonies.

In a private correspondence by Flora Lugard to Chamberlains, Lady Lugard wrote:

> I have not yet myself been able to pick up the threads of the life and as the doctor persuaded Sir Frederick Lugard that I must on no account be permitted to go out in the sun. I spend the greater part of my time in solitary confinement...I confess that the first effect of the climate is very trying. It is not so much excessively hot as it is excessively enervating.[115]

It would be recalled that the intensity of the sun in most parts of Northern Nigeria prevented many officers from bringing their wives at first, and those that dared the vagaries of weather were either invalided or placed on intensive medical examination. A few European wives

who dared the environment had a lot to reflect, these included Constance Larymore, Lady Sharwood Smith, Lady Glover, and Lady Violet Bourdillon, among others.

The East Africa campaign of 1918 against the Germans, which occurred simultaneously with the Influenza epidemic, was another tragic event in the lives of soldiers' wives in Nigeria. They were barely thirteen years old in the barracks when their husbands were mobilized for the first external campaign. At the end of hostility, most of the soldiers were either dead or injured as Lugard has written:

> The great excitement of the men who are almost too excited to eat- their wild and resonant cheers as they steam up the harbour and hear the bugle sound and see the red coats of their comrades which they have not worn for so long were in from the harbour... the cheery fellows limping on behind with bandaged feet or legs, the bronzed officers and British NCO's in tattered uniform...It was sad indeed to hear that men were dying of pneumonia on the troopships before they could be disembarked. It was indeed tragic to have been through so strenuous a campaign and to get back to Lagos harbour and die without landing.[116]

The Second World War was also characterized by similar experience, and it was in consequence of this that wives of military personnel went on rampage both in Lagos and Umuahia districts. It was provoked further in 1946 when the injured and incapacitated were demobilized with a pittance to show for their participation in the war.

Another unfortunate situation of the period was the hostility of indigenous people as explained by some European scholars and colonial crusaders. It was reported that some British officers attempted on several occasions to arrest slave-raiders within the confines of the barracks because they perceived their trade as obnoxious and unethical, unfortunately, it brought them into collision with the agents who claimed to be raiding their enemies known as 'the heathens.'

This event was highlighted by Larymore as thus:

> It was the first case of obvious slavery I had ever seen and the terrible cruelty of it made one's blood boil My husband of course detained the 'caravan' the leader of which declared glibly that the children were not slaves but his own offspring and that their mother was just coming along behind. The elder toddler had spirit to cry out; we are not, we are not! He bought us for a horse...The men were taken into custody, the donkeys and loads confiscated...and we took charge of the children.[117]

The problem of language was also a factor in the early years. It affected most European wives who attempted in diverse ways to extend their social relations and humanitarian activities within and outside the barracks. Suffice to state that even when interpreters were contracted, the intended message(s) were not appropriately translated or conveyed. For instance, the experience of Constance Larymore in a town called Lukpa near Kabba was memorable. According to her:

> I had been six weeks in the country, my knowledge of Hausa was confined to salutations and a few simple words, so I summoned our interpreter to help me to entertain my visitors They chattered, shouted and gesticulated at Paul, who eventually explained to me, smilingly, that they had never seen a white woman before, and were anxious to offer me a personal welcome.... I thanked them cordially, and, when I had exhausted my small stock of polite salutations, told the interpreter to give them leave to go home....Six weeks later we passed through Lukpa again, on our way back to Lokoja, and found it *deserted*.... I learnt long afterwards, that, on our first visit, our precious interpreter and others of our party had seized and killed every goat and fowl in the village! The wretched owners had rushed up to the rest-house to complain and implore protection and all they got was: Thank you! Thank you! Yes that's all right! You can go home now! I am not ashamed to confess that I cried when I made that discovery! The lesson however, went home to us both, and drove us to work ceaselessly at the Hausa language. [118]

Related to the above was the problem of culture. This prohibited Moslem men from dealing directly with non-Moslem women. Thus, the attempt by many European wives to utilise the privileges of their husbands to engage and interact with women in harem proved less successful.

Similarly, the post-First World War economic and administrative problems also affected soldiers' wives and dependants as was the case with the larger Nigerian society. The period was characterised by economic depression, unemployment, and increase in prices of commodities which weighed heavily on women in the barracks considering the meagre salaries of their spouses. This was further compounded by the scarcity of silver currency which came into circulation in the wake of colonial effort to integrate and monetize the colonial economy. Writing on post-First World War development, Jide Osuntokun contends:

> There was the very difficult problem of the shortage of silver currency in Nigeria after the war for which the government was forced to substitute paper money. The immediate result of this was the hoarding of silver coins by trading companies and the local people which drove silver currency out of circulation.[119]

This situation led to increase in prices of food items as well as imported commodities. Consequently, Colonial Office became apprehensive on how to get out of the predicament since the prevailing economic instability was a global affair. In a twist of circumstance, the situation triggered off a wave of agitation for increase in wages of workers to alleviate the sufferings of Colonial Civil Servants and the military in particular. In consideration of mounting complaints, the Colonial Office decided to approve bonuses of minimal percentage for officers, soldiers and all the Colonial Civil Servants in its employment.[120] Therefore, this development motivated most wives of military personnel to look beyond the activities of home-keeping and engage in profitable ventures such as trading, and compound gardens, among others.

One of the challenges of soldiers' wives in post-War War II was the incidence of salt scarcity occasioned by the problem of importation. More worrisome at the time was the plight of soldiers' dependants who suffered malnutrition and calcium deficiency. Salt scarcity was

aggravated by non-availability of substitute as most salt industries were gradually being eclipsed owing to production shift from extracting industry to cash crop economy. It was also noted that the major factor was the integration of Nigeria's economy into the colonial economies, thereby forcing most local producers not only in Nigeria but the rest of British West Africa to connect to monetized commodities.

On the other hand, the effect of salt scarcity made the colonial government to look for alternative strategies, such as the importation of the commodity from markets around the world and empowerment of local producers, since the scarcity was attributed to sabotage. According to Toyin Falola, "Indeed, the scarcity of salt and other products combined with the inflation of the war years, became major sources of discontent that were to contribute to the general strike of 1945. This is because it brought the realities of the war home to many Nigerians."[121]

The demobilization programme of the force immediately after World War II also affected wives of military personnel. It should be recalled that the Colonial Office raised about 121,652 Nigerian soldiers that fought the W.W.II only to retain about 7,000 men. This development showed a drastic reduction in the strength of troops as well as wives in the cantonments.[122] Thus, a greater percentage of soldiers' wives had to relocate to villages and semi-urban centres in order to start new endeavours. Some others remained in different cities such as Lagos, Kaduna, Umuahia, and Owerri where they carried out agitation with their spouses against the British imperial neglect of wounded soldiers and insufficient benefits paid as gratuities. During the period most ex-servicemen in Igboland who were not compensated by the colonial government for cases that could not be substantiated were at the vanguard of the demonstrations.

This is corroborated by James.S. Coleman in the following lines:

> The administration had its greatest difficulty with the resettlement of ex-servicemen in the Eastern Region. This was partly because a substantial number of Ibos had been recruited for the army, and partly because there were fewer career openings in the Eastern Region. In 1951 an organisation known as the Unemployed Ex-servicemen's Union literally captured the large eastern town of Umuahia and kept the European community and officers of the provincial administration in-communicado for several days.[123]

Unfortunately, this predicament created negative images of military men and their wives in major towns in Nigeria.

Public Images of Wives of Military Personnel in Nigeria 1905-1999

The public perception of wives of military personnel, in time and space had not only been controversial but different from that of other women outside the barracks. It was a stereotype of mixed feelings because the military system was initially conceived as an organization for men and masculinity. For this reason, women who ventured into the barracks as wives were perceived as social deviant, idle, or mediocre. In Nigeria, the reputation of wives of military personnel in the early years was one of ridicule, rejection, and a pervading aura of inferiority until the 1960s when military profession began to attract prestige and glamour as a result of the involvement of their spouses in governance and nation building.

In retrospect, women married to warriors and combatants in traditional societies were seen as inordinate lots who enjoyed not only the protection and comfort of warriors but the luxury of war. Among womenfolk, soldiers' wives were seen as extra-ordinary women who possessed uncanny courage associated with femininity. The perception and pejorative stereotype of women in colonial barracks emanated from different ideological perspectives. In the first instance, there was the initial rejection of wives by officers and men who were steadfast in their thinking that the barracks was not a place for women because they were capable of

obstructing the privacy of men and the freedom of masculine domain.[124] In line with this philosophy, some British colonial officers maintained that there was no place for European women in a "man's country"[125] [the barracks]. This idea is aptly encapsulated by Alan Burns: "From the official point, wives are often a nuisance in West Africa. Husbands are reluctant to take them travelling in bad weather and equally reluctant to leave them behind; therefore they travel less than they should. A wife's illness upsets the husband and puts him off his work."[126]

There was also the Victorian notion of patriarchy which explains that the duties of a woman resides in the private space where they took charge of childbearing, house-keeping, and comfort of their spouses. It was this idea that most European colonial officers imbibed, particularly, those in the West African Frontier Force and the 'older officials in the force.' To this class of people, "European wives in the colonies were nothing but intruders into what had been essentially bachelors' paradise, where a man could dress as he pleased, drink as much as he liked and be easy in his morals without causing scandal.''[127]

Literary works also portray wives of military personnel as hard-hearted and over-bearing category. Notable among these were memoirs and autobiographies of men in Colonial Service. These narratives, as enriching as they appear attributed little or no achievement to European wives in colonial barracks. Helen Callaway's illuminating study on *Gender, Culture and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria* states:

> In men's memoirs of the colonial period European women appear, if at all, as nameless figures in the background, while in widely read anti-colonial novels such as E.M. Forster and George Orwell, and others, women in the colonies were shown as shallow, self-centred and preoccupied with maintaining the hierarchy of their narrow social worlds.[128]

In the same vein, Gann and Duignan note that "official wives rarely got a good rating, for instance the exciting works of Somerset Maugham, one of the great writers of the time made much of the memsahib's social snobbery and lapses into marital infidelity."[129] Extending the discourse the authors argue that "white women were far from popular in the man-centred world of pioneer officials trained in public schools."[130]

The work of Joyce Cary titled, *Mister Johnson*[131] also depicts the lives of colonial officers' wives in Nigeria as hardly less unsympathetic. The effort shows the neurotic calculations of Cecilia Rudbeck setting in motion the series of events which finally placed her husband in the disquieting position of having to preside over the execution of an inventive African for whom he feels responsibility and common humanity. In contrast, Beverley Gartrell's representation of colonial wives in an article "Colonial Wives: Villains or Victims?"[132] contends that the label applies only to a few colonial wives who were actively disliked within their own circles while most wives might be better characterized as victims-oppressed by stressful demands of frequent moves, difficult living condition and the restricting conformity of colonial social structures. Similarly, Callaway declares:

> In these range of anti-colonial novels it was argued that military spouses were arrogant, proud... non-productive, parasitic and eager to display signs of their derived ranks and this became in a sense the key symbol of colonial exploitation. The moral evils attributed to imperialism find their most concentrated fictional embodiment not in the active imperialist men who fought the military battles and imposed their administration but in their dependent women.[133]

Aside from the works of literature, scholarly production also shows that the social origin of wives of military personnel marked the deterioration of race relations and social dichotomy between rulers and subject peoples.[134] This explains the fact that some women out of pride and arrogance dictated the rules of engagement in the colonies, particularly, in matters of

conquests and discipline of indigenous rulers. The argument was profound in the behaviour of some colonial officers who were fond of having their wives in the official entourage of visits and tours.

Sociological works also portray wives of military personnel in bad light. Most of the study reveals that wives were more interested in protocols, status and social engagements of their spouses.[135] Indeed, this assumption cannot be completely correct considering the fact that not all women in the barracks had the opportunity of being officers' wives as to have had the privilege(s) of social engagements where rank and precedents took centre stage. However, the underlying perception has been traced to the fact that Colonial Service in Nigeria was men's institution in which women were seen as adjuncts or incorporated group in the organisation.[136] This study notes that there was a sweeping generalization of images of wives of servicemen by authors and some members of the public. Nevertheless, the contributions of some wives such as Violet Bourdillon, Constance Larymore, Lady Donald Cameron, and Maryam Babangida of contemporary times were indelible in the sand of time.

Oral traditions and myths also portray wives of military personnel in sordid competition over social status, power and prestige. According to an Igbo saying, a lazy and idle woman is likened to a soldier's wife while a Yoruba proverb describes soldiers' wives as a group suitable only for procreation. An Indian myth pointed out that all the worst faults of the Raj - its pretty intolerance, its prejudices and snobberies, its cold-hearted arrogance – stemmed from the *memsahib*.[137]

There was also the negative perception of European wives by subordinate ranks, junior colleagues, and personal aides of military officers. These group of people described officers' wives in different adjectives. For instance, J.W.A Thorburn declared that "some Residents' wives were rather terrifying, and used Assistant District Officers (ADOs) as their personal Aide-de-Camps (ADCs) at a time when European wives had no specific job, and wives spent their time playing bridge or talking scandal."[138]

Similarly, individual testimonies in contemporary times on the overbearing attitude of officers' wives did not differ from what obtained in colonial period. For instance, some officers' wives were implicated in unwholesome attitude towards non-commissioned officers which clearly undermined their reputation. An informant[139] reveals that an Army officer's wife ordered a batman to be detained in the guardroom for his refusal to wash her clothes and that of her children. In a swift reaction, the batman claimed that he had successfully washed his boss' uniforms and other items; whatever was left was not part of his military job in the army. The officer's wife complained to her spouse and in the end the batman was redeployed to another department where he continued his duties.

The domineering attitude of some wives was equally experienced by some housekeepers, cooks and gardeners. Indeed examples abound of wives who replaced their cooks and female servants within 24 hours over minor offences bordering on forgetfulness, sluggishness, misplacement of items and loss of money. On the same matter, Alan Burns wrote: "my wife was no more fortunate in this respect than others. Soon after her arrival my head boy departed without notice, and was replaced. A week or two later I received a letter from him asking me to take him back, as my friends tell me all missis be the same trouble"[140]

In the public space, part of the unpopularity of soldiers' wives stemmed from the way some spent money in market-places and social gatherings. This was noticed before and after the Nigerian Civil War. According to Jacinta Karo,[141] during the war, wives of military personnel in the barracks went to the market together every month to purchase foodstuffs in an escort because of prevailing insecurity in the land. Soon as they got to the markets, sellers abandoned their initial customers to attend to them because it was believed that soldiers' wives had lots of money to spend, without haggling or bargaining since they purchased in bulk.

The quarrel against wives of military personnel by other buyers was the fact that market women used the opportunity to hike prices of goods out of the reach of common consumers. This prompted some women in those communities to invent derogatory epithets against soldiers' wives. These include 'wastrel', spenders, thieves, and loafers to mention but a few. This development gradually affected the social relations of wives of military personnel and women in major cities and towns where barracks exist.

The study discovered that soldiers' wives were under instructions during the war period to hasten their activities outside the barracks because of danger, thus, much time was not offered in the bargaining of goods and other items. Similarly, the presence of soldiers' wives in the markets was guided by time and discretions of escorts and drivers of vehicles who had other military engagements to fulfil.

The negative image of wives of military men was also highlighted by mistresses and concubines of their husbands. Since the early years, *mammy* markets had been a place of relaxation and wine bibbing which frequently attracted ladies eager to profit from the social

conviviality of the environment. Because of the nature of military profession, some officers and men spent money lavishly and thus easily captivated by women who saw an opportunity in their lifestyle and leisure. Consequently, disagreement and fighting emanated from these rendezvous, particularly, between wives of military personnel, perceived lovers, and concubines of their spouses.

Writing on Benin Province after the Second World War, Ian Brook "tells of a married Assistant District Officer and his concubine, who damaged the reputation of colonial administration because they flaunted themselves in public."[142] Soon as the officer's wife arrived the country it became a running battle between her and the Nigerian concubine over the welfare and custody of a child, a product of that relationship. The matter subsequently became a national debate between indigenous people and the Colonial Office. The event was not unique in a sense because "observing the children of mixed parentage in a village in 1933." For instance, W.R.Crocker notes: "I recall seeing more than about half a dozen, even around the mining areas of the plateau where liaisons with African women amounted to rather more than that."[143]

The *West Africa Magazine*, dated January 2, 1926 commented sharply on this development "We regard the creation of the people neither European nor African as the supreme racial disloyalty."[144] It should be recalled that this incidence had earlier provoked Lord Crewe, the Colonial Secretary in 1909 to issue a confidential circular expressing strong disapproval of officers becoming involved with local women and setting out penalties known as the 'Concubinage Circular'. The distribution of these enclosures to Northern Nigeria was listed as 180 'A' and 600 'B', to Southern Nigeria, 240 'A' and 800 'B.'[145]

The study observes that the negative perception of wives of military personnel as illiterates and indolent in the early years arose from three perspectives, first, the initial composition of the force in which the bulk of recruits were Moslem Hausas and run-away slaves. Second, majority of the soldiers were Moslems whose religion prescribed the seclusion of wives. Third, the barracks community at the time was not open for public contact and inspection, as such, not much was known about the social and economic activities of the community. Additionally, it was heightened by the argument that the barracks was a visible symbol of British system imposed on the peoples of Nigeria.[146]

Nevertheless, it was due to mounting prejudice and repudiation of soldiers and their dependants that provoked the editor of the *West African Pilot*, dated January 31, 1956 to comment: "If the present state of affairs exists simply because our soldiers are drawn from the illiterate class and do not compare favourably with their counterparts in the outside world, then a case has to be made for government to answer but on no account should soldiers be molested or abused."[147]

It was further observed, that the disparaging attack on military men and their families assumed worrisome dimension in the years leading to independence thereby forcing some colonial officers to express their displeasure in the *West African Pilot*, dated February 8, 1956:

> I have visited many countries in my life wrote an expatriate, in 1956, but in none have I seen soldiers being treated with such discourtesy as I have in Nigeria and especially here in Lagos…What I see in Lagos is abuse, insult and derision, amounting to causing some minor degree of dissatisfaction among the rank and file….Scarcely a year passes without some irresponsible citizen inventing some abusive epithet or another for the soldiers[148] [and their families].

However, the progress of the 1960s changed the perception of people to a greater extent when movement of troops from one location to another was introduced in the force. The question therefore is to what extent did the wages of military men influence public perception of their wives?

The poor reputation of wives of military personnel was also tied to the poor monthly remuneration of their spouses which barely accommodated the home front. It would be recalled that majority of the women were confined to domesticity and reproduction in the early years coupled with the socio-religious factors of seclusion and purdah system. This made them inadequate in the public space, particularly among other women and family members outside the barracks. This limitations manifested in the bearings and outfits of most non-commissioned officers' wives who dressed lowly in public and social gathering, occasionally, prompting the outcry of some civilian women who identified them as soldiers' wives.

In consequence of their spouses' inability to provide the basic needs of the family, some of the women adopted survival strategy to improve their living standards which perhaps, never improved their economic status for which the barracks had up till the present times been labelled an unhealthy environment for child training and human development. It was also frightening when *The Daily Times*, dated December 12, 1984 came up with a caption titled: "Captain's wife to die."[149] The paper explains that the lady was arrested for oil bunkering which was a serious offence in the country. When interviewed, the woman stated that she got into the business to support her household, but there was nothing anyone could do to bypass the Law because it was a military regime.

In another development, an informant[150] recalled an episode in which a wife attacked her military husband in the office for maintaining a mistress when there was little or nothing to eat at home. This illustrates the predicament of some women in the barracks during the period. It is therefore necessary to provide a sketch on the wages and salaries of troops in Nigeria.

Table 1

Rates of Pay, Daily and Deffered, of Other Ranks, 1881-1884

Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate
Seargent major	5s.	Corporal	1s.10d.
Colour sergent	3s. 2d.	Drummer	1s.3d.
Seargent	2s.6d.	Private	1s.2d.

Source: W. H. Goodenough and J.C.Dalton, comps. The Army Book for the British Empire (London: 1893), 149.
Note: Deferred pay was a proportion of the salary that was set aside as compulsory savings.

In January 1899, troops pay according to A.H.M. Kirk-Greene were: 1/- per diem for privates, 1/1d for L/Cpls, 1/3d for Cpls. and1/- for Sgts.Of the month's pay of 28/- , a private was paid in two instalments, of 7/6d and 11/-, while 9/6d went to deffered pay.[151] N.J.Miner has also shown that "army pay was not attractive even by 1956 because a recruit earned between 2*s*.6*d*, to 3*s*.9*d*, per day as well as received a subsistence allowance of 3s.6d. a day when serving in the Northern province and 6*d* when serving in the South.[152]

For this reason, soldiers [and families] felt particularly aggrieved because of their inability to maintain their wives, children and other necessities of life. When they compared their pay with that of the police, it was amazing that a police recruit received 5s. per day rising to 9s a day as a first-class constable. At the same time, police Lance Corporal received 10s.4d, a day more than a Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM). Therefore, complaints within and outside the

barracks on the welfare question began to attract attention of the media as well as politicians.[153]

Table 2

Salary Structure of the Nigerian Armed Forces

(1975) Scale 'A' (Combatants)

Military Rank Army/NAF/NAVY		Basic Salary
Cadet		N1,092
2/Lt	Mid-SHM AG Sub-Lt	N3,000
Lt	Sub-Lt	N4,200
Capt	Lieut.	N5,520
Maj.	Lt.CDR	N6,960
Lt-Col.	CDR	N8376
Col	Capt	N10,044
Brig.	Comd	N11,556
Maj.Gen,nn	R/Adm.	N13,959
Lt-Gen.	V/Adm.	N15,120
Gen.	Adm.	N15,960

Source: J.Bayo Adekanye, "Military Occupation and Social Stratification" An Inaugural Lecture, University of Ibadan November 25, 1993, 1

Table 3

Salary Scale for Nigerian Army Officers, 1981

RANK	BASIC SALARY
Cadet	N1,200
L/LT	N 3,300
Lt	N 4,500
Captain	N5,820
Major	N7,260
Lt-Col	N8,676
Colonel	N10,344
Brigadier	N11,856
Maj. Gen	N14,259
LT-Gen	N15,420
Gen.	N16,260

Source: J.Bayo Adekanye, "Military Occupation and Social Stratification," 16.

Table 4

Adjusted Salary Scales for University Academics, 1979

ACADEMIC RANK	ADJUSTED SALARY
Professor	N11,568
Reader/Associate Professor	N9,168
Senior Lecturer	N8,064
Lecturer I	N6,744
Lecturer II	N5,760
Assistant Lecturer	N4,668

Source: J.Bayo Adekanye, "Military Occupation and Social Stratification" An Inaugural Lecture, University of Ibadan November 25, 1993, 18

The above illustration is to support the claim that military salary scale was much lower compare to that of the Police and other members of the Public Service during the period. It was probably for this reason that Mr Eneh, an ex-serviceman from the Eastern Region, told the parliament in the 1950s that "people jeered at them when they want to join the Army, the reason being that soldiers [and their families] are treated no better than labourers….There is a psychology in this country that when someone is badly paid that man is inferior."[154]

Another factor that contributed to the poor image of wives of military personnel was the poor severance benefits of retirees in the post-World War II. This event impacted negatively on the social well-being and living standards of some women. Paradoxically, the demobilization programme of the force incidentally led to the escalation of bride wealth following the rush by some retirees to marry beautiful women that could boost their newly acquired social status. According to Ukpabi, "One immediate effect of the return of these 'heroes' was the steep rise in bride price in several villages since these ex-servicemen were prepared to pay a much higher amount, than other villagers, for any woman of their choice."[155] Consequently, there arose a popular saying in the 1940s that "it was only the long throat that gave out their

daughters in marriage to soldiers."[156] The marriage of many wives by some ex-servicemen also triggered the wrath of their wives against the new brides and their parents whom they perceived as over-ambitious lot trying to reap where they never sowed.[157]

This trend was not peculiar to colonial Nigerian society, it manifested in the colonial history of East and Central Africa. This is corroborated by Eugene Schleh, "in Uganda bride prices were quickly inflated in many areas and some chiefs were reported as over-energetic in levying heavy fines on returned soldiers for minor infractions.[158] Also, Kenda Mutongi epitomizes the dilemma of Maragoli widows in post-World War II who targeted men serving in the King's African Rifles (KAR). She noted that "KAR men became the preferred partners especially for the daughters of widows who were desperate to acquire the high bride wealth to improve their economic situation. Unfortunately, these marriages often were plagued with problems."[159]

The period was significant in Nigerian history because it popularized the payment of bride wealth in monetary terms. Also worthy of note is the fact that since the 1920s when demobilisation of troops was carried out in tandem with the introduction of silver coins most communities in Nigeria never reverted to the old method of bride wealth arrangement which encouraged payment in commodity or kind.

The question therefore is why did the negative perception of wives of military personnel in Nigeria pale after half a century of great challenge? Or put succinctly, to what extent has power and politics enhanced the image of wives of military personnel? The study establishes the fact that the prestige and privileges enjoyed by wives of military personnel in contemporary times stemmed from the fact that the officer corps has shifted its style of life

from a relatively isolated group, residing mainly in its own community, to a profession with elaborate, though transitory contacts with civilian society.

Similarly, the 1960s marked a turning point in the image of military men and their wives. With the increase in the intake of graduate officers, many civilians realized the potentials in the emerging independent Nigerian military force. Hitherto, renowned politicians and nationalists considered it unsuitable to have representatives in the force but this philosophy changed with the enlistment of Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, Emmanuel Ifeajuna and a few others who were already graduates from different universities before joining the army. This circumstance created awareness of military profession among the womenfolks who had earlier concluded that the military was a profession for illiterates and slaves.

The other factor that provided publicity and glamour to women in particular was the victorious outing of the Nigerian contingents in peace keeping mission in the Congo. This is encapsulated by R.O. Fashina:

> The involvement of the Nigerian troops in the peace-keeping operations in the Congo in 1960 helped to some extent to boast the image of the Nigerian soldiers [and their families] way back home. This was because regular reports and commendations of the activities of the Nigerian soldiers were constantly brought home. The old opinion held by some parents and relations of our soldiers gradually started to change from that of trouble shooter or war-monger to that of a peace maker. It is even on record that some soldiers, who could not get married before this time, soon won the favour of some parents and eventually got married.[160]

Added to this, was the First Republic Celebration of 1963 in which soldiers actively participated and thrilled the general public. Prior to this time, many civilians had scarcely set their eyes on soldiers except those who lived within the neighbourhood of the barracks or those who had witnessed their brutality against resistant towns. The celebration at the Tafawa

Balewa Square, Lagos attracted a large crowd of youths who were enthralled by the parade and march past conducted by well trained colonial soldiers in neatly starched khaki uniforms. The display created overwhelming impression in the minds of ladies and the entire audience. As time progressed more and more youths decided to make a career in the army as recruits or officer cadets.[161] Some parents, on the other hand, developed interest in the force because it encouraged some element of discipline and mannerism.

The image of military men and their wives soared higher during the Nigerian Civil War when they mobilized against the Biafran troops. As scholars argue "the army's involvement in political demonstration of the country gave it prominence...meteoric rise in its reputation. Consequently army officers and their wives increased in status and elitism because they were seen as a symbol of unity,"[162] and of power. Describing the development, Maryam Babangida wrote:

> A young girl had taken her boyfriend to see her parents for introduction and to seek their blessings for their proposed marriage. Her father bluntly refused their proposal and withheld his blessings. He did not need to give any reason. The young girl made similar trips on three occasions with three different suitors; still the old man would not give his blessings. But on the last trip the young girl, despaired and confused, mustered enough courage to ask her father what invisible flaws he had spotted in her beloved one "Can't you fall in love with an "Army officer" he barked, all these years I have spent so much money to send you to school and now you want to marry ordinary teacher and civil servant or don't you think that I should enjoy the fruits of my labour. Find an Army officer, anyone.[163]

It could be argued that the father of the girl preferred military personnel because of power and influence. The Nigerian Civil War, therefore, became an event that facilitated the attraction of women to military personnel. Added to this was the publicity and media report on the resilience and contributions of women to the war effort.

Another attraction of the period was the use of military orderlies and batmen by officers' wives in market places and social visits. This acquired status brought admiration to friends and well-wishers who supported the marriage from onset. Consequently, ladies began to pay nocturnal visit and social calls to friends in the barracks in an effort to win the hearts of commissioned and non-commissioned officers.

The 1980s and 1990s, described as 'the golden age of wives of military personnel in Nigeria, offered greater recognition to women following their involvement in the public space and nation building. Therefore, the marriage of beautiful ladies to serving and retired officers' became a source of debate in the media. For instance, The *Shadow Magazine* reads "Why Pretty Women Marry Military Officers"? [164]

Several answers were given as to why the barracks had become a destination for beautiful women in recent times. First, there was the assumption by some people that such ladies were over-ambitious, but an informant,[165] claimed that these women were attracted to the men because of the social life of the barracks. To another informant,[166] they were motivated by the desire to become wives of governors and 'first ladies of states'. But, a greater percentage of the informants affirm that marriages to military men were the product of love and understanding.[167] As Maryam Babangida puts it:

> Presently, the Army officer seems to have taken the centre stage in the heart of the ladies. [Because] there is this strong impression that the life of an Army officer's wife is one of glamour, prestige and plenty; the world is at her feet, hers to command with just a snap of her fingers. Well, like most fables, this impression is a far cry from reality.[168]

Gloria Labora Shoda, wife of Col Emma Shoda also confessed that what attracted her to the man she married was his "good looks, vibrancy and good nature."[169] In summary, it was noted that marriage is an adventure of absolute thinking because it made or marred the career of most officers. Therefore, it is argued that so many people married for different reasons but what prompted beautiful women to marry officers and non-commissioned officers alike, ranged from love and the profession.

Conclusion

It should be clear from the discussion that women have always had a place in the military stations and this had its roots in pre-colonial period where they contributed to the political, economic, and social life of the camp. The emergence of wives of military personnel in Colonial Nigeria was the outcome of a Board of Inquiry instituted at the Headquarters of the West African Frontiers in Gold Coast, composed of the former British colonies of Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia. The Wilkinson Commission of Inquiry as it was called was necessitated by frequent desertion of troops from areas of primary assignments in virtually all the British colonies.

This anomaly was traced to a number of factors hitherto undermined by the Colonial Office since the creation of the West African Frontier Force in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. First, most of the soldiers lacked the comfort of their wives. Second, the quality of food given to troops were undesirable to most of them as it was not part of their food culture, worst still was the fact that rotten grains formed part of the diet which caused death to many. Third, there was a marked distance between soldiers' primary assignment and home place which caused homesickness to many.

In view of this development, the Colonial Office declared in 1905 that it was mandatory for troops to bring in their wives into the barracks. The emergence of indigenous military wives laid the foundation of barracks culture in Nigeria. The situation was not the same for British officers and non-commissioned officers who had hitherto opposed the introduction of women on the grounds that the barracks was a man's world and the introduction of this group would affect the career of troops. However, when British officers began to see the robust life of indigenous troops coupled with the fact that they rarely fell ill, agitation and criticisms became the order of the day, particularly, from some European wives already in the colonies as well as liberal thinkers. This made the Colonial Office to re-consider its earlier stand on the introduction of European wives in the cantonments.

The result of this was the Debate of August 23rd 1920 imposed on Colonel Amery to announce that married life should be the rule rather than the exception in the colonies. The study notes that the emergence of women eroded the masculine world of men in the barracks because they were no longer free as they used to be when they were all bachelors; this was the reason hitherto adduced by the conservatives popularly called the 'old-coasters.'

Indeed, women suffered a lot of challenges in colonial and post-colonial barracks which endeared them to a lot of people both at home and abroad. These challenges ranged from the effect of weather and climate, tropical diseases, hostility of local people, language barriers and civil wars among others. The low reputation of wives of military personnel can best be described as stereotype, considering the fact that R. D. Pearce noted that Lady Violet Bourdillon was described in 1935 as 'the perfect Governor's wife who contradicts completely the stereotyped conception of British women in the colonies."[170]

Since independence, images of wives of military personnel had improved because they assisted their husbands in governace and nation-building. The involvement of their husbands in the administration of the country, mission assignment, and training abroad had equally widened the horizon of most of the women in the barracks. The period also marked the evolution of beautiful and educated women in the barracks as officers and non-commissioned officers' wives. The contributions of these women were remarkable because they transformed the domesticity of women and exploited it beyond the confines of military cantonments, especially in their empowerment efforts. The emergence of wives of military personnel in the barracks contributed to a robust culture and inter-group relations in the organisation.

The theory of social system is apt in this analysis because military families were perceived as an indispensable part of the sub-system. Even though women were rejected in the early years of the force, their roles were later observed to be crucial in the maintenance of the system because of their supporting and complementary functions. The idea of social stratification was also robust in the discussion because during the period hedges were erected to separate British officers' accommodation from that of indigenous soldiers and their families. For the system to endure, as well as effective role allocation, the office of the *magajiya* was instituted as a link between British officers' wives and wives of local troops.

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CHAPTER FOUR

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF WIVES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL IN COLONIAL BARRACKS, 1905-1960

Introduction

It is an indisputable fact that traditional military community moulded family life to the requirement of the profession. It is for this reason that women in traditional camps had the privilege of participating in different activities and supporting roles aimed at complementing the efforts of their military husbands. In Yoruba country, for instance, warriors' wives and female camp followers were involved in major political debates of the camp, particularly issues relating to the internal organisation of women, logistics, co-ordination, and conflict resolution, to mention but a few.

Studies have also shown that during the internecine wars in Yoruba kingdoms, prominent warriors' wives in both the Ibadan and Ekitiparapo camps combined administrative and judicial functions in settling domestic feuds between and among neighbours, while the men were away in battle. Apart from these responsibilities, some of the warriors' wives were known to have established their influence in the dynastic marriages of warriors and their combatants with a view to perpetuating class and royalty.

Since the colonial period, military men had utilised the advantage of environment and regimentation to guide and guard women in private and public affairs and generally the barracks culture. This background is imperative because it stands to show that the position of wives in military camps was important and complementary. In the light of the foregoing, this chapter discusses among others, the internal political system, economic organisation and mode of transportation of wives of military personnel in colonial period.

Internal Political System of Wives of Military Personnel

Just as officers and men had their internal political structure, women also were given the privilege to establish theirs in the barracks. This idea is explicit in the film, *Army wives Season 7,* which explains that, "the Army has its code, the wives have their own."[1] The internal political system of wives of military personnel since inception was centralized and hierarchical in nature. This is corroborated by O. Ophiolite in an illuminating article titled, "The Military Spouse Dichotomy." According to the author, "We are taught that there is a hierarchy among spouses..., mentoring young military spouses as to the military's expectations of them in today's internet age."[2]

This political arrangement was made possible in the barracks by a number of factors. First, it was adopted and sustained on the premise that wives of military personnel were sensitive to rank and protocol in the day to day activities of the barracks. Second, the system was practicable because military authorities permitted little tolerance for informal administration.[3] Third, and most importantly was the idea that as dependants, they drew their identity from their husband's work and rank, even though, they retained a measure of autonomy.[4] It was these underlying principles that compelled wives of military personnel to ascertain the rank of every officer on post in order to extend the basic compliment to his wife.

In colonial Nigeria, Flora Lugard was in-charge of wives of military personnel in the regiment from 1902-1918 when her husband (Lord Lugard) was the Governor-General and titular Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. During her tenure, she managed to co-ordinate the women throughout the Nigeria Regiment as the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria had just been concluded. Though, her office was not as popular or glamorised as contemporary office of the first lady of Nigeria because only few European

wives were in the colonies due to colonial policy and circumstances of the time. Indeed, as the wife of number one man in the country, her responsibilities in public and private spheres were enormous. Relating her experience, Flora Shaw asserts, "As I passed into the status of the official's wife in a tropical country with Lugard away for many hours…I have not yet managed to get myself really interested in local affairs and Fred's time and thought are necessarily almost absorbed in them."[5] As her biographer also notes:

> When she ceased to be Flora Shaw, she also ceased to be a woman with a career. She marked this change symbolically by discarding the black clothes she had worn for her professional career to wear white dresses in her new identity as the wife of a leading colonial administrator in Africa.[6]

Lady Lugard is remembered for laying the foundation of the office of wife of Governor-General in Nigeria. She was also known to have endeared herself to many people for her campaign and correspondences to Joseph Chamberlain on the need for the inclusion of European wives in the colonies as well as improved welfare of troops. This assertion, she elaborates as thus, "There can be no trustworthy continuity of administration until men can safely bring their wives and families to the country."[7] Writing in the same vein, Helen Callaway observes that, "she deserves a place in imperial history in her own right, [because] she helped to create the ideological field from which events were generated and reputations secured in the period from 1890 through the First World War."[8]

Her contributions in the First World War were equally remarkable, especially, her hospitality and concern for soldiers' children and widows. In carrying out her daily routine, Lady Lugard was assisted by Miss Florence Robinson her personal maid, who later became Lugard's housekeeper in Lokoja Cantonment.[9] Apart from Lady Lugard, there were some Governors' wives who left lasting impression in colonial barracks. These included Lady Hugh Clifford, Voilet Bourdillon, Lady John Macpherson, Lady Cameron, and Lady Nancy Robertson.

These women used their social standing to contribute to the development of colonial administration, improve the welfare of women in the barracks, Lagos Market Women's Association, and Government House. As the years progressed, the title, Governor-General was changed to Governor by Hugh Clifford's administration. This in my opinion was only a change in name because the office and its privileges remained the same.

According to Callaway, "the wives of Deputy Governors and Chief Secretaries had their social duties prescribed as well, with intervals when their husbands became the acting Governor and their own role also enhanced."[10] During the period, Joan Sharwood Smith and Lady Eric Thompstone performed creditably well as Deputy Governors' wives in Nigeria.[11] They were equally accountable to the Governor's wife in most of their oversight functions in the colony.

The other level of command in colonial barracks was the office of wives of Regional Governors. It was created in the three regions for administrative convenience and control. The women were responsible to the wives of Deputy Governors. Their functions among others include co-ordinating women in military units in Lokoja and Zungeru for the North, Lagos and Ibadan for the West and Enugu and Calabar for the East. Other responsibilities centre on educating and acquainting the wives of Deputy Governors of proceedings in their stations. These women also organised meetings with officers and non-commissioned officers' wives in their constituencies with a view to making them responsible housewives and participants in their husbands' career. This level of authority was headed in contemporary times by wives of General Officers Commanding (GOCs).

Another structure in the pyramid of power was the office of wives of District and Resident Officers. As Hillary Callan puts it, "The District Officer's wife had a position in the district similar to that of the Resident's wife in the province. These supporting roles played by wives of officers in Colonial Service would seem to be a prime example of the person defining power of organisations' flowing across the conjugal link."[12] Apart from their political functions, they also engaged in the social life of the colonies. Some Residents' wives in Nigeria include Betty Moresby-White who came to Nigeria in 1936, Elizabeth Purdy[13] and Constance Larymore, among others.

Another level of command in the political arrangement of wives of military personnel was the office of the *Magajiya*(s) of Units; they were responsible to the wives of Commanding Officers (COs) of Units. "The word *magajiya* was an Hausa word meaning women leader, it is an old tradition in the Nigerian Army (NA) to keep and maintain *magajiya*"[14] for administrative expediency and command. *Magajiya* or head of wives of non-commissioned officers (NCOs) served as a link to the commanding officer through the Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM).[15] Prior to the emergence of European wives in the barracks, it was the office of the *magajiiya* that was in-charge of wives of indigenous soldiers and this tradition has continued even in contemporary times.

In carrying out her functions, the *magajiya* liaised extensively with the RSM of the barracks whose machinery she utilised from time to time in settling disputes, effecting arrest, and punishing offenders. In addition, the *magajiya* was in-charge of mobilising and co-ordinating other ranks' wives during sanitation exercise, general meetings, and security of the barracks, to mention but a few.

In the early years of imperial rule, some of the complaints from the British officers' wives, such as, noise making, drumming and dancing, poor hygiene, and untidiness of soldiers' children were directed to the office of the *magajiya* for necessary action. This relationship brought about mutual understanding and cooperation among women in the barracks despite the problem of racial divide. Describing the political organisation of women in colonial barracks, Gann and Duignan note:

> Each company had its head woman, the *magajia* – responsible for the cleanliness of the barracks and for the dress, deportment, and morals of the wives. The headwoman attended on company "request day" usually a Thursday, when grievances and suggestions could be aired. Sporting a red sash, she accompanied officers on their inspection rounds, and when matters did not come up to her expectations, her wrath was more fearsome than the RSM's.[16]

Haywood and Clarke also observe that "the *magajia* wore a sergeant's red sash in Northern Nigeria, while in the Southern part of the country, they wore khaki drill jacket with sergeant's stripes as well. In the north they curtsied, Hausa fashion, in the south they saluted and very well did it."[17] As was the case in colonial barracks in Nigeria, so it is in contemporary times. For instance, the *magajiya* was allowed to wear military uniform with ceremonial ranks, especially, on very important days and events.

This scenario, perhaps, provided women the needed recognition in the organisation as stakeholders rather than their initial conception as appendages in a male dominated institution. It also shows that women could hold the rear in the absence of their spouses to the battle front or tour of duty. This situation played out in the Second World War when some European wives took charge of the security of the barracks and enlisted their services in the Second World War.

The Political Influence of Wives of Military Personnel in Colonial Barracks

The power and influence of some wives in the political dynamics of the military cannot be overemphasized. This is because the privileges of interference were largely drawn from the ranks and status of military-husbands. Added to this, was the fact that women's rights in the barracks was directly and indirectly incorporated and consolidated in marriage. As Helen Callaway has written, "As individuals, they retained a measure of autonomy, often enlarging their circumscribed role... in some cases criticising the colonial order."[18]

The involvement of some officers' wives in service affairs had for long attracted debates and reactions within and outside the military circles. This is cogently highlighted by Sir Bernard Bourdillon: "The Good and, alas, the harm that can be done by the wives of men working in the colonies is too late realized."[19] "This statement, originally made in 1944," as R.D.Pearce has written, "remains relevant today, for historians have failed to devote sufficient attention to the role of women of all categories in the empire."[20] This is probably because the rule of engagement guiding wives of military personnel were both written and unwritten codes.

The manner of interference by senior officers' wives in service politics varied from place to place, but their meddling was always intended to protect the interest of their husbands, domestic families and the institution's aspirations. Extending the thinking, Gann and Duignan state that "military transfers and promotions in the British Colonial Force depended heavily on regimental and personal links, a sort of military 'old boys' network."[21] European wives in Nigeria were presumed to have used their positions to direct decisions on aspects of colonial administration during the period.

According to Margery Perham:

> Flora did not hesitate to write at immense length to Mr Chamberlain both as Flora Shaw to her old friend and also as Lady Lugard to the Colonial Secretary. She was confident she could use her own position in her husband's service.... In the autumn of 1902 she sent Chamberlain a letter that was almost a dispatch with its full account of the work that had been achieved in Northern Nigeria. She did not scruple to impress upon the man of power how greatly this work was handicapped by lack of means and, knowing just what his political difficulties were, she gave him the arguments which might help him to extract funds from a grudging House of Commons.[22]

Narrating an event in the then British Force, Morris Janowitz recalled the dilemma of Col T. Bentley Mott who had repeatedly sought transfer to where he could advance his career but without success:

> I [Mott] then bethought me of a promise Mrs Wesley Merritt, the Superintendant's wife, had made me when I graduated [from West Point]. "If you ever want something that is proper for you to have and you need help, write to me" she had said. So I wrote. My Colonel nearly fainted when a week later he received a telegram ordering me to the Artillery School. Mrs Merritt had written to her friend Mr Endicott, the Secretary of war.[23]

This suggests that the power and influence of women in service affairs was not limited to Nigeria, but almost a global phenomenon. However, the intervention by some of the women could be for good or evil. It is for this reason, that commanding officers often distanced themselves from critical matters by instituting boards of inquiry or committees to verify and ascertain policy direction on complex issues.

Wives of military personnel were also involved in the affairs of family and kinship ties. "This is an age long tradition in which senior military officers placed sons and relatives as personal staff or aides."[24] Women's interference provided opportunities for promotion and, welfare of this group as well as solidarity in the service. But more importantly was the security it offered to the senior officer and his household against sabotage and double loyalty

of staff. The influence of some of the women also placed them at vantage position to mediate in the 'politics of marriages,' especially in the lives of young officers. Writing on the British military force, Morris Janowitz asserts, "Occasionally; wives have even influenced minor personnel decisions... a proper marriage by a young officer to the daughter of a high-ranking officer was a relevant step in building a career, and service wives worked hard to screen potential candidates."[25] Corroborating the view, Gann and Duignan indicate that "colonial military administrators wedded their own kind (class consciousness). They were either married to the sisters of colleagues or the daughters of military officers...quite often it was to girls they had known from childhood or whom they had met on leave."[26]

Finally, the influence and interference of some wives in service affairs has also remained significant in contemporary times because of rank and protocol. It has also underplayed some of the hardline regimentation of the military. On the same matter, Laura Boyle underlines:

> Yet these women had an important role in maintaining colonial society. Their advice on matters political and administrative did not always go unheeded. An intelligent wife would play her part in getting her husband promoted or posted to a more agreeable district. Above all, a capable woman was required to change her husband's lifestyle.[27]

Wives of Military Personnel and the Development of public Space

The contributions of wives of military personnel to the development of colonial barracks in particular and the administration of Nigeria in general cannot be overemphasized. Writing on Flora Lugard, Margery Perham asserts: "We have good reason to study her, not only for her close co-operations with Lugard at this time but because of the part she was to play in his career as his wife. Since their last contact, she had become even more of a public figure."[28] Lady Lugard was known to have created consciousness in the public space using her articles in *The Times* to explain and contest the West Africa question.

She was "anxious to learn from him [Lugard] all she could about them, and, with her strong faith in Britain's imperial mission, ready to use her personal and professional services to advance her country's interests in the area of dispute." [29]

The character and career of Lady Lugard, first as a correspondent and wife of foremost colonial administrator did not only popularise her name in the British Empire but also in the masculine affairs of colonies at a time that Victorian ideology of separate spheres was palpable. This idea is taken further in the writings of Helen Callaway and Dorothy .O. Helly:

> Flora Lugard's belief in the positive benefits of the British Empire infused her writings....She focused on the prospects of economic growth and political consolidation of these self-governing colonies within an increasingly united British Empire, a vision largely blinkered to the force of colonial nationalisms and local self-identities.[30]

It is probably because of this and other reasons that Lady Lugard was accused of being a "Crusader for Empire"[31] and a benevolent partner in the imperial mission. This notion is probably popular on the grounds that she devoted her column in *The Times* to issues around the colonies rather than informal sphere and the well-being of women in the barracks.

The implication of her effort was far-reaching because it provided first-hand knowledge about West Africa and Nigeria in particular to the British populace. It also afforded them the benefit of clarifying the activities of imperial officers, especially, on the contested issues of unlawful behaviour, sexual deviance, concubinage, and illegitimate children from indigenous women[32] hitherto hidden from Colonial Office. Dame Flora Lugard's interaction with Joseph Chamberlain, Taubman Goldie, and Lord Lugard with regard to the 'forward policy' to a greater extent dominated her interpersonal relationship with fellow Europeans and indigenous wives in the colonies.

This argument is reinforced by the fact that literature on women and empire has not yielded evidence on her personal relationship or friendship with either European or indigenous women in colonial barracks. Despite her informed knowledge on this matter, Lady Lugard's place in Nigerian history remained significant not only as Governor-General's wife but as one who named the amalgamated nation "Nigeria."

Upon her death on January 25, 1929 there were tributes and accolades. Among the many tributes, was the one Colonel Amery, the Colonial Secretary paid at the Corona Club dinner on May 6, 1929:

> There is one loss, not indeed in the ranks which gather round this table, but in the truest sense in the Colonial Service, that we must all deplore. Lady Lugard had already played a notable part in awakening the consciousness of this country to the opportunities and responsibility of our imperial heritage before she entered upon that wonderful partnership of kindred spirits inspired by a single lofty aim which was to be hers for so many years with Lord Lugard in West Africa, in the Far East, and in that ever active focus of interest on all affairs of the Empire, their beloved home down in Surrey. [33]

Literature on women and gender in colonial Nigeria is also replete with the contributions of Contance Larymore to the development of the barracks. She arrive Lokoja in company of her military husband in 1902 from Sierra Leone[34] where they served in different capacity. In the "Preface to the Second Edition" of *A Resident's Wife in Nigeria*, she wrote: It has been a very great pleasure to me to know that my experience has been of some practical use to several of my country-women who have shared their husband's exile. The difficulties in the way of wives accompanying their husbands to far-distant stations must still exist.[35] The above statement was imperative at the time because of prevailing circumstances in the colonial force, particularly in a situation where the cantonment was perceived as a male centred world.

Thus, women who were prepared to share in the experience of colonies must brace up for the challenges. They must be ready to travel to remote areas where there was no water supply, no newspapers and necessary comforts of home. Writing on her early years in Nigeria, Larymore posits:

> Our first month in Lokoja was, in many ways, a busy one...realizing sadly in a day or two that the amenities and conveniences of Indian life were not to be found here, anymore than inside the house. We made friends; too, with the small community of white people in the station, the nursing sisters, N.N.R officers and civilian officials, and many were the helping hands and kindly hints given to us, on all sides, and most gratefully received.[36]

The contributions of Larymore to the imperial administration were remarkable in the barracks economy and the delimitation of some parts of colonial Nigeria. As she puts it, "Exactly a month after our arrival, we set forth on our first tour in the bush. The object of our journey was the delimitation of the Northern Nigeria-Lagos boundary, from Aiede to Owo, and at the former place we were to meet the Lagos Travelling Commissioner."[37] She was also involved in the delineation of boundary line around Benin and Ondo areas. According to her, "Along the banks of the Ose River a rough path was blazed, to mark the boundary line, and we made an expedition along it on foot. It was a very interesting experience, penetrating this silent forest, where no human being had passed before." [38] The same could be said of Ilorin-Kabba boundary[39] and several others. The participation of European wives in boundary adjustment and delineation suggest the lack of manpower in boundary adjustment at the time and the resilience of Colonial Service to achieve effective boundary lines in most communities.

Another European wife who made impact in the public domain and well-being of military families was Lady Donald Cameron. She assisted her husband a great deal in the administration of Nigeria and she was often seen in Government House doing one thing or another. Corroborating the view, Alan Burns indicates that Lady Cameron did most of the

house-keeping[40] and hospitality. Similarly, Nancy Robertson, wife of Governor-General who presided over Nigeria's independence was described as an "ideal partner" because of her wit, intelligence and humanity. During her tenure at Government House in Lagos, she had the privilege of presiding as hostess to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh in Nigeria and to Princess Alexandra who came as the Queen's representative for the Independence celebrations.[41]

Laura Boyle's involvement in the colonial administration of Nigeria was noteworthy. According to Gann and Duignan: "When she arrived in Nigeria most of the towns along the coast had a fair complement of European wives; there was the same routine of life in the club and the Sunday church service,"[42] but her idea introduced some changes. This she explains in the following lines: "Many of the Districts had never had a white woman as a permanent resident, and I was inwardly very proud, though perhaps slightly nervous, that I would be living in one which had not been so favoured since the Ashanti war." [43]

Another woman of substance in colonial Nigeria was Lady Violet Bourdillon, "a woman described in 1935 as the 'perfect Governor's wife' and who contradicts completely the stereotyped conception of British women in the colonies."[44] According to R.D. Pearce, "Lady Bourdillon always insisted on good manners – not on any precise form but on their essence, which is consideration for others. She also realized that there was much to be gained from other cultures....She found that differences in culture and outlook were not unbridgeable."[45] Pearce also noted that Lady Bourdillon was known to have constructive interest in the welfare of women and children in every colony to which her husband was posted. She was endeared greatly in the minds of some Nigerian chiefs[46] and politicians.

For instance, on one of her visits to the Emir of Kano, Lady Bourdillon was said to "have talked to the Emir until 'he hugged himself and rocked on the edge of his chair with delight and allowed her to visit his wives in his harem."[47] She also visited the Oni of Ife, where she received a great accolade having first been blindfolded, she was taken by the Oni deep into the forest and shown his esoteric tribal fetish, and was reported to have been the first white person to be given the privilege of seeing it.[48]

The *Nigerian Daily Times*, dated October 2, 1936 underlines that Lady Bourdillon was applauded in colonial Lagos for her boundless energy as a society leader and organizer which endeared her steadfastly to a large circle of admirers.[49] "It was this exceptional commitment and dedication that inspired her husband "to pay glowing tribute to her human sympathy and exceptional lack of all sense of class or colour; adding that her attitude had influenced his policy towards a range of problems."[50] Corroborating the view R.D.Pearce remarks: "There can be no doubt that by presiding as hostess at Government House, Violet Bourdillon exercised an influence that affected the whole of colonial life in Nigeria that was no less significant for being intangible."[51]

Similarly, her hospitality was always of the highest possible order, and she created an environment of friendliness, warmth, and goodwill for all. As part of her social responsibility, "she arranged that every new British officer arriving in Nigeria should have a meal at Government House, and stay the night if he wanted to, before proceeding to his station."[52] The history of Violet Bourdillon cannot be complete without mentioning the event of 1939 when her husband, Sir Bernard Bourdillon was on tour in Niger province and began to experience a weakness of the body so much that he could not continue with official formalities.

This is aptly encapsulated by R.D. Pearce:

> On tour in Niger Province in January 1939, when the Governor was running a high temperature and had to retire to bed, it was Lady Bourdillon who filled in as understudy and carried out the tour of inspection, meeting the Emir of Kontagora, visiting the women's quarters, talking in Arabic with the Alkali, and then moving on the Elementary school where, she was shocked that many of the boys were so woefully thin,[and] she stressed the importance of good nourishment to growing children.[53]

As the wife of His Excellency, her influence in cementing a colonial empire was not only remarkable among the Lagos Market Women, but also government officials across the French and British colonies. It was on the strength of her popularity that "she declared to her husband that she could lead these women in rebellion and overthrow the government if she had a mind to."[54] In the same view, *The Daily Service* dated May17, 1943 reads:

> She had adorned Government House for eight years with conspicuous success. No wife of any Governor before had made Government House more democratic and popular than Lady Bourdillon and her work among our women folk will be a lasting monument to the joint services of herself and her husband in this large and growing country.[55]

The above analysis shows that women were indispensable in colonial barracks just like any other community. Their role in the household as well as public space was profound. These efforts were complementary in the activities of their husbands and the administration of Nigeria. Besides, it demonstrates that imperial rule did not rigidly isolate women in the empires and colonies as speculated by some scholars.

Wives of Military Personnel and the Second World War

The role of wives of military personnel in the Second World War cannot be glossed over in a work of this scope. This is because the war provided opportunities for European and indigenous wives of military personnel to engage in the war effort, not only as stakeholders but dependants in the colonies.

This is cogently noted by Helen Callaway:

> Beside the work traditionally considered appropriate for them, women moved into positions previously reserved for men. This began during the Second World War when qualified wives took on jobs in administration formerly carried out by DOs and ADOs. When the war was over, many of these women continued to assist their husbands' work in various ways, although no longer in any official capacity.[56]

It would be recalled that on the escalation of conflict, the coastal areas of Nigeria were under the threat of the Vichy France. The insecurity was heightened immediately the Germans took control of the Mediterranean Sea, thus making Nigeria an important staging post for troops heading to the Middle East and Burma.[57] Moreover, "when the war started, administrative officers in Nigeria with special qualifications were released for military service, at the same time, recruitment for the Colonial Service stopped. The loss of staff required that all administrative officers had to take on extra duties, and wives came forth to take paid and unpaid jobs."[58]

Joan Sharwood Smith, for instance, then in Kontagora, was involved in military duties, the same way other European wives in the outposts assisted the force in the war years. Relating the events, Sharwood Smith notes, "So she began to help me unofficially in the office in much the same way that other wives, in the isolated stations were soon to help their over-burdened husbands throughout the war years."[59]

Apart from these functions, she was particularly noted for her secretarial duties and occasional coding and decoding of information.[60] Also within her range of responsibilities, was the routine of monthly check on the accounts of the two native treasuries of the division.[61] It was her commitment and determination that got her involved in the preparation of maps, plans, and compilation of statistics.[62]

According to her memoir:

> I was given lessons in filing and card indexing and in such spare time as I had, I absorbed a book on Office Management...Codes and ciphers then had to be mastered and finally I had to improve my French for one of our duties was to interview all French Officers escaping from Vichy territory into Nigeria to join the forces of General de Gaulle.[63]

This idea was taken further by Sharwood Smith: "My wife spoke French well and she had skilfully created, out of the bizarre surroundings in which we found ourselves, a home in which we could entertain comfortably."[64] It was the courage of Sharwood Smith that motivated her "to travel with her husband to the border areas, usually in a three-ton truck, carrying her typewriter in order to type his reports. Her secretarial duties overlapped with those of 'wife' when they entertained guests coming through Kano – including General de Gaulle."[65]

It was also during the Second World War that Lady Bourdillon tempered the elaborate formality of official protocol when a host of visitors, officials and dignitaries became stranded in Lagos; this action forced her husband to describe Government House as "the best Hotel in Africa."[66] Available records indicate that Lady Bourdillon's pet projects empowered a number of women and children in the barracks, the Club also raised War Relief Fund for the education of several children[67] and dependants.

Lady Bourdillon also extended her kindness to military families when a ship sank outside Lagos harbour in which several crew members, officers and men died. She later invited all the survivors to a dinner where they were served in two sittings, thick soup and steak and kidney pie.[68] Lady Bourdillon, in her warmth and affection equally provided encouragement to the lowliest of British officers and their wives, members of the Governor's staff, and the

Africans who worked in the compound of Government House, which formed a small village, these were all part of the extended family of Sir Bernard and Lady Bourdillon.[69] In fact, it was the women's passion and challenges of the time that inspired them to advance their frontiers in the public space. It also informed their efforts to learn and speak local languages in the country. This is encapsulated by Larymore in the following lines:

> I am not ashamed to confess that I cried when I made a starkly discovery of being misinformed. The lesson, however, went home to us both, [my husband and me] and drove us to work ceaselessly at the Hausa language, knowing there could be no security for ourselves and no justice for the people, until we could be independent of dishonest interpretation."[70]

Also in Northern Nigeria, Larymore made effort to learn Arabic and French with a view to supporting her spouse, similar to the examples of other European wives. According to her:

> We beguiled some of the long hot hours by making an effort to learn Arabic; we did not progress very far or very fast, but, indeed I think circumstances were rather against us! Our teacher spoke Arabic and Hausa – no English.... Our text-book and dictionary were Arabic-French! Something like a miniature Tower of Babel ensued, and we decided to postpone our studies till a more favourable opportunity presented itself.[71]

The contributions of women in war situations were not peculiar to colonial Nigeria alone. In the United States of America, as Morris Janowitz has written: "George Paton's wife was reputed to have possessed an outstanding command of French which she utilised in translating textbooks used by the French Cavalry Schools, thereby enhancing the military reputation of her husband as an advanced thinker."[72] In a related event, a Colonel's wife was reported to have memorized the Army Regulations so that her husband would have a readily available reference source.[73]

Another European wife who made a significant impact in the politics of public space was Sylvia Leith-Ross. In her memoir she recalled an encounter in 1913 as a wife of military personnel where she discussed extensively with the Assistant resident on the agenda of future Nigeria, the duties of the British to establish law and order and their responsibilities for upholding an empire standing for freedom and justice.[74] It was also along the agenda of colonial development that Flora Lugard wrote to Chamberlain, the then Secretary of colonies in 1902 on the challenges of colonial empires in which she admonished him to press forward his argument to enable him extract funds from the grudging House of Commons.[75]

Suffice to state that the activities of European wives in the colonies were the same all through the war years. In far Northern Nigeria, for example, Laura Boyle, wife of a district commissioner participated in administrative duties where she took interest in her husband's work as well as judicial matters.[76] "She was also involved in welfare activities and was not the kind of person who was easily rattled."[77] Her fluency in Hausa provided the desired advantage to understand the country's history and ethnography.[78]

L.H.Gann and Peter Duignan also underscore the remarkable achievements of Olive Macleod, who made a name for herself in Africa. She was described as a woman of great distinction. It was in Zungeru that her exploits manifested when she got married to the British Resident C.L.Temple whom she assisted in imperial administration.[79] She was reputed to have extensively studied the area and its ethnography leading to the compilation of a book titled, *Notes on the tribes, Provinces, Emirates and States of the Northern Provinces of Northern Nigeria* (1919).[80] At the same time, she made notes on natural history, forestry, agriculture, plants, animals, insects, birds, fish, and reptiles in the region. [81]

Similarly, Callaway explains that, "as a Resident's wife, Elizabeth Purdy typed confidential reports for her husband in Yola and Sokoto. Wives received no pay for this; it just never occurred to me to think about it. We were glad to be able to help."[82] Also in colonial Lagos, European wives were made to register and be 'directed' to work as a result of shortage of manpower. This therefore brought to the fore the personality of Diana Bridges who worked in the Censor's Office where she assisted her husband who was then the Acting Commissioner for Colony. Her administrative skill came to the fore during the salt crises in Nigeria. "One of her jobs at the time was the issuing of permits for salt ration to market women at a time when hoarding and high prices was the order of the day.[83]

Gladys Leak's effort in World War II was also outstanding during the period. She was reported to have executed a number of projects at the General Service Office (GSO), similar to her activities in filing system and documentation in the office. In one of her letters dated August 8, 1943, she wrote, "We do the filing for the whole place and do not get a moment's peace...It reminds me of one of those crazy American business films where clerks and secretaries are dashing about."[84] Immediately after the war, she returned to her nursing profession for relief work at the hospital.[85]

Indigenous wives of military personnel also demonstrated exceptional courage and resilience in the war years. Though, they had no administrative skill as the European wives, yet, their efforts were commendable. They were known to have maintained the security of the barracks by observing the movement of people in and out of the community, provision of health care to wounded soldiers, participating in the burial ceremonies of deceased soldiers and friends, sympathising with bereaved families and dependants, and managing the home. These contributions to the barracks system were not only demanding, but an exigency of the time

despite prevailing racial divide common to both European and indigenous wives in the barracks.

The Economic Development of Women in Colonial Barracks

The economic organisation of wives of military personnel in colonial period was gradual but steady in successive years. This aspect of study is important because there is no intellectual production of this nature in any journal, as to the best of our knowledge. Consequently, the study relied on the memoirs of some European wives in colonial barracks, structured interviews from respondents, and journal articles from cognate disciplines. Because of the information provided by these materials, the effort stands to illuminate our understanding of barracks economy, as well as invalidate some of the assumptions about wives of military personnel by some members of the public.

In fact, fragmentary evidence suggests that wives of military personnel had over the years participated in the informal or domestic economy of the barracks with a view to ensuring food security in the community. Some of the stations where European and indigenous soldiers' wives left their achievements include Lokoja, Zungeru, Calabar, Zaria and Lagos Cantonments, among others. The study reveals that gender division of labour in the barracks brought about complementarity and understanding in the management of households.

In the early years of the barracks, most European and indigenous soldiers' wives were involved in agriculture which comprised gardening, livestock production, and fishing. Other women were occupied with trade, distribution and exchange which developed from compound trade to the institution of *mammy* markets. The economic activities of wives of military personnel since inception had been primitive but not stagnant as some Eurocentric

scholars made us to believe about African economy. Besides, the circumstances surrounding the slow pace of women's economic growth and development in Nigeria had been traced to the foundation of the colonial economy which focused on male centred cash crop economy. In consequence of this, the process of change and continuity in the barracks economy was slow and linear in relation to the economy of the period.

The question therefore is what was the nature of pre-colonial economy in most traditional camps in Nigeria? This will help us to situate the barracks economy in the context of the period. The history of camps in traditional societies revealed that it was unable to thrive on spoils and raids of farmlands from outlying villages. Hence, warriors and their retinues worked assiduously to engage in agriculture, trade, craft production and indigenous technology since warfare was an occasional vocation. Some scholars have also corroborated this argument. One of such was G.O.Oguntomisin who emphasized that, "warriors tended to have new ideas of government as a result of their exploits in war; therefore they utilized their large household and retainers to cultivate farms and conduct their trade from which they derived much wealth."[86]

Stretching the thinking, Bolanle Awe notes, "The maintenance of the style of life which leadership in Ibadan demanded needed more than booty and other proceeds of war to sustain it."[87] On the same matter, Adeniyi Oroge argues that, "one of the distinctive features of any war chief of repute was to be able to *fight, farm, and trade*."[88] In fact, some notable warlords known to have engaged in agriculture with their household include, Balogun Ibikunle, Commander-in-chief of Ibadan army, Are Kurunmi of Ijaye, and Latosisa of Ibadan among others. The above illustration establishes the fact that military camps survived on the productive economies of warriors and their families which were mutually beneficial.

Gender relations in military community since the colonial period was characterized by sexual division of labour, this implied that men were exclusively involved in military duties, while women were active in economic life. The question therefore is why was it imperative for most wives to engage in income yielding ventures rather than relying solely on the wages of their husbands? Providing a clue, Elizabeth M. Finlayson's work highlights the observation of a Captain's wife: "As an Army wife there are many times when we are in complete charge of home and family, so I also feel I should prepare myself for a profession in case I am thrust into the role of sole bread winner. I do not believe this attitude would be as prevalent were I a civilian [wife]."[89]

Writing in the same vein, Hellen Callaway asserts:

> Emily Bradley advises the young colonial wife to take up work outside the home, not to add to the family income or to develop her own interests, but to free one of the lordly ones' from some of the routine drudgeries of the office and give him time for the more creative side of his work. Her job does not excuse her, of course, from her duties as an official's wife and hostess.[90]

The researcher could deduce from the statement that Emily Bradley was writing as a Victorian full time housewife and a feminist which in contemporary times was debatable. Similarly, Marjorie K. Mcintosh's study of the Yoruba women states:

> It was expedient for some Yoruba women to generate income of their own as a result of their involvement in women's associations which demanded their time and commitment. Such social relations include attendance of group wedding, religious ceremonies and civic occasions, wearing similar dresses or head ties and others.[91]

An informant[92] explains that in Igbo society, the inability of a woman to have her own resources was perceived as unethical in a world of competition and creativity. It is for this reason that most women strive to have their own income, which could be harnessed for personal use, purchase of clothes and other requirements of town's meetings and market

associations. The barracks economy depended largely on the use of simple farm tools, family labour and traditional exchange system. The cultivation of garden in the barracks began with some indigenous soldiers' and European wives, who practiced horticulture and livestock keeping. In one of the personal correspondences of Flora Shaw to Joseph Chamberlain, She wrote, "I have begun today 30th August [1902] to organize some little improvements in Government House garden, which is at present merely a cleared enclosure."[93] This was probably done in the spirit of colonial enterprise and possibly to ward off solitary condition. Apart from the involvement of European wives in agriculture, indigenous soldiers' wives also engaged in gardening, and livestock production, perhaps, to keep themselves busy as well as contribute to the food security of the barracks .[94]

Agricultural Activities

In an informative study of "Compound Garden in Ibibio Food Culture and Economy 1850-2000" Eno Ikpe stresses that "compound garden refers to a farm located around the house. It varies from about two to four hectares, depending on the size of the household especially the number of wives it harbours. Unlike a European garden, it is not full of flowers but of diverse food crops and perennial trees of economic, medicinal and nutritional values."[95]

In the barracks, compound gardens were located at the back of living quarters; this was due to the fact that military authorities never condoned untidy environment. This behaviour changed a bit with the arrival of European wives who engaged in the cultivation of flowers along pathways and in front of their quarters. Some of the flowers were nurtured in their enclosures and ridges behind their homes before being planted at designated areas. As Ikpe has shown, "compound garden was distinct from other farms due to two reasons: it was the only piece of farmland which was privately owned and not communally owned....It was also used for

intensive cultivation of a mixture of perennial economic trees and arable crops, which was not the case in other farms."[96] Similarly, compound gardens in the barracks were privately owned and sustained for domestic consumption.

In the early years of the barracks, military authorities encouraged the planting of flowers and food crops in the gardens in order to minimise the spread of rodents, mosquitoes and other vermins which posed health hazards to British officers and their families. Records indicate that most European wives in Lagos, Lokoja, and Zungeru Barracks, cultivated flowers for the beautification of their homes and Government House, while others who were unable to adjust to the weather condition engaged the services of labourers and servants to manage their enclosures.

The experimentation with flower gardens in colonial barracks began with some European wives among whom were Flora Lugard, Lady Cameron, Constance Larymore, Lady Alan Burns, and Lady Violet Bourdillon, to mention but a few. According to Alan Burns:

> We were the first occupants of this house and my wife succeeded in making the garden a thing of beauty. We planted many fruit trees, but, as has happened to so many colonial officials, we left Nigeria before any of them had borne; as it has been little consolation to hear from men who have since occupied the house that the fruit was plentiful and delicious.[97]

Flowers were planted all year round but most especially during the decline in rainy season, though, some thrived in dry season but with frequent watering to avoid dryness occasioned by the scorching sun. Some of the flowers planted and propagated in the barracks include hibiscus, freesia, agapanthus, roses, zinnias, sunflowers, marigolds, cannas, and balsams among others.[98] Most of these flowers gradually diffused to some parts of the country soon after European wives succeeded in domesticating them.

According to Larymore, “Plants have their fancies, which utterly refused to grow in my compound, across to Dr Parsons when it immediately took a fancy to him and his garden, and began to grow. Roughly speaking, the higher the site, the better are the horticultural chances; so that the experience I have gathered in Lokoja and other places will serve for Zaria, Bauchi, etc.”[99] Relating her early years in Lokoja, she added, “I there and there took to heart the lesson which I have tried to practise ever since – the absolute duty of planting trees everywhere for the benefit of one’s successors.”[100]

Some of the perennial fruit trees include orange trees, mango trees, pea and avocado trees, guava trees, and apple trees, to mention but a few.[101] The value of flowers cannot be overemphasized in colonial barracks. This is because most of them were used for different purposes ranging from the beautification of Government House, living quarters, and pathways. Sometimes flowers were used as a symbol and an expression of love. Indigenous soldiers’wives were not interested in the planting of flowers at the beginning, but engaged in the cultivation of local vegetables and food crops in the gardens. This is aptly observed by Larymore, “There is, however, native spinach, which is quite as good as the English kind, and grows like a weed. Country tomatoes, garden eggs, okros, sweet potatoes, green pawpaws, and yams are all of great use in supplying the table with the necessary green food…”[102]

This suggests that not all crops were diffused from Europe into Nigeria in particular and Africa in general as postulated by some European scholars. Indeed, the insight provided by Constance Larymore on the indigenous economy demonstrates that traditional societies were self-sufficient before the arrival of British imperialist. Available records indicate that some European wives in the barracks experimented with some foreign crops and seedlings introduced from Britain and other parts of the world. For instance, Larymore was said to have

brought from Sierra Leone in 1902, twenty seeds of *clitoria*, the beautiful sapphire blue pea, a tiny packet of *Ipomea quamoclit* and a few of the brilliant scarlet miniature convolvulus into the Lokoja Barracks. "Their descendants," according to her, "are now spread all over the country, so much so, that they have often been mentioned to me as growing wild."[103] Similarly, "in Lokoja Barracks," as she noted: "The mangoes are quite good, and I have had guavas and custard apples. The country abounds in tiny limes, which are sold in great quantities, very cheap, and make most delicious lemon squashes."[104]

On the method of garden cultivation, she instructed her colleagues in the following ways: "The most important factor in the success of vegetable garden (and, indeed amongst the flowers too) is that the seed should be quite fresh from England. A small quantity arriving twice a year will give far better results than one of the large collections."[105] This useful guide on crop production was corroborated by the views of Eno. B. Ikpe in the following lines: "Women were the first to adopt new food plants hitherto unknown in their societies. The continuous search for food variations for the purpose of increased food security was responsible for such adoptions."[106] This study agrees with this assertion because the primary motive of European wives was the search for varieties of food regimen and security to provide quality food for their spouses as was common in their countries of origin.

Generally, the method of cultivation involved tilling of land into beds, as long as space would allow, and not more than three feet wide, with paths between. Every bed had a roof or shelter, consisting of matting or palm branches, fastened uprights four or five feet high, and the earth was well banked up so as to be quite a foot above the ground level. Vegetables were usually planted in September when the heaviest rains were over; a few kinds were sown in dry season with constant watering of the ground.

As Lord Lugard rightly pointed out, "vegetables can be raised in properly-tended gardens under municipal supervision and sold to Europeans; but raw salad should be avoided in the tropics. Gardens in the dry zone depend on irrigation, which can be affected by raising well-water by windmills."[107]

On the other hand, the cultivation of tomato gardens began during the late rains. It was ideally planted on beds and ridges to forestall the washing away of the seeds during the heavy rains. Tomatoes were often harvested in Lokoja and Zungeru Barracks during the period of May and April. Also cucumbers thrived in colonial barracks; these were sown in boxes until it began to grow out. It could sometimes be staked or allowed to grow on ordinary ground.[108] Other food crops planted in European enclosures included, beans, English potatoes, cabbages, and spinach, and lettuces, to mention but a few.[109]

Wives of indigenous soldiers were also involved in the cultivation of compound garden. This served as a source of food supply in the home and an avenue for generating little income. It was for this reason that compound garden was seen as one of the best approaches to food security in the household in both pre-colonial and colonial periods.

The management of compound garden was simple compared to farming which required enormous labour and working implements. Immediately a fallow space was located behind the quarters, it was cleared by the women and sometimes by hired labour. Thereafter, the felled trees and shrubs were set on fire. This, they claim was to make the land fertile and free from harmful rodents. After this process, the women awaited the rains to fall before planting crops, this was necessary to avoid the seedlings from dying of heat and scorching sun.

Since there was gender division of labour between men and women in the barracks, men never had a say on the choice of crops planted or income generated from harvest of crops, particularly vegetables. Hence, the content of garden crops was determined by the women. some of which included melon, maize, cassava, potatoes, yams, okro, vegetables, bitter leaf, *effirin* or *Ncheanwu*, sugar cane, banana and plantain among others. These crops were the favourites for wives military personnel resident in the barracks located in parts of southern Nigeria.

Similarly, in Northern Nigeria, women in the barracks engaged in the cultivation of annual crops such as onions, ginger, millet, vegetables, *acha*, soya beans, barley, maize, cassava, beans, potatoes, and garlic, to mention but a few. It was observed that the activities of secluded wives in food production and food processes were limited even when they utilised the services of their daughters as helpers. In the same manner, their influence in market activities earned very little profit because of losses arising from their non-physical presence, inability to recover debts from customers, and poor capital base. The challenges of garden system in colonial barracks were mainly caused by environmental factors, and policy decisions of the Colonial Office, among others.

According to Alan Burns:

> A senior official with a good salary, and fairly certain that he will continue to live in the same house for some time, may be prepared to spend money on his garden; the junior official, apart from the insecurity of his tenure, is unable to face the cost. In many cases, eg, in Lagos, the sandy soil has to be improved by a large dressing of "black" earth, brought from a considerable distance and at great expense.[110]

He added, "I consider that the Government should provide the necessary funds to make a garden for each official bungalow, should set out the necessary hedges and plant fruit trees,

and it would then be reasonable to ask each occupier to maintain the garden."[111] But the Colonial Office did not hearken to this suggestion as a result of prevailing circumstances at the time. On the other hand, the difficulties encountered by European wives in the cultivation of compound garden and enclosure had to do with the following: The vagaries of weather and climate, diseases, indifference on the part of Colonial Office, lack of modern farm tools, to mention but a few.

The effect of the sun was great on some European wives, causing them to suffer sunburns and skin diseases during the period. Thus, doctors encouraged them to wear sunglasses and hats to prevent the damage of their eyes. Corroborating the view, Flora Lugard states: "The principal, perhaps, the only serious obstacle to the successful development of the country appears to me to be the effect of the climate upon Europeans"[112] Added to this, were the diseases of tropical Africa such as blackwater fever, malaria, dysentery, typhoid, cholera, smallpox and chicken pox to mention but a few. These diseases contributed adversely to high mortality in the community which hindered the efforts of women in the domestic economy. It was during the period that some European wives were invalided to Britain for medical treatment and change of environment.

Colonial policy on the postings of British officers and local soldiers directly and indirectly affected the women's effort in gardening. This is because they were under obligation to accompany their military husbands to areas of primary assignment irrespective of distance and situation. For instance, it was reported "in 1934 that a unit in Katagum had eight or nine different District Officers (D.O.s)"[113] and wives, being the total strength of the officers. Also in Katsina Ala in 1933, the commanding officers were changed six times within a period of

ten months[114] which was perhaps unhealthy for economic development. This state of affairs became worrisome in successive years as Larymore observes:

> The term of service of twelve months followed by 'leave home,' and an uncertain prospect of returning to the same station, prevented any attempt at all being made in the majority of cases, and the very few spots that were started as gardens flourished till their owners left, when they were utterly neglected, the bush claimed its own, and all traces of cultivation vanished far quicker than they had appeared. But now that things are progressing generally, and each station contains a larger number of people willing to carry on each others' labours, the gardening problem comes nearer solution, though it still needs a stout heart and endless perseverance.[115]

Writing in the same vein, Walter .R. Crocker asserts:

> The present lack of system, `the casualness, the changeableness, and the unpredictability, with which officers are moved, and the evil effects thereof both on the natives and the spirit of the officers themselves…. Senior District Officers are sometimes moved two, three, or more times in the course of one tour (eighteen months). The Division that can show a list of names of officers who have been in-charge for a period of, say, as long as five years, is very rare.[116]

On the same matter, Alan Burns emphasises the fact that the "frequent changes of stations, and in some cases changes of quarters within a single station, do not encourage officials to make gardens."[117] From the above analysis, the study shows that the movement and migration of women with their military husbands decreased their economic potentials and income, particularly, the loss of garden and livestock production.

Following the limitations and attendant consequences of colonial policies in some parts of Nigeria, efforts were made in successive years to improve food security in Northern Nigeria. This debate is highlighted by Eno Ikpe in the following lines: "There was a concerted campaign to encourage the people to plant fruits and vegetables, seedlings of budded mango, orange, lime, and guava were issued to every household with information on the best way to plant and tend the trees."[118] This is because the food culture of some Northerners did not

contain enough vegetables and fruit, thereby exposing them to lack of vitamins especially of the 'B group'. Hence, the necessity for the fruit tree campaign. The other problem that confronted women in the cultivation of compound garden was the use of simple farm tools, such as hoes, cutlasses, shovels and knives. These implements hampered the expansion of enclosures despite large land spaces. For instance, tending and trimming of flowers was difficult with cutlasses as against the use of shears and specialized cutters. Same could be said of tilling the ground and making of moulds, where women had to use cutlasses and hoes as against specialised farm tools and tractors. It is for this reason that Lady Lugard opines: "The economies which have been practised, would be almost laughable but that the strain of living in severe discomfort and working without proper appliances costs good lives in a climate like this."[119]

Women also suffered from insufficient experimental pots and cages used for the preservation of seedlings; hence, they had to make do with ridges and sheds. The scarcity of storage facilities also impacted on their productive capacity to transplant as well as preserve some seedlings for planting seasons. Therefore, a greater percentage of the seedlings were lost in the rains, sun and the activities of rodents. Similarly, crops were sometimes affected by prolonged harmattan, drought and famine. These natural occurrence, contributed to low productivity in the garden system, more often than not causing the seedlings not to sprout or survive within the season. This development caused food scarcity and insecurity in the barracks.

Finally, the cultivation of compound garden in the barracks was the first attempt by the women to place themselves in economic history, and economic space of gender and power. Similarly, the benefit of these crops to the women was immense. First, they were planted and

harvested without much labour and where labour was employed, it was cheaper. Second, most of the crops in the compound garden were harvested at convenience, particularly, during or shortly before process of cooking. Additionally, neighbours and co-tenants had unlimited access to the use of these farm crops because it was not intended for sale all the time, but merely for the purpose of consumption. It is against this backdrop that the researcher refers to the contents in the compound garden as "convenient food crops."

Fishing activity was only carried out by European wives on part time basis as a hobby. Meanwhile, colonial barracks, to say the least, did not produce women who earned income through fishing industry. This is further explained by Larymore,"We fished the next day, without much science or skill on my part, and, to my immense surprise, our efforts were rewarded by the landing of a most uncanny- looking fish; indeed as it whirled out of the water" [120] This indeed explained that fishing was a pastime activity in the community.

Animal Husbandry

Apart from the cultivation of gardens and fishing, some of the women engaged in animal production or livestock management. In the early beginning, indigenous soldiers' wives reared fowls, goats, ducks, pigs, sheep, and other domestic animals which roamed about in the open space. This activity also took place in pre-colonial camps, where women domesticated a few animals for consumption and surpluses were either given to neighbours for further propagation or breeding. Others were sold in the market or bartered in exchange for goods. European wives also participated in livestock production, despite the challenges and constraints of the environment. For instance, Larymore kept a couple of ponies and shortly after, organised a stable for the safe comfort of the animals.[121] At that time, ponies were managed and maintained by women through hired labourers called '*Doki*-boy' because

most of their husbands were occupied with official duties. Ponies were kept by European women for sports, recreation and long distance journey as there were few vehicles in the early and formative years of colonial barracks.

During the period, most of the animals survived on grasses, fodder, maize, guinea-corn, and millet. Others thrived on leaves, yams, guinea corn and water. The care and treatment of these animals rested on local expertise of the Hausas and Fulani herders who doubled as traditional veterinary doctors. Most European wives also participated in cattle breeding, of which some were raised for milk, meat and other purposes. However, cattle and donkeys were not used in tilling the ground as most farm work was done by hand during the period. For the indigenous women in the barracks, cattle provided the bulk of the meat eaten on special occasions such as Sallah, and Christian festivities. Dairy products were also derived from cattle, while others earned income from the sale of surpluses.

Describing livestock production in colonial barracks, Larymore explains:

> I started with a stock of five cows, each with a small calf, and in full milk; I then, with a lamentable want of foresight and proper humility, decided on, and attempted to carry out all kinds of innovations and dairy principles, such as separating the calves from the cows, endeavouring to pacify the former with milk mixed with *adusa* (bran) – which I could never induce them to touch – and treating in a high-handed manner the remonstrance of the *mai-sanu* (cowman or head dairymaid).[122]

The challenges of maintaining cattle, sheep and goats were enormous, especially, with diseases prevalent in the tropics. Some of these include rinderpest, pleuro-pneumonia, tse-tse fly, mouth-cow disease, and tick, among others. Apart from livestock production, some European wives also engaged in the domestication of dogs and cats. But the experiment was of little success at the beginning, even when different varieties of dogs and cats were introduced in Lokoja and Zungeru Barracks, the result was the same. The high mortality of

these pets during the period was attributed to the prevalence of fleas, tick, lice, tsetse-flies, and the tropical weather and climate.[123] However, in the intervening years leading to World War II; several attempts were made to introduce disease resistant pets as highlighted by Larymore, "I have met a variety of English dogs out here, from massive bull-terriers down to the most fascinating little ones, a tiny Yorkshire terrier, but, to those who were coming out for the first time ...in the selection of a dog; let it be a young dog and a small one."[124]

The management of dogs was expensive in the colonies, but this had to do with the variety and nature of breed. Dogs were fed with meat, bones, fresh potatoes, porridge, oatmeal, and garri or (native flour) to mention but a few.[125] In the treatment of dogs, European wives administered salt spoonful of quinine which was perceived to be effective.[126] They also engaged traditional doctors who made use of local herbs in the treatment of rabies and serious wounds.

The importance of poultry management in the home cannot be overemphasized. According to Constance Larymore, "The keeping of poultry is certain to become, in the near future, a feature of every English household in Nigeria."[127] Local birds of different kinds were reared and managed in Zungeru and Lokoja Barracks before the emergence of European wives in Nigeria. During the period, "the class of fowl bred in the country were small, skinny, and tasteless and the eggs no larger than 'bantams.'[128] The question therefore is how were these birds managed in the barracks? The birds were sometimes bought as chicks and tied to familiarize itself with the environment for a time. Thereafter, the fowls were allowed to wander about and roost in the evenings. Some of the fowls took refuge at the corners of buildings, kitchens, rafters, and cages while others slept on tree branches.

Poultry management in the early years was simple because the fowls roamed about to source for food. Occasionally, the women provided them with maize, guinea corn, potatoes, cassava, cabbage leaves, boiled garri and corn pudding (*Aggidi)*, [129] and other food remnants. The fowls lay their eggs in secluded places, free from rodents, reptiles and floods. With the coming of European wives came a variety of birds in the barracks. Relating her experience, Constance Larymore asserts:

> My personal experience on the subject of English fowl is as follows: At first, we brought out four black Minorca hens and one cock; the latter died shortly after his arrival in Nigeria, but, on our way up-country, we had the good luck to be presented with a very fine Plymouth Rock cock. The hens behaved beautifully; they travelled in a large wicker-basket, and regularly laid eggs in it during the daily march.[130]

The contribution of European wives to the development of poultry system in colonial period need to be investigated by scholars, particularly, their achievements in the diffusion and domestication of birds, hitherto unknown in tropical Africa. Perhaps, the memoir of Larymore will be a useful guide:

> On our return from leave, we brought a fresh consignment of fowls, and if I call them 'a mixed lot' it is not intended altogether as a term of disparagement, for we had purposely selected mixed breeds. A fine Buff Orpington cock with a slight Black Minorca strain, two Black Minorca hens, a handsome Houdan hen, and two highly indiscriminate 'would-be' Orpington hens made up the party. Further fortified by an incubator, a kindly gift from Sir Alfred Jones, we fared forth to Bussa, firmly intent on poultry-rearing. This time our efforts were distinctly successful.[131]

The challenges of poultry management cannot be overlooked at the time. "The main difficulty lies in finding enough boiled food for the fowls,"[132] treatment of dysentery, birdflu and cold. The birds were also affected by marauding hawks, cats, snakes, and floods. Other birds found in the early barracks included ducks, geese, turkey, doves and pigeons.

Women's Role in Crafts and Industry

Since pre-colonial camps, women's economic potentials had been elaborate and dynamic not only as producers but sellers. Similarly, the population of women over the time had been seen as a great asset for the economic foundation of many kingdoms and empires. Describing the economic culture in Ekiti-parapo camp, S.A.Akintoye states:

> There were markets here and there where women spread out their wares such as food articles, home-made cloths, tobacco, potash herbs and a variety of delicacies displayed under tree sheds. The fact is that most men whose homes were distant from the camp would, if they could afford it, take some of their wives and children with them to the front.[133]

In the same manner, Robert Smith revealed that in one of the Nupe camps, there were "seen weavers, taylors (sic), women spinning cotton, others reeling off, some selling foo-foo, others carrying yams and paste, little markets at every green tree...."[134] These illustrations are imperative because it supports the claim that women's economic power in modern barracks was not different from what obtained in traditional camps. Production and craft industries thrived successfully in some barracks despite the limitations of the times. These industries operated on simple indigenous technology because only few individuals possessed the knowledge and skill required for its advancement. Some of the industries were involved in cloth production, bags and basketry, pottery, beads and jewelry, brooms and mat production, fruit drinks and others.

In colonial period, for example, cloth production was a vibrant and income generating venture for only a handful of wives in the barracks. This was done using the home made loom because it was a profession that accommodated both the old and the young. In some societies also, it was seen as a hereditary profession handed down from mother to daughters and to protect the industry there was the guilds of cloth producers. Cloth industry later created its

own division of labour and specialization in the barracks which enabled some women to develop the technology of dyeing, knitting, embroidery and sewing. Dyeing of cloth was carried out by wives in the barracks through the procurement of yarn and bleach. Thereafter, the processing of different components into colours before the weavers carried out their own work.

Secluded wives also participated in cloth production, but their specialisations were only visible in cap and hat making, knitting, embroidery, dyeing, weaving and sewing. This industry which began on a small scale in Lokoja Barracks later diffused into Zungeru Barracks, the then capital of Nigeria. With the establishment of a military base in Zaria, the population of soldiers' families increased in the trade, particularly, with the arrival of wives who came on posting with their husbands. The relocation of some military units to Kaduna in 1912 also popularized cloth production in the area as there were large markets for textile materials from indigenous people and workers in the Tobacco industry in Zaria.

On the other hand, the involvement of women in cloth production in the barracks situated in Western region was scanty. However, since independence, women's interests had grown in spinning, weaving, sewing, dyeing and embroidery. It was also observed that the chamber-pit looms with their wider cloths was popular among women from Ekiti, Akoko, Ijesha, Igbomina, Igbo, Nupe and Igala areas in the cantonments. According to Olubunmi Olawoyin, "*Adire*' trade in Abeokuta witnessed an expansion during the period between the two World Wars."[135] Moreover, with the construction of modern barracks in Ibadan and Abeokuta in the inter-war years, cloth production in general and *Adire* industry in particular found outlet to *Alamala* Barracks, Abeokuta, and *Odogbo* Barracks, Ibadan.

The activities of wives of military personnel were also visible in the production of bags and basketry using animal skins, raffia palm and other palm products. This technology enhanced the production of different shapes and sizes of bags and baskets based on income level and choice. The production of bags made of animal skins was well developed in the barracks in Kaduna and Zaria to the extent that bags were made of different colours sometimes decorated with beads and cowries which made them attractive to buyers. Basketry was also carried out in all the barracks but predominantly in Enugu Barracks in the then Eastern Region.

In contemporary times, basket industry had continued as a lucrative business for some women in the barracks following the postings of their spouses from one location to another. The production of basket had also become profitable following the location of most barracks in urban centres and proximity to markets. The importance of baskets in the home cannot be over-emphasized. It was used for variety of purposes which ranged from conveying of goods to and from markets, storing of dresses and other valuables.

Pottery industry had been a part of the economic livelihood of wives in the barracks since inception. Though, production level had been very minimal over the years because it was labour intensive. According to Niara Sudarkasa's detailed study of Yoruba women, "Pottery is a female industry, though men may sometimes be seen assisting to dig up the clay and to perform some rough initial work. But as a rule, the industry is in the hands of women."[136] Since colonial period, pots and calabashes of different shapes and sizes had been produced in most military community and used for different purposes. As Justus Nzemeka has shown, "The invention of pottery is believed to have provided the cheapest and easiest way of making containers and pots used for storing water and other liquids."[137]

Similarly, European wives used pottery materials for flower pots and vases while indigenous soldiers' wives used pots for cooking, brewing local beer, storing indigo dyes and serving of food. Pottery and calabashes were sometimes used for traditional and cultural purposes, such as, cooking and preservation of herbal medicines, vessels of sacrifice, and containers for keeping valuables among others. Among traders in colonial barracks, pots and calabashes were used for distribution purposes, particularly, in conveying and displaying of wares in the markets. It was also used by women engaged in the beautification of homes, acrobatic dancers during durbars, West Africa Social Activities (WASA) and other annual festivals in the barracks. In colonial barracks pottery production was common in Lokoja and Zungeru Barracks. This technology according to an informant was believed to have been diffused by the Gwari people in present day Niger State.[138]

Similarly, some women in the barracks also engaged in small scale production of palm oil and palm kernel. This extractive industry had gone a long way in providing the essential requirements of the home. In traditional societies, for instance, warriors' wives participated actively in this trade. According to Niara Sudarkasa, "the aged Yoruba women in the camps employed their time shelling kernels from the palm nuts used for the production of palm kernel oil."[139] The process involved removing the shell from the palm nut before the kernel was fried in a pot, thereafter; palm kernel oil began to settle at the bottom of the pot.

According to an informant[140] palm fruits were processed into palm oil by separating ripe palms from the bunch, after which the palm fruit was cooked and pounded using mortar and pestle. In some barracks, palm nuts were mashed with legs just for the purpose of extracting the oil. Shortly after, the by-product was emptied into a pot for the separation of the chaff and nuts. After this process, another round of cooking commenced, this was to allow the oil sift

into finish product. However, palm oil production was promoted by the colonial government using the slogan, "each bunch of palm nut that could be cut was equivalent to cutting down a German soldier and each tin of oil and kernels produced could help to running a German gun or aeroplane on the battle field."[141] Similarly, by-products from palm produce, such as the shell and chaff also served as a good source of fuel. Indeed, women used these residues to ignite fire in their kitchens. The brooms extracted from palm fronds were used for sweeping, ritual purposes, as well as, income for the producers. Wives of military personnel also purchased shea nuts from the markets with which they produced shea-butter, a commodity extracted from shea fruit; this was exclusively female industry in *Allamala* barracks, Abeokuta. These items were used in the production of soap and medicine.

Food processing was another activity that was popular among women in colonial and post-colonial periods. This productive activity cut across women of different ethnic groups in the community. For instance, secluded women in the barracks processed food drinks such as *zobbo, kunnu, fura, nunu,* and others. These food drinks had survived as essential items in market places and offices in the barracks. Some of these food drinks were made from barley, millet, rice, sorghum, ginger, and others.

The production of local brew was also carried out simultaneously by some soldiers' wives in the barracks. According to Mrs Danlami Khadijat "I lived on the production and sale of *pito, Brukutu*, and palm wine throughout my stay in Lokoja. And from Lokoja we moved to Kaduna barracks. It provided much income for me which I used for the training of my children because military pay was small."[142]

Relating further, she claimed, "I knew women who processed cassava and corn flour in the barracks and through this activity they were able to improve their lives and that of their children, even when their husbands had long died in the barracks."[143] Some of the popular food-stuffs processed by indigenous soldiers' wives included: fried bean cake (*Akara*), roasted plantain, cooked bean cakes (*moimoin*), roasted /cooked yams, cooked/roasted corn, and other food items. A few women also concentrated on the sale of cooked food such as, rice, tuwo, beans, *amala*, pounded yams, cassava, and others.

A study of Hausa women by Enid Schildkrout indicates that:

> The income women generate by cooking food for sale rather than for domestic consumption, or by engaging in other income-producing activities, is their own....The entire activity is distinct from their obligation to prepare food for their families. The investment a woman makes in her business, even when this business is the preparation of food, is distinct from the household budget.[144]

Food processing offered a lot of advantages to secluded women because they were able to raise their initial capital all by themselves, particularly, from variety of sources, which included income saved from household budget, dowries, gifts from relatives and female friends, loans from cooperative societies and monetary gift (Kudin batarwa) from their husbands.[145]

It has been argued that since some Moslem soldier-husbands were not under obligation to establish their wives as traders, they also cannot rely on them to support the household. It is for this reason that most women spend their income on clothing, gifts to friends and relations, contributions to dowries, jewelleries and other household effects. To achieve economic self-reliance, most women in seclusion introduced their children, especially, the young adult girls into productive skills, bearing in mind that they had to accumulate income for their dowry and other incidental expenses of womanhood.[146]

The Challenges of Economic Life in Colonial Barracks

The economic activities of wives of military personnel in colonial period was hindered by a number of factors, these include: incessant postings of military-husbands from one location to another; which made it possible for wives to lose their customers and business environment. This was observed when officers and men moved with their families from Zaria to Kaduna in 1915.[147] According to Dorothy Remy:

> Women who came to Zaria from rural areas are poorly equipped for participation in the urban indigenous economy, where there is a more complex division of labour and a greater reliance on specialised skills. Trading agricultural products or processing food, both common activities of Nigerian rural women, became more complex in the city, where the raw agricultural products must be purchased in the market or acquired from customers.[148]

During the period, some soldiers' wives in Kaduna Barracks had no option but to participate in urban home-based crafts, such as knitting, crocheting and embroidery, weaving, sewing, and sale of cooked food, among others.[149] Second, there was the lack of collateral which made it difficult for banks to extend loans to women. It would be recalled that bank officials had often complained of their inability to track down wives of military personnel whenever their husbands were on postings. Third, colonial policy on demobilisation of troops within stipulated period, and sometimes involvement in wars did not help the efforts of women in the barracks economy as the affected personnel had to relocate with their families to the villages.

However, since independence, great improvement had been recorded in the economic activity of women particularly in the production of candle, confectionaries, detergents, beads, jewellery, ice blocks, disinfectants, and others. It should be clear from the discussion that the economic activities of wives in colonial period were vibrant and robust despite the challenges of the period. At the same time, the comment of Walter Rodney was relevant; when he

argued that, "the vast majority of Africans went into colonialism with a hoe and came out with a hoe."[150] Nevertheless, the introduction of plants and animals by some European wives contributed to the progress and development of colonial barracks as well as the food basket of modern Nigeria.

Mode of Transportation in Colonial Barracks

The mode transportation in the barracks varied from period to period. In the early years of colonial rule, European wives relied extensively on pack animals, canoes, human porterage and carriers. Pack animals were the range of animals used in transporting goods from place to place. They were also used in routine movements, official assignments and long distance journeys. Some of these animals include horses, donkeys, mules, ass and camels. These animals were popular in the savannah areas and most effective in the desert for which they were referred to as "the ship of the desert." Bryan Sharwood Smith and his wife made good use of horses in most of their official engagements. As he puts it, "Fortunately she was a good horsewoman, for we spent ten to fourteen days of every month travelling around the division. Most of this time, we were on horseback, but not always, for the southern districts of the emirate were infested with tsetse flies and unsafe for horses"[151]

The limitations in the use of these animals were evident in the quantity of goods they conveyed at a given time. The animals were also infected by tsetse flies, fleas, ticks, and other diseases. Besides, pack animals were not favourably disposed to rainy season which adversely affected its condition and reproduction. The other means of transporation in colonial Nigeria was human Porterage. This involved the use of human beings to convey goods from place to place, and carrying of fellow human beings on palanquins.

Human porterage was the most widespread means of transportation in pre-colonial period and the early years of the twentieth century. According to Constance Larymore:

> On the 28 May [1902], we rode leisurely out of Lokoja, about 4.00 o'clock, having decided on a short march for the first day ....We jogged down to the Mimi River, on the far side of which our camp was arranged the carriers and servants having been sent on ahead, so that everything was ready for us in the little rest house.[152]

However, this mode of transportation suffered setback at the beginning of the twentieth century as it was almost difficult to source for carriers, particularly in Western Region of Nigeria.

In the Colony of Lagos, for example, the District Officer complained in 1908 that:

> Carriers are now difficult to be obtained both at Epe and jebu Ode (sic), consequently travelling is made difficult. In the Epe District, carriers have always been scarce, and in Jebu Ode (sic) a few could generally be found, but these seem to have returned to their own countries.[153]

Also in Abeokuta, the District Officer noted in 1914 that it was difficult to get carriers. He reported that, "it is impossible to obtain carriers in Abeokuta, and for officials who are travelling, men have to be obtained from either Meko or Lagos...the Egba as natives...look on carrying as far too menial an occupation...."[154]

The use of canoe and steam boats in water transport was also popular among women and their military-husbands and this has continued even in modern times. As Larymore explains, "That evening we dined on board the *Jebba* [a steam ship] which was lying at Burutu, and later embarked on our little stern-wheeler, and set out on our river journey under a full moon threading our way along one of the labyrinths of creeks."[155]

Immediately after World War I, transport system in most cantonments gradually changed following the introduction of automobile cars by the British military officers and their spouses. The poor road network, however, compelled colonial administrators to interchange with other modes of transportation in most of their official assignments. This is corroborated by R.D.Pearce:

> In November 1935 the Bourdillons arrived in Lagos the capital of colonial Nigeria, to the traditional pomp and ceremony that greeted the new governor and his wife...As the gubernatorial car drove slowly in the official possession to Government House a ragged young urchin put his head through the open window and gave the Bourdillons his personal welcome 'Hello Guv.'[156]

Since independence, much progress had been made in transportation system of the barracks and other communication networks. However, the use of cars was no longer a thing of luxury among wives compared to the past when only few privileged individuals could boast of one.

Trade, Exchange and the *Mammy* Market in Military Barracks

The importance of trade and exchange cannot be overlooked in any community because it was a medium through which contact and friendship were established across gender and ethnic divide. The role of wives of military personnel in trade and exchange has been evident since the colonial period and these activities were also practised in traditional camps. According to Ester Boserup, "In no other field do ideas about the proper role of women contrast more vividly than in the case of market trade."[157] Similarly, Virginia Delancy argues that "markets developed for the exchange of food crops, livestock, as well as household and farm equipment within local economies and among neighbouring communities."[158]

Since pre-colonial Nigeria, trade had been organised and conducted at designated spots, tree shades, individual compounds, and palaces of royal heads, open spaces, and farms. In fact, two types of trade were organised in most military barracks - local and long distance trades.

Local trade, on the one hand, revolves around the sale and exchange of goods among women in the community and on the other, among soldiers' wives and their civilian neighbours in the villages. In the first example, only a handful of wives organised daily trade in their homes and corridor spaces where they sold foodstuffs and general goods, such as milk, sugar, salt, kerosene, thread, garri, rice, millet, soya beans, wheat, amala, palm-oil, beans, yams, potatoes, tea, cigarette, snuff, soaps and detergent, to mentioned but a few.

Compound trade, as it was popularly known was the oldest form of trade in most barracks. Most women found it easier to venture into it because it required little capital and also afforded women the opportunity for making little earnings of their own, in addition to taking care of domestic affairs. Women involved in compound trade purchased their items from neighbouring villages and markets for resale in the barracks. However, where sales were perceived to be slow at home, some wives hawked their wares within the barracks to increase their sales. This tradition cut across women traders in the barracks, as well as young Moslem girls. As Toyin Falola puts it, "In Muslim areas, considerable trade was carried on in the compounds by women in seclusion. They often employed the services of girl hawkers and itinerant women traders whom they pay some token since they could not make themselves available in the open space."[159]

Most secluded wives were not only absent from the sellers markets, they were in the minority even among the customers, since men do the shopping of both food and of women's clothing.[160] This tradition has not changed even in contemporary barracks. In the second instance, it was a routine for most women traders in the barracks to patronise daily or periodic markets in the villages and towns. These markets were known for the sale of foodstuffs, durable commodities and others. Moreover, most women preferred to buy their

goods from villages and town markets for two reasons. First, they bought in bulk and second, they believed that the cost of goods and other commodities in the markets were cheaper than those sold in military quarters, despite the fact that some of them often purchased on credit from their neighbours.

Indigenous soldiers' wives were also involved in long distance trade across towns and villages. Such trade missions usually took weeks or months before their eventual return. Occasionally, they carried goods from their local environment for sale in the next town or village, from where they purchased other essential commodities for resale in the barracks. A good number of soldiers' wives in colonial Ibadan were regular buyers and sellers in *Iba*, *Gege*, *Dugbe* and *Oje markets*. According to an informant[161] the choice rested on the fact that *Dugbe market* was a centre of trade in cloths brought from *Shaki and Iseyin* which was said to be of high quality and women's delight. It was also a market with specialty in the retailing of imported goods, particularly Chinaware and enamelware, while *Gege Market* was noted for its agricultural produce such as palm oil, yams, yam flour, *elubo*, cassava and others. [162]

The study reveals that the preponderance of ancient markets in parts of Western Nigeria rendered *mammy* markets in Ibadan and Abeokuta barracks almost insignificant. But for the presence of a few long distance traders from neighbouring villages who converge from time to time at the frontiers of the barracks to sell off their wares and retain their money since soldiers' wives were said to have ready cash. This trend did not improve even after the completion of modern barracks in *Odogbo* many years after.

One economic institution associated with women in the barracks is the *mammy* market. The origins of *mammy* markets in the early years of Lokoja Barracks cannot be established with precision but suffice to state that it began as a market organised by aged women from neighbouring villages and towns. These women were in search of buyers willing to pay immediate cash following the introduction of silver coins by the colonial government.

Markets in the local setting had hitherto thrived on the exchange mechanism of cowries, manila and barter system, which was considered cumbersome and primitive to the colonial economies. Apart from the quest for immediate cash, the women also sought military environment for reasons of protection and security against thugs and bandits. In the course of time, most of the aged women settled for full time trade and exchange around the military frontier as the colonial officers were reluctant to approve such social institution inside the barracks. Expectations were also high, that with time, military authorities would dislodge them, but that was not to be.

As the years progressed, the market began to witness large influx of people and steady patronage by market women from outlying villages and towns. Because of the popularity of the market and its benefit to military families, military authorities decided to deploy soldiers from time to time on routine check to avoid molestation of traders and breach of security. In the early years of the market, trade was organized under tree shades, tablelands, and open spaces where it never obstruct or interfered with settlements and installations as barracks were not demarcated or fenced as obtained today. In view of the domination of the market by matured and aged women, colonial officers decided to encourage the women by relocating the market inside the barracks since it afforded families the opportunity to buy foodstuffs and other essential commodities at close range.

Another factor that prompted the consideration and approval of the market was the challenges of the time which directly or indirectly made soldiers enemies of the local people. Thus, the market came to be known as '*Mammy* market' or "Mothers' market" in recognition of the age bracket of the women traders. As the market continued to expand, indigenous soldiers' wives began to participate as sellers, but the exact period when officers' wives began to own stalls or became involved in the market as sellers cannot be ascertained with precision, though, their presence became noticeable in the 1980s following the modernization programme of the military on barracks infrastructure.

Describing a small trading location around Kabba military barracks, Larymore writes:

> The open space in front of our quarters [cantonment] bathed in warm sunlight above blue sky and wheeling kites; below, the valley, stretching away into purple distance. Little groups of people, humble folk, trading in a small way between Lagos and the Hausa states, carrying country-made cloth, palm oil, salt and kola-nuts, turned in here daily to disburse, with cheerful reluctance, the small percentage then levied on each load as a caravan tax. Those moving in the same direction were, of course, travelling acquaintances. Many were women and the babble of laughter and chatter in various tongues was incessant....As each new arrival appears upon the scene, a chorus of salutations in Hausa, Nupe and Yoruba meets him; a dozen kindly hands are stretched out to help him down with his heavy load; endless inquiries are pressed upon him as to his health, the comfort of his journey, the state of the road etc....I heard all round me at Kabba in sonorous Yoruba; Akwabo! Akwabo! (You are welcome, Very welcome! [163]

Since independence, the composition of *mammy* markets had gradually changed from an all time women market to gender based markets, where men and women had equal opportunities and privileges as traders. And since the 1980s and 1990s most *mammy* markets had undergone reconstruction compared to their initial state in colonial period. Over the years, the *mammy* market had been a melting pot of commerce and industry.

In the early beginning of *mammy* markets, production and manufacturing was not so common compared to what obtained in modern *mammy* markets. This has been attributed to the fact that the markets were at an evolutionary stage and devoid of management. Similarly, the markets had only a handful of wives of military personnel as sellers or buyers. Some commodities of trade include, hat, textile materials, beads, baskets, pots and brooms. Other items include palm oil, palm kernel, shea butter, diary products, salt, kunnu, meat, cassava and yam among others. Finally, mammy markets had developed in modern barracks to the level of being lock-up shops and plazas, compared to the thatched huts, open spaces and tree sheds which characterized colonial *mammy* markets.

Conclusion

The participation of women in the politics of military camps began in pre-colonial period. Since then; their power and influence had been felt in major issues of the community. Worthy of mention were decisions affecting their welfare, spouses and dependants. The internal political arrangement of wives of military personnel to a greater extent promoted peace and unity in colonial and post-colonial barracks. For instance, the positions of wives of Commanding Officers and Centre *magajia* in the political structure of wives of military personnel cannot be overlooked. This is because both offices were indispensable not only to women but to the military authorities.

It has on the other hand promoted discipline and protocols in military barracks in contemporary times. Some notable women who played notable roles in colonial barracks in Nigeria included, Lady Lugard, Violet Bourdillon and Constance Larymore to mention but a few. The contributions of these women were also remarkable in the development of public sphere of the barracks. In the economic space, the study discovered that wives of military

personnel were involved in agricultural activities which comprised gardening, animal husbandary, crafts and industry. Compound garden, for instance, is as old as the barracks itself because both the indigenous and European wives participated in crop production and horticulture. Indeed, a number of food crops were cultivated in compound garden; some of these included corn, millet, yams, cassava, melon, garlic, and potatoes. Others include tomatoes, pepper, vegetables, and others.

Indigenous and European wives also kept domestic animals for home consumption and sales. These livestock included goats, sheep, cows, fowls, and turkey to mention but a few. Other animals maintained in the European enclosures included, camels, horses, donkeys, cats and dogs. Nevertheless, some of these animals were maintained through labour and *doki-boys*.

On the other hand, European women also planted flowers in their gardens; some of these were used for various purposes. Apart from agriculture, wives of military personnel also engaged in the local production of palm oil, shea butter, and palm kernel oil among others. These commodities were used at home while the surpluses were sold in the markets. There were also established trade in cloth production, basketry, and pottery products in colonial barracks, despite the challenges of economic life in the barracks, the women were self-reliant.

Therefore it should be clear from the discussion that wives of military personnel were actively involved in the political and economic activities of colonial barracks in Nigeria; contrary to the speculation by some members of the public that wives of military personnel were only engrossed in reproduction and domesticity. Just as the theory of social system emphasises, one can safely argue that the political structure of wives of military personnel was dictated by military traditions and values. It is for this reason that officers' wives maintain

authority over other women in the organisation and this arrangement has contributed to stability, order, and cooperation in the barracks. Generally, it is the postings of military husbands that hindered the economic development of most women in the barracks because they move from one location to another accompanying their spouses. It is also reinforced by the idea of social system which explains that there is an exchange between a “sub-system of society” and the family and these can be considered as assets and liabilities, advantages and disadvantages, or stresses and opportunities. The stresses and strains include periodic residential moves, accommodation to different and varying social sub-cultural, economic, and physical living conditions and separation of husband and father from the family for extended periods.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER FIVE

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF WIVES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL IN COLONIAL BARRACKS, 1905-1960

Introduction

Liiterature on Colonial Service reveals that the social activities of wives of military personnel were not only vibrant but elaborate. It created inter-group relations, interdependence, and collaboration among women in the barracks and their civilian counterparts outside the community. The study notes that over the years, there has been a general lack of awareness by some members of the public on the social and cultural activities of wives in the barracks. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that soldiers' quarters were closely guarded community in which most civilian men and women had no part to play.

It is against this backdrop that this section examines the following: The social activities of wives in colonial barracks, gender relations and the role of women in the household. Others include women and security of the barracks, domestic and official social convocations, religious activities, recreation and reading culture as well as the external social activities of wives.

The Social Activities of Wives in Colonial Barracks

The social life of wives of military personnel is divided into two interrelated segments, namely, domestic celebrations and official social convocations. The domestic celebrations of wives revolve around those actions and traditions that fostered friendship and cooperation in the barracks. These include: marriage and wedding celebrations, naming ceremonies, birthday celebration, West African Social Activity (WASA), durbar, social calls, dining-in, religious worship, Mess activity, send-forth, sports and recreation, among others.

The official social convocations of wives of military personnel points to those interactions that promote understanding with their civilian counterparts outside the barracks. These include: Village and town meetings, Club, religious organisations/society, (Christian and Islamic organizations) to mention but a few. These two-fold activities could be seen as the pedestal upon which the socio-cultural system of wives of military personnel was consolidated. A discussion on the social life of wives of military personel must first begin with the nature of gender relations and household in the barracks, the focal point of intra-socialisation.

Gender Relations and the Role of Women in the Household

As a rule, wives of military personnel were under instructions to maintain peace and harmony with their neighbours and members of the public in colonial and post-colonial barracks. Peaceful co-existence, they were told, must first be cultivated at home where 'the rank of a wife was presumed to be one step above her husband's. This tradition as indicated elsewhere in this study is probably an attempt to preclude the exercise of arbitrary power and checkmate the excesses of patrarchy in the system. It is also aimed at providing opportunity for participation mix and identity. This is part of the unwritten code of wives of military personnel in the system. According to Maryam Babangida:

> Officers' wives do feel quite elevated...to the extent that quite a good number of officers' wives have consequently invented for themselves the military rank a step ahead of their husband.Thus, a Brigadier's wife could imagine herself as a Major-General! Although this is merely imaginary and there is no such thing as a wife actually wearing specific badges of rank on account of her husband's status, there is a convention that very senior officer's wives must be accorded the same military courtesies and respect as their husband's. Thus, a Captain, for instance ought to salute a Major-General's wife as he would do to her officer husband. Before the civil war an officer who failed to salute a wife with such status could be punished for contempt.[1]

It is for this reason that officers' wives partook in the official decoration of their spouses whenever promoted in rank, which explains the premium and superiority of wives over their military-husbands in this tradition. This practice had over the years thrived along gender and social space of the military. Thus, it was obligatory for a Corporal's wife to extend her greetings and fellowship on seeing a Staff Sergeant's wife, the same way a Lt- Colonel's wife would extend her greetings and felicitation to the wife of a Brigadier irrespective of age or background. This practice was considered a mark of respect for womanhood and where it was found missing or violated, offenders were frankly reprimanded because it was echoed in the military parlance that "salutation is officers' food and there is no exception with their wives."[2] Perhaps, this was the first level of authority in the social sphere of the household.

However, this tradition has been criticised in some quarters on the grounds that disagreements still abound between and among men and women despite established protocols and precedence in the community. Gender relations between European and indigenous soldiers' wives in colonial cantonments could best be described as formal. The relationship between the sexes was perhaps caused by the spirit of colonialism and segregation.

Over the years, European wives saw themselves as superior queens to the indigenous soldiers' wives because of established structure and imperial mannerism. Instead of dealing with them as partners and stakeholders in the military system, they chose to maintain social distance and separateness. This feelings was heightened by a number of factors, which included, language barrier, fear of indigenous inhabitants, cultural diversity, and sexual attack, to mention but a few. In consequence of this, British officers' wives deemed it appropriate to socialize only with British non-commissioned officers' wives and some European women in Colonial Service resident in the barracks.

However, this development had far reaching implications on indigenous soldiers' wives. First, it discouraged indigenous soldiers' wives from imitating European wives in most of their social engagements, especially the empowernment programmes of the cantonments and their external social relations. Second, it widened the negative perception of European women in the barracks, for which they were known as *mensahib* or "woman master." And finally, it inspired indigenous soldiers' wives to focus on their private and public spheres. Thus, the sight of European women was greeted with suspense and suspicion. In consequence of this, the authorities decided to appoint the office of the *magajiya* as a liaison between European wives and indigenous soldiers' wives in the barracks.

Another reason for gender dichotomy in the barracks in particular and the country in general was the control of sexuality and marriage by white women. Through this, European women maintained and reinforced their sense of superiority and identity. In an exciting study, Malia B. Formes states:

> The stereotype of British women has three main components, the first two of which relate to sexuality. White women supposedly disapproved of sexual liasons between white men and women of colour. Consequently, white women were allegedly more racist than white men and where responsible for the creation of greater social distance between the colonial and indigenous communities. Secondly, according to the stereotype, European women aroused the sexual passions of African and Asian men from whom they then had to be protected by white men. Finally, white women were assumed to be frivolous, lazy nuisance who contributed nothing to the running of the empire and actually interfered with the work of European men.[3]

In Nigeria, for instance, records suggest that colonial officers used considerable discretion in their relations with African women whether or not European women were present in the station.[4] This is probably because of the nature of discipline in the force or the respect for Nigerian peoples and culture.

Writing on colonial Uganda, B. Gartrell underlines the role of colonial wives in 'policing' the sexual boundaries between the races and of their own "sexual fear" of African men which restricted women's activities beyond the European enclave.[5]

Also in New Guinea, there was the "White Women's Protection Ordinance of 1926" which stipulated death penalty for an indigenous male convicted of the rape or attempted rape of a European woman.[6] "On the question of European women fearing the 'sexually threatening African male," Helen Callaway established that, "all the evidence from Nigeria throughout the colonial period points in the other direction, that women felt confident in remaining in an isolated camp for the day without any European male protection." [7] This study notes that in all the colonial barracks in Nigeria, there was no singular indictment or enquiry on libertine, or the sexual harassment of European wife by indigenous soldier(s). This innate moral disposition provided confidence to the majority of European women who travelled within and outside the cantonments in Nigeria.

Extending the thinking, Callaway contends:

> The only account of 'sexual fear'... arises from a different source. In a letter to her women colleagues at home about her journey on the boat train from Lagos to Kano, Dr Greta Lowe-Jellicose tells of the difficult position she found herself in the middle of the night when a drunken British army man boarded the train and attempted to force his way into her compartment. She concludes, 'candidly I'm scared of drunken white men.'[8]

She further indicates "that in none of the memoirs or letters, female or male, during the entire colonial period in Nigeria is there even the slightest apprehension of any Nigerian male aggression towards a British woman."[9] This in my opinion was due to moral rectitude, traditions and respect for aliens.

How then, did colonial first ladies such as, Violet Bourdillon, Lady Cameron and Lady Hugh Clifford among others, overcome gender differences and separateness that hindered socialisation between and among European and indigenous soldiers' families on the one hand, and on the other, the Lagos Market Women Association in 1930s and 1940s?

It could be argued that these women succeded because they were able to manage their feelings, comportments, and prejudice. They prospered where others had failed on account of their personal dedication and active support of their spouses. Comparatively, in post-colonial Nigeria, records show that Maryam Babangida and Mariam Abacha succeeded in projecting the image of wives of military personnel into the public domain in the 1980s and 1990s due to the cooperation and collaboration of their spouses. Therefore, a woman can only redraw or redefine a gendered space such as the barracks system if she had the will, and support of her husband.

The popular adage that 'Men make the house, women makes the home'[10] is a contemporary debate that provides insight into the indispensability of women in the gendered space. In the barracks system, it is believed that the death of a military man is a setback to the military family, while the death of a wife crashes the effective management of a household. The term household is defined as the arena of domesticity, reproduction, and support. According to Harris Olivia "the word 'household' refers to a fairly common form of social organisation...and often represents the primary site for the restructuring of relations and women's specific experience."[11] Therefore, the role of women in the household is complementary considering the fact that they were generally described as helpmates.

The illuminating work of Laurel Richardson and Verta Taylor also affirm that:

> We are born into a culture that has definite ideas about males and females – ideas about what is appropriate for males to do and what is appropriate for females to do. Further, our culture evaluates men's behaviors, occupations, and attitudes more highly than women's behaviors, occupations, and attitudes, and it assumes that what men do is what is right and normal. Women are judged in accordance with how well they do or do not conform to the male standard.[12]

The activities of women in the barracks centred on cooking, fetching water, cleaning, laundering, childcare, shopping, and creating of comfort for spouses. It is because of these roles that Laura Schlessinger emphasises that, "the woman is the soul, spirit and center of a house."[13]

Sometimes, household chores were jointly carried out by husband and wife, particularly when the military-husband was on post and devoid of military exigencies. Some of the domestic chores in which men assisted their wives include cleaning, washing, ironing of clothes and uniforms, polishing boots and belt, bathing the children, and taking the children to school among others. At other times when a wife was indisposed or out of station, the responsibilities of cooking, sweeping, and washing of clothes temporarily fell on the husband. It is for this reason that the presence of a sibling or maid-servant was important in most military household because the military-husband was bound to be deployed for duty at short notice.

The study discovered that that "wives of military personnel had three families, namely, the one they were born into [nuclear household], the one they chose, that is, military life, [immediate household] and the one they adopted [household staff]."[14] On the whole, this section is concerned with the 'immediate family.'

According to the *Terms and Conditions of Service, Nigerian Army* '*Soldiers*' (*1984*),

> Soldier's family will consist of his wife married under the Marital Act or Islamic Law, or Native Law, and Custom and children under 18 years of age subject to a maximum of 6 children. 'A child of a Soldier, means in this context, (1) child who is under the age of 18 (2) the Soldier's biological off-springs' (3) The Soldiers step child, being the biological offspring of a spouse of the soldier (4) The child adopted by the soldier in accordance with statutory provision and is entirely dependent on the soldier.[15]

Scholars have also provided different interpretations of the term, but Samuel Dixon's perspective is relevant to this discussion because of his insight. According to him:

> A family is an organized system of interacting personalities with characteristic ways of functioning. It has several important functions. The first function of the family is the socialization of its children. Next is the satisfaction of the emotional and affectional needs of its members. The family provides love and security which we know are critical psychic development and social functioning. Third, the family is an economic unit that ensures the continuity of society by incorporating the society's values, traditions, and laws into its system.[16]

This clarification is important because it helps to juxtapose the concept in its proper form in contradistinction to the 'military family', which collectively represents the entire individuals in the barracks. To what extent did the military laid emphasis on the family? The military was concerned with the family because of the stability and welfare of officers and men. A situation in which a serviceman was not in a better frame of mind because of domestic affairs, military duties were bound to suffer and by extension the security of the nation.

The question that arises is what role (s) did wives play in the household in colonial period? The account of European wives in colonial Nigeria provided insight into the activities of wives in the private space. According to Emily Bradley "in the colonies your husband is the master, the work is his life. You really are going to a man's world in which you will be very much the lesser half of this imperial 'partnership'...you are your husband's silent partner."[17]

She added:

> There was the need for setting up a household, touring with your husband, dressmaking without tears, managing servants, and developing a flourishing garden... there is nothing so cruelly disheartening to a man when he is prepared to enjoy his life and his work in what is still largely "a man's country",[than] a miserable wife. It spoils everything for him, his home, his leisure and inevitably, his work.[18]

Describing her duties in the household, Larymore stresses: "I had my duty too, and I must look after our house and garden, ponies and dogs, so as to keep everything in order."[19] Alan Burns also pointed out that "Lady Hugh Clifford worked assiduously in refurnishing the Government House which was something like a barn when she arrived. Besides, she was reputed to have changed the style of entertainment at Government House to the delight of the public."[20] Similarly, Lady Cameron's fame was echoed in the idea that she effectively executed the task of housekeeping because Sir Donald Cameron depended very little on private secretary.[21]

Soldiers' wives in seclusion (purdah system) were also involved in home management and motherhood. But the totality of the task that involved contact and exchange with strangers was delegated to the young and adult children while the men took responsibility for the provision of clothing, monthly allowance and general needs of the family. Ironically, the character of a secluded wife was said to be intact if she never bothered or interfered in the activities of her military spouse outside the home.[22] As Enid Schildkrout notes:

> Women see that their families eat three meals a day, but virtually no woman cooks three times a day. In most houses, one or two meals are purchased outside the house instead of sending children to buy ingredients for cooking, women send their children to purchase cooked food from children who come to their houses selling for other women."[23]

Be that as it may, this study contends that the argument of Enid Schildkrout was an uncommon occurrence among secluded wives in the barracks. This could be attributed to the plural nature of military community, but suffice to state that secluded women in the cantonments often purchased cooked food but not in the generalised proportion painted of secluded women in Kano. From the analysis, it could be deduced that "in this symbolic drama of imperial culture, wives as lesser queens were cast in supporting roles to their husbands whose superiority they were assigned"[24] The complementary role of women in military barracks had over the years enhanced their social identity.

In the family system, men and women had the responsibility of raising children together. But the military syatem did not afford men the opportunity because of frequent tour of duty. According to Ibrahim Babamosi Babangida "while it is true that the up-bringing of children was the exclusive duty of both parents, it is also a fact that mothers had the greater influence on the child straight from birth [while] the father's role here is supportive and complementary."[25] This was the situation in the barracks because official duties superseded domestic affairs and wives were never consulted in the official protocols of the military.

The question is to what extent were barracks children affected by the environment? Child training in the barracks was more or less a difficult task because of the peculiar nature of the community (environmental factor). Rose.O.Ochoga aptly explained that "the toughest job in the Armed Forces is not how to plan and win a battle; it is on how well the home front is faring. Military personnel are bold, tough, tactful, selfless and colourful, disciplined and efficient in their work but many a time the home front presents a challenge."[26] Consequently, barracks children were perceived as social problems by some members of the public.

Two interrelated factors contributed immensely to the behaviour of barracks children since the early years of the cantonments. First, the influence of environment mentioned above. Second and embedded in the first was the plural nature of the community as a mini-Nigeria. The military environment had been an underlying influence responsible for the social behaviour of military children. This debate was further narrowed to the proximity of living quarters to the training grounds. It was from this vantage positions that children and dependants of servicemen watched at close range military exercises and drills. Thereafter, the children began to practise and demonstrate what they had observed at training grounds.

Apart from this anomaly, the situation was further compounded in the early beginnings by the indifference of Colonial Office to the welfare of military children. In the early years of the barracks, there was no welfare or provision for schools for children of indigenous soldiers. This is because colonial administrators never intended that West African recruits should marry until confronted with the problem of desertion in the West African Frontier Force.

To strenghten the policy, a three year service was adopted by the Colonial Office on recruitment while another three years was for re-engagement and nine years for full engagement, and this was subject to obedience and discipline of the soldier. The condition of service was not different from that of the British officers and non-commissioned officers. As Alan Burns puts it, "When I first went to West Africa there were practically no European children in the British colonies... too often, the European woman has to decide whether to be separated from her husband or from her children."[27] The First and Second World Wars caused the deployment of most military men from the cantonments, which invariably transferred the responsibility of raising children to the women alone. Because of the absence of children's schools in military barracks at the time, most of the children began to roam

about, while others mingled with gangs. In view of this, most of the children in the community became under-developed and bereft of acceptable etiquette required in an emergent society. Thus, members of the public began to complain on the excesses of these children and the military profession in particular, which they perceived as an extension of slavery. According to an informant[28] it was highly regrettable that during the period barracks boys were seen as loafers and criminals, while the girls were regarded as prostitutes for reasons occasioned by environment and neglect.

To assuage popular agitation against colonial authority, the military decided to set up the 'Army Boys Units' (ABU) where boys of fourteen years enrolled for a four-year course of schooling and military training. One of the schools was set up in Zaria in 1954 and priority given to sons of serving soldiers because of the advantages of environment and adaptation.[29] The programme was sustained till the 1960s when the authorities transformed the "Army Boys Units" to the "Boys Company" presently the Nigerian Military School (NMS). The Command Primary and Secondary Schools were later established in the barracks to accommodate other children who were not absorbed into the aforementioned schools[30] because of privilege and class.

However, the situation was not the same with colonial officers' children because most of them were schooling in Britain until 1920 when approval was given for European wives to join their spouses in the cantonments. Shortly after, *Corona* Schools and other private institutions were established for European children in the spirit of segregation and racial inequality.

The other factor that contributed to the social problems of military children was the plural nature of the community. As a mini-Nigeria, the barracks were composed of officers and men of different ethnic groups and culture. The effect of contact and intermingling among military families reflected on the behaviour of some children which worked excellently for some and poorly for a few that succumbed to peers pressure. As a sub-culture, most children learnt to speak the three major languages in the country with little or no hinderance due to regular interaction and friendship with neighbours which helped them in overcoming ethnic barriers.

The question therefore is what action(s) did military authorities take to mitigate the problems of juvenile delinquency in the community? Soon as the military authorities discovered that juvenile delinquency could not easily be eliminated in the barracks due to inherent factors, such as, the lack of schools, absence of family planning, high level of illiteracy among indigenous soldiers, and cultural belief, to mention but a few.

A policy was later introduced which made it compulsory for Commanding Officers to provide approval before marriages took place in the barracks, the authorities also agreed on the sponsorship of only four biological children of serving personnel in schools. Shortly after, this policy suffered a setback as a result of gaps in its implementation; this finally gave rise to the introduction of "Eviction Orders." The 'Eviction Orders' stipulates that children of serving military personnel from 18years and above should not be accommodated in the barracks because they were adults. This policy, to say the least, was perceived as punitive on women. To them, life was meaningless without their children as this was perhaps unconventional in the lives of civilian women. This state of affairs became worrisome in the succeeding years, not only to the women but to the men.

According to Aisha Mohammad, "there was the utter fear of life outside the barracks because the children knew no other place other than the military community in which they were born and known as "barracks children."[31] In consequence of this, some officers and men began to disengage their service. To them, they were in the force to provide for themselves and the needs of the children. As Babangida puts it:

> As some officers' children grow up, they are acquainted with the dangers of their father's profession and how it may affect them one way or the other. If their father is suddenly retired, [or evicted] they may be stripped of some privileges that they had grown accustomed to. It is also very real that he might go to work one day never to return home.[32]

The impact of the policy and the attendant consequences on officers and men made military authorities to relax the measure, only to be invoked whenever a serious offence was committed. However, since the 1990s 'eviction order' of adult children had been revived in most barracks. Concession was however granted to officers' children, which were perceived by other ranks as unfair and detrimental to the system. Perhaps, the exception was on the grounds that their fathers had power and privileges in the military.

Despite the negative perception of soldiers' children over the years, the environment provide a platform for serious minded young boys and girls whose achievements were celebrated in learning and scholarship, sports, music, art and other fields of human endeavour. A few of these individuals include, Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo, the ace Comedian, Ali Baba, Macaulay Chrisantus, Segun Arinze, General Martin Luther Agwai (rtd), the former Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Dambazau (rtd), Lt General Salisu Ibrahim, former Chief of Army Staff, Genevieve Nnaji, an actress, Miriam Rukevwe Agisogu, a writer and an officer's wife, and Chukwudi Ogana, an ace broadcaster, and a few others.[33]

As Miriam Rukevwe Agisogu has written:

> The 'barracks boys' or 'barracks girl' thing is no longer a stigma but a virtue. This is because there are many successful and decent people in our society today who are (sic) brought up in the barracks - Army Generals or equivalent in the Navy or Air Force (serving and retired), high ranking politicians, Inspector Generals of Police, Bank Managers, etc.[34]

Since 1976 there has been a great transformation in the military schools in Nigeria, especially, in the quality of teachers and learning facilities. For instance, in 1984, the Nigerian Army Nursery / Primary School, Bauchi State was presented with a certificate of good performance in the field of education, sports and general achievement by the Commissioner for Education Alhaji Badaji Umar.[35] Similarly, Command Secondary Schools, Ipaja, Lagos, Minna and Enugu were all adjudged best schools in Nigeria for many years. In 2001 and 2003, the Air Force Secondary Schools, Lagos, and Ibadan were among the best schools nominated by the West African Examination Council.

Nevertheless, the argument of some writers, commentators and the media that military environment was unwholesome for child-training and career development cannot be validated or established in the light of overwhelming verifiable evidence on the achievements of barracks children since post-War Nigeria. Similarly, officers' wives were not only vested with the responsibility of taking care of her immediate family but that of the household staff. For instance, a military wife had every privilege to extend assistance to her household staff. This tradition began long time ago in colonial cantonments. This is underlined by Larymore:

> Military wives had privileges of household staff which consists of a cook, with an attendant satellite, called a cook's mate,' a steward or boy,' with, usually, in a married household at least, an under-steward, or perhaps a couple of small boys to assist generally in the housework and table service. There may be an orderly attached, but his duties consist rather in the airing of clothes and boxes, cleaning of guns and boots, and carrying of letters, etc. Each pony has his own doki-boy who was in-charge of the donkeys and horses.[36]

In modern barracks also, officers and wives enjoyed the services of household staff. As Babangida explains:

> Depending on his rank and appointment, an officer may be provided with some house-helps. These include a Bat-man, a gardener, a cook and a guard. They may live with their boss in the 'boys quarters' or in the barracks with their families. Their output usually depends on how they are treated or managed by the officer's wife. She is expected to treat them nicely in order to bring out the best in them. For instance, in the Army, an officer's wife should be able to assist them when they need help and assist in settling family problems by offering reasonable advice. She should also give a helping hand at births, deaths, naming ceremonies, and so on.[37]

It was equally observed that some young officers and soldiers sometimes found favour in officers' wives due to their influence on matters of welfare, postings and promotions. According to Babangida:

> When salaries were due for collection, most other ranks became anxious and were unable to concentrate on their chores. At such times they sought for madam's permission to enable them collect their salaries from the paymaster. When they were obliged immediately, such madams became their friends and confidant; but if it is contrary, the staff became unfriendly and combative.[38]

Women and Security of the Barracks

The role of wives of military personnel in the security of the barracks cannot be overlooked in a study of this scope. This is because women were described as adjunct security officers in the barracks. This supporting role had for years remained one of the primary duties of wives in the system. This responsibility had not only become a tradition but a part of women's orientation entrenched by commanding officers and the *magajiya* of Units. As stakeholders in the military organisation, they were mandated to report suspicious movement of people in the barracks, challenge unidentified visitors, and unknown faces politely whether in uniform or in mufti. This they were told was to forestall espionage and enemy attack.

Writing on a case of robbery in Kano Barracks in 1931, Walter R. Crocker notes:

> As soon as I got up I was greated with the news that a burglary had been committed during the night in the servants' quarters of the other A.D.O's house. It turns out that the hut of his head boy had been entered and practically everything in it (i.e. a couple of boxes containing clothes, a few odds and ends like a mirror and scissors; and a blanket and gown hanging on a peg) was stolen, and -- the very mosquito net strung up over the mattress on which the boy and his wife were sleeping! It is another of many such instances one runs up against of the heavy stone-like sleeping of natives. A characteristic which simplifies the profession of burglary.[39]

It should be recalled that there was an incident of burglary in Lokoja Barracks in 1902 and this is underpinned by Larymore as thus:

> On arrival in Lokoja, we found Mr Wallace there.... While there we were burgled in a fashion so characteristic that it may be worth describing. My husband was known – evidently -- to have a large sum of money in silver; this he deposited, naturally, in the largest, heaviest, and therefore least removable of our boxes, but the enterprising burglar evidently thought that a tin uniform case (which happened to be padlocked) looked promising, and, during a tornado at night, carried it off ! We discovered our loss early next morning, and I was utterly dismayed, as its content were mainly a new photographic outfit, chemicals, paper, etc. We communicated to the Police...[40]

This illustration is imperative because it goes to show that some unwholesome behaviour experienced in modern times in the barracks was also common in colonial barracks. Thus, women became stakeholders in the security and safety of the community, for which they were known as the 'chief security of the home.'

On the other hand, women in their collective effort were the first to raise alarm in most major disasters that were either averted or experienced in the barracks. These included fire outbreaks, building collapse, kidnap and rape, and stealing among others. It was also noted in 1966 that women were the first to observe the massacre that characterised the Nigerian Civil War. Besides, women were always in the know of the secret movement of their spouses, during the planning of coups and lobbying for appointments. In more ways than one, their

observations were sometimes due to the frequent lateness of their spouse(s), neighbours and friends. Added to this, was the reticent and unfriendly mood of the men. The Ikeja bomb blast, for instance, was another example of the vigilance of women in the barracks. It was confirmed by Mrs Patricia Iloba that some women who lived within proximity to the arms stores spoke in low tones of explosions for a number of days which was mistaken for canisters. Even when they told their husbands about the frequent burst of explosives, they were ignored as idle talk.[41]

Some women were also vigilant in identifying questionable characters in some barracks. This is because some of them conducted their businesses at home from where they observed the movement of people in and out of the quarters. For instance, in Ojo Cantonment Lagos, it was the vigilance of a few women that made it possible for the authorities to identify the miscreants that burgled valuable items from the apartment of non-commissioned officers engaged in peacekeeping operations in Liberia. Wives of military personnel were also given the authority to report individual(s) presumed to be threats or under the influence of drugs in the barracks. This charge was informed by past records in which a soldier was 'Returned to Unit' (RTU) for further treatment from mission area on account of mental illness. Unknown to his co-tenants in the quarters, the soldier went berserk in the dim of the night threatening to kill everyone who crossed his way. Relating her experience in Colonial Kano, Larymore notes:

> A native soldier had been confined in the guard-room....While there, he coolly possessed himself of a rifle and a pouch full of ammunition, and darted out of the guard-room, the bewildering suddenness of his action apparently paralyzing the guard for the moment. He rushed out on the parade ground, shrieking vengeance on all Bature (Englishmen), calling them to come and be shot, brandishing his rifle – evidently quite insane and running amok. Taking careful aim, he shot five horses tethered in the shade, belonging to his officers....Finally; the unfortunate lunatic was shot down.[42]

In the light of the above, the role of women in the security of the barracks was important to the well-being of military families and the safety of the environment. Women should be given audience by the *magajiya* and the Regimental Sergeant Major anytime of the day because of their strategic position in the organisation.

Domestic Celebrations

The domestic celebrations of wives of military personnel included: Marriage and wedding ceremonies, naming ceremony, and birthday celebrations among others. Marriage was one of the social activities in the barracks. Because of the importance attached to this ceremony by the authorities; it was conducted in accordance with laid down rules and regulations. Therefore, a newly commissioned officer or Second Lieutenant (2Lt) or its equivalent in the tri-service was not expected to marry because he was under probation.

The period of probation was to allow the newly commissioned officer respond to regimentation and military culture. "During the time, it was expected of him to live in the Mess as a bachelor for a minimum of three months, as this was the basic place of socialization."[43] This orientation was important because it was assumed that newly commissioned officers were probably bound to have distractions occasioned by marital related commitments capable of affecting their proficiency in the early stage of their career.[44] According to *Terms and Conditions of Service* "If he, that is the officer, has been married before he went to the academy, though his record may show this fact, he will not be recognized as a married officer for the purpose of accommodation, pay and any other allowance applicable to married officers."[45] However, "on promotion to the rank of Lieutenant, a young officer was considered fit and matured to start thinking about marriage. The society at large expects the young officer to be married by the time he is three years old

in the rank."[46] In fact, "military procedure demanded that a young officer inform his commanding officer or appropriate higher authority of his intention to marry. This is because commanding officers were the only authorized persons to approve marriages in the community."[47] Apart from the power of approval, commanding officers also possess the authority to deny any officer or non-commissioned officer of such rights and intent. This occurred in two instances in the force. First, when the timing of the marriage was not right. Second, when the prospective partner was acknowledged to be a foreigner or a naturalized Nigerian.[48]

For a long time in the military, officers and non-commissioned officers alike were restricted from marrying foreigners, except those who had done so before the law was enacted in 1975. Therefore, in the succeeding years "any officer that proposed to marry a foreigner was mandated to relinquish his or her commission"[49] while those that secretly hid their marital status from the knowledge of the authorities were penalized; so much so that it was impossible for them to attain commanding heights or sensitive positions in the system.

The reason surrounding the policy bothered on the notion that officers' married to foreigners were capable of divulging official secrets to their wives which was detrimental to the military organisation. Though, the *Terms and Conditions of Service Nigerian Army* stipulates that officers intending to get married must first notify their Commanders[50] because of the sanctity of marriage. This policy was later undermined by some soldiers after independence, particularly, during the Nigerian Civil War when impunity reigned. But since post-civil war period the regulation has been revived.

The importance of marriage approval in the system cannot be overemphasized. It was in consonant with this tradition that Lord Lugard wrote to the Colonial Office in June 1902 requesting for a special leave to Madira on full pay to enable him marry Flora Shaw. Though, the authority was initially reluctant to approve the application because of inherent challenges until Joseph Chamberlain intervened, instructing that since the request was for marriage purposes it should be granted.[51] This is corroborated by Margery Perham in the following lines, "Chamberlain minuted his agreement with the case... and then benignly permitted the union of his two friends with the question, who will say after this that Downing Street is bound by red tape?"[52]

Narrating a marriage arrangement in 1934, Crocker states:

> Umoru, my "first small boy" (i.e. he is the second in the hierarchy of three steward boys), came and announced this evening that he wants to get married. He met the lady – a divorcee who has just completed the requisite three months at the end of which it is lawful for her to re-marry—two days ago. Asked when he proposed marrying her he said tomorrow. After my pointing out the swiftness of the affair and urging caution he agreed to delay the event by a day! My part is to finance the match: there is 30s, to be paid to her late husband, this being the bride-price he paid to her father…[53]

He observes further:

> One of the D.O's servants had a marriage….When the bride was brought to the compound in the evening she was accompanied by the usual horde of people in search of free refreshment and by the professional musicians – two drummers, three guiter players ("molo"), and the praise singers. They kept up their din until the moon sank, in the early hours of the morning.[54]

The above illustrations point to the fact that marriages in the barracks had the advice and approval of District Officers and Commanding Officers of the period. Perhaps, this was intended to have the assurance of the prospective bridegroom and his readiness and maturity for marriage. Generally, marriage approval was not only peculiar to the Nigerian Armed

Forces but a common feature of the armed forces of Europe. In Great Britain, for instance, Morris Janowitz writes:

> At one time, the Air Force required men on duty to get their Commanding Officer's consent for marriage. With the marriage rate at three thousand per year in 1958. Written consent was given after a security investigation of the fiancée's moral and political background. In order to eliminate prostitutes, criminals, and subversives, a medical check-up and a confidential pre-marriage interview by a chaplain were required to select out incompatibles and prevent marriages based on unreasonable coerced decisions.[55]

The aspect of *Terms and Conditions of Service* (1984) that has remained controversial in the military circles emphasised that, "if an officer marries a soldier under any of the existing ordinances, the soldier will be discharged from the Army from the date of such marriage [because] it is an offence for an officer to conceal his or her marriage to a soldier for the purpose of preventing the soldier's discharge from the Army."[56] On the other hand, "if a soldier marries an officer under any of the existing ordinances, that soldier will be discharged from the army from the date of such marriage [because] it is an offence for a soldier to conceal his/her marriage for the purpose of preventing his/her discharge from the Army."[57]

Considering the above provisions, questions have been raised as to why the policy to discharge affected only soldiers or non-commissioned officers in the tri-service. Perhaps, the thinking ought to have been left to the partners to decide. But in the words of Pius Mondawe, "it was appropriate for the lower rank to relinquish his appointment just as the law says because of the advantage it offered the couple in privileges and status."[58] This contention became worrisome in successive years thereby compelling the armed forces to re-examine the issue in the *Harmonized Terms and Conditions of Service, Nigerian Armed Forces, Officers, 2007* (Revised) Section 23.04.

The section stipulates:

> If an officer marries a soldier/ rating/airman/airwoman under any of the existing ordinances, the officer or the soldier/rating/ airman /airwoman will be given the option to leave the service from the date of such marriage. It is an offence for an officer to conceal his marriage to a soldier/rating/airman/ airwoman for the purpose of preventing the officer or the soldier/rating/airman/airwoman from leaving the service.[59]

Soon as marriage request was approved by the appropriate authorities, the officer (prospective bridegroom) was free to conduct his marriage ceremony as he wished. Nonetheless, military personnel had options of traditional marriage, church wedding, Islamic rites, and Registry wedding. "The Army does not in any way have anything to do with the marriage ceremony except at a personal level."[60] But an officer's marriage was sometimes arranged and sponsored by friends, colleagues or some officers' wives.

According to military traditions, any woman married to a commissioned officer was entitled to the ceremonial officers' marriage which involved the 'cross-sword or 'sword-crossing ceremony.' Maryam Babangida also pointed out that "a lot of women were actually attracted to officers because of the sword-crossing ceremony."[61] 'Sword-Crossing'ceremony was a practice inherited from the early years when officers bore swords for war.[62] In the years leading to independence; it had become fashionable for most colonial officers to carry swords as part of military outfit.

The need to formalize marriages in the military system was important. This is because it formed part of an officer's record and a requirement for higher responsibilities. It also provided privileges for officers and men to live in bigger and better accommodation and enjoy the welfare and incentives accrued to married couple unlike the "Bachelors' Quarters."[63] In the same vein, it was customary for an officer to register the name of his

spouse with the headquarters soon as marriage ceremony was concluded. And in the event of a re-marriage, officers and men were advised to amend their records to reflect current status. This is because it is marriage that conferred officers' wives the eligibility of next of kin, (NOK) to their spouses. To them, this arrangement was convenient because it prevented bickering and rivalry for the gratuity of the officer at death.

According to an informant[64] it was essential to formalize marriages because of posterity; it is for this reason that military authorities instructed that marriages and births be published in the official document of the military known as the *Part 2 Orders*. The importance of this document cannot be underestimated. This is because it represents a title and a non-negotiable instrument which placed wives in good stead to contest the validity of their position as a military wife. Second, wives' personal information was also published in the *Part 2 Orders*, in the same way her citizenship and that of her children were documented in the barracks. It is important to reiterate that without the publication of the names of children in the *Part 2 Orders*, they would neither be admitted into the military schools nor enjoy free scholarship in the event of the death of their father. Information recorded in the *Part 2 Orders* was further transfered into the *battalion or company compendium.*

As a reference book, *Company Compendium* was consulted from time to time to ascertain or invalidate information contained in the personal record of military personnel to avoid confusion.[65] In contemporary times, marriage celebrations, births, birthdays, deaths and other occurrences relating to women were also published in military magazines and bulletins as part of their entitlements.

Naming ceremony, on the other hand, was a common practice in all the military community and it took various forms - the traditional system, Christian pattern and Islamic rites. "When a child was born to a military family, the commanding officer was expected to send a letter of congratulations to the parents on behalf of the formation or unit."[66] In the same manner, the soldier's commander was under obligation to extend a congratulatory message on behalf of the regiment[67] or command. For a soldier, it was the Commanding Officer's wife that was expected to lead a delegation from her office in company of the *magajia* on the social visit. Thereafter, other women began to pay individual visits to the mother of the new baby with or without gifts.

Naming ceremony was conducted according to the financial capacity of the family, since it was not compulsory to arrange a party, but where there was the financial ability; parties were organised in an atmosphere of dancing, eating and drinking after the morning session in which the Imam or Pastor presided according to their faith. Individual well wishers who were unable to partake in the morning session visited in the evening before the all night party. Parties and get-together were generally conducted under the watchful eyes of Intelligence Detachment and representatives of the Military Police. This was intended to avoid fighting and other ugly incidents in the location.

Senior officers and non-commissioned officers' wives also celebrated their birthdays from time to time as this was done without rigid rules or precedence. Birthday celebration was organised in the house, Mess or notable places outside the barracks. It was observed that women's birthday celebration attracted more visitors than that of their spouses because they were private individuals who could not be monitored by military agents or be subjected to probe and official scrutiny.

Prior to the occasion, letters of invitation were sent to friends, members of Officers' Wives Association and colleagues of spouse. During the occasion, the celebrant danced to the delight of the guests. It should be pointed out that cutting of cakes had become a practice for most celebrants during the event; a tradition imbibed by a corps of Nigerian military officers trained in British Military Academy in the 1950s and 1960s. Thereafter, gifts were distributed by the celebrant to the visitors for honouring their invitation. However, some officers and non-commissioned officers' wives marked their birthday quietly with the immediate family and without pomp and pageantry.

For instance, Constance Larymore was reputed to have marked her birthday at *Shokko-Shokko* a suburb of Lokoja with a dinner-party of two, in her words "I could not recall a cheerier moment in my life than that."[68] Maryam Babangida also celebrated her birthday several times during her tenure as First Lady of Nigeria in the 1980s and 90s without much publicity.

Official Social Convocations

Official social formalities include West African Social Activity (WASA), durbar, social calls, courtesy call, sent-forth ceremony, and Mess culture, to mention but a few.

The West African Social Activity (WASA) was an event that began in colonial barracks and up till now is still being observed. Since independence, WASA had assumed different names in the armed forces, perhaps to shade off the vestiges of colonial titles. For instance, in the army barracks, it was known as 'Nigerian Army Social Activity' (NASA), in the Air Force, "Base Social Activity" (BASA), and in the navy, "End of Year Party."

Generally, WASA was a way of bringing together officers and soldiers' families in a social and interactive atmosphere to mark the end of the year [69] and the beginning of another in the barracks. According to *Traditions, Customs and Ethics of the Nigerian Army 2005*:

> The origin of WASA may be linked to the period of West African Frontier Force, when persons in the society whose ancestral background has some traditional or customary heritage started joining the army. Sacrifices were usually offered at the end of harvest or the beginning of planting season to their gods and ancestors for bounty harvest or for peaceful and progressive period in the New Year. Delegates were usually sent to military authority by the village heads to seek the release of soldiers for this yearly ritual. Rather than releasing soldiers yearly to perform the ritual, the military authority then, incorporated it in the army activities and tagged it WASA.[70]

Nonetheless, a more plausible explanation could be established in the fact that the British military officers wanted an indigenous recreational activity capable of reducing stress in the lives of soldiers of the West African Frontier Force and by extension forging an inter-group relations capable of promoting civil-military friendship and cooperation. Indeed, the significance of the tradition was due largely to its connection with African cultural values of the new yam festival, the annual worship of river goddess, spirit celebration, and re-enactment of wars, fishing festivals, wrestling contest, kingship celebrations, and others.

The interest in the ceremony was created by traditional rulers who thought it an honour for colonial officers to integrate their customs into the military system. Though, some informants[71] argue that the integration of the ceremony into the military culture was to avoid undue socialization with civilian populace. "This traditional ritual at first involved the burning of sacrifice, dancing and exposure of masquerades."[72] As the years progressed, the ceremony developed independently in the then British West African colonies as a result of the ingenuity of some local soldiers who deemed it necessary to recreate their heritage through social groupings and entertainment. It was after independence that the Nigerian

Armed Forces (Navy, Army and the Air Force) adopted this event as an important ceremony in the barracks, but with slight modifications in some of its activities. The changes were to suit current realities and instill confidence in military men in the spirit of esprit-de-corps.[73]

Similarly, 'Durbar' was one of the cultural activities in colonial barracks. The word 'durbar' was derived from Persian language, where it had its origins in the court rituals of the Mughal emperors in India. The tradition later diffused into Northern Nigeria before the advent of the British colonial administrators. As Kirk-Greene remarks:

> Durbar added to the cavalry traditions of horse and camel divisions of the Fulani emirs. The royal salute, the *jafi* and *jinjina*, became its dramatic climax. By 1959, durbar had become a ceremony symbolizing not only the quintessential north but also springing from the very inspiration of the Northern peoples.[74]

Durbar later became official ceremony of the local chiefs for the entertainment of important visitors in colonial Northern Nigeria. For instance, durbar was held in honour of Lord Lugard and his wife to mark his appointment as Governor-General in 1913. Describing the event in Northern Nigeria, I.F.Nicolson notes:

> There were some fifteen thousand horsemen, and an uncounted number of footmen, each grouped around their chiefs. There were also 800 West African Frontier Force, and about 300 mounted cavalry, with turbans and lances, and there was the galloping 'Salute of the Desert' with Emirs dismounting to kneel and make obeisance to him.[75]

Similarly, there was the celebration of durbar in Kano in honour of Edward, the then Prince of Wales in 1925 and in Kaduna in 1956 in honour of Queen Elizabeth II. "It was on this occasion that the chiefs made special request to the queen to wear full evening dress and *tiara* in which she graciously obliged despite the fact that the event was held in the morning when the heat was already shimmering."[76]

Perhaps, it was in an event of this nature in 1920s that Richard Palmer, Lieutenant-Governor, resident in Northern Nigeria instructed European women to wear veils at official ceremonies in deference to Muslim custom."[77] On this matter, Helen Callaway contends that this was unusual, but for formal occasions wives were always expected to appear in dignified dress (not sleeveless or low cut), a hat, white gloves, and, of course, silk or nylon stockings (sticky in the tropical heat).[78] Narrating a similar event in colonial Bida, Larymore states:

> My husband was very anxious to meet and confer with the Resident of Nupe...It was a great day for Bida; no white woman had ever been there, and the Emir and his people were determined to do honour to the event;[durbar] so as we approached the town, a great concourse of people began to throng down the hill from the residency. At the head of the procession rode Mr Goldsmith, the Acting Resident, followed by the Emir....Behind him followed the members of his family and court officials and the procession ended in a surging crowd, on horseback and on foot... After the ceremonial greetings we all proceeded to the Residency, where more greetings ensued, and, on his dismounting, one could get a better idea of the vast proportions of the Emir - a truly huge man.[79]

Durbar could be described as the height of conviviality in colonial cantonments, particularly when a Governor and his wife were making their initial visit. For instance, John and Lady Macpherson were treated to durbar in Northern Nigeria. This is aptly narrated by Sharwood Smith:

> As the Governor had never before visited the North; we had, in consultation with the Emirs of Gwandu, Argungu, and Yauri, decided to stage a provincial Durbar. There had, of course, been in the past other notable gatherings of horsemen and displays of pageantry in the North, but it had always seemed to me that, viewed as a spectacle, the effect of such gatherings was largely lost owing to a lack of timing and control and to the uninvited presence of the noisy, unkempt riff-raff of the towns that always attached itself in swarms to any procession. I now felt that the time had come to show what could be done and that the Sultan and his brother chiefs, given a lead, could stage a ceremony that, without losing any of the spontaneity and pageantry of tradition, would yet move to a climax with something of the precision and panache of a full-dress military parade.[80]

However, in modern barracks, the celebration of 'durbar' has changed in form and practice. It was therefore known as a general meeting where matters of great importance were discussed and harmonised in the community. Commanding officers' wives also held general meeting with wives of non-commissioned officers at regular intervals to discuss issues affecting women and the barracks in general. Sometimes, durbar (general meeting) was arranged by Commanding Officers (COs) for military officers alone and on certain occasions for military personnel and spouses but without ceremonies.

"Residency parties" according to Brian S.Smith, "were undoubtedly, the best catalyst for the jealousies and bouts of ill feeling between individuals and cliques that every hot season brought to most outlying Stations."[81] The Residency, too, was the ideal meeting place for Africans and Europeans. The Residency parties, brought to an end, the era in which Sultans could see privileged colonial Administrative Officers by special arrangement. Smith added that, "now whenever we entertained on any scale, he and his councillors and visiting dignitaries from other emirates moved to and fro among our guests, perfectly at ease and radiating friendliness."[82]

"Social calls" also were exciting moments in the barracks. It had its beginning in colonial cantonments as an arrangement through which men and women in the community expressed solidarity to friends and colleagues in time of joy or sadness. Social calls were sometimes reciprocated as a way of cementing relations between traditional rulers and military authorities and their spouses. Beyond this, the event encouraged the spirit of togetherness with civilian populace in general and esprit de-corps with military families in particular. "The formality of Social calls was simple, it was made on neat and presentable attire by men and women, though, it was permissive for men to wear military uniform on important visits."[83]

This is cogently highlighted by Larymore:

> On the occasion when, accompanied by Mr Goldsmith, we went to visit him [Emir of Bida], we had an opportunity of inspecting the Nupe style of building and decoration.... I requested and obtained permission to pay a visit to the ladies of the harem, and, escorted by a dignified – and presumably privileged – dotard, I passed through the heavy door and found... a great crowd of women, some mere girls, others middle aged, nearly all carrying babies, and a swarm of brown toddlers, all laughing, clapping their hands, calling greetings and salutations incessantly. To them it was indeed a "bolt from the blue,"and their placid lives of seclusion.[84]

During social calls, gifts and presents were often presented to the guests. This is further observed by Larymore:

> The Emir presented us with an enormous and almost embarrassing 'dash' or present --- oxen, sheep, fowls, and various special Bida products.... I afterwards sent the Emir of Bida, as a token of friendship, a Hausa gown, made for me locally of white material, much pleated, and heavily embroidered in white in the customary patterns and this embroidery I outlined and embellished with gold thread, producing a very fine rich effect, which was highly appreciated by my friend. [85]

Also "Bernard Bourdillon and his wife paid social call to the Emir of Kano, and in the spirit of hospitality, the Emir showed the Bourdillons his bathroom and royal bath salts."[86] Similarly, R.D.Pearce recalls in his work, one of the social calls made by Violet Bourdillon to the Emir of Zauzau in which she was given the privilege to visit his harem."[87]

Courtesy call, on the other hand, was an old tradition in the military system. It was carried out by top ranking military wives, such as the Governor-General's wife, wives of Unit Commanders or any other assigned women representative. Social calls were different from courtesy calls in the manner of formality and arrangements. Courtesy calls had to do with visiting and socializing with wives of military personnel in other locations, sometimes traditional rulers, and representatives of other countries. During a courtesy call, it was customary for unit commanders and wives to play host to the guests.

In colonial cantonment, as Larymore noted, "when Lord Lugard, the then High Commissioner arrived the country with his wife, he decided to pay a short visit to Lokoja Cantonment before going to Zungeru for the celebration of Coronation Day."[88] Apart from normal protocols, 'the hostess also provided hospitality' while the tour lasted. Relating her experience, Larymore declares; "we got a warm welcome from Mr Wallace and spent a few days with him; enjoying his hospitality and kindness while we made our final preparations for a start."[89] Also, Nancy Robertson, wife of Governor-General at Nigeria's independence celebration acted as hostess to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh when they paid courtesy call to them. [90]

Coronation and Empire Day were significant events in colonial barracks in Nigeria. These occasions were observed to mark the emergence, ascendancy and achievements of the British in their various empires and colonies. Quoting Lady Lugard in 1902, Margery Perham states:

> We were there for Coronation Day and I managed with the help of a little borrowed crockery from the mess to give a dinner party of 20 people....and we drank the king's health with the band playing "God Save the King" and a black crowd of servants and others clustered round the open windows ejaculating "Good King! Good King! [91]

In a related event, Helen Callaway observes:

> At 7.00am General Lugard walked on to the parade ground to read the Queen's Proclamation to the assembled units of the West African Frontier Force. The flag of the now defunct Royal Niger Company was drawn down and the Union Jack raised as the visible British authority. Guns fired in noisy salute and then the military band struck up the chords of the national anthem. Next, the Nigerian troops gave three hearty cheers for their new sovereign, Queen Victoria. After Lugard had been sworn in as High Commissioner, the troops executed a march past and where praised for their excellent appearance....This impressive celebration served at once to display mystical authority and to incorporate the Nigerian military units and local populace into the British Empire.[92]

In 1941, there was a celebration of Empire Day, and on this occasion, as Stanhope White opined, the Resident called out all the officers in the headquarters in Makurdi to observe the day in its proper form despite the war. "So in the morning there was a parade attended by all the Administrative Officers in full dress - white uniform and helmet, sword and all; doubtless a very brave sight."[93] The occasion continued even after independence as Empire Day was organised with pomp and pageantry in the British Commonwealth of Nations with the usual parade by military men, horse riders, students, briefs, and address by government officials.

The beauty of the event is that it was usually a public holiday which afforded European wives in the colonies the opportunity to stay at home and show hospitality to friends and well-wishers in the cantonments. Since independence, Military Wives' Association had used the occasion to visit Charity and Orphanage Homes where they donated money and food items to the less privileged in the society. However, since the last years of 1970s, the celebration of Empire Day had seized throughout the country giving way to the celebration of independence anniversary in the barracks. Most wives found the occasion most appealing because it afforded them the opportunity to stay at home with their spouses and children or visit important places of interest.

From the above discussion, it could be deduced that colonial administrators simply re-enacted these ceremonies in the colonies to promote their enterprise and, perhaps display their heroism over conquered territories. The Coronation and Empire Day celebrations showcase different royal insignia, and local guns seized from local soldiers and deposed Emirs and Sultans during wars of conquests. It is for this and other reasons that colonial soldiers were looked down as illiterates and misfit.

Other Military Feasts

Dining-in Ceremony was a formal dinner function for members of the military force. It had its origins in colonial barracks as an event to unite officers and wives socially for the purpose of unit esprit-de-corps and friendship. In the course of time, other activities were incorporated, such as welcoming of newly posted-in officers and wives as well as send-forth ceremony for retired colleagues in the force. In Lokoja Cantonment, for instance, Larymore observed that a cheery dinner-party was held in honour of General and Mrs Kemball in the Officers' Mess Lokoja. "And I said good-bye very regretfully when they went on their way to Zungeru."[94]

Similarly, dining-in ceremony was organised for posted-out officers and wives, especially those who assumed higher responsibilities or appointments abroad. It was reported that "when news came that Sir Bryan Sharwood Smith was to succeed Sir Eric Thompstone as Lieutenant Governor of Northern Nigeria, there was wild jubilation in the cantonment and a spontaneous Champagne party was given by a member of his staff in celebration".[95] This was succinctly captured by Joan Sharwood Smith as thus, "It took two glasses of this potent mixture to drown my inward groans at the thought of becoming a Lieutenant-Governor's wife and of all the awful formalities of Kaduna."[96]

In modern barracks, the event had become an opportunity to honour distinguished servicemen, members of host communities and friends of the military. Dining-in Ceremony had its procedure which must be strictly adhered to by officers and wives. First there was the rigid precedence of entry and seating arrangements of men and women.

Describing her formal introduction in Minna in 1940, Joan S.Smith noted as quoted by Helen Callaway:

> At last, there was a signal from our hostess and the women trouped upstairs. We ascended the stairs in strict order of our husbands' seniority, according to the Staff list, the Resident's wife sedately leading. The operation completed, we descended the stairs in the same order and were shown our places at the dining table."[97]

Second, the line of ladies waiting to enter the single lavatory as pressure of necessity never overrode precedence. In addition, speech and briefs were allowed in order of protocol and rank. Finally, other formalities included, the posting of colours, introduction of guests, a toast to the guests, dinner service, conduct of the events of the evening, concluding remarks by the presiding officer, retirement of the colour and adjournment to the informal period.

It was the frequent dining-in ceremony that made Sylvia Leith-Ross critical of European wives, which to her, caused so much distraction in the barracks and upsetting imperial objectives in the colonies.[98] In the same manner, "she was criticised and accused of not having seen beyond the "folk model" of her own social group [because] she failed to note the hidden assumptions and meaning behind the social convention"[99] On the same matter, Erich Fromm, a psychologist argued that the lone Englishman who dressed for dinner in the jungle could, by this means, feel at one with his home community.[100]

This tradition continued even in the days of the Bourdillons. As R.D.Pearce states, "An official dinner was given in honour of General de Gaulle and Lady Bourdillon arranged for the new Free French Tri-colour with the Cross of Lorraine to be hung at one end of the dining room."[101] In consolidating her social relations and hospitality, Lady Bourdillon made it a habit that every new British officer arriving Nigeria should be taken care of in Government House before reporting to his station.[102]

It was also observed that "she manipulated the elaborate formality of official protocol during the Second World War when a host of European visitors were stranded in Lagos."[103] In contemporary military culture, dining-in ceremony had been streamlined to meet the exigencies of the time.

Messes were recreational facilities where service personnel socialized after a hard day's job.[104] It was also a place where they freely entertained their relatives, friends and guests. In colonial barracks, there were three messes for the personnel, namely, the British Officers' Mess, British Non-Commissioned Officers' (BNCO) Mess and the African Sergeant's Mess. "Until 1960" according to N.J.Miner, "the Officers' Mess of the first battalion displayed among its trophies the flag picked up beside the body of Sultan Attahiru after the battle of Burmi."[105]

Since independence, the size of Nigerian troops had increased; thus, there is the Officers' Mess, Warrant Officers/ Sergeants' Mess, and Corporal below Mess, otherwise known as the 'Servicemen Club.' According to Babangida:

> Traditions vary from mess to mess hence; every mess has its own body of rules and regulations. For instance, no serviceman can enter into the mess with his or her headgear on. Similarly, web belts are not worn within, hence a rack is always provided outside the mess for caps and web belts. Any officer who breaches either of these rules is compelled to buy a round of drinks for everyone in the mess as a penalty. [106]

Moreover, on special occasions, the most senior officer was expected to buy drinks for his junior colleagues as a social treat. Military tradition demanded that officers converged at the Mess every Friday shortly after noon. This provided the chance for informal get-together as well as opportunity for second opinion on certain issues.[107] On the other hand, the Officers' Mess was regarded as a second home because whenever there was shortage of

accommodation; officers were assigned sleeping spaces in the mess until adequate provisions were made.

From the foregoing, what privileges accrue to women who visited the mess? It was generally not common for wives to enter into the Mess except when accompanied by their military-husband and children as special invitees. This is because Mess was a freedom spot for men, in interaction, drinking, merriment and playing with mistresses. Corroborating the idea, Maryam Babangida explains, "Officers can go to the Mess with their wives and children. Other civilians may also be taken. Indeed, in a lot of messes around the country some civilians of proven integrity are admitted as honorary members, sharing all the benefits enjoyed by officers."[108]

In the Navy, for instance, it was customary for personal guest to be invited to a Mess dinner but not without the approval of the Commanding Officer.[109] Thus, Navy Mess Etiquette states: "Whenever a lady enters the mess, men were expected to rise from their chair as a mark of respect. Officers should also ensure that they remain standing until a lady who had just entered took her sit before the men do likewise."[110] Babangida also affirms that: "when an officer and his wife walk into a gathering of officers, say in a mess, everyone is expected to rise as a mark of courtesy for the woman, the officer's rank notwithstanding…. This courtesy is considered a mark of respect for the institution of marriage."[111]

During Mess dinners, wives of military personnel were considered as Mess guest and personal guests of their husbands. In the first instance, the Mess as an entity had social and public obligation to entertain wives of serving personnel or others at regular intervals for which the Mess was financially responsible. In the second, women and children were allowed

into the mess as personal guests of their husband/father for whom responsibility of entertainment and attendant bills must be handed over.[112]

Fare-well and Send-forth ceremonies were also organised for officers and wives in the community. Send-forth, as it was known in the military circles was arranged for posted-out personnel. It was usually held in the Officers' Mess, thereafter, a dinner-party commenced followed by the presentation of gifts. Send-forth ceremony was designed; first, by extending letters of invitation to the affected officers and wives prior to the date of the occasion; this was to notify them ahead of time so that they would be available for the event.

In the case of wives of military personnel, the Officers' Wives Association and its affiliate were entrusted with the responsibility of putting together a befitting fare-well ceremony for one of their own. During the ceremony, women commented on the character and leadership qualities of their departing colleague. Reflecting on his fare-well ceremony, Allan Burns asserts, "when my wife and I left Lagos on the 23rd June 1934, we were seen off by a great number of our friends, including the African and European staff of the secretariat, and the buglers of the Nigerian police sounded the "Hausa Farewell" as the steamer in which we were travelling left the harbour."[113] At the end of the occasion, gifts were presented to out-going members by officers and wives. Similarly, friends and colleagues were not left out, as each and everyone presented souvenirs to the officer's wife as a mark of appreciation. Thereafter, dancing, eating and drinking took place in the Association's Secretariat.

Religious Activities

The role of wives of military personnel in religious activities cannot be overemphasised. In the beginning, religious worship among women in the barracks, centred on individual faith

and belief. Though, in colonial Northern Nigeria, the dominant religion was Islam and women carried out the observances with their children at home as there were no mosques in the barracks, some others who were not satisfied with the practice resorted to worshipping in the mosques outside the cantonments. This practice was also common among Yoruba Moslem women during the period.

Christian religious faith was also practiced by a number of Yoruba women in the barracks, though; some had Islamic background which made them hold tenaciously to their faith and this did not spur any rancour. Among women from Eastern Nigeria, Christianity was the dominant religion in the barracks, even though; some were traditional religious worshippers. The reason(s) why British military officers did not introduce religious worship in the barracks were to avoid clash of culture. Second, it was geared towards consolidating colonial paternalism in northern Nigeria, a doctrine which systematically insulated Islamic faith from alien western culture. Finally, it was to forestall double loyalty of troops and sectionalism.

Immediately after independence, military authorities approved two religious denominations in the barracks, namely Christianity and Islam.[114] This made it possible for military families to belong to either of the faith. However, a change of religion was only allowed on the grounds that the military family or the individual notified the Commander.[115] Therefore Christmas, New Year, Easter and Sallah celebrations were observed throughout the military cantonments without discrimination. For instance, yuletide was usually agog in the barracks because the event was adequately prepared for by officers' and non-commissioned officers' wives alike, especially women whose husbands had been away as a result of peacekeeping operation and mission assignment. It was also exciting for wives whose spouses were due for release owing to one offence or the other.

Yuletide was also a time for stock-taking, execution of personal projects such as marriages, building of houses, and purchase of new cars. In addition, visitations and touring were embarked upon by families during the period taking advantage of the holidays. Relating a Christmas occasion in Lokoja, Larymore opines:

> Christmas Day of that year found us at Egga, a small riverside town on the right bank of the Niger, sixty miles above Lokoja....It was rather an event... the first we had spent in Nigeria and much care and thought had been expended on the dinner menu. There was a plump turkey to be roasted in a native oven...the Chef had his work cut out for him that day, for the feast was to include a most desirable teal, shot the day before, which had to be similarly cooked in a similar oven.[116]

The day after Christmas was generally observed as Boxing Day in the community. It was sometimes a day for officers and non-commissioned officers not on essential duty to enjoy the day quietly with their wives and children. Some others used the opportunity to visit important places, picnicking spots, zoo, Officers' Mess, *mammy* markets and several other relaxation centres with their families. It was also a day for sharing of gifts to beloved families and the less privileged in the society.

For the Christian believers, it was a period of spiritual reflection on the birth and life of Jesus Christ and this was done through singing and dancing in the churches. This is aptly highlighted by Larymore:

> When the Christmas present had been distributed to the household, the morning spent itself peacefully in writing and sketching, the Sahib working away as the habit of political officers out here [in the colonies] in spite of my loud insistence on a whole holiday: all arrangements had been made for an afternoon on the river among the wild duck, and luncheon had been despatched, when, with housewifely care. I bethought me of making final arrangements for dinner, and summoned the cook. He was not forthcoming...Momo[h], our faithful head Steward appeared, taking generous support from the side of the doorway...he certainly had drunk too much *pito* (native beer). [117]

Easter celebration, on the other hand, was a Christian ceremony introduced in military community to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ. The beauty of this event was in the fact that it was celebrated with pomp and pageantry similar to Christmas. The season was usually declared a public holiday and a period of rest, hence personnel not on essential duty enjoyed the days visiting important places. As one of the colonial officers explains "we marched northwards to Romasha, and returned to Lokoja by the Benue arriving very late on Easter Eve, so that I was just able to keep a promise I had made, to play the harmonium for the Easter Sunday Service in the Cantonment Church."[118]

The Muslim holidays of Eid-el-Fitri, *Eid-Kabir* and *Eid Malud* were also observed in the barracks by military men and their families. The Muslim faithful usually went to *Eid-grounds* for prayers, thereafter, they slaughtered rams which they later distributed to friends and relations. At other times, they simply felicitate with members and share food within the barracks. The significance of Sallah celebration could be located in the social interactions between military families on the one hand and civilian friends on the other.

Writing on this event, Larymore declares:

> On January 25[1908] occurred the Great Sallah, a Mahomedan festival which appears to commemorate the sacrifice of Isaac - a sheep being killed ceremonially on the occasion. We assembled ourselves outside the city wall, and sitting under an improvised shelter, watching the seated thousands waiting patiently in the sunshine, it would not have seemed strange to me to see the Disciples passing down the irregular lines, distributing the loaves and fishes to the hungry listeners. Presently, the Limam's voice rose clear and shrill, away in the distance under the shade of a mighty tree where the Emir and his court had their places...It was a wonderful and moving spectacle. The prayers finished, we were conducted to the Emir's seat, where special prayers were offered for us all.[119]

Finally, the celebration of Christian and Moslem festivals had continued in contemporary times in all the barracks and bases in Nigeria. The two religions had also promoted unity and peace in the community.

Sports, Recreation, and Reading Culture

According to Kathlen Heasman, "Human beings have always had to work in order to live....Yet a person does not work all the time. He has periods of work and period of leisure."[120] Over the years, the barracks had provided opportunities for sporting and recreational activities not only for the men but also the women. Particularly, those who wanted to reduce their weight or slim down their size, since it was expected that an officer's wife must look elegant and smart all the time.

Some of the sporting activities in the barracks include, walking/trekking, jumping, running, long and table tennis game, football, horse riding, basket ball, volley ball, and other indoor games such as ludo, scrabble and cards among others. Maryam Babangida substantiates this point in the following lines, "Military wives need not leave the barracks before they could engage in sporting activities and such leisure games include table tennis, badminton, jogging, or lawn tennis, all within the barracks."[121] The importance of recreation to wives of military personnel was immense. This is because it promoted social relations between and among officers' wives and their civilian counterparts who partnered with them in keep fit exercises. It is also a vehicle for ideas, business knowledge, friendship and cooperation as well as healthy tips.

Horse riding was a practice among European officers' wives in colonial Northern Nigeria where tsetse fly was not a menace. Prior to the emergence of the colonialists, the Emirs, warriors and the aristocratic class in Northern Nigeria region had been using horses for combat operations and recreational activities. In view of the exigencies of military duties and ceremonial parade, some of the desert animals were procured for these operations and as mascots, these include horses, camels, and donkeys among others.

With the advent of European wives, the use of beast of burden became popularised in the barracks, mainly for touring and long distance journey. Underpinning the argument, Bryan Sharwood Smith states that, she [my wife] was a good horse woman, for we spent ten to fourteen days of every month travelling around the division. Most of this time we were on horseback, but not always."[122] Similarly, Frederick Forsyth pointed out that "Private Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu was given the duties of escorting the colonel's wife and daughter on their daily horse rides and tennis parties."[123] Nevertheless, the use of these animals was not strange to some women married to indigenous soldiers because some of them had earlier employed them as beast of burden as well as sporting activity in their villages. This argument is reinforced by the fact that wives of indigenous soldiers at the time were ethnically localised because the military had not been Nigerianized.

Picnicking was a common recreational activity among military families since the early years. European officers' wives and their children had often engaged in outdoor excitement and leisure. Picnicking was usually planned in advance by most families because it entailed adequate preparation, such as the purchase of swimming kits, relaxation mats, and cooked food.

Relating her experience on the Benue River, Larymore remarks:

> The Benue River struck me as being remarkably clearer and purer in colour than the Niger, and the scenery is very lovely. Each evening we "tied up" by a convenient sandbank, and the men camped there, rejoiced to spread themselves out a bit. One evening the *Black Swan* contingent gave a dinner party, the novel feature of which was that our menu was to consist of a French dinner. [124]

Since the emergence of women in the barracks, most officers and non-commissioned officers' wives had developed the habit of reading books and bulletins. This was particularly intended for two reasons, first to fight-off loneliness occasioned by the solitary environment of the barracks and second to be informed about the happenings in the country in which they found themselves. Quoting Lady Lugard, Margery Perham writes:

> Books will I expect [to] give me my principal companionship and this will be in one sense a permanent advantage; for life of late years has been so pressing that the habit of reading has fallen into abeyance and it will be a real good opportunity here to get back to it. I have started on Grote and hope to get through all the beginnings of European history again. [125]

Indeed it was the solitary condition in colonial Nigeria that motivated Alan Burns to embark on this initiative. This he explains as thus: "I had been much impressed by the need for a Library in Lagos but had failed to persuade the Governor that this was a matter deserving Government support; in default of something better, a Book Club was started following a meeting convened in my house but the membership was limited."[126] He also stressed that it took many years and several patronage to start a full Library in Moloney Street, Lagos. And thereafter, a building was procured for the Lagos Library in 1932. This effort encouraged some European wives to approach the writing of their memoirs and works on tropical cookery.[127] Some of these efforts were, Flora Shaw's *A Tropical Dependency* (1905),[128] Constance Larymore's *A Resident's Wife in Nigeria* (1911),[129] and Emily Bradley's *Dearest Priscilla, Letters to the Wife of a Colonial Civil Servant* (1950).[130]

Others include, Olive Temple's *Notes on the Tribes, Provinces, Emirates and States of the Northern Provinces of Northern Nigeria*, (1919),[131] and Elizabeth Knowles "Jobs for the Girls," *Corona* (1954),[132] among others.

Commending the effort of some European wives, F.D. Lugard asserts that, "Mrs Ruxton and Mrs Tew rendered great service through their admirable books on simple tropical cookery which was designed to assist European women in the colonies."[133] In contemporary times also, a number of military wives had documented their lives, activities and contributions to the development of the barracks.

Other Aspects of Community Life in the Barracks

Shooting and hunting expeditions were hobbies in which European wives had leisurely engaged since the colonial period. Some of them accompanied their spouses in the evenings and weekends and at other times when their husbands' were off-duty. Literature on military wives also explains that most wives accompanied their spouses to the field whenever the family was financially handicapped or expecting important visitors in their home.

Games were obtained from the forest areas of the south as well as the grassland savannah of northern Nigeria. According to Larymore "Mr Wilcox was our daily companion when we went on shooting in the evenings in Keffi where we killed birds.[134] In contemporary barracks, servicemen and their spouses' still hunt for games within and outside the barracks. Therefore it should be clear from the discussion that wives of military personnel had elaborate and dynamic social culture in the barracks which is adequate for any society, despite the fact that they operated behind the walls as muted groups. They were also perceived as invisible despite their social achievements because of military laws and conventions which restricted

their publicity and media attention. Thus, the study demonstrates that wives of military personnel were not all illiterates as conceived by some members of the public.

External Social Activities

One of the pertinent questions that stand to illuminate this discourse is to what extent were wives of military personnel involved in inter-group relations and to what degree were they allowed by the authorities? Wives of military personnel were involved in inter-community relations for a number of reasons. The participation of wives in inter-group relations began in colonial period when a handful of European officers' wives saw the need to explore the corporate social responsibilities of the barracks. To them, it was part of the activities demanded of women in the empires and colonies to promote friendship and cooperation with their civilian counterparts.

The history of wives of military personnel in colonial Nigeria is replete with examples of women whose social engagements transcended the boundaries of military barracks. For instance, Lady Violet Bourdillon, wife of Governor of Nigeria between 1935 and 1943 entertained the Lagos market women led by one Madam Pelewura and went as far as dancing with them in the gardens of the Government House.[135] It was the shining example of Lady Bourdillon that motivated the Lagos Market Women's Association to name a clothing material after her 'Lady Bourdillon Lappa'. Apart from the glowing public image of Lady Bourdillon, there was also the scintillating contribution of Mrs Constance Larymore in colonial barracks. She was reported to have made great impact in social relations with the common people and the royal class.

This is noted in her memoir:

> The Seriki [of Katagum] explained to me that as I had evidently been sent to them as a special mark of favour, it was quite necessary for them to know my name. What should they call me? A man's name, I remarked.... Give me a name yourselves. After cogitating in whispers, the old man said, smiling, that they would in future know me as *"Uwamu*" meaning our mother, and so I received my 'country' name, one that has stuck to me ever since, and by which I am known to all my dark-skinned friends throughout Nigeria. I am always proud of it, for though, at the time, I felt inclined to smile at being so addressed by men old enough to be my father, the title is recognized to be the highest expressed of respect and affection that the African man can offer to a woman.[136]

In a similar manner, Lady Joseph Chamberlain was reputed to have been the arrow-head in the formation of Colonial Nursing Association in 1896. The object of the Association was to supply trained nurses – a need that arose from the fact that nursing sisters were unknown in Africa.[137] These feats were seen as great achievements at a time that only a handful of European officers' wives were in the colonies, amidst the marginalisation of men.

Wives of military personnel had rights and privileges to engage in village and town meetings much unlike their husbands who were restricted by the *Military Terms and Conditions of Service*. The conditions stipulate "that an officer shall not hold membership of any secret society, organization or political party."[138] Thus women decided in their capacity as civilians to represent their spouses by paying appropriate levies and dues on behalf of their spouses. Indeed, village and town meetings took place on rotational basis, sometimes in the barracks environment and at other times in a civilian member's house outside the military vicinity.

Nevertheless, an informant stresses that village and town meetings were indispensable to wives of military personnel because it provided opportunity to interact and connect with their people. It also encouraged civilian members to know in person officers and non-commissioned officers from their locality.[139]

An Ex-soldier's wife, Selina Nyong[140] notes that village and town meetings were useful to them in various ways. First, it was an avenue for compulsory savings, as dues and levies were collected on monthly basis. The dues were in turn disbursed at the close of the year from where most wives had a fresh start as small scale entrepreneurs. Second, village/town meetings provided avenues for assisting bereaved families and contributing to funeral rites. A few of these town/ethnic meetings include, the Urhobo/Itsekiri meetings, Ika-Ibo Association, Igbo Community Union, Birom/Angas Association, Tiv/Idoma Union, Akwa Ibom/Cross River (AkwaCross), Atyap Association, for the people Zongo Kataf, Micika Association, Adamawa/ Borno people, to mention but a few.

This study notes that towns and ethnic meetings were important to military men and their wives because it is a way of life and a veritable means of promoting inter-group relations in the barracks. The study also reveals that village and town meetings were the initiative of military men and wives whose states of origin were far from locations of primary assignments. It was for this reason that local associations/meetings served as a rallying point for cooperation and unity among military families. In most cases women used such fora to initiate and promote development projects in their local areas from the collective monthly savings.

Wives of military personnel were also actively involved in religious societies in the barracks, even though it was in its infancy during the period. It was in the succeeding years of colonial cantonments that the Colonial Office approved the Catholic and Protestant Churches for military men and dependants. Because of the nature of the environment, the activities of women were restricted to the Church. Some of the religious organisations include League of Christian Mothers, Faithful Women Society and Catholic Women's Organisation among

others. These societies assisted the church in various ways, particularly in evangelism, empowerment of members, and the welfare of the church.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined some of the social activities of wives of military personnel in the colonial period. These activities bordered on internal and external social relations. It establishes the fact that wives of military personnel were involved in the social activities of the community in colonial period. Some of these activities included, naming ceremonies, marriage and wedding celebrations, birthday celebration, West Africa Social Activity (WASA), social calls, and courtesy calls among others. Thses formalities were important in the social system of the barracks, for this reason, they was embedded in the barracks tradition and culture. The recreational activities of reading, sports, jogging, horse riding to mention but a few, helped women to maintain and keep fit. It also helped them to ward off stress, loneliness and isolation. More importantly was the fact that it promoted social interactions and friendship with civilian women outside the barracks.

It should be clear from the above discussion that ceremonies and events shared commanding heights with military duties. Thus, there exists a manual on *Traditions, Values and Ethics*, designed to instruct and guide military personnel and their wives on the appropriate behaviour demanded of them in official engagements. Marriage ceremony was important in military circles because of its significance, and position and consent of Commanding Officers. It was in fulfilment of the requirements that gave rise to swords-crossing ceremony and other rituals that characterised officers' marriage.

Above all, the study emphasises that the socio-cultural system of wives of military personnel in the barracks was adequate, if though it was structured to meet the needs of the military. The inter-community relations of women during the period were also appealing because it promoted barracks culture and maintenance of the social system. The military performs the role of integration just like any other society through cultural, educational, and religious practices.

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CHAPTER SIX

WIVES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL AFTER INDEPENDENCE, 1960-1999

Introduction

This chapter discusses among others the political, economic, and social activities of wives of military personnel since independence. It also considers the power and influence of some officers' wives in the affairs of the barracks and the public space. Additionally, it investigates some aspects of continuity and change in the activities of wives of military personnel after independence. This analysis is important because it draws a correlation between the activities of women in colonial barracks and the current state of developments in modern barracks.

For instance, records indicate that it was in 1990s that wives of other ranks exploited their social identity as well as the platform of Officers' Wives Association to establish their own organ of women's association in the barracks, known as Soldiers' Wives Association (SWA), Airmen's Wives Association (AWA) and Ratings' Wives Association (RWA). It is through this gathering that their position and aspiration in the system was communicated. The study notes that much development had taken place in Nigerian barracks, due to the activities of this group. Indeed their involvement in inter-group relations of the barracks was not only rewarding but remarkable. Therefore this chapter establishes the fact that the political and socio-economic life of wives of military personnel since independence had expanded as a result of their involvement in governance.

Political Life

The emergence of military rule in Nigeria was due to the problems created by the then civilian government of Sir Tafawa Balewa in the First Republic. The administration was alleged to be corrupt and sectional. This state of affairs led to a coup d'état which eventually

ushered in the military into power. The challenges of governance gradually became enormous during the period thus compelling some officers' wives to engage in the organisation of women and aspects of nation building. This interaction between officers and their wives in the public space led to the ascendancy of the office of the first lady.

The political organisation of wives of military personnel since independence has been described as effective and vibrant. At Nigeria's independence, the office of colonial Governor's Wife was changed to the office of the first lady to reflect the status of self-government. This transformation made it possible for the wife of Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces to direct the political and aspects of social affairs of women in the barracks. Consequently, Victoria Aguiyi Ironsi became the president and chairperson of the Army Wives' Association (AWA) which was one of the most demanding volunteer jobs in Nigeria at the time. The beauty of the two offices rests on the premise that they were non-elective positions, but based on the seniority of husband's rank.

The question therefore is, what was the role of the first lady and how did she carry out her duties? According to *The Allure Vanguard Newspaper* dated, October 6, 2013: "The role of the first lady is multi-faceted. To the country, she is at a certain level of governance that is extremely demanding; a mother to the nation, a wife and a mother at home, a sister, cousin etc."[1] Drawing on the illuminating work of J.B.West:

> First Ladies were legally responsible to no other except the man with whom they exchanged marriage vows. They had no official title because 'First Lady' was a term popularized by a newswoman many years ago, but it has remained the only designation given to the woman who is married to the man we call 'Mr President.[2]

Perhaps, it is important to stress that first ladies maintained a retinue of aides or domestic staff, which include personal secretary, intelligence officers, protocol officers, social secretary, ushers, wardrobe attendants, kitchen staff, and press secretary, to mention but a few. These inner staff assisted in carrying out the official functions of the State House stated against their titles. This tradition of appointing domestic aides had long become fashionable in the United States of America and parts of Europe.

In her capacity as the First Lady, Victoria Aguiyi Ironsi was officially assisted by the wives of General Officers Commanding (GOCs), Air Officers Commanding (AOCs) and Flag Officers Commanding (FOCs). The role of GOC's wives was significant in the barracks system, not only because of their position as the second echelon of authority in the political arrangement of wives, but because they were known as "Mothers of Units."[3] Their roles were strategic as leaders and representatives of women in their various jurisdictions. But more importantly, was their status and contributions at the national level of Defence Officers' Wives Association (DEFOWA). Despite their respective positions, they were answerable to the First Lady, and consultations were frequently carried out among themselves which were communicated to the First Lady.

The Office of Wives of Commanding Officers (COs) was also important in the political structure of wives of military personnel. This is because they were not only the chairpersons of battalions and Units but the third level of authority in the pyramid of power. These women were accountable to the wives of GOCs or its equivalent in the Air Force and Navy. Also wives of COs of units and battalions were responsible for the provision of up-to-date information on the activities of women in their constituencies. Information generated from these cell units were utilised by the Officers' Wives Associations in particular and military

authorities in general, in the planning and provision of amenities for women and dependants in the barracks. Commanding Officers' wives were assisted by some women executives, such as, the deputy chair-person, secretary, provost, financial secretary, treasurer, ex-officio and others. These appointments were strictly based on selection or election except that of the chair-person and deputy chairperson because they were the wives of most senior officers in the command. In the light of the foregoing, it could be seen that the top positions in the political arrangement of women in the barracks were manned by the officers' wives whose spouses were the elite in the organisation. It is based on this tradition and precedence that some of these women belonged to the ruling class where they often influence decisions in service affairs and generally, the barracks.

The other level of command in the political organisation of women was the Office of the *Magajiya*(s) of Units. This structure, according to L.H.Gann and Peter Duignan's *The Rulers of British Africa 1870-1914*, had its beginning in the colonial period. The authors observe that, "Each company had its headwoman, the *magajia* – responsible for the cleanliness of the barracks and for the dress, deportment, and morals of wives. The head-woman attended on company 'request day,' when grievances and suggestions could be aired."[4] Also in modern barracks, they were responsible to the wives of Commanding Officers of battallions and units. The *magajiya* or head of soldiers' wives served as a link to the Commanding Officer through the Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) [5] as indicated elsewhere in the study.

In most barracks there were more than one *magajiya*, unlike the colonial period and this was informed on the one hand by the size of the barracks, and on the other by the population of women in that community. The appointment of more than one *magajiya* in the barracks was to effectively control the women as well as ensure orderly behaviour in the environment.

A few of these barracks include, Ojo Army Barracks, Lagos, Ikeja Army Cantonment, Lagos, Odogbo Barracks, Ibadan, Ribadu Barracks, Kaduna, Dodan barracks, Lagos, Chari Maigumeri Barracks, Lokoja, Abakpa Army Cantonments, Enugu, and Sam Ethnan Air Force Base, Ikeja.

The role of *magajiya* in time of conflict and war situations was not only demanding but challenging. For instance, during the Nigerian Civil War, majority of them enrolled as health care workers, counsellors and resource providers to widows and children. Writing on Anioma women during the Nigerian Civil War, Egodi Uchendu notes:

> Gladys Obi, for instance, was absorbed into the employ of the military unit in Asaba, as the *magajiya*, that is, the mother of the barracks, where she also was given accommodation. As *magajiya*, she became the superintendent of the female members of the barracks. Because of her knowledge of midwifery, she functioned as the barracks obstetrician, attending to soldiers' wives during pregnancy and at childbirth. She was assigned two junior-ranked soldiers as her adjutants, indicating her degree of influence. The range of her activities was widened, albeit informally, to include the provision of counselling services for married couples within the barracks.[6]

The comportment and uniforms of the *magajiya* in colonial barracks as Haywood and Clarke observe[7] did not alter much in modern barracks except in colour and remuneration. In contemporary barracks, the uniforms of the *magajiya* were the same depending on the armed forces they represented, that is, (Army, Navy and Air Force). In modern barracks, the *magajiya* was allowed to wear military uniforms with ceremonial ranks on important days and events. Apart from this, the *magajiya* received welfare packages during religious festivals, passing-out ceremony and Army Day Celebrations. On important official visits or courtesy calls to a military formation by senior ranking officer or his wife, the *magajiya* and her entourage formed part of the parade or receiving team, and this was highly honoured in the military organisation.

As a mark of influence, the *magajiya* and her retinue of staff stood side by side with the wife of Commanding Officer who officially introduced the visitors to them. According to Veronica Eborka, an ex- soldier's wife, "the *magajiya* was also involved in informal matters. Some of these include, settling of quarrels between husband and wife, co-wives and even neighbours."[8]

The *magajiya* had authority to report soldiers who abandoned or maltreated their wives or children to the RSM and in extreme cases to the commanding officer or his wife. She equally possessed the influence to advise the RSM on issues relating to divorce whenever there was a threat to life, or a separation of quarters in the case of two neighbours involved in unhealthy bickering. Halima Sule, an ex- soldier's wife reveals:

> A *magajiya* in one of the units in Kaduna masterminded a protest against a Commanding Officer on the grounds of neglect of wives of servicemen by the authority. For this cause, she instructed the women not to leave his office until their demands were met. It took the intervention of the General Officer Commanding before the women were pacified.[9]

Similarly, Hadiza Usman also recounted an episode in 1996 at 192 *Owode* Barracks, Ogun State from where Nigerian Contingents left for peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone.[10] Unfortunately; they were ambushed by rebel troops behind Maxwell Khobe International Airport, Sierra Leone, formerly, Lungi International Airport the fateful day they arrived on mission. This incident claimed the lives of 35 soldiers on the spot. When news of the sad event got to *Owode* Barracks, the *magajiya* led a procession of women to the commanding officer's house demanding an explanation on the untimely death of their spouses while on national assignment. However, in the course of proceedings, the report of the officer became incredible to the women who went home to mobilise for further action.

The next day, another protest began, led by the *magajiya* and her colleagues. They accused the authority of insensitivity to their plight as well as uncoordinated logistics for the protection of their spouses. It took the intervention of the wife of the commanding officer, some senior officers, the Reverend Father of the Catholic Church and the Centre Imam before peace returned to the barracks.

Narrating a similar protest in colonial Nigeria, N. J. Miner wrote; "In May 1952, a hundred soldiers [and their wives] at the Command Ordnance Depot, Yaba, staged a mutiny in protest against their living accommodation, burning army property and wounding two European officers."[11] Indeed, it was to avoid the reactions and contentions of wives in the barracks that motivated commanding officers to set aside a day in the month for *durbar* or official meeting with wives of military personnel in the barracks. The gathering of women at such meetings was co-ordinated by the wife of commanding officer and the *magajiya*. The occasion provided opportunity for both officers and non-commissioned officers' wives to express their views or present their grievances on issues affecting them in the barracks. This avenue equally contributed to robust and harmonious relationship between servicemen and wives on the one hand, and officers' wives and non-commissioned officers' wives on the other.

In fact, most commanding officers used such gatherings to educate and sensitize women on their roles in the barracks, as well as, the career of their spouses. For instance, it was in one of such interactions that the idea for a manual to guide wives of naval officers and ratings were raised, hence, the prublication of *The Guidelines on General Security Awareness for Personnel and Families*. Finally, the role of the *magajiya* was indispensable in the barracks system, because as a leader of non-commissioned officers' wives she wielded power almost as equal to that of wives of commanding officers whose tenures were transitory.

Figure 3

The Command Structure of Wives of MilitaryPersonnel since Independence

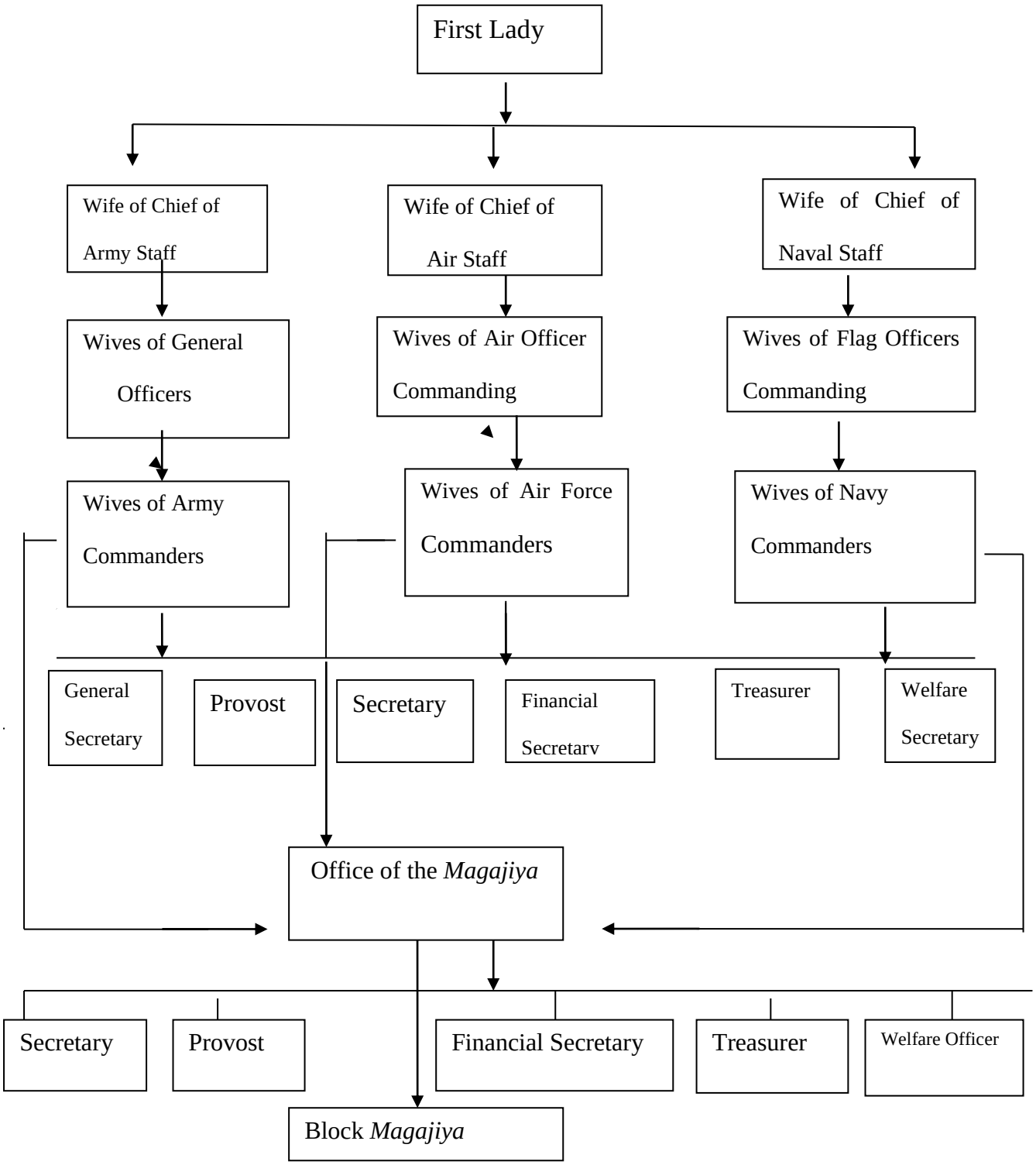
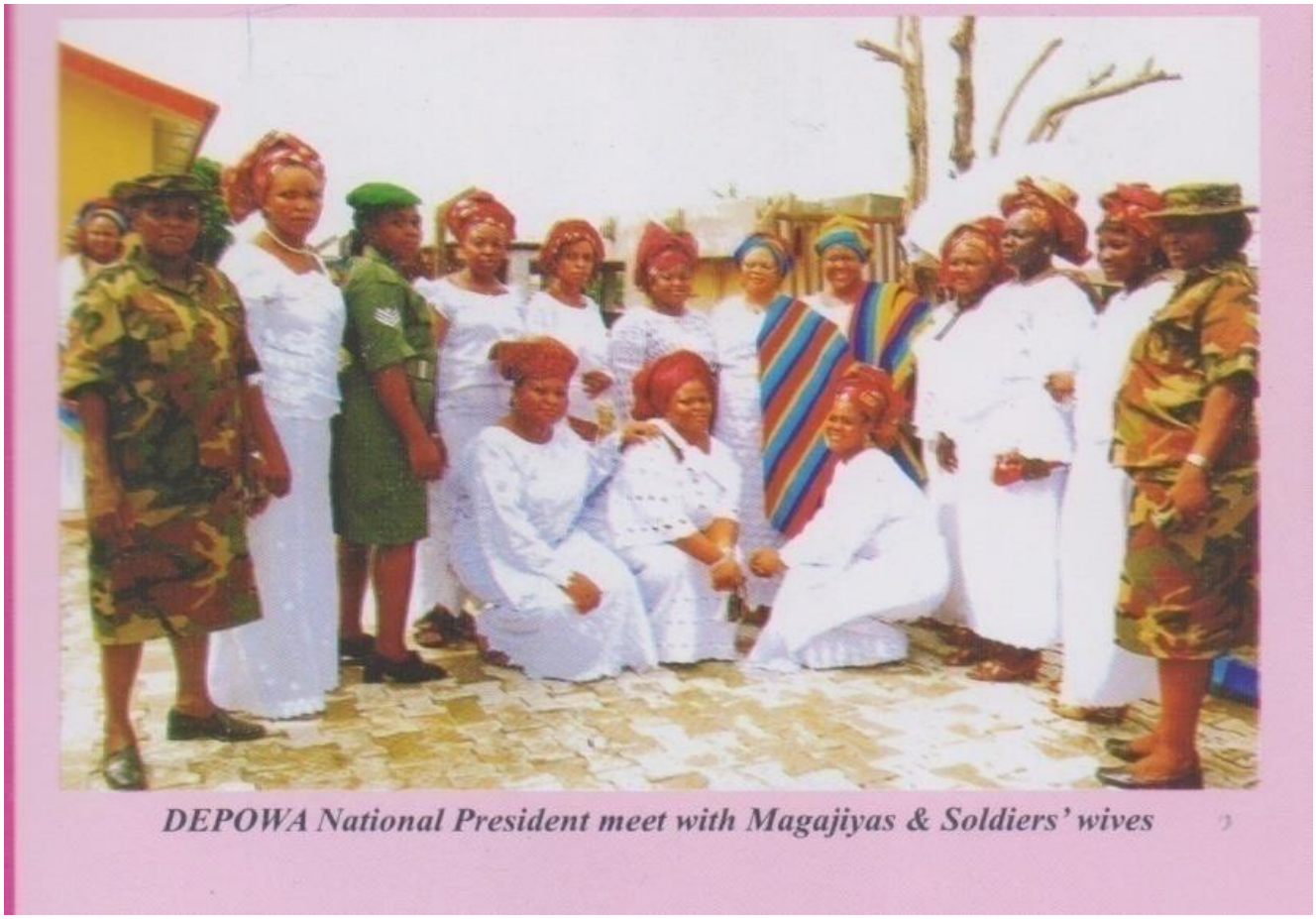


Figure 4



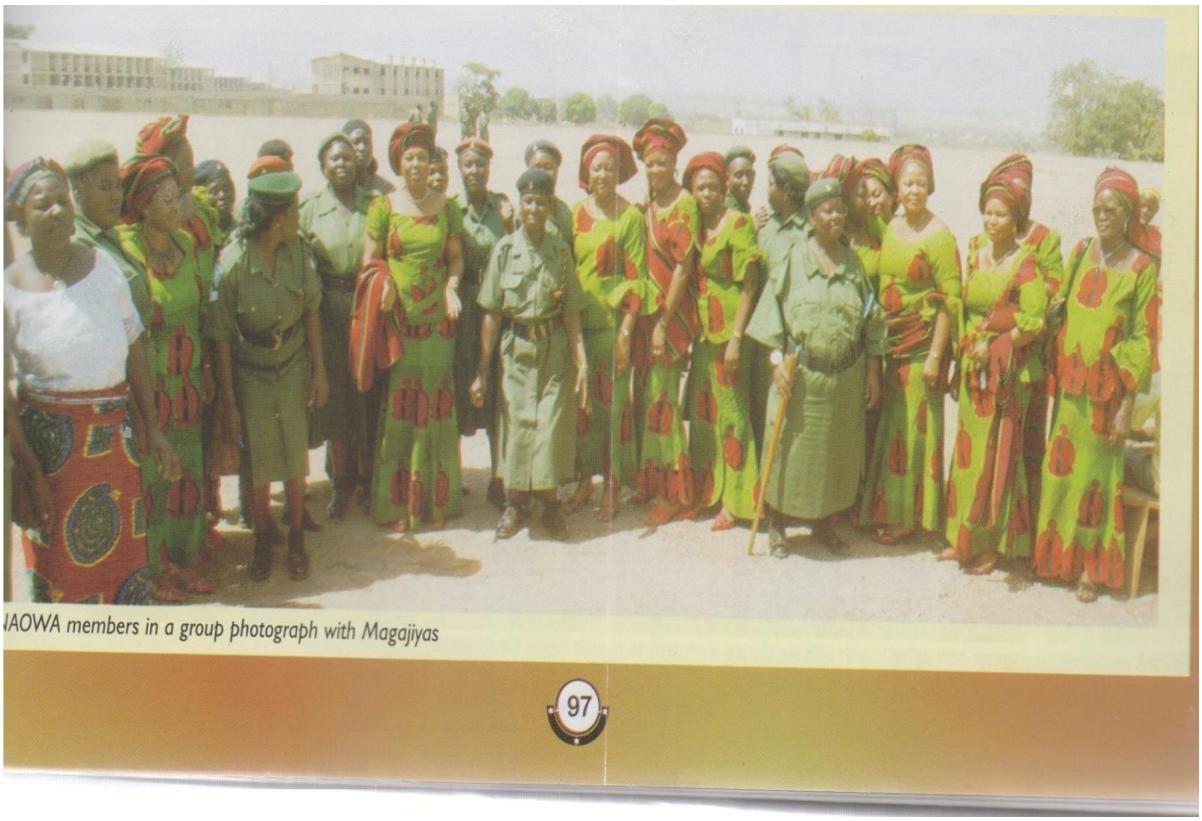
DEPOWA National President's Visit to NAFRC, 2013

Source: ***NAFRCOWA Magazine*****, June, 2013, 27.**

Another important position in the internal political arrangement of wives was the Office of "*Block Magajiya* or *Block Leaders*." These were women representatives from different living quarters. The role of these representatives was significant in the environment because it was a cell organ entrusted with peacemaking, discipline, vigilance, and collective security in various living quarters. The office of *Block magajiya* was answerable to the overall *magajiya*, it is for this reason that they worked in close cooperation as information relating to the conduct and behaviour of women in the blocks was monitored and subjected to scrutiny. *Block Magajiya* also advised the overall *magajiya* on general issues concerning stealing, battering, adultery, disturbances, and lateness, to mention but a few.

The internal political organization of wives of military personnel is significant in the barracks system because of checks and balances and the superiority of the levels of authority. This had helped in the maintenance of peace and harmony between and among women in the barracks. It has also shown that women could effectively work together with men in the same environment without prejudice or inequality.

Figure 5



NAOWA Members in a Group Photograph with *Magajiyas*, 2011

Source: *New SOJA Magazine*, 1st Quarter, 2011, 97.

Figure 6

Maryam Babangida, Former First Lady
Source: The Vanguard Newspaper, November 17, 2009, 1

Gender and Power in the Barracks

The influence of some women in service affairs cannot be overemphasised. The power and prestige were largely drawn from rank and position of their military-husbands. Records indicate that in colonial and post-colonial periods, some officers' wives intervened in some aspects of barracks life and administrative matters. For instance, Lady Lugard exploited her personal recognition in writing to the then Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain on the need for the inclusion of women in the barracks. She also agitated for improved welfare and accommodation of troops in colonial barracks. It was also in one of the debates on the name to be given to the vast territory sprawling from the savanna to the sea, that she intervened by calling the country "Nigeria."

Similarly, Lady Bourdillon was reputed to have taken over proceedings when her husband was indisposed during an official engagement in Northern Nigeria. In contemporary barracks also, some officers' wives were known to have been influential in service affairs, sometimes, by-passing traditions. Some of these include Maryam Babangida, Mariam Abacha, and Hajia Fati Abubakar among others. Perhaps, it is for this reason that Badamosi Babangida stresses that "Our wives have been contributing immensely to the success and well-being of the officers.... I must express our appreciation and gratitude for all their efforts.[12]

The influence of these women in service matters has attracted reactions within and outside the military circles. For instance, the creation of the Better Life Programme (BLP) and the Family Support Programme (FSP) by Maryam Babangida and Mariam Abacha generated debates from some members of the public, particularly the political and social class of the time. In driving home their points, they assert that the Nigerian Constitution does not provide for the office of the first lady, hence, the establishment of pet projects where only avenues to

drain tax payers fund or provide employment to loyal friends. The historical relevance of the foray of these women in the public space seems to be a turning point in the women's liberation struggle in Nigeria. It also marked the beginning of a new dawn for women in Nigerian barracks because the officers' wives associations leveraged on the times, and metamophorsed into an organ for the defence of women's identity and image.

Also in contemporary times, officers' wives exploited the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA), the Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association (NAFOWA), and the Naval Officers' Wives Association (NOWA) to enlarge their position and influence in military affairs. In consequence of this, some influential members of the association were implicated in matters affecting spouses, aides, relations, and friends. They sometimes utilised the bonding to enforce decisions that were not pleasing to the menfolk, [13] as Betty B. Caroli puts it, "since they had long learn to move in their husbands' shadows."[14]

Extending the thinking, Chidinma Eberendu, a Staff of Ministry of Defence noted that "some officers' wives exploited their privileged positions in matters of postings, appointments, training, accommodation, recruitment and commission into the force."[15] As 'purveyor of service information' they obtained first hand hints on occurrences and major developments in the barracks through a number of vents which assisted them in the pursuit of their goals. These channels included official and unofficial sources, but mainly from officers and men who had made passionate pleas on postings, promotions, and other pressing issues. Similarly, some officers' wives employed their personal recognition to lessen serious offence(s) committed by soldiers by prevailing on their spouses to award lesser punishments rather than outright reduction in rank or dismissal from service.

The pressure on some of these women occasionally came from friends and well-wishers, religious leaders, and women's association in the barracks. In the same vein, Babari Yaro, an ex-serviceman observes:

> Some women had successfully facilitated the postings of well-liked or well-behaved officers to lucrative areas, such as, the rich oil Niger Delta, Petroleum Task Force, Commander of Peace Keeping Operations (PKOs), Diplomatic assignments abroad (As Defence Attaché) as well as the Senior Officers' Division Course abroad.[16]

An informant[17] also confirmed that during the military era, notable officers' wives fought hard in the appointment of some military administrators/Governors. This led to the nomination of the so called "Loyal Boys" of one of the former Presidents and Head of Military Junta. "This development," according to Fiberissimo Anthonia "was unfortunate because it overturned the initial nomination of some military officers within a space of time."[18] This explains the high profile politicking in the military and the interaction of gender and power between officers and their wives.

It was also alleged during the military rule that official list of top military officers once suffered delay because of conflicting interests and politics of quota system masterminded by highly placed officers' wives, who contended that without the names of their candidates on the list no action would be taken on the document. This stalemate during the period was echoed in an epithet 'At the mercy of the madams" while the women also took up the catchphrase "Until the right thing is done."[19] This explains the interplay of matriarchy and patriarchy in a social system, but more importantly is the fact that women knew how best to achieve their goals in the barracks irrespective of military laws and regimentation.

The manifestation of power was also evident in the creation of one of the States in the Niger Delta, alleged to have been the handiwork of Maryam Babangida, the former first lady. She was believed to have suggested the location of the capital of the State in her town. On the other hand, most reminiscences of the period indicate that domestic assistants - body guards, batmen, orderlies, drivers and escorts often enjoyed the good-will of some officers' wives in cash and kind. While some initiated their promotions, course nominations, participation in Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) and postings to choice areas using her letter head.[20]

It was also an open secret during the military regime that some officers' wives used the platform of Officers' Wives Associations to influence the award of contracts to wives of some retired generals. For instance, Roselyn Elegbede, an Ex-soldier's wife explained that some officers' wives had for many years been in control of the contracts of some agencies and parastatals through which most of their projects were funded.[21]

Also Joy Sulaiman Tanko, a former diplomat's wife declared that "some military officers' wives had directly proposed the retirement of officers who fell short of regimental protocol befitting commissioned officers, particularly, military attachés in mission, found to be 'excessive in deed and wanton in character.'[22] Writing in a similar manner, Margery Perham notes, "I know well from my travels over many years how much, as a lesser queen beside the gubernatorial representative of the British Crown, the wife could help to make or mar her husband's work in the highly sensitive setting of a British dependency."[23] Power and influence in modern barracks were sometimes deployed negatively by some officers' wives in the heyday of military rule just to spite their spouses.

According to Maryam Babangida, "An officer could also be punished for an offence committed by his wife. This will also ultimately affect his career. An officer's wife, who commits a civil offence, is tried by a civil court. This too may affect the husband's career."[24] The above illustration shows that some women had power and influence to dictate or interfere in certain matters affecting the military as well as their welfare. This privilege made some senior officers' wives more popular than their spouses, probably, because they controlled the situation from underground without challenging the system.

The transmission of barracks culture to women was mostly carried out by the *magajiya* and some officers' wives because they combined formal and informal functions. In colonial times, culture transmission was important because of the strategic nature of military community. The *magajiya* and some older women entrusted with the responsibility groomed newly wedded brides on the expected and unexpected behaviour of military personnel in the organisation. Oftentimes, they prepared their minds on the expected mannerism of men in time of danger, war and peace, as well as the likelihood of women playing dual roles in the family.

According to Morris Janowitz: "Wives of military personnel were involved in the transmission of barracks culture and perpetuation of family and kinship ties, an age long practice in which senior military officers placed sons and relatives as personal staff or aides"[25] with a view to learning the ropes. The position of women also placed them at vantage point to interfere in the "politics of marriage" as obtained in traditional camps. This is important because the military attached great importance to marriage involving servicemen and women.

This is not peculiar to Nigerian military, in the United States military force, Morris Janowitz states, "Occasionally; wives have even influenced minor personnel decisions... a proper marriage by a young officer to the daughter of a high-ranking officer was a relevant step in building a career, and service wives worked hard to screen potential candidates,"[26]

In contemporary times, it was a great prestige in military circles for a commissioned officer to marry the daughter of a senior ranking officer as was the case in British colonial force. The marriage of an officer's daughter to a commissioned officer was sometimes intended to institute or perpetuate aristocratic lineage which invariably made the assimilation of military culture a little easier compared to her civilian counterparts. It is this social distinction that sometimes made it possible for officers' wives to request the personal aides of their husbands to introduce their fiancées in order to evaluate their potentials and suitability. "This understanding was often attractive to young officers because marriages were conducted with respect to protocol and with an eye to perpetuating the traditional forms of social life."[27] Thus, the primary duty of a senior officer's wife was to transmit the traditions and customs of the barracks to her.[28] This perhaps is the first assignment wives engaged in the social system of the barracks.

Closely related to the above, was the induction of new brides into the Officers' Wives Association, an outlet through which newly established families integrate themselves into the circles of senior officers' families.[29] The transmission of culture is also captured in the film, *Army Wives Season 4*. In which a General's wife declares:

> I have organized educational counselling for most families in the community, but more importantly was my adult education programme for military spouses. And the series of interactive sessions where domestic violence and its psychological effect were discussed among military families.[30]

To what extent does transmission of barracks culture impact on women? Traditions reveal that wives of military personnel often engaged in what Van Allen called the act of "sitting on a man"[31] or the politics of gender solidarity. This entailed the coming together of women to fight a serviceman or his mistress, perceived as an intruder in the marriage of a soldier's wife. This kind of a combined attack was devised by some wives to forestall the excesses of their spouses in adultery and senseless marriages. It is also reinforced in the debate that "women had discovered that it was the mistresses/concubines outside the home that enjoyed their spouses more."[32] This is elaborated by Maryam Babangida:

> I remember when an officer, whose wife was my friend, took a second wife. She complained to all her friends living in the barracks, and we all came together and planned a strategy which we used in chasing the second wife out. When the officer got word of our action after his second wife had left, he came to our house to complain to my husband. But we all ended up laughing about it.[33]

Narrating his ordeal in the hands of soldiers' wives, Cpl Babari Yaro asserts:

> I was surprised to see some soldiers' wives around my door, I enquired of their mission, surprisingly, the women told me that they had come to avenge their friend whom I sent home on suspension. I told them that the lady in my house was only an acquaintance but the plea fell on deaf ears. Suddenly they broke my door and made straight for the girl until they rendered her naked. It took the intervention of the *magajia* who promised to handle the situation and the girl never returned.[34]

In light of the above discussion, this study demonstrates that there exist culture transmission in the military system and this has helped to sustain the conduct and discipline of women in the organisation.

Contributions to Public Space

Women's contribution to the politics of public space in general and traditional military camps in particular, dates back to ancient times. And in traditional African kingdoms, their decisions were seen as complimentary to the effort of men. Among the Egba people, for instance, the

contribution of women elite called the *Erelu* was highly respected in major assemblies because of their dignity. In an excellent study of 'The Iyalode in the Traditional Yoruba Political System," Bolanle Awe wrote:

> The principle that ensures that every major interest in the society is given some representation in the conduct of government is widespread in most West African societies and has probably been one of the underlying factors in the recognition given to women within the political systems. The institutions of the Queen Mother of the Ashanti (Ghana) and the Edo (Benin Nigeria), the female chieftains of the Mende (Sierra Leone), the Segi and the Sonya of Nupe (Nigeria), and the royal princesses of the Kanuri (Bornu Nigeria), to mention but a few, are examples of the efforts to associate women with the government of these various ethnic groups.[35]

Perhaps, what seems recent in Nigerian political space was the contribution of wives of military personnel to public sphere. Since Nigeria's independence, wives of military men had actively participated in the administration of Nigeria where they assisted their military-husbands in governance. This is probably in contradistinction to their earlier role in the rigidly informal system which restricted them to reproduction and domesticity.

Women's involvement in public affairs became visible in the years covering 1966 to 1999, an era dominated by their military husbands. One singular factor that provided a head start was the transformation of the women's association from Army Wives Association (AWA) to the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA). This group provided strength to women during the Nigerian Civil War; it also assisted them in upholding their identity and dignity in the system. This idea is also noted by Ifi Amadiume:

> Consistent with the transformation in the role of women during a crisis, the Nigeria–Biafra War (1967-1970) saw the AWA emerging from the confines of the barracks into the national limelight, organising donations and looking after the sick and wounded and the families left behind. It was through this role that the AWA is said to have achieved its vision of a "partner-in-progress"to the Nigerian Army.[36]

Post-Civil War Nigeria also witnessed far reaching consciousness in the lives of wives of military personnel and their spouses in the barracks. Scholars are agreed that prolonged military rule in the country gave opportunities for military wives to create spaces and distinctiveness in the public sphere. It was through this channel that some women exploited the positions of their spouses in various command to function as first ladies, wives of Governors, and wives of diplomats in foreign countries. This is aptly captured in another dimension by Dr (Mrs) Walter Rodney as quoted by Muyiwa Adekeye and Akin Adesokan: "We know that some women through their privileges or their husband's privileges or the privileges of education are involved in some aspects of development process."[37]

In another perspective, Mollie Gillen underscores the fact that "some women are born for a public career, just as some men are born to cook in a restaurant, Yes they are! Sex seems to me to enter very little into the question. There is no sex in mind."[38] The above illustration is important because it reveals that European and indigenous first ladies exploited the status of their spouses by integrating themselves into public space. At the same time they utilized the opportunity to canvas for women's inclusion in the barracks as well as their participation in the socio- economic and political affairs.

The contributions of these women cannot be overlooked. According to Christiana Agbaje, Rosemary Odumah and a few others, [39] some Military Governors' wives assisted their husbands in different areas of administration. These include, the interpretation of local languages in which they were proficient, especially, women whose marriages cut across ethnic divide, mediating in local crises, and intervening in land disputes and conflict resolution using tradition method. Some others assisted in educating grassroot women and sensitizing them on empowerment and electoral programmes. These activities enhanced the

capacity of some Military Administrators in the states. It also minimized frictions with the public and difficulties experienced in governance. The years after independence recorded remarkable improvement in the activities of wives of military personnel in public sphere. First, it was during this period that the office of the first lady was officially recognised following the departure of European wives in the barracks. Second, the era also witnessed increased participation of women in public space. Finally, it was the period that wives of military personnel began to accompany their spouses on missions and courses exceeding six to nine months.

The emergence of Victoria Aguiyi Ironsi as the first indigenous "First Lady of Nigeria" was significant. It shows that indigenous wives of military personnel were capable of governing themselves, contrary to the views of Eurocentric scholars who opined that Africans were incapable of ruling themselves. During her tenure, she played host to some diplomats and wives, heads of government, representatives of countries and envoys. However, Victoria Ironsi could not accomplish much because of the untimely death of her spouse in a military coup of 1967.

One of the most remarkable achievements of wives of military personnel in the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil-War was their contributions to reconciliation and peace-building. This effort was initially difficult because of the bitterness of war and conditions of some displaced women. Though, in their determination, they managed to bring together different ethnic groups with a view to finding lasting solution to the problems of divisions in the barracks. Their resolve as mothers, gave hope and succour to their husbands, children and the general community.

From July 1967 up till 1975, the office of the first lady was almost non-existent due to several factors, which included the Nigerian Civil War, the prolonged duration of reconciliation and rehabilitation programmes of the government, confidence building mechanism of the actors, allocation of resources for reconstruction of barracks to mention but a few. Thus, the emergence of Victoria Gowon as the First Lady gradually passed unnoticed. In consequence of this, the activities of the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association gradually came to a halt as she took to her nursing profession.

It has been argued in some quarters that her indifference to the office of the first lady was due largely to the instability and uncertainty of military regime headed by her husband. To some others, it was her personality and lack of support from her husband that caused a break in the women's association. Be that as it may, the reason(s) could be either of the above but more importantly was the fact that NAOWA and its sister affiliates left a vacuum at a time it was supposed to be a rallying point for women in distress.

The tenure of Mrs Ajoke Murtala Mohammed as First Lady of Nigeria was also short-lived. This was due to the assassination of her husband in a military coup of February 13, 1976. Prior to her appointment as First Lady, she worked in the Nigerian High Commission in London in the 1960s.[40] The opportunity in mission provided her with insights into the workings of public service which she probably incorporated as the First Lady despite her religious background. Another woman who left imprints in the activities of the barracks as well as women's association was Oluremi Obasanjo. Indeed her contribution in governance was more outstanding than that of her predecessors probably because of the time and age. Her achievement was attributed to her privileged position, aptitude and support of her spouse.

In her memoir, she wrote: "I witnessed many things about the nature of power – its allure, use and misuse."[41] Therefore, her participation in governance either as a member of government delegation or representative of women did not come as a surprise. This fact, she encapsulates in the following lines: "As the Head of State's wife, I performed many diplomatic duties in and out of Nigeria, but in the true spirit of the administration's low profile, our activities were scaled down."[42]

On the same matter, she opined: "I was at the Organisation of African Unity Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 1979 and I even led a Nigerian delegation to Nairobi, Kenya and Shehu Yar'Adua was on the delegation but he accorded that premier position to me…I also led government delegations to Senegal and other countries."[43] From the above analysis, Oluremi succeeded in her tenure because of the support she earned from her husband as well as the privilege of education and stable government.

The emergence of Maryam Babangida in the public space did not only popularise the office of the first lady in Nigeria, but glamorized the activities of women in governance. She was believed to have given meanings to the office she occupied, utilising it to influence government policies for the betterment of womenfolk and youths.[44] This period in the history of Nigerian women has been described as the golden age of wives of military personnel because it incorporated more women in governance than any other period across time and space. And since then, the office of the First Lady of Nigeria had been ranked third in order of protocol, below the office of the Vice President and above the Federal Executive Council, the National Economic Council and the Office of the Secretary to the Federal Government.[45]

Her tenure also witnessed landmark developments in the political and socio-economic sphere of the barracks. Worthy of mention, was the poverty alleviation and cooperative society of Better Life Programme (BLP) for which the Peoples Bank was established.

At the state level, she incorporated the Governors' wives (First Ladies of the State) into grassroots enlightenment and democratic process of the rural women. To achieve this, she tagged her political agenda, "Rural Women on the Move." This, she referred to as "the beginning of a new movement which strives to ensure a better life for the rural woman through the elimination of hunger, poverty and disease."[46] She further opined that "the human rights policy of government also strives at the restoration of the dignity of the rural woman."[47] According to Oluwakemi Agosu:

> Maryam Babangida was so influential with her husband that she practically operated the leverage of power behind the scene. With her Better Life for Rural Women Programme she influenced the creation of the Ministry of Women Affairs, the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and Peoples Bank of Nigeria.[48]

On the other hand, the contributions of wives of military personnel to national debates and foreign policy cannot be underestimated. For instance, Oluremi Obasanjo wrote that she opposed her husband's bid for the post of the United Nations Secretary for obvious reasons: According to her: "The post of Secretary General demands 24 hours' commitment. Certainly, that position is not for a polygamist with a spouse who would be competing with him to hug the limelight. I did not want my husband to mar the chances of future aspiring Africans for the revered position."[49] One wonders whether her reactions and contentions arose from the love of her country or a spill over effect of marital disagreement between her and her husband since her home was a polygamous one with stiff competition. Be that as it may, she was entitled to her judgement being an active participant.

On the same matter she opines:

> It is in the interest of the black man, Africa and Nigeria particularly and in conformity with good conscience, I decided to act to stop the day dreaming before it mistakenly became a reality. I called the *Punch* [*Newspaper*] and issued a statement that Obasanjo should not be considered for that job in the interest of the black man.... It was co-incidental that Wole Soyinka, the Nobel Laureate, Bekolari Ransome-Kuti and many other civil liberties organisation leaders held the same view as I did.[50]

In 1985, Maryam Babangida led a contingent of Nigerian women to the United Nations Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi Kenya. "The Conference brought out the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, a blueprint for action, by government, non-governmental organisations and individuals, for the advancement of women towards the year 2000."[51] The Conference was timely because the Platform for Action reaffirms that the "advancement of women and the achievement of equality" are a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice.[52] Since then, as one of the scholars rightly pointed out, Nigeria has been a part of this global network for the integration of women in the mainstream of development.[53]

Another giant stride in women's development was made in September 1995 when Mariam Abacha led Nigerian women to the historic Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing China. This led to the enactment of women and children's rights, non-governmental organisations which in various ways engaged in the sensitization of women and children on issues of human rights.[54] Apart from this, she was known to have chaired a two-day summit of West Africa First Ladies on Peace Mission in Abuja in July 1996. Added to this was the fact that she made history by being the first woman and a country's First lady to address the General Assembly of the defunct Organization of African Unity now African Union (AU) on the need for the involvement and participation of women in governance.[55]

Indeed, it could safely be argued that the contributions of wives of military personnel to national development and international affairs were remarkable during the period. Besides, the years covering 1985 to 1999 could be described as the glorious years of wives of military personnel in the activities of the barracks and empowerment despite the myriad of challenges. The question therefore is to what extent has women contributed to the affairs of foreign missions?

Since the early years of Nigeria's independence, wives of military personnel had been involved in the activities of foreign mission where they supported their spouses in varied capacity. The conception of "wives of military personnel as diplomats" is considered in two senses in this study. In the first, it refers to a woman who worked in mission following the appointment of her spouse as a military attaché. In the second, it represents a woman who accompanied her spouse on a training programme or military course abroad lasting not less than six or nine months. Nevertheless, this study is concerned with the first perspective because from inception, the role of wives of military personnel in mission had either been glossed over or largely neglected in major debates. Thus the position of wives of military personnel in mission is largely obscured and sometimes misconstrued.

To some members of the public, a diplomat's wife is a helper or companion to her husband. In an informative "Study of the Wife of the Army Officer" Elizabeth Finlayson observes: "To her civilian neighbours in the country of assignment, she is a diplomat, a representative of her country."[56] Therefore, as a representative of her country, she was entitled to the rights and privileges of a diplomat's wife irrespective of the fact that the appointment was not directly hers. This argument, therefore, attempts to uncover the role of wives of military attaché in the mission. In the analysis of diplomats' wives in the mission, the researcher relied on the

background created by Hilary Callan in an article entitled "The Premiss of Dedication: Notes towards an Ethnography of Diplomats' Wives."[57] This section therefore examines the position of wives of military attaché in mission, their roles in politics, social and economic life. To a wife of military personnel, diplomatic assignment was entirely different from internal postings of a military husband. This is because of the challenges of environment and adaptation. According to Callan, "Diplomatic society is importantly different from a 'total culture," in that one joins it – in the capacity of a wife -- late in life."[58] This implies that the position and membership of a wife in mission was only acquired through marriage rather than birth. The same way the status and membership of a wife of military personnel in the barracks was ratified through marriage.

Generally, one of the most challenging activities in the life of a soldiers' wife was when called upon to leave her home and country because her military-husband had been assigned a role in mission, where civilian personnel, military officers, and non-commissioned officers worked together as members of Defence Attaché (DA). The problem that first beset most women, particularly wives of non-commissioned officers was the anxiety of working abroad as "a lesser queen" under the supervision of officers' wives. The question therefore is why was it a challenge in a social system such as mission?

The situation is so because of perceived superiority and overbearing nature of some senior officers' wives. This state of affairs was also created by military traditions and values which demanded respect for ranks and protocols. Also worrisome to wives, was the complexity of official and auxiliary functions in the mission which obliged them to learn the scripts of social practice through precepts and rehearsals.

It is for this reason, that Shea Nancy advised a subordinate military wife in the British Army: "Connie, there will be times when you, as a non-commissioned officer's wife will work with officers' wives on various post projects, simply be cooperative, polite and gracious."[59] This corroborates the claim that the dilemma of working in mission or outpost was not only peculiar to wives of military personnel in Nigeria but wives of military personnel in United Kingdom. On the same matter, Emily Bradley asserts:

> You must be happy to... put everything aside and be at anyone's disposal. You must be interested in the work, and yet a refuge from it, knowing nothing and yet everything about it. You may shed the light of your charming personality on the company...with everything arranged so that your triumphs are unnoticed.[60]

In Nigeria, for instance, the involvement of wives of military personnel in mission began in 1ate 1950s. It only gained popularity in the Civil War years following the declaration by the military authorities that serving officers could travel with their wives and children to alleviate the challenges of diplomatic assignments. This is not to say that wives of military personnel had not been accompanying their spouses on other trips, such as training / courses and annual leave abroad. The point being made is that the involvement of women in the affairs of missions increased in the war years following the opening of additional consulates, mission and liaison offices in major countries of the world. This expansion necessitated the efforts of women in the social activities and protocols of missions.

The question therefore is in what capacity or position did these women function since it was their husbands' job? Embedded in this interrogation is, to what extent is diplomatic culture different from barracks culture since they operate according to precedence? Scholars have tried to explain away this argument in the light of their standpoint and understanding.

Asccording to Shirley Ardener:

> We learn how these wives form part of the diplomatic Mission, and yet at the same time they do not, according to the way in which they are perceived. Their characters, temperaments, and qualifications are supposedly of no concern to the Diplomatic Service because they are private citizens, present in the Mission at the request of their husbands. Yet they are expected to exercise their talents, do their duties, almost as if they were a recognize part of the Service.[61]

Callan also notes that, "the diplomat's wife, as we saw, is assumed to have a primary commitment ('loyalty') to a set of activities in which she is not instrumentally involved or at best peripherally so. Her expected contribution to these activities is based on a traditional definition of the feminine sphere which is essentially typological."[62] Perhaps, it is through this standpoint that most wives resolved the ambiguities of their position, in what Callan refers to as the "Premiss of Dedication." [63]

Diplomatic culture is entirely different from the barracks culture, even though similarities abound. First, "women in both communities thrived within the isolated walls as 'muted group."[64] Second, diplomats' wives and wives of military personnel are mere titles acquired by marriage, as mentioned above, rather than achievement or background. Therefore, women in both communities could best be described as incorporated wives because of privileges of spouses as stated in the Diplomatic Conventions and Military Terms and Conditions of Service.

Since the rights and privileges of wives of servicemen in the barracks are sacrosanct, one would be quick to ask the question, what were the rights and privileges of wives of military attaché in mission? The rights and privileges of diplomat's wives, as Callan emphasized, were stated in various textbooks and other literature on the conduct of diplomacy, and those built into traditional ways of doing things.

In general, the principle that the wife of a diplomat is absorbed in her husband's role, sharing his rank and immunities, is built into protocol; and this is not surprising in a set of conventions going back to the Congress of Vienna (1815)[65] In the same manner, Wood and Serres note:

> The Vienna Convention was drafted to cover in broad terms the social and family customs of all states. It is generally admitted that all persons over whom the diplomat, as head of the family, exercises legal authority, should participate in the immunities granted to diplomats. The diplomatic list should mention the names of all members of the family of a foreign diplomat required to conform to the obligations of etiquette. This list always includes the wife and the daughters who have already been presented in society. Precedence for ladies is regulated largely by the ranks of the father or the husband.[66]

Additionally, "The Terms and Conditions of Service, Military Officers," stipulates that a military-husband was entitled to be accompanied by his wife and four children, but concessions were given to additional two children born in mission. Similarly, a lot of privileges accrue to a wife of military personnel who accompanied her spouse on a mission and this is also stated in the official visas issued to them, which reads: "To accompany my spouse to mission." A military attachés wife was entitled to "Leave of Absence" if she was an employee of the Federal Establishment or Parastatals before her new assignment. She was also expected to enjoy her notional promotion just as her colleagues at home since her new responsibility was in line with Public Civil Service.

She was equally entitled to the welfare and insurance policies of the Diplomatic Service. Indeed, Callan affirmed that "the principle that the wife of a diplomat is absorbed in her husband's role, sharing his rank and immunities, is built into protocol, and this is not surprising in a set of conventions.[67] Equally important is the idea of Satow Ernest, who underlines that "wives of diplomatists enjoy the same privileges, honours, precedence and

title as their husbands."[68] In addition to the above, the wife of a military attaché was entitled to the following:

a. A higher degree of protection than what is assured to her in virtue of her birth and sex.
b. The same personal exemptions as belong to her husband. She accords to Ladies of position at the court equality in matters of ceremonies, only if her own husband accords equal rank to the husbands of those ladies. She claims precedence and preference in respect of presentations, reception at court, visits and return visits over other ladies, only if her husband enjoys preference over the husbands of those other ladies.[69]

The political system of diplomats' wives was partly similar to that of wives of military personnel in the barracks. This is because the diplomatic community operated a hierarchical structure based on seniority of wives of diplomats, though, this arrangement cannot be said to be the norm in all the missions. At the head was the wife of the High Commissioner who co-ordinated wives of diplomats in major programmes of the mission. She was assisted by the wife of the Consul-General as well as wives of Defence Advisers as obtained in most foreign missions. The internal structure also involved the positions of the treasurer, secretary, provost and financial secretary among others. All of these were elective positions in the mission.

The internal arrangement of diplomats' wives helped to create identity and space in the mission. It also facilitated the establishment of "Wives of Diplomats' Association" (WDA), similar to the situation in Nigeria where they were known as 'Spouses of Heads of Mission' (SHM). This was a non-governmental organisation through which diplomats' wives discussed issues of womanhood, fund-raising and charity in the community. It was also an avenue through which social relations, protocols and cultural engagements were promoted and perhaps assimilated.

For effective organisation of the association, and the spirit of togetherness, wives of diplomats sang their anthem at every meeting which read: "Be loyal to the chaps in the team, official duties come first."[70] Anything contrary to this ideology was however viewed as an act of disloyalty and insubordination. This explains the values and ethics of the union and the importance of rank and status in missions.

The role of military attache's wife was not explicitly defined, but worthy of mention was the fact that their activities were wide-ranging and far-reaching. At the informal level, women's work cut across domesticity, secretarial duties, nursing, homemaking, child management, interpreters, and organisers of events. These roles were primarily important to the diplomats because they helped in shaping the lives of children and the home front. Besides, juvenile delinquency was not condoned in mission irrespective of rank and position.[71] It is on this note that women's role was crucial because military-husbands were busy with diplomatic affairs that sometimes isolated them from the events in the home.

According to an informant[72] it was the absence of an acceptable behaviour on the part of dependants that contributed to the withdrawal of some diplomats in the 1980s. Extending the thinking Callan states, "These points to the fact that while at post neither a diplomat nor his wife is ever, in theory, 'off duty,' They are expected to live their lives on the assumption that their behaviour may at any time be made grounds for some sort of judgements on their country." [73] This is why the challenges in mission could be said to be different from other communities because a wife was seen in the words of Shea Nancy as, "one who manages her family generally under conditions which would seem impossible to her civilian sisters...accomplishing all as a good soldier, whose sense of duty, honour and country are those of the Army itself."[74]

In broad perspective, it was the duty of women to ensure that their husbands were not in any way distracted by the exigencies of domestic affairs or the encumbrances of the home. It is for this and other reasons that most servicemen sought the presence of their wives in mission in order to assist in the traditions and culture of the community. This assertion is elucidated by Morris Janowitz:

> To be without a wife was a real career handicap and a grave inconvenience in the circumscribed life of the military community where family and professional relations were intertwined. If a first marriage was terminated because of the death of a partner or due to personal discord, remarriage was essential.[75]

Apart from women's domestic work, their social roles were also indispensable in mission. This is underscored by Callan, "The diffuseness of the diplomat's role and the lack of sharp definition of public and private identities - spills over onto his wife."[76] Hence, they functioned as hostesses, volunteers and service providers, and representatives of their countries on National events and celebrations. However, the wife of a military attaché was not expected to engage in independent occupational career incompatible with her responsibilities as a wife of a diplomat. This law was strictly enforced in the 1980s in order to avoid the so called "diplomatic luggage." An illegal commercial activity through which senior officers' wives trafficked goods into their home countries in the name of personal effect.

Perhaps, this was not peculiar to Nigeria alone as Shirley Ardener explains: "For the wives, other over-riding objectives are not acceptable in the ideology of the mission, therefore, a wife who wishes to establish an independent career must 'encode or transform her objective in terms of value to the mission."[77]As an exception to the rule, diplomats' wives were at liberty to pursue educational careers and voluntary services because it complements the high

calling of their husbands' office and by extension the manifold activities of the mission. It is probably for this reason that Shea Nancy described the military wife as an "independent dependant" who, at the same time, finds satisfaction and fulfilment in her home."[78] Wives of military attaché were also involved in other activities such as the National Day Celebration, African Day, Independence Anniversaries, and Armed Forces Remembrance Day, to mention but a few.

Women also engaged in humanitarian and volunteer services through which they helped victims of war, natural disasters and migrants. According to an informant[79] it was the diplomats' wives in Italy that first hinted Nigerian Authorities on the illicit sex labour and child trafficking of her indigenes in that country. Perhaps, this was done in the spirit of friendship and good neighbourliness, contrary to diplomatic ill-feelings and moral superiority of some nations. Similarly, an informant[80] stresses that Defence Attaches' wives in Libya assisted a good number of Nigerian immigrants caught up in the rebellion against Muamman Ghadafi. It was also their concern and anxiety that led to the quick evacuation of some of them before the fall of the regime.

At the economic level, wives of diplomats also participated in international exhibitions and trade fairs of their countries. These exhibitions afforded them the opportunity to showcase their country's goods and services as well as establish trade contacts for their countries. This study demonstrates the fact that wives of military attaché were visible and dependable dependants in the affairs of missions. Apart from caring for the well-being of their spouses, women also contributed effectively to the development of friendship, ideas and cooperation in missions.

Economic Life

The economic life of wives of military personnel since independence had undergone a lot of transformation despite inherent challenges. This analysis is important contrary to the assumption that wives of military personnel constitute a non-career minded category, incapable of directing affairs either in the private or public sphere. This aspect is also important because it attempts to show that women's economy in colonial barracks had changed and diversified in modern barracks.

Garden cultivation continued in the years after independence. It was maintained through the application of animal waste, ashes, grasses, leaves and other sources of manure. Since the 1980s most wives had been using fertilizers in the compound gardens to improve their yields since arable land was continuously cultivated year after year. In contemporary times, some compound gardens were structured in form of mixed farming, which implies the cultivation of crops and keeping of livestock in different parts of the garden. Some of the animals found in the garden include fowls, turkey, goats, sheep, rams, pigs and others. Compound garden was seen as one of the best methods of food security in the households in particular, and the country in general. Other food crops in the gardens include, corn, lettuces, potatoes, banana and plantain, cabbages, carrots, onions, pineapples, pumpkin leaves, and vegetable herbs, bitter leaf, ginger, garlic, and lemon grass, to mention but a few.

Since post-Civil War, purdah system and its attendant norm on production and exchange had changed in most military community. This was due largely to the growing trend of modernity, pattern of buildings in the barracks, respect for rank and protocol, and interactions. Thus, secluded wives of military personnel succeeded in disengaging some aspects of religious practices which hindered economic activities in the system by engaging

in outdoor production and exchange. Immediately after the Nigerian Civil War, there was serious drought and economic depression as most of the country's foreign reserve had been invested into the war economy. Consequently, media houses began to report the impending food insecurity with striking and alarming headlines. For instance, *The Daily Express* July 4, 1971 reads, "Save Nigeria from Famine."[81] In the same vein, *The Daily Times* February 24, 1971 writes: "Nigeria Will Face Food Shortage If..."[82] Reporting on the same matter but different headline was *The Sunday Times* June 4, 1971 captioned, "The Nation Faces the Threat of Famine." [83]

Similarly, published works in journals and books also pointed to the looming danger of food insecurity and the urgent need to tackle the crisis. Prominent among the articles were those of J.Oguntoyinbo and Paul Richards' "Drought and the Nigerian Farmer,"[84] Wayne Nafziger's "The Economic Impact of the Nigerian Civil War,"[85] Tina Wallace's "The Challenge of Food: Nigeria's Approach to Agriculture 1975-80"[86] and Eno Blankson Ikpe's "Food politics and Diplomacy," [87] to mention but a few. How and what were the reaction of Government to these reports?

The response of government to food insecurity in the aftermath of the war was prompt. By 1973, the Federal Government had decided to launch the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) designed to solve the problem of food shortage. This initiative was also aimed at promoting and assisting farmers to increase their yield in the production of staple food such as, rice, guinea corn, millet, wheat, cassava and others. This effort encouraged some soldiers' wives to commence farming on a small scale since the military authorities had not fully given its consent on full scale farming in the barracks except vegetable gardens and planting of fruit trees.

Another initiative that changed the character of compound gardens in the barracks was the launching of "Operation Feed the Nation" (OFN) by General Olusegun Obasanjo (rtd) on May 21, 1976 in Dodan Barracks, Lagos. In his words, the then Head of State declared, "The aim of the programme is to make the nation self-sufficient in basic food production."[88] Thus, he urged institutions, colleges, universities and the armed forces to endeavour to grow part, if not all of their own foods. He also charged traditional authorities, community leaders, and individuals who had fallow land to release it temporarily to institutions and organisations to grow food crops. He further advised Individuals who had access to farmlands to start farming even in their little backyard plots where they could grow vegetables or keep poultry.[89]

Also, in the years leading to 1979 the military regime intensified its campaign and sensitization on food production in the barracks and the nation in general. This was also reinforced by Shehu Shagari's "Green Revolution Programme." In view of these initiatives wives of military personnel began to utilise open spaces and undeveloped plots of land within the frontiers of the barracks for farming purposes. Writing in the same vein, Appall and Adeniyi note: "As is the case with most barracks, farming activities was allowed but restricted to the undeveloped spaces in the cantonments."[90] This period marked the evolution of female farming in the barracks.

In the years covering 1980 to 1987 much progress were recorded by women farmers in most barracks. This transformation was made possible by the empowerment programmes of the Nigeria Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA), which provided the leverage for wives of military personnel to source for loans in various aspects of productive economy. This effort was simultaneously carried out by the Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association (NAFOWA) and its sister organisation, the Naval Officers' Wives Association

(NOWA). The incentives, to a greater extent, encouraged wives to embark on distance farming system through which they leased or rented fallow lands from outlying villages and civilian land speculators instead of scrambling for land space in the barracks environment. This development led to improved crop yield as a result of the application of fertilizers, use of modern farm techniques, and involvement of hired labour. It also introduced specialization in farming which encouraged most women to concentrate their labour either in mono-cropping, mixed farming, livestock management, or poultry system.

The practice of distance farming system was not a recent phenomenon in human activities. Writing on "Militarism and Economic Development in Nineteenth Century Yoruba Country: The Ibadan Example," Bolanle Awe stresses:

> There were two types of farms;(1) *Oko Etile*, meaning farms which were just outside the town walls were worked by daily commuters from Ibadan town and (2) *Oko Egan*, those [farms] which were far away, and were really far villages, which eventually became farm settlements in their own right; this latter type of farm was colonised by a labour force made up of women, children and large members of slaves.[91]

This illustration is important because Ibadan was a military republic in which the entire activity revolved around autocratic rulers. And women were part of this process because the men occasionally engaged in warfare leaving women to direct the economy.

The involvement of women in farming, as revealed in the field work was to augment the income of their spouses and at the same time support the welfare of children. It should be emphasised that officers' wives, serving or retired never engaged in farming, perhaps, for personal reasons, or reasons linked to identity and image. Soldiers rarely took part in farm work as pointed out earlier because of military duties. But they assisted their wives in felling trees, burning of shrubs, tilling the ground, making moulds, and weeding.

Jane Guyer's detailed study on "Female Farming in Anthropology & African History," also underlines the fact that, "Africa is the region of female farming per excellence, where men fell the trees but to women fall all the subsequent operations"[92] Sometimes, women were compelled to hire labour whenever their military-husbands were away on peacekeeping operations, keeping duties on post or when the burden of farm work was laborious. On this occasion, women hired the services of soldiers' children or male dependants to work for them rather than external labour.

The services of agents were also utilised by the women, particularly those who supplied seedlings from neighbouring villages. For instance, some soldiers' wives in Ojo and Ikeja Cantonments utilised the services of agents from Akwa Ibom and Cross River States; involved in the purchase and sale of vegetable seeds such as pumpkin seeds, the popular green vegetable seeds, curry seeds, and bitter leaf stalks.

Similarly, most soldiers' wives in Obinze Barracks and Owerrienta Naval Base whose specialisation was on mixed-cropping often obtained yam seedlings, tomatoes, vegetable seeds, cassava stems, and fertilizers from the village markets and individual sellers who patronised the barracks. The situation was not different from the activities of female farmers in Odogbo and Abakpa Barracks in Ibadan and Enugu, where women contributed immensely to food production and food security of the barracks. Food items sold in the barracks included tomatoes, yams, potatoes, palm produce, onions, cassava, ginger, millet, garlic, and melon. These women sold these items in order to earn money for other essential commodities such as, clothing materials, seedlings, cutlasses, and hoes, to mention but a few. By 1990s, most female farmers in the barracks had begun to purchase their own motorcycles, buses, and pick-up vans from profits generated from farm produce. These vehicles were frequently used in

the distribution network - conveying of seedlings, fertilizers, vegetables, tomatoes and passengers to the markets. The benefit of long distance farm to most wives was immense. First, it became a source of steady employment for most wives in the gendered space. Second, it accorded some women the right of place in gender relations, as there was little or no contestation of power. Third, it debunked the erroneous conception that soldiers' wives were idle and lazy. And finally, farming activities in the barracks led to the integration of women farmers into different association. Some of which include, Vegetable Growers Association, Union of Fertilizer and Seedling Distributors, Association of Transport Owners to mention but a few.

Notable barracks where distance farming was and is still being practiced on a large scale include, Ojo Barracks, Lagos, Odogbo Barracks, Ibadan, Army Barracks Obinze, Imo State, Tactical Air Force Command, Makurdi, Benue state, Ethnan Air Force Base, Ikeja, Army Resettlement Centre, Ipaja, Lagos, Navy Base Ojo, Lagos, and Army Cantonment Kebbi, among others. Nevertheless, there were challenges associated with female farming in the barracks and this cannot be glossed over. According to an informant [93] some of the problems included, scarcity of farmland, lack of funds, absence of credit facilities for loans, use of simple farm tools, and frequent postings of their husbands. These factors had over the years contributed to the low productivity of soldiers' wives. Despite these challenges, women's role in farming has remained conspicuous and important in food security of the barracks in particular and the nation in general.

Apart from farming activities, most wives also engaged in animal production or livestock management in the barracks. As was the case in colonial barracks, indigenous soldiers' wives reared fowls, goats, ducks, pigs, sheep, and other domestic animals. However, the breeding of

pets and animals were later proscribed in most barracks in the 1980s due to frequent dog bites and rabies. The report on the destructive tendencies of these animals came from soldiers and their families which were later confirmed by medical experts. It was also heightened by the indiscriminate droppings of these animals which was unhygienic to the barracks environment. In consequence of this, women began to tether their dogs, goats, sheep, and cows in distance fields only to return them into makeshift enclosures in the evenings.

Since the 1980s, scientific approach has been adopted in the management of livestock in most barracks. This was the impact of workshops, seminars and conferences organised by Officers' Wives Associations as part of empowerment programme to encourage wives of military personnel to adopt modern farm techniques in animal production. The traditional method of rearing birds in most barracks has changed in character and operation due to the introduction of modern poultry system, a practice hitherto uncommon in military community. The system involved keeping of birds in cages constructed with iron gauze or wooden materials depending on the financial capability of the operator. Some of the birds managed in poultry include, chicken, turkey, peacock, ducks, and guinea fowl.

Indeed, most wives saw poultry business as a convenient venture because it provided the latitude for other domestic engagements. The other advantage was that the birds were well fed and properly managed by a professional or hired worker while the owner was sure of high yield production and minimal mortality. The economic benefit of animal husbandry was enormous. First, it constitutes a veritable source of meat for the owners, especially during festivities and other celebrations. Second, the women derived substantial income from the sale of eggs and animals in time of need, or surpluses. For example, most female farmers engaged in the sale of old layers during religious festivals.

Some other people gave out a few of the chickens as gifts to friends and well-wishers, all in the spirit of the season. At other times, the women used the animals for sacrifice and rituals. What were the challenges of poultry business in particular and animal husbandry in general in the barracks? According to an informant, [94] the challenges of poultry business in the barracks were immense. Some of which include the lack of personal funds to commence the business, absence of credit facilities for loans, high mortality of birds as a result of the disease called bird-flu or *Avian flu*, high cost of feeds occasioned by inflation and strikes, lack of space for expansion as the business was located within living quarters, and frequent posting of spouses.

Fishing was carried out using dug-out canoes, baskets, nets and traps. Women engaged in fishing only when the level of water had gone down, possibly when the rainy season had abated to avoid being drowned by the force. Fishing was common among the Ijaw, Ilaje and Bakassi women married to naval personnel, who by nature were familiar with the catching and processing of fish before their contact with barracks. Some of the naval barracks where women engaged in fishing include the Navy Barracks, Borokiri, PortHarcourt, Akim and Atimbo Navy Barracks in Calabar, and Navy Base, Warri, Delta State.

Fish industry in the barracks changed in the 1980s and 1990s following the empowerment programmes of women associations in the community. This development led to the introduction of fish farming at the backyards of living quarters. This process involved the construction of pond and provision of fingerlings. Fingerlings were fed with feeds and ground crayfish, but due to lack of knowledge about the profession, women engaged the services of scientific officers in the management of their farms. The question therefore is what were the challenges associated with fish industry in the barracks? The challenges faced by the industry ranged from maintenance of fish ponds, procurement of fingerlings, lack of space as well as

absence of capital. These challenges prompted most wives to engage in the use of large containers and full-size plastic tanks in their operations. Women's role in crafts and industry expanded in the decades after independence, despite the Nigerian Civil War and its impact on the barracks. Some of the industries were built around simple technology until the 1980s when Maryam Babangida brought a turn around in the economic culture of women through the Better Life Programme (BLP). Some of the industries that thrived vigorously included cloth production, bags and basketry, pottery, beads and jewellry, brooms, mat, and fruit drinks to mention but a few.

Women's activity in crafts and industry became popular in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of the poverty alleviation programmes of Officers' Wives Association and "Ministry of Defence Empowerment Scheme for Military Wives." It was through these outfits that seminars and workshops were organised for wives of military personnel to be self-reliant. Consequently, majority of the women developed flourishing outfits in modelling, hairdressing, bead and jewellery production, interior design and decoration, cooking and event management among others.

Other women owned or hired showrooms and stores where quality pottery products, vases and pot flowers were made and sold. Much of the efforts were supported from personal earnings and salaries of spouses who were desirous to have their wives engaged in one form of productive activity or another. A few others obtained loans from cooperative societies and banks to promote their businesses, particularly from People's Bank of Nigeria,[95] which was specifically set up to empower women.

Food processing was another popular enterprise among soldiers' wives in the barracks. Some of the food-stuffs processed by wives included fried bean cake (*Akara*), roasted plantain, cooked bean cakes (*moimoin*), roasted /cooked yams, cooked/roasted corn, and other food items. Others concentrated in the sale of cooked food such as, rice, *tuwo*, beans, *amala*, pounded yam, cassava, and others. This economic life was essential for two reasons; first, it was an avenue through which food was readily available in the home. Second, it was a veritable means of generating income for the maintenance of household.

Some women in purdah also engaged in the production of processed food drinks, such as *zobbo*, *kunnu*, *fura*, *nunu*, and others. These drinks were common items in *mammy* markets and offices in the community. Some of these food drinks were produced from barley, millet, rice, sorghum, and ginger among others. The production of local brew was also common among soldiers' wives in the barracks. These liquors include *pito*, *burukutu*, *shekpe* and medicinal hot drinks. The trade in local gin was presumably lucrative because of the nature of military duties and the profession itself.

The participation of soldiers' wives in trade and exchange had been remarkable over the years, considering the nature and impact of barracks on residents. Women attended periodic markets organised in Lagos metropolis, these include, Onipanu night market held every Friday for the sale of Ijebu garri, *Agbono*, melon, vegetables and other items. The Aswani market, held every Tuesday was popular for most of the general goods and clothing materials, while the Mushin market held every Monday and Friday was known for medicinal herbs and food items.[96] Also in barracks within the Kaduna metropolis, soldiers' wives patronised *Kawo market* organised every Tuesday where they bought essential commodities and other valuables.

Similarly, 'Shaikh Abubakar Gumi Market' and Kaduna Central Market were popular for its cow meat, potatoes, onions, yams, barley wheat, sorghum, rice and other foodstuffs. These markets had in recent times turned out to be the favourite of many wives because food items were relatively cheaper than other markets around. The *Kurmin-mashi* Market in Kaduna State was dominated by wives of military personnel because they were predominantly owners of the stalls. The market was also famous for the sale of beniseed, sorghum, millet, barley, onions, pepper, tomatoes, and vegetables. Women did not only engage in the sale of food items but concentrated their efforts in tailoring business and embroidery.

In *Atimbo* Barracks, Calabar, some wives of naval personnel actively participated in buying and selling of palm oil obtained from villages in Akwa-Ibom State. The major customers of these women were buyers from Lagos and other urban markets in the Niger Delta region. Apart from palm oil trade, wives in *Akim* Barracks, Calabar also travelled as far as Cameroun to buy wine and other food drinks which they re-sold in the *mammy* markets. They were also reported to have been in the carrying trade from Calabar to Equatorial Guinea, and sometimes Gabon where they purchased clothing materials (Guinea Brocade) and other items on their return journey.[97]

It was also revealed that some of the women utilised the transport facilities of naval authorities in travelling long distances to procure palm produce and other sea foods in commercial quantity. For instance, some wives travelled as far as Uyo, Ibesi-ikpo, and Ngwa to obtain palm oil in commercial quantity, while others specialised in the business of pumpkin seeds and fertilizers.[98] They also bought variety of goods from Aba, Onitsha and Lagos for resale in the barracks.

Since the 1980s and 1990s, women's participation in long distance trade has not only expanded but developed into foreign trade. This was probably the outcome of three main developments in the system. First, the determination of some wives to be economically self-reliant as propagated in the United Nations Decade for Women 1975-1985, but more importantly, the Beijing Conference of 1995. Second, the involvement of a large number of military men in Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and Internal Security Operation (ISO) of the Niger Delta region provided opportunity for officers and men to accumulate wealth which some of them ploughed into their wives' businesses. Third, the poverty alleviation programme of the Officers' Wives Association which enhanced the well-being of women in the barracks.

Corroborating the view, an informant[99] noted that some soldiers' wives were actively involved in foreign trade. This was particularly common in the barracks around the borderlands of Nigeria where smuggling was prevalent. Due to proximity and financial power of these women, they engaged in wholesale import of rice, groundnut oil, butter, canned foods, second hand clothing, bags, jewellery, cars, and other household items.

The activities of some of these women in the barracks have often clashed with security operatives such as the Nigerian Customs Service and Immigration Service who confiscated their goods as contraband.[100] This development was common in *Owode* Barracks, Ogun State, *Iberoko* and *Topo* Barracks, Badagry, Lagos, *Barma* Barracks, Maiduguri, and military barracks in Katsina, and Sokoto states. Nevertheless, the impact of foreign trade on some officers' wives cannot be ignored. First, it introduced class among wives. Second, it led to overbearing of some women in the barracks because of their financial powers.

Generally, the structure and layout of *mammy* markets had changed since independence due to increased number of troops in the war years and the coming of their wives into the barracks. It was also caused by the increase or the expanded budgetary allocation of the armed forces on barracks construction. Be that as it may, it was suggested that the transformation in the *mammy* markets was necessitated by the relaxation of military policy on personnel, civilians and the barracks. Writing on the evolution of *mammy* market in Asaba during the war, Egodi Uchendu notes:

> In Asaba in particular, a minimarket locally called a "mami-market" was started and held in the evenings in place of the town's major markets. Mostly wives of federal soldiers patronized it. Two items were introduced into the community through the auspices of the soldiers and this mini-markets; the cooked and dried hide of cattle nicknamed *kpomo*, which served as meat and acha - similar to millet but very tiny seeds and prepared as pudding – which was widely grown in northern Nigeria.[101]

Since post-War Nigeria, the composition of *mammy* markets had changed from an all time women market, to a gender based multi-purpose market where men and women had equal opportunities and privileges as traders. By the second half of 1980s most *mammy* markets had been reconstructed and modernised to suit peace time military. From the 1990s, much progress had been recorded following the Government policy on public/private partnership in the economy.

The organisation of *mammy* market as an institution was different from other market associations in the country. *Mammy* market was headed by a woman representative called the *magajiya*. The office of the *magajiya* was responsible for the co-ordination and discipline of traders in the market. The *magajiya* of the market, for purposes of clarity was entirely different in position, rank and status from the Centre *magajiya* or head of non-commissioned officers' wives. The *magajiya* was assisted by elected officers of the market which comprised

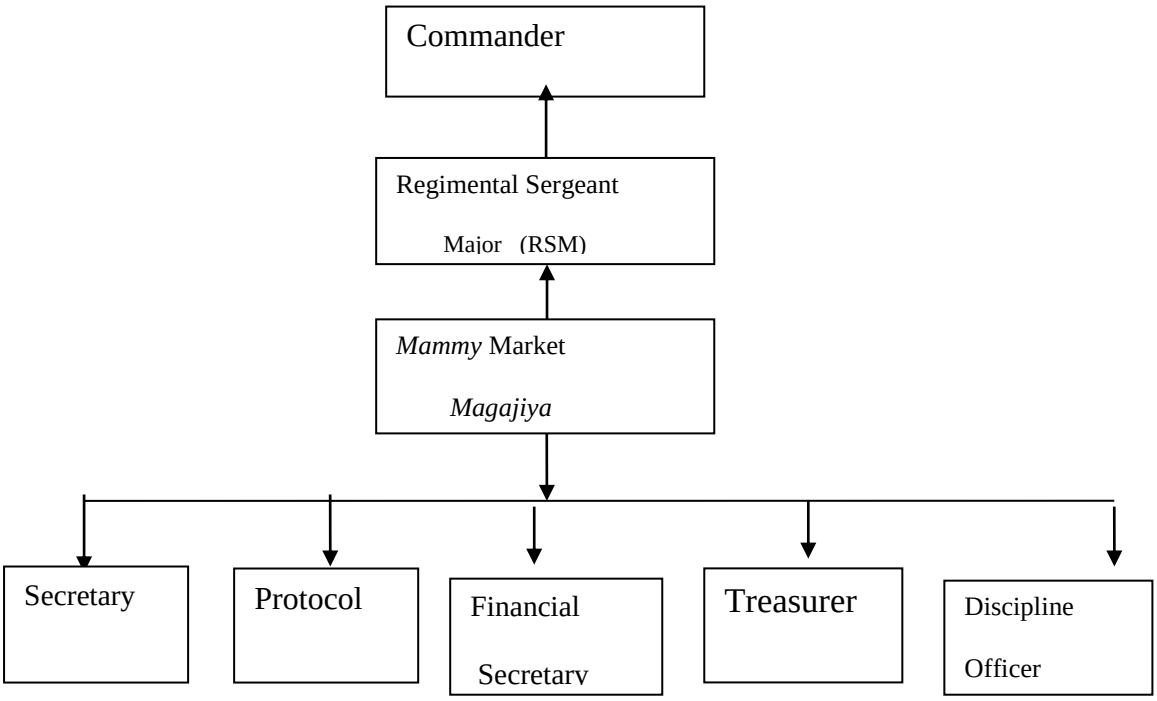
men and women. The *Mammy* Market Association, on the other hand, was the umbrella body of all the sellers in the market. Though, the association was not as popular as other market associations in towns and villages because of the nature of the environment. Nevertheless, the body was able to direct and coordinate the activities of buyers and sellers. It is equally important to note that the idea of public/private partnership development of *mammy* markets was first suggested by the *magajiyas* and the different associations in the 1990s.

Indeed, most m*ammy* markets in modern times had transformed into multi-purpose shops. These include Veteran Shopping Plaza, Marda Barracks, Lagos, Nigerian Army Cantonment, Ikeja, popularly called "Arena Shopping Plaza", The Air Force *Mammy* Market, Ikeja, and Naval Officers' Wives Shopping complexes, Port Harcourt, and Ojo, Lagos. In the northern part of the country, there was, the Abuja Multi-Purpose *Mammy* Market, and Ribadu *Mammy* Market, Kaduna, among others.

The *mammy* market among others served as an abattoir where cattle and other domestic animals were slaughtered and sold to military families and members of the public. Also textile production such as hats, caps, knitting and embroidery designs, beads, baskets, pots and pans, mats, brooms, and leather bags, were on sale in the market. Other commodities on display included palm oil, palm kernel oil, shear butter, and dairy products, to mention but a few. Assorted wine, whiskey, local liquor, yoghurts, ice block, nylon, candles, plastic containers of different sizes and shapes were also produced and sold in the markets. Farm tools such as hoes, shovels, diggers, cutlasses, buckets and other items were bought from major markets in the villages and sold in the *mammy* markets. Same could be said of electronic equipment, bedding materials; and foodstuffs.

Figure 7

THE STRUCTURE OF *MAMMY* MARKETS



Petty traders also sold fried bean cake, corn pudding, pancakes, wedding cakes, cooked groundnut, oranges, pineapples, yams and cassava. Others include cherry fruits, apples, guava, pawpaw, mangoes, fruit juice, *kunnu*, *zobbo*, *fura*, detergents, bread, disinfectants and insecticides, local liquors and gin (*pito*, *brukutu*, *ogogoro*,) traditional herbs, and leather bags among others. The production of certain commodities such as drugs, whiskey, frozen foods and packaged water in the markets had for long become worrisome to the authorities, causing them to raid the markets from time to time.

However, several factors hindered the smooth operation of most *mammy* markets in the barracks. These included: bureaucratic bottlenecks of the military, payment of arbitrary monthly dues, and unnecessary harassment of civilian traders by security operatives. Despite these challenges, the market had contributed immensely to the welfare of military families and in general their neighbours.

Engagements with the Formal Sector

Apart from trade and exchange, a number of wives of military personnel also engaged in the formal sector economy. This development became common in the 1980s and 1990s when soldiers' wives began to train in various disciplines and human endeavour. Consequently, military authorities requested wives in various barracks to forward their certificates for consideration and temporary employment as ward maids, nurses, clerks, laboratory technicians, and doctors in the medical hospitals of the Air Force, Army and the Navy. This opportunity opened connections and prospects for many wives. In recent times, most of them had been absorbed into the Federal Civil Service as permanent staff. It should be emphasized that prior to this period, a number of soldiers' wives were already in the service of Government Ministries before they got married to officers or other ranks in the force.

The absorption of these newly employed women increased the strength of professional hands in the medical departments of the armed forces and public service. Similarly, military units such as the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre, Oshodi, Air Force Base Ikeja, Naval Base Ojo, Lagos, and Nigerian Army Cantonment, Ikeja among others had soldiers' wives on their nominal rolls as maintenance officers and highway managers. Their duties include sweeping and cleaning of corridors and pathways of the barracks.

The dedication of these women was commended in most military barracks. For instance, in Air Force Base Ikeja, Air Vice Marshall Nyananyo "commended the women for their commitment, zeal, and sense of responsibility in working as a team to keeping the Base clean."[102] Besides, it was the dedication of some of these women that made the Commandant of the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre to canvass for the absorption of the women into the Civil Service of which majority benefited. This probably paved the way for the employment of others as temporarily maintenance officers in the barracks.[103] It was also observed during the period that majority of the teachers in Command Secondary Schools in Nigeria were wives of military personnel in the employment of Ministry of Defence, while others were involved in the management of primary and nursery schools established by the Officers' Wives Association in the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

According to Maryam Babangida, "some wives also functioned as lawyers, engineers, bank managers, secretaries, accountants, and consultants in various companies and establishments."[105] A few others were chief executives and managing directors of oil companies, schools, transport companies, hospitality and fast food firms among others. Since the democratic dispensation of 1999, a handful of retired officers' wives had contributed immensely to the field of politics and business.

These include, former Senator (Mrs) Grace Bent, former Senator Stella. Ufuoma Omu, Hajia Laila Joshua Dogonyaro, Justice (Mrs) Fati Abdusalam Abubakar, the former First Lady, Mrs Akwashiki of the former House of Representatives, Mrs Chilaka Agbaje, a business magnate, and former First Lady, Enugu State, and Chief (Mrs) Oluremi Obasanjo, to mentioned but a few.

Apart from the formal sector economy, some wives were also involved in the field of traditional medicine, their activities cut across general treatment, reproductive and child care, bone treatment, and psychiatric disorder to mention but a few. A source[104] stressed that some soldiers' wives in colonial barracks were skilful in the treatment of skin diseases, bullet wounds, poison and snake bites. These women were known to have assisted greatly in the treatment of soldiers involved in the Second World War. A few others also specialized in the use of local herbs, potent in the treatment of malaria, dysentery, back pains, cancer and infertility of the womb. Though as Eno Ikpe explains "the efficacy of these herbs could be debated, [but] they were important in traditional medicine and provided a psychological feeling of being taken care of."[106]

Social Life

The social life of wives of military personnel in colonial barracks did not change much after independence, probably for two reasons. First, the social activities of soldiers' wives were dictated by barracks norms and conventions. Second, most of the military laws enacted by the Colonial Office were subsequently adopted by the Nigerian Military Force after independence. Therefore the socio-cultural activies of wives have been categorised into two interrelated parts namely: domestic ceremonies and inter-group relations. Since most of these activities have been discussed in chapter five only a few have been selected for analysis.

Domestic ceremonies included: Marriage and cross-sword ceremonies, pulling-out ceremony, decoration of spouses, calls of inquiry and congratulations, reading culture, and burial ceremonies among others. Women's inter-group relations in the barracks, on the other hand revolves around those activities which promote understanding between women in the barracks and their civilian counterparts outside the barracks. Some of these were religious activities, club, town meetings, and recreational activities

Marriage celebration in the barracks was conducted in accordance with laid down rules and regulations, as indicated elsewhere in this study. The rule that newly commissioned officers or Second Lieutenants (2Lt) or its equivalent in the tri-service should not be allowed to marry because they were under probation still exist in modern barracks. Since it was a period of probation to allow the newly commissioned officer respond to military culture and socialisation.[107] Commanding Officers also retained their status as "the only authority to approve marriages in the community,"[108] perhaps, for security reasons and sanctity of the institution.

Officers' marriage celebration centred on 'cross sword ceremony', this was conducted either in the Church, Mosque, Court Registry or the venue of the wedding reception as the couple walked hand-in-hand into the place. The minimum number of officers to cross sword was twelve (12) formed in file. More officers might cross sword depending on the availability of officers. According to *Traditions, Customs and Ethics of the Nigerian Army*:

> On either side of the entrance were six officers dressed in their ceremonial uniform, standing opposite one another with their swords raised high above their heads and crossed. At this point the new couple were expected to walk in between the two rows of officers and underneath the crossed-swords.[109]

During the reception, two swords were presented to the officer; one for the cutting of his wedding cake and the defence of his country, the other sword from the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces "was a symbol to commemorate the wedding and for the personal protection of his wife. The officer making the presentation had to be of the same rank, senior to him or subordinate to the newly wedded officer."[110] Commissioned female officers also enjoyed cross-sword ceremony in their marriage to civilian husbands similar to their male counterparts. During the occasion, two swords were handed over to her, one for the defence of the nation and the cutting of the cake, the other for the protection of her husband and her marriage. The use of sword in the marriage ceremony of officers is perhaps symbolic because 'sword' is one of the lethal weapons of warfare. It is also indicative of the premium attached to marriage by the authorities.

The question therefore is to what extent were other ranks' marriage celebrations different from that of officers? The marriage ceremony of other ranks were not as elaborate as that of officers, though similar protocols were observed except the cross-sword and presentation of swords.[111] To fill the gap, non-commissioned officers had added glamour to their marriage ceremonies by raising their caps in unison to the delight of the crowd. Because of the significance of cross sword ceremony in the military culture, the ceremony had become the attraction of a lot of people.

Another event in which women played active role was the 'pulling-out ceremony.' It was an occasion in the military circles that always called for reflection among officers and wives. It was a ceremony organised for retiring senior officers and commanders from the rank of Brigadier General who served the nation, and fulfilled their roles in military service. "For an officer and his wife to be 'pulled-out' was a sign of honour, respect and farewell from

service."[112] The ceremony usually attracted dignitaries, classmates and colleagues of retired officer, friends, kinsmen and in-laws. At such moments, military bands, traditional dancers and professional musicians usually graced the occasion. Pulling-out ceremony commenced immediately after a farewell parade by officers and men from the parade ground or Officers' Mess. Thereafter, the retiring officer and his wife mounted a waiting Land Rover tied with ropes and courteously pulled by the officers' colleagues out of the barracks gate.[113]

This ceremony successfully marked the end of an officer's career in the military. Thereafter, fanfare and get-together commenced at designated places. Pulling-out ceremony has been adjudged as one of the most glamorous events in the life of an officer's wife. This is because her husband had successfully ended a challenging career in the military, free from indictment, death and dismissal. Pulling-out ceremony was equally a time of accountability because while an officer and his wife were retired from active Service, congratulatory messages were equally extended to in-coming officer and wife because there is no vacuum in the military. With a successful 'pulled-out ceremony,' a military officer and his wife automatically became civilians devoid of some military privileges and power. Her membership of the Officers Wives' Association also ceased to exist, irrespective of her status or that of her husband in the system.

Another important ceremony in which wives participated in the military system was the decoration of spouses whenever promoted in rank. During the ceremony, a wife and a very senior military officer vested with the authority to 'pip the ranks' stood side by side the newly promoted officer while his citation was being read. Thereafter, the senior officer standing on the right hand side pipped the new rank on the shoulder of the newly promoted officer. His wife, standing close by on the left hand side also decorated her spouse in the same manner.

Figure 8

Army Celebrates Lt Gen Ihejirika, Bids Him Farewell

Source: *New Soja Magazine*, Ist Quarter 2014, 14.

Figure 9

Decoration of Newly Promoted Officers in Abuja

Source: *New Soja Magazine*, Ist Quarter, 2014, 185

This prerogative was made possible by the position of wives in the military system as one step above their husbands. Though, imaginary as the idea appears, it was highly significant in the military culture and any attempt to undermine the precedence was viewed seriously. This event was fascinating because newly promoted officers and wives collectively had the pleasure to organise refreshment in the mess to mark the occasion.

The question therefore is how did the two great events (Pulling-out and Decoration of spouse) impacted on wives of military personnel in a community where masculinity was celebrated? Generally, the two great events were inevitable to military officers and wives because "pulling-out ceremony" signified the end of a long career for a senior officer and his wife in the barracks. Similarly, whenever a military-husband attained new rank in the profession, soldiers' wives enjoyed the atmosphere the same way they suffered depression whenever their spouses lost seniority, demoted in rank or dismissed from service. This feeling was strong because the promotion of a military-husband was also seen as the promotion of his wife, since it was in the promotion of her spouse that her status in the structure of Officers' Wives Association was recognised and given a fillip. This is because as Maryam Babangida puts it, an officer's wife is assumed to have the same level of intelligence with her husband.[114]

Calls of inquiry and congratulations' were social activities carried out by wives during the illness or convalescence of a friend or neighbour. It was also performed when a military family experienced misfortune or accidents. For instance, in the turbulent days of coups and coup d'états, officers and wives suffered house arrest, while others were detained as suspected conspirators.[115] Once released from detention and freed from all charges and suspicion, 'Calls of congratulations' were extended to such families as an expression of

sympathy and friendship. Calls of congratulations were also carried out when officers or non-commissioned officers earned their promotions or were blessed with a new born baby in the community. At such periods, it was customary for their colleagues to visit them and present cards and gifts[116] to the new baby.

Reading culture had increased among women in the barracks since independence. This could be attributed to a number of factors: increase in literacy and capacity building of women, the involvement of wives in governance, and women's participation in mission as wives of military attaché. The act of writing which began in colonial barracks by some European wives continued even in contemporary times. Some women who documented their activities in modern barracks include, Maryam Babangida, who wrote, *The Home Front, Nigerian Army Officers and Their Wives*, (1988)[117] Oluremi Obasanjo's, *Bitter Sweet: My life With Obasanjo*,(2009),[118] and Miriam Rukevwe Agisogu's informative work titled, *Toughest Job in the Armed Forces*,(2009),[119] and others.

Available records indicate that the 1970s and 1980s witnessed astronomical increase in the reading culture of wives. This perhaps was due to their involvement in governance and contribution to the career of their spouses. Diplomatic Service and training of officers abroad also created awareness to wives of military personnel. This is corroborated by Maryam Babangida in the following lines, "There are many officers' wives who acquired degrees and diplomas during their husband's training overseas. Such degrees were aptly referred to as "Pushing Hubby Through" (P.H.T)."[120] These degrees as she noted, was awarded to those who accompanied their spouses on course to Fort Knox, Kentucky, USA. Other women who had no accumen for full intellectual work took to the study of home economics or learning a trade, such as, hairdressing, cake decorating and other handcraft."[121]

Generally, this programme contributed greatly to the improvement of arts, culture and learning in the barracks. This programme has been sustained even in contemporary times because of its utility and promotion of ideas.

Burial ceremony was one of the events in the barracks through which wives of military personnel connect with friends and well-wishers. According to the *Terms and Conditions of Service Nigerian Army Officers,* (1984), the following conditions shall apply to an officer in Foreign Service in the event of the death of his wife; "The Government will, if it is the wish of either of the spouse bear the cost of repatriating the body of the deceased to Nigeria by the cheapest possible means. Where the deceased is the wife, the Government will also pay return fare of the husband, if he accompanies the body to Nigeria." [122]

Since wives of military personnel were members of the barracks, some of them were buried in military cemeteries as a right as was the case in colonial barracks where some British officers and their wives were buried in Lokoja, Kaduna, and Zungeru military cemeteries. Though the burial arrangement of a military wife was dictated by certain factors, these include family traditions, religious and cultural background as well as the time or period of death. The period of death is critical in the military, especially where the husband of the deceased was involved in peacekeeping operation or serving a sentence, in this wise, the authorities were bound to send a signal message and await his return, or directives.

Nevertheless, a formal call of condolence was usually made to the family after a funeral, sometimes by the Commanding Officer's wife and the magajiya or other representatives.[123]

Writing on the United States Army, Morris Janowitz notes:

> In the military tradition when death occurred of either the man or woman, there was no outward display of mourning or grief except in the observance of military tradition and customs of the service. This characteristic was so visible so much so that there was no drawn shades, muffled bells, hushed voices, crepe-hung doors among others.[124]

The inter-group relations between wives of military personnel and their civilian counterparts began in colonial barracks. This interaction had continued even after independence because their husbands were not allowed to interface with civilian men and women in the areas of town meetings, social club, associations and politics. This idea is substantiated in *The Armed Forces of Nigeria, Harmonised Terms and Conditions of Service for Soldier's / Ratings/ Airmen*: "A soldier, rating or airman shall not hold membership of any secret society, or political party. He will not participate in any way in activities concerned with such societies or parties even in observer capacity."[125] Due to this guideline, women took it upon themselves to represent their spouses in major gathering and at the same time pay their dues.

The meeting rarely took place in the barracks as members preferred to gather in the villages or towns. Meetings were either held monthly or forthnightly depending on the arrangement and commitment of members. The question therefore is what is the essence of town and village meetings to wives of military personnel? Town and village meetings provided avenue for women to know their people, as well as interract with them from time to time. In difficult situations members of town meetings assisted their people through financial contributions. For soldiers' wives, village and town meetings were important because of the profession of their spouses which took them regularly out of station and sometimes on posting.

During the difficult years of coup and counter-coup in Nigerian barracks, most officers and non-commissioned officers used the privileges of town unions, associations, and club to secure their families outside the barracks. Similarly, in 2001 bomb blast at the Nigerian Army Cantonment, Ikeja, it was pains and agony that motivated most servicemen to relocate their dependants to the homes of members and relations living in the town from where they relocated to their towns. In retrospect, this experience equally played out during the Nigeria Civil War when most military personnel were compelled to hide their family members in the homes of friends and relations outside the barracks before the escalation of crisis.

Town meetings in modern barracks cut across the six geopolitical zones in the country. A few of these town/ethnic meetings included, the Ijaw Women Association, Anioma Union, Igbo Women Association, Rivers/Bayelsa Association, Ondo women Association, Ekiti women Union, Birom Community Association, Angas Town Union, Etsako Tiv Women, Idoma Town Union, and Akwa Ibom/Cross River (AkwaCross) Meetings, among others. The study shows that town and village meetings were channels of cooperation and collaboration among wives of military personnel and their counterparts outside the barracks, especially those whose state of origin were far from the location of primary assignments. Nevertheless, it was through some of these associations that identities were created along ethnic lines which occasionally brought about opportunities and connections in the system.

Apart from village and town meetings, some wives were registered members of clubs within and outside the barracks. Some of these clubs include, Angels Club, Club 2000, Ndokwa/Enuani Women, Elite Women of Lagos, Igbuzo Women Club, Odua Women League, Etsako 81 Club, Glorious Women Club, and Akwa-Cross Women Club among others.[126]

Religious Life

Religion had over the years provided moral values and spiritual support for some women in the barracks. This is essential when we evaluate the lifestyle of some men and women in the barracks and by extension the impact of wars and peacekeeping mission on military families. Religion also provided strength of character to women whenever they experienced the loss of a dear one or the long absence of a spouse on tour of duty. According to the *Traditions, Customs and Ethics of the Nigerian Army 2005*:

> The Nigerian Army allows controlled freedom of worship. There are 3 centres of religious worship in the barracks. These are the Protestant Churches and Roman Catholic Churches of the Christian faith and the Mosques for Muslims. All military personnel are expected to worship in any of the 3 centrres. Holding of any form of public worship outside these 3 centres in the barracks is not allowed. It is the duty of all Commanders to make adequate provision for the spiritual and moral needs of their personnel.[127]

Over the years, wives of military personnel and family constitute over half of the membership of each denomination in the community. For effective administration of the Churches, the authority established the Directorate of Chaplain Protestants/Catholic Services to oversee the smooth operations of the Christian faith in the barracks.[128] According to Obia Egbunu, "the two churches generated their funds through harvests, bazaars, fund-raising and sometimes the assistance of military authorities. The collections from these programmes were sometimes handed over to the Church Committee and Council for judicious use."[129]

Nevertheless, the role of wives of military personnel in the Catholic and Protestant Churches could not be overlooked. Indeed, women were actively involved in the administration and routine work of the church. According to Mercy Imeh Akpan, "we the women had a roster on the cleaning activities of the church. Sometimes, we visit of our members and occasionally helped those in need. Similarly, there was a time when the women came out to assist in the

reconstruction of the church to avoid its collapse."[130] The Imam Directorate, on the other hand, was one of the oldest religious components of the Nigerian military. It was responsible for the provision of spiritual needs of some military families and Moslem faithful. During the Nigerian Civil War, Imams accompanied troops to war front where they provided spiritual and moral support.[131] It was also during the period that some wives, vast in Islamic teaching and scholarship provided Koranic lessons, guidance and counselling to children and neighbours. The Friday *Jummat* Service just like the Sunday worship service for Christians was a must for men, women, and children believers.

Extending the thinking, Dorothy Remy notes, "Women are expected to observe Moslem practices, such as praying in the privacy of their rooms, but they may not attend the gatherings for prayer at the mosques or the religious celebrations of the great annual festivals."[132] Besides, some of the women were involved in different societies and organizations where they discussed issues relating to their welfare and that of the mosque. This study reveals that Christian and Islamic religions fostered friendship and cooperation between wives of military personnel and the general public outside the barracks. But the seclusion system, to some extent, impacted greatly on some wives in the barracks, especially, in their wider social relations and interdependence.

Change and Continuity

As part of women's inter-group relations in the barracks, they engaged in one civic responsibility or the other, just like their civilian counterparts outside the barracks. Since the inception of census enumeration and political elections in Nigeria, wives of servicemen have always participated as part of their rights.

Perhaps, it is for this reason that Commanders of various units engaged wives in enlightenment campaign to educate them on their rights and obligations during registration of voters and casting of votes.[133] However, women in the barracks were barred from political rallies, debates, arguments and public discussions throughout the period of election to avoid backlash. This was intended to prevent unnecessary interference and attendant harassment from political thugs.

During voting in an election, wives of military personnel were advised not to compromise with acts capable of tarnishing the image of the force in general and that of their husbands in particular. They were also to refrain from disorderly conduct at the polling booths or disagreement with electoral officers as this was capable of generating violence. Similarly, officers and men were under command to control their wives during the occasion as they would be liable for whatever offence they committed outside the barracks.

Therefore to what extent did wives of military personnel participate in general elections in the country during the period? In spite of regimentation and orders which characterised the system, politicians had a way of not only penetrating but engaging wives because of their disposition as private individuals. According to an informant[134] politicians engaged some wives of military personnel through a number of outlets, namely, towns meetings, social clubs, Church societies, friends, person to person contact and *mammy* market association among others. Theresa Onwuma also noted that some wives belonged to one political party or the other, but the bulk of electioneering campaign was done secretly by party agents.[135] However, because of barracks laws and convention, some soldiers' wives held their meetings secretly at designated spots to avoid the spotlight of either the Military Intelligence or Military Police of the Unit.

In the words of Mgbonkwo Adieli, "some officers' wives occasionally partnered with woman leaders outside the barracks to avoid detection of wives of other ranks as well as the criticisms of colleagues."[136]

The challenges encountered by wives of military personnel in party politics included, military regimentation, organisation, co-ordination, and funding, This had been the case since 1979 elections, but the fact of the case is that women in the barracks had been secretly involved in electioneering activities in Nigeria. Besides, an informant[137] comfirmed that some wives benefited from party gifts in many ways, these ranged from cash, clothing materials, bags of rice, and foodstuffs, to mention but a few. Generally, wives of servicemen did exercise their rights and privileges like their civilian counterparts; the only difference was that they were guided by military regimentation and code of conduct, a violation of which was capable of affecting the career of a military husband.

Conclusion

The involvement of wives of military personnel in the politics of military community dates back to pre-colonial times. In modern barracks also, some of them had played remarkable roles in major issues of the barracks. Worthy of mention were matters affecting their welfare, spouses and dependants. This group also used their power and influence to affect the lives of junior officers, non-commissioned officers, and civilians outside the barracks. Their role was most visible in matters of promotion, training and postings, as well as recruitment into the force. Nevertheless, the contributions of wives of Commanding Officers and Centre *magajia* in the political arrangement of wives of military personnel cannot be overlooked. This is because both offices were indispensable

not only to women but to the military authorities. It has on the other hand sustained the unity and culture of military barracks in contemporary times. In the economic space, the study demonstrates that women's involvement in compound garden was as old as the barracks itself. Indeed, a number of food crops were cultivated in the gardens; these include corn, millet, yams, cassava, melon, garlic, and potatoes. Others include tomatoes, pepper, vegetables, and others. Wives of military personnel also kept domestic animals particularly for consumption and sales. These livestock include goats, sheep, cows, fowls, turkey, donkey and others.

As the years progressed, some wives transformed from compound garden to farming in the 1970s and 1980s following the efforts of government at food security in the country. Female farming was also encouraged by the Structural Adjustment programme of 1986 masterminded by the Babangida Administration. This programme adversely affected most families and dependants in the barracks, so much so, that mutual understanding was reached in the sexual division of labour of most households. The arrangement motivated most men to forgo the merriment in the messes and drinking spots in order to assist their wives in farm work on off days and public holidays. This move was also in realization of the fact that women's income generation in the home was indispensable.

Apart from farming, wives of servicemen also engaged in crafts and industry. Productive activities various kinds took place in most *mammy* markets. Items such as ice blocks, nylon bags, candles, and clothing and textile materials were either produced or sold. Palm oil, shear butter, palm kernel oil and other commodities were part of the extracting industry common in most barracks. Mats, baskets, pottery, brooms and other goods were equally produced in

some homes and the *mammy* markets. Some wives of military personnel also engaged in formal sector economy such as teaching, nursing, banking and insurance services.

The domestic ceremonies of wives of military personnel include, marriage and wedding celebrations, naming ceremony, West Africa Social Activity (WASA), calls of inquiry and congratulations, to mention but a few. The official convocation of wives include, pulling-out ceremony, decoration of spouses and others. The inter-group relations of women, on the other hand, centred on religious activities, social club, village and town meetings, and civic responsibility, among others. These activities were significant in the social system of the barracks, not only because of their benefits but the advantage of interdependence and exchange of ideas. Just as the theory of social system suggests, these activities have contributed to integration in the military and realisation of set objectives.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

NATURE AND IMPACT OF NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR AND PEACEKEEPING MISSION ON WIVES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL 1967- 1999

Introduction

Over the years, the Nigerian military force had participated in major conflicts and peace-keeping operations (PKOs) within and outside the country. The impact of this phenomenon on wives of military personnel is little understood or discussed by the general public. In an informative work Egodi Uchendu wrote that "confessions of women from countries that have known civil disturbances help to illustrate the ordeal of the female gender and the challenges they grapple with during episodes of violence and civil strife."[1]

Wives of military personnel in particular suffered tremendously during conflicts or mobilisation of their husbands to flashpoints. On such occasions, women maintained the rear, taking care of children and safeguarding the home front. Apart from these dual roles, women also were involved in the treatment of wounded combatants and praying for the safe return of their spouses from the battle. As Egodi Uchendu rightly observes, "Women may rarely have taken part in the decision of any group to resort to violence, but when conflicts arise they take a heavy toll on the female gender."[2]

In the light of the foregoing, this chapter investigates the following: Wives of military personnel and the burden of World Wars, the impact of the Nigerian Civil War on wives of military personnel, as well as war and barracks economy. Others include Governments' efforts at re-uniting women of Eastern Nigerian origin, the effect of coups on wives, and finally, the impact of peacekeeping operations (PKOs) on wives of military personnel.

Since the evolution of the Nigerian State, series of talks have been held by concerned members of the public and the organised political class[3] on the appropriateness of barracks in civilian environments, as well as, the raising of children in the barracks. This anxiety emanated from the behaviour of some soldiers which was perceived as unacceptable for peaceful co-existence and national development. Some of their actions included: assault, plundering, robbery, rape, and kidnapping to mention but a few.[4] Thus, the *Senate Debate* of October 18, 1965, observed that in Western Region soldiers apparently caused havoc around their locations.[5] Contributing to the debate of the Senate, Chief Longe asserts, "I remember during the last war some soldiers were brought to my area at Ede....Most of them committed atrocities... some of them were arrested and tried."[6]

This misbehaviour, perhaps, was not limited to the Nigerian troops alone, but a common feature of European military and by extension the United States Navy during the Great Wars and the Vietnam campaign. This idea is aptly encapsulated by Morris Janowitz: "The strains within the military community are reflected in the extent to which deviant personal behaviour comes to the attention of civilian society.....War inevitably produces a lowering of standards of personal behaviour among civilians and soldiers, which can be tolerated as a temporary relapse."[7]

Wives of Military Personnel and the Burden of World Wars

The history of wives of military personnel in Nigeria is replete with wars, coups, and peacekeeping operations of military husbands within and outside the country. For instance, there was the First and Second World Wars of 1914 and 1939-1945, the Burma war of 1943-44, the Congo crisis of 1960-64 and the peacekeeping operations in Chad, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Durfur and Somalia. These conflicts had great consequences on Nigerian soldiers and

their families in the barracks, despite the fact that Nigeria was not the centre stage of the crises. Nigerian troops under the umbrella of the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) participated in the First World War against the Germans, barely nine years after women were authorised to join their spouses in the barracks. At the end of the war, casualty was high on all fronts coupled with the fact that the big troopships was unable to enter the Lagos harbour thereby causing more deaths and health crises to wounded soldiers.

This state of affairs was also aggravated by the outbreak of pneumonia and influenza epidemic of 1918 which decimated men and women in the barracks and most parts of the world.[8] This singular event did not only place wives on disadvantaged positions but also made widows of them. This is corroborated by D.C.Ohadike:

> We must pause to reconsider the validity of holding Britain responsible for the influenza epidemic in Nigeria....The epidemic affected many parts of the Old World – Asia, Europe and Africa...it occurred soon after the end of the First World War and soldiers returning from the war fronts are said to have brought the disease.[9]

He also added that the ratio of mortality between the various age and sex groups was worth noting. This is because reports from all the Provinces indicate that the old suffered less than the young and that women suffered less than men. It was further argued that there was a greater mortality among pregnant women than women who were not, and that adult suffered more than children.[10] This event was said to have prompted the Acting Lieutenant-Governor of the Northern Provinces, W.F.Gower to lament: "The consequence of this is that the number of deaths ...comprise an unduly large proportion of the young and vigorous. Such a loss of manpower cannot fail to have an appreciable effect on the productive capacity of the country during the next years."[11]

Comparatively, this experience was not limited to Nigeria alone. In an informative study of the First World War, John Keegan observes:

> By 1918, however, there were 630, 000 war widows in France and a very large number of younger women deprived by the war of the chance of marriage. The imbalance between the sexes of those aged twenty to thirthy-nine stood in 1921 at forty-five males to fifty-five females. Among the five million wounded of the war, moreover, several hundred thousand were numbered as *grands mutiles*, soldiers who had lost limbs or eyes.[12]

This goes to show that the effect of the First World was a global affair to both combatants and civilian men and women. Its impact was also tremendous so much so that resettlement homes were built for disabled soldiers across the world.

Similarly, the impact of the Second World War cannot be over-emphasized in the order of things. This is because it reflected a great deal on societies and the social well-being of soldiers' wives in Nigeria following the deployment of troops to East Africa.[13] The war also precipitated health and social challenges such as, casualties of men, mental instability of some soldiers, and infant mortality in the barracks, divorce, and sexual deviants among others. On the other hand, the demobilization of troops in 1946 created a yawning gap in the economic and social life of both European and indigenous military wives as most of them had to leave the barracks for other endeavours.

Apart from the problems created by the Second World War, it also had favourable influences on some soldiers' wives. During the period, the social status and living condition of most military families were enhanced due to the payment of benefits and other remunerations to their spouses. For example, it was common during the period to find soldiers' wives in one form of productive business or the other. A few others utilised their resources for the training of children and dependants, while others engaged in the building of houses or payment of

rents for the family. There was also a marked change in the lives of some military wives whose spouses took on new roles as local chiefs or politicians in their localities.[14]

The participation of Nigerian contingent in the Congo crisis also had its implication on women as R.O.Fashina rightly indicates: "The old opinion held by some parents and relations of our soldiers gradually started to change from that of a peace-maker. It is even on record that some soldiers who could not get married before this time, soon won the favour of some parents and eventually got married"[15] The widows, on the other hand, utilised their deceased husbands' benefits for the welfare of children and dependants, packing of their belongings out of the barracks and setting up small enterprises of their own.

Impact of the Nigerian Civil War on Wives of Military Personnel

The Nigerian Civil War has been described by political analysts, historians and social commentators as a watershed in the history of the country. It has also remained a singular event that slowed-down the political and socio-cultural activities of military wives association for about half a decade. This is underpinned by Egodi Uchendu:

> Wives also suffered from the confusion and total breakdown of law and order from the disastrous 1965 Western regional elections and the inability of the central government to arrest the situation provided the stimulus for the January 1966 coup led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu...which ended Nigeria's experiment at post-independence civil rule.[16]

Questions have been raised as to what extent, were military wives affected by the war. This is not an attempt to rehearse either the cause(s) or course of the war but to recall the event as it happened in the minds of some women and children who watched helplessly at the rage. This analysis on the one hand is important contrary to the position of some scholars and pedestrian thinkers who speculated that men were the only victims in wars. On the other

hand, the analysis is necessary because it stands to show that soldiers' wives were not only victims of war but also targets in the profession of their spouses. For instance, on the eve of 1966 coup, Brigadier Samuel Adesujo Ademulegun and his wife were murdered in their beds.[17] Also Isawa Elaigwu's exciting work on Yakubu Gowon states:

> Lt Col Gowon was reported to have in the course of the pursuit of the mutineer entered into Lt Col Pam's house where the sight of his sobbing wife and children told the whole story, while the house of Brigadier Zakariya Maimalari was spattered with the blood of another soldier (not Maimalari's).[18]

Similar incidents were recorded in the homes of Colonels Kur Mohammed, Ralph Adetunji Shodeinde, Arthur Unegbe and others.[19] In addition; Nelson Ottah notes that "Governor Ejoor had hardly dropped the telephone when he heard firing .... [Then] Mrs Ejoor who was nearby gathered the children with the celerity of a mother-hen being menaced by a hawk and ran with them into one of the bedrooms of the State House."[20] Besides, they were later arrested and released by the Biafran troops who had taken over Benin City.[21]

The private letters of some suspected coup plotters equally described the dilemma of wives during the crisis. Worthy of mention was the personal correspondences of late Major Christian Anuforo, one of the officers implicated in the January 1966 coup, dated February 21, 1966:

My dearest Wife;
I know that you have been wondering where I have been or what might have happened to me. This is why I suppose the authorities have kindly allowed me to write you this. Honestly, I have little or nothing new to tell you or anybody. You can well imagine the volume of activities and goings-on within the place! You can safely say...little. However, I would like to tell you this; I am absolutely well, properly looked after, rested and above all, I am in a good mood. It will be groundless for you or mother or anybody to waste away thinking of me instead of resigning everything to the will of God and doing something useful.

Yours Ever Chris.[22]

The second correspondence dated March 3, 1966 reads:

My dear wife;

I hope you have received my last letter. If you have, I suppose you have no cause for anxiety because as I said, I am in good shape....How are the children? I hope they are not sick as usual. Much will depend on how you handle them. I know that you cannot do everything but try to do everything you can to maintain their good health....You can write me with my office address; HQ Nigerian Army, Ministry of Defence, Lagos. They will then redirect it to me. In your letters, do not go beyond ordinary everyday matters, just leave it as you find it....You can tell Cele [stine] not to worry about me that I am o.k. and that he should not worry about writing. Make sure that you do not get into any quarrels with anybody and to all questions and talks from anybody - just keep quiet.

Yours affectionately
Chris.[23]

The third letter published in The *Nation Newspaper* dated October 24, 2010 reads:

> My dear Wife,
> My only worry is you and the children. I hope I will be able to leave a little more money for the big job of training my sweet little kids and I also hope that they will live in this country as of right, as Nigerians and free from the present oppression. If you do not even see me again, do not worry, do not worry; do not regret.
>
> Yours affectionately
> Chris[24]

Similarly, personal reminiscences of army officers' wives were also informative. Some of which include, Maryam Babangida, Oluremi Obasanjo, Gloria Labora Shoda and a few others. Recounting the experience of a soldiers' wife, Babangida asserts:

> We got married on December 4, 1965, the first coup came on January 15, 1966 and by January 17, a tattoo which is an alarm to get the army ready for any eventuality was blown. Things became different from then on. All the lights in the barracks were immediately switched off. Mothers dragged their children from one end of the barracks to the other. Children were screaming with wives watching and soldiers taking position on tree and roof tops. There was pandemonium in their attempt to escape from the barracks. Some women dragged their children over barbed wire. Others also got hurt one way or the other. There was blood all over and you could almost feel the pain of some of the children and their mothers. I thought the world had come to an end. All the officers had been summoned and their wives were left to take care of the children.[25]

In the same manner, Lt Col Ojukwu recalled how he had the "unbearable painful duty of breaking the tragic news to Mrs Victoria Aguiyi Ironsi, who had since the announced kidnap of her very dear and heroic husband on July 29 been living in lonely and awful anxiety."[26] Narrating her ordeal Obasanjo asserts:

> Anonymous callers telephoned from town. Some would just laugh. Others would threaten me. The news had broken that many Southern Officers had been killed and that none was safe in Kaduna. Later I learnt it happened also in Lagos and Ibadan. I could not place the events properly because I was green to the Nigerian crisis. Days passed and there were no calls from Maiduguri, I was torn between hope and despair, accepting that God would grant me the former. After seven days, my husband called to tell me that he was at Kaduna Air Force Base.[27]

She also added, "The Igbo engineers and other Southern officers whose wives had welcomed me to Kaduna had been shot and killed. In addition, the killers were still looking for the Yoruba man with a red Peugeot car."[28] "The event was the same in Kano where I met with Major James Oluleye [and] on that ill-fated night we saw Ibo officers being taken into the guardroom, that was about three weeks after the putsch, they were all shot dead that night [and] their widows wailed helplessly the morning after." [29]

Furthermore, the civil war created unpredictable hardship to couples who married not long before the war broke out in the barracks. It was observed that their pains, anxiety and loneliness in a community they did not understand kept them in isolation. This is substantiated by Maryam Babangida who pointed out that at war times, officers' wives go through a lot of stress wondering and worrying about their husbands particularly those officers who got married weeks before the civil war broke out, just before their husbands were drafted to the war front.[30]

Relating the experience of an officer's wife, Babangida notes:

> The day my husband was brought home wounded nobody wanted to inform me because they did not know what my reaction would be. So a relation of mine decided to trick me into going to the military hospital to find out for myself. With her insistence, I started suspecting that something was fishing, it later turned out that my husband was seriously injured and in the hospital for an operation.[31]

Another informant declared, "We were newly married when he [my husband] went to war. I was very young and knew nothing about the implications of war. I knew he was going to fight but I expected that he would be back home very soon.... When he came back after the war, I did not recognise him...."[32]

Apart from the recollections of soldiers' wives, scholars have also described in detail the fate of wives and children in time of war. For instance, Ralph Uwechue, Egodi Uchendu and N.J. Miner's works provide interesting detail on the dilemma and anguish of wives and children at the capture and execution of their military husband/father in their presence. As Uwechue has shown:

> At about 11.00 p.m on July 28, 1966, two sections of Northern troops at Abeokuta broke into a meeting of officers in the Officers' mess and shot Major Obienu, Lt Orok and Lt.Col Okonweze - all officers of Eastern and Mid-Western origin.While the siege was in progress...troops of Northern origin then went from door to door in the barracks in search of troops of Southern origin who did not answer to the alarm. Some of those caught were manhandled and pushed into the guardroom while others were shot at sight....By daybreak most of the Southern senior non-commissioned officers were brought out of the guardroom and shot in the open and their bodies dumped in the storage vehicle.[33]

The massacre was similar throughout the Western region; as reported by women, officers and men of the unit. It was in Ibadan that Lt Col Fajuyi and General Aguiyi Ironsi were brutally murdered alongside officers of Eastern origin. In Ikeja Cantonment also Uwechue observes that there was the annihilation of Eastern officers and men. Those who could not be captured

at the parade ground were trapped in their houses or captured elsewhere in the barracks and killed. But the most horrible and repulsive aspect of this shocking event was the atrocities committed against the captives before they were killed.[34] Corroborating the view, Uchendu explains that the problem was compounded by the fact that Nigerian soldiers intensified their hunt for Igbo people so much so that there were disruptions of transportation in a bid to track them down. In this wise, men and women discovered to be Igbo were separated from the rest and were not allow to re-board the vehicles or continue their journey as many were publicly executed in 1968 around the Tinubu Square.[35]

The account of N.J.Miner on the war in Kano was also illuminating:

> The massacres at Kano seem to have been sparked off by an incident at the airport, when the troops on duty there became incensed at the sight of Ibos [and their wives] departing with their belongings on a flight to Lagos, and then proceeded to murder them....Whatever, the cause, the massacres very quickly spread throughout the North. Thousands of Easterners were killed and the survivors, more than a million refugees.[36]

The immediate aftermath of 1966 crises reveals that "more than 1 million Nigerians were displaced from their usual abodes elsewhere in Nigeria into the homeland in the area of former Eastern Nigeria [where] the war had introduced a lot of problems in food scarcity, clothing, shelter, medication and others."[37]

To others, it was the pains of death of children from kwashiorkor and malnutrition. This was also made complex by the forceful re-engagement of their spouses in the Biafra force where most of the men who escaped the initial massacre of 1967 were either killed or incapacitated. Apart from the loss of status on the part of officers' and non-commissioned officers' wives who joined the Eastern Nigeria Army, there was also the loss of personal belongings due to the war. It is an overstatement to assert that women left the barracks with their belongings.

According to an informant, those who kept valuables in the homes of friends and neighbours at the wake of the confrontation, returned to be dispossessed of it or denied of such belongings immediately after the war.[38] Even those who managed to convey a handful of personal items to their villages and towns eventually lost all in the crisis.

An analysis of the factors that aggravated the war is imperative in a discussion of this nature. This is because available records suggest that the second round of crisis, particularly; the killings targeted at the Igbo in most barracks would have been averted if the Northern leaders had agreed to a constitutional arrangement aimed at post-conflict resolution.[39] This stalemate was however traced to the death of their political and military leaders in what was perceived an Igbo coup. For this reason, efforts at reconciliation within six months without commensurate punishment of the coup plotters as they advocated seemed inadequate to most people in an already charged atmosphere. It was the retaliation of the Hausas on Eastern Nigerian soldiers and harmless civilians that motivated Igbo leaders to call for Igbo seccession.[40]

This unfortunate development was further worsened by Col Yakubu Gowon's attempt at political engineering as Head of State. Particularly, when he implemented an aspect of the recommendation of a Conference, which emphasizes that military personnel be posted to their areas of origin.[41] This policy contributed to four major events in the history of military wives in Nigeria. First, it halted the activities of wives in the political and socio-economic culture of the barracks. Second, it marked the beginning of ethnicity and division among indigenous military wives hitherto unknown in the barracks. Third, the policy escalated the killings of the Igbo (men and women) in major barracks in Western and Northern part of the

country. Finally, it reinforced the collective agenda for war between the Federal troops and the Biafran forces.

The other recommendation that caused anxiety during the period was the Armed Forces and Police (Special Powers) Decree of 1967 which empowered the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces or the Inspector General of Police to order the detention in civil prison or Police Station of trouble makers and those implicated in acts prejudicial to public orders. The other policy flaw was the official announcement in the media credited to the federal government mandating people of Igbo origin to be issued identity cards. This development did not only heighten the tension in the land but also aggravated the insecurity problem experienced by the Igbo. In consequence of this, they were to carry identity cards on their persons whenever they were outside their homes. This event was however rumoured to have been a calculated attempt to know the exact population of the Igbo in Lagos with a view to putting them in check.[42]

The role of wives on both sides of the divide, that is Nigeria and Biafra territories, was similar in one way and differed in another. For instance, most military wives of Igbo origin who fled the Nigeria military barracks later became custodian and repository of history because of the recollection of events that either led to the death or missing of their spouses and children and their flight. Those who actually confirmed the death of their spouses were made to undergo a period of ritual mourning and traditional rites in their villages. Thus, their membership of military community ceased to exist because they could not be re-admitted into the Eastern Nigerian barracks. Though, at the outbreak of hostility only few women were retained in the then Eastern Nigerian barracks because intelligence reports confirmed that it was not safe accommodating wives in war zones.

Therefore most officers had to return their wives and children to their in-laws and immediate families for protection. At the outbreak of war in the territory of Eastern Nigeria in 1967/1968 some adult children of deceased soldiers enlisted into the force to avenge the gruesome killing of their parents while others forcefully enlisted to make up the infantry force. As Miner puts it, there were reports of children of fourteen or even younger fighting in the Biafran Army.[43] This was corroborated in the Report of Lord Hunt's Mission which notes, "In Enugu we were informed by the General Staff Officer (GSO) 1 Division that a large number of ex-Biafra soldiers were surrendering, being registered and sent home. One of these was a boy of 12 years old proudly wearing the top boots-size $10_{1/2}$ – of a man he had killed. Most wives on the other hand, provided support in the Food and Water Directorate of the Biafran Army.[44]

A few others worked in Logistics and Espionage Directorate where they provided information on the movement and strength of Federal troops. Mrs Regina Nzemeka, one of the few traders along Igbuzo – Isheagu- Abala - Oko-gbele – Ihialla routes during the war explains that "it was these women and other female traders that provided information to Biafran troops."[45] She Further explained that Biafran troops often engaged the services of women traders in conveying arms and ammunitions to battle lines unnoticed by Federal troops.[46] Mrs Lydia Nnando, one of the camp followers, recalled how she carried Ogbunigwe (Mass Killer) to the Biafran camp while her colleagues provided entertainment to the soldiers until they were rounded up by enemy troops.[47]

Records indicate that it was grief and bitterness that compelled some women to remain inactive and care for their children while a few enrolled in different departments of the war directorates, such as, health care services, traditional medicine, evacuation of wounded

soldiers, entertainment and provision of sex to troops among others. It was in the spirit of the war and refuge that some women gave out their daughters to soldiers for food and safety, while a handful of ladies lived in trenches and camps with their men loading cartridges, shining boots and belts, cooking for them, washing and providing homely services.

This event also characterised the Liberia and Sierra-Leonian wars of 1990s, in which young ladies of marriageable ages flocked to Nigerian troops at the request of some of their parents in order to survive the war, leading to the procreation of the so called "ECOMOG kids." Similarly, the participation of United States troops in the Vietnam crisis of the 1960s also produced children of mixed colours which provoked reactions among politicians in United States of America. These actions can be attributed to the perils of wars and destruction of culture. This situation also occurred in conquered towns in Igboland where women were in desperate need of food and protection.

This study reveals that soldiers did not allow their legitimate wives to join them at front lines because of the challenges of household except their mistresses.[48] During the occupation of Igbo West of the Niger, Regina Nzemeka remarked that some women were forced to abandon their legitimate spouses for Nigerian soldiers as a result of necessity, safety and food.[49] Others who suffered battering or, married out of parents' compulsion, took the opportunity to desert their marriages without concern for their children. The question therefore is what were the role and involvement of wives of Federal troops in the Nigerian Civil War? The role of wives of Federal troops in the war was strictly informal and humanitarian in nature. This is because they did not participate in actual war but resided in the barracks.

This is underscored by Maryam Babangida:

> During the war, wives were left alone with their children in the barracks. However, the wives joined different groups which assisted in treating the wounded and bringing them back to good health. As soon as wives realised that a wounded officer had been brought home, they did their best to nurse him back to good health whether he was married or not and whether his wife was around or not. They all recognised the fact that it could happen to their own husbands at any time. They took him fruits and food and tried to cheer him up within the limitation of the times.[50]

In a reminiscence, an officer's wife noted that "during the civil war, an unmarried officer was brought back home wounded, he had been hit by a bullet in the leg. We took care of him and because he was an amiable officer, he always had officers' wives around him."[51] It was also observed that those whose husbands were brought dead went through the most terrible period of their life while some newly married young women became widows and their children orphans. It was also noted that quite a good number of officers and men came back disabled and confined to wheel chair for the rest of their lives.[52] This category of soldiers were later discharged from the force on medical grounds in 1975. The fortunate ones were sent to the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre, Oshodi, for rehabilitation and skill acquisition.

War and Barracks Economy

At the economic sphere, little or nothing was achieved on both sides of the divide as a result of the challenges of war. As Egodi Uchendu puts it:

> War impacts on people's economy as much as it does other aspects of a people's life, in addition to other changes it brought about. The Nigerian civil war reshuffled and reorganized female economic pursuit in Anioma. The insecurity that prevailed during the emergency and restrictions on movements determined the economic engagements that flourished during the crisis.[53]

The economic production of wives of Federal troops also suffered setback in the manufacturing, production and exchange. The compound garden system, for instance, was affected as women concentrated in home keeping and nursing of wounded combatants.

A few wives who summoned courage to continue with gardening were restricted for reasons of insecurity in the barracks. Women in formal sectors and Civil Service were restrained from going to work while others had to apply to their employers for leave of absence to enable them concentrate in the security of the barracks and welfare of children. Other measures taken by the authorities to prevent sabotage and injuries to military families included the following: renewal of Dependant's Identity Cards, Gate Passes, inventory of military families from time to time, and restriction of movements within specific hours in the barracks.

Similarly, business activities that had to do with intra and inter trade activities were disrupted. Thus, markets around the barracks and its frontiers were closed down for fear of enemy attack and sabotage. The question therefore is what measure (s) did military authorities take to ensure the welfare of women during the period? First, military wives irrespective of rank and status were provided with escorts to market places in the towns. This made it compulsory for them to visit markets in groups and purchase food items in bulk to avoid frequent movement in and out of the barracks. Second, an alleviation programme was set up through which provision of tinned or canned foods, bags of rice and beans, semolina and dried fish were distributed to families based on rank and positions of spouses.

In addition, a policy was issued to all military formation mandating them to change the order of payment of salaries and wages of officers and men for purposes of convenience. Thus, all serving personnel were paid twice in a month, beginning with half pay on the 14th and 15th day of the month and final payment every last week of the month. However, the data substantiating these claims cannot be cited here because they were classified documents. To sustain this effort, the Federal Government also assisted in the importation of essential scarce

commodities such as salt, tinned food, packaged rice, stock-fish and other items which were sold at reduced cost to wives of military personnel in all garrisons.

In Igboland, economic activity was also stagnated because able-bodied men had been forcefully conscripted into the Biafran army except those who evaded the exercise on health grounds. But itinerant female traders were restrained from major trade routes to avoid cross-fire, kidnap, rape and molestation by enemies. This measure was seen to be necessary in order to avoid piloting of enemy troops (Federal troops) into the Biafran camps. Farmers in most villages were prevented from the cultivation of farmlands to avoid encounter with live arms, bombs and grenades. In consequence of this, there arose food shortages in the Biafran controlled territories as Wayne Nafziger explains, "the adverse impact of the conflict on the level of living in Biafra was greater than in Nigeria, and reached all segments of the population. The economy was geared almost entirely to mobilisation for the war and the production of bare necessities."[54]

Worst still was the economic blockade of Biafran neighbours by the Federal troops which compounded the embargo on the Eastern Nigerian foreign reserves abroad. "The embargo on Biafran ports" as Nafziger rightly observes "prevented trade with a region that was overpopulated and plagued by refugees, and which had been an importer of food, [therefore] food shortages reached a crisis in mid-1968, when Biafra was a shrinking enclave surrounded by Nigerian territory, and continued until several months after the war."[55] Thus, malnutrition became the order of the day as women and children began to die in alarming digits of hundreds.[56]

The impact of this unfortunate circumstance was wide-ranging: First, most military families experienced the loss of loved ones, personal belongings and identity. Second, wives of military personnel who lost their soldier-husbands in the Biafran war after the initial escape from the Federal troops were unable to access the entitlements of their deceased husbands as soldiers of Federal troops during the period of rehabilitation and reconstruction. This is because personal records relating to their husbands' enlistment as a Nigerian soldier were either unknown to them or destroyed in the war.

According to an informant[57] soldiers' wives of Eastern Nigeria also suffered ridicule and stigma of war as they were labelled rebels' wives in the barracks by other ethnic groups. It is for this reason therefore, "that some of the candidates at the Nigerian Defence Academy stated in their essays on the reconciliation of Nigerians, that it will be appropriate for the Federal Government to ban the use of any obscene languages against the Ibos such as '*Yamiri*', 'rebel' 'Biafrans' and such like terms that will make them feel unease among other Nigerians.[58]

The Social Impact of War on Wives of Military Personnel

The social impact of war on soldiers' wives cannot be glossed over. The war truncated the educational development of children all over the barracks in Nigeria and Igboland in particular. Especially returnees from other schools and universities in Nigeria who were re-admitted at the University of Nigeria Nsukka to make up lost grounds. Unfortunately, they were unable to continue their programmes because the tertiary and primary institutions in the area had been taken over by Federal troops as recruitment centres and camps. Out of frustration, majority volunteered their services in the war, leading to the death of a number of

them, while others fled to Gabon, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and Ivory Coast respectively to avoid arrest and forceful conscription.

Available evidence indicates that harassment and molestation of women in Anioma and Igbo heartland was rampant during the period. For instance, there were cases of beating and manhandling of civilians (men and women) in several towns, months after the war. Beautiful young women, married and unmarried were abducted and forced into marriage by Nigerian troops, this cut across wives and daughters of soldiers on the Biafran side. The purpose of abduction during the time was perhaps to celebrate the defeat of the Igbo and the victory of Federal troops.[59] This is corroborated by Egodi Uchendu: "A couple making their way back from Biafra to Anioma after the crisis was shot dead by a Nigerian soldier because of the husband's refusal to relinquish his wife to the soldier."[60] Though the Biafran soldiers as argued by scholars, did the same in non-Igbo areas. For instance, in Ibibioland, commandeering of young women by Biafran soldiers was the order of the day. It continued even after the liberation of the area, that is why the war was a double jeopardy for minority peoples in the East.[61]

There was also the displacement of wives from their social ranks, for instance, officers' wives whose husbands were killed in the coup and counter coup of 1966 had no claim to the barracks anymore because membership of the community terminated with the death of a spouse. Also, soldiers' wives resident on the Biafran side whose husbands enlisted into the service of the rebels lost their titles and ranks in the Biafran camps. Similarly, on the Biafra side, diseases and epidemic were common as women and children suffered malnutrition, dysentery, cholera and other pandemic diseases. Thus, many women died in their hide-outs while others died before they could reach the refugee camp.

In the refugee camps also, a greater proportion of women and children died before medical assistance could reach them. This was compounded by the shortage of drugs, water, and medical personnel. There was also the problem of relief programmes for displaced wives, children and other victims of war. Though their efforts were commendable but was seen to be too little too late. A few of these relief organizations were, the Nigerian Red Cross, Quaker Relief Organization, Christian Council of Nigerian Relief, Save the Children Fund Team, The Roman Catholic Fathers, Caritas Fathers, Norwegian and American Relief Teams, The International Committee of the Red Cross and Nigerian Women's Organization, among others.[62]

These relief organizations assisted in the establishment of refugee camps for displaced persons. They also recruited representatives and professionals of health care providers, refugee and humanitarian managers who helped in the medical departments. More importantly was their effort in drawing public attention to the magnitude and proportion of human disaster and wanton destruction of lives and property. On the Federal side women were affected due to the disability or death of their spouses. Others also lamented the death of their children occasioned by the prolong absence of their spouses. The war equally impacted negatively on the behaviour of some children in the barracks due to the absence of men and the burden of war. It is safe to argue that the war affected the barracks culture in its entirety and the interdependence of women in the community.

Government Efforts at Re-uniting Women of Eastern Nigerian origin

"With the end of the Civil War, one of the most immediate demands on Gowon's government was one of providing relief for the suffering masses of the newly affected areas. The need for shelter, food and medicine for the war affected population became more glaring than ever."[63]

The question therefore is what was the nature of reconciliation and peace building in the barracks and among military families? Second, to what extent did reconciliation, reconstruction and resettlement efforts of government assuage the cry of military wives? One of the very first steps taken by General Yakubu Gowon's administration while the war raged was the establishment of the National Rehabilitation Commission under Decree No.41 having anticipated the enormity of rehabilitation work and its challenges. To handle the task therefore, a Commissioner was appointed in the person of Mr Timothy Omo-bare an astute administrator and technocrat.

The appointment of Mr Ukpabi Asika, a onetime lecturer of political science at the University of Ibadan as the Administrator of East Central State was also in the direction of reconciliation and peace building. It helped in facilitating the co-ordination of relief efforts of the refugees.[64] Other programmes aimed at ameliorating the problem included rehabilitation, restoration of electricity, water, transport and communication systems. Aditionally, there was the idea of "farm resettlement, reopening of factories, and orientation of the people. These efforts were designed to facilitate the resumption of normal economic life."[65]

Apart from this agenda, the use of enlightenment campaign was suggested and utilized, in the media and local villages stressing that at no time in the history of this nation have the Igbo been declared unwanted by any section of the country. This enlightenment was important because every Nigerian knew the indispensable contribution of the Igbo people in the social, economic, and political development of the country.[66] This project was said to have been important because it had been argued in some quarters that integrating the Igbo was central to post-war reconciliation and any attempt to allow the Igbo break away from the larger society would also facilitate the imminent exit of other sections of the country.[67]

Thus, the use of such epithet as *Yanmiri*, 'rebels', 'Biafrans' as pointed out earlier were discouraged by the regime in order to restore the confidence of the people.[68] As part of reconciliation effort, it was announced that all secessionists who were members of the Eastern Nigeria Public Service should report in the first instance to their respective State Governments for re-absorption into the service as they were eligible for absorption into the Federal Civil Service if they so desired. Similarly, Federal officers on postings to Federal offices in the former Eastern Nigeria were directed to report to Benin, Calabar, Enugu and PortHarcourt since they were assigned agents of the Federal Government.

On the part of the Nigerian Military, the case of Biafran soldiers was suggested for review by a Board of Officers mandated to probe the war activities and roles of officers on the secessionist side. At the end of the exercise, a large proportion of officers and men were re-absorbed while others were dismissed from service. However, officers who participated in the January 1966 coup alongside those who helped secessionist forces to invade the former Midwest Region were detained for a period of time.[69]

As part of reconciliation and reconstruction programme of the Gowon regime, it was suggested that demobilised armed forces personnel be trained and placed in gainful employment in civil life while disabled persons on both sides of hostility be provided for, absorbed into the Nigerian Army without prejudice. This was also meant to affect the unfortunate civilians who by miscalculations of military tactics suffered disability.[70] It was also agreed that priority be given to children of military dependants who lost their parents in the war. This was intended to provide succour, counselling and psychological solutions to them following the hangover of war. Therefore such students who were known to have lost their guardians and sponsors were granted financial assistance in the form of scholarships,

loans and bursary according to their desire.[71] According to Isawa Elaigwu, by the end of 1971, quite an appreciable amount of work had been done with regard to rehabilitation, reconstruction and resettlement and about N120 million worth of cash and materials had been expended on rehabilitation work in Nigeria within the period 1970-71. The value of assistance from foreign donors was put at N64.6 million while that of the Federal Government Rehabilitation and Special Currency Grants totalled about N33.14 million.[72]

The contributions of Nigerian Women's Organisation to the effective integration of wives of military personnel into the barracks cannot be underestimated. This is because their ideas and suggestions provided the needed comfort which reassured displaced wives of Eastern Nigerian origin that the proclamation and spirit of 'no victor no vanquish' was real.[73] The only aspect that eluded the organisation or seem to have been glossed over as this study discovered was in the area of compensation to military wives for the loss of personal valuables and economic power.

There were other organisations and well meaning individuals too numerous to mention here who brought palliative measures as well as psychological antidote for the effective rehabilitation of military wives, particularly those that lost their spouses and children. The effort of the church in this direction, especially, that of the Young Men and Women Christian Association and some International Organizations was highly commendable at a time the country was in search of unity and peace.[74]

Impact of Coups on Wives of Military Personnel

The history of wives of military personnel cannot be complete without a thorough look at the effect of coup and counter-coups on military wives in Nigeria. To some members of the public, it was normal for soldiers to organise coup and change government whenever they perceived corruption or inefficiency in the security of a nation. For this reason(s) there was nothing inherently bad about it, but suffice to state that it was one of the most dreaded events in the lives of wives of military personnel. This is because it is one action that was capable of changing the status of some military men and women for good or evil in the social system of the barracks. This has been the heritage of the Nigerian military since the 1960s up till the 1990s.

To most Nigerians outside the barracks, the 1966 coup should have been the beginning and the end of all coups in Nigeria because of the wanton destruction of lives. This is encapsulated by Claude Philips in 1984 when he described the Nigerian Civil war as the most notorious conflict ever witnessed in Africa.[75] This perhaps, was before the dawn of reckless killings and genocide in Liberia, Sierra Leone and the horn of Africa. What therefore were the experiences of soldiers' wives during coups and to what extent do they adapt to the situation?

Coups are a source of many sad moments for women, indeed the account and experiences of wives of military personnel have been one of mixed feelings, sadness and joy. This is because they were either trapped in the cross-fire, running for dear life or in search of husbands and children. Patients in the hospitals were not left out as they discharged themselves without the consent of doctors and nurses to enable them monitor events in the barracks. At the same time, merry-making in Messes and *Mammy* markets ceased.

As one of the authors puts it:

> Most officers' wives find themselves getting nervous and very anxious and terrified at coup times. They go around wanting to know more about what is going on. Although, they are officers' wives, they are expected to know more about the goings-on at coup times, it is however common, although unbelievable, that most officers' wives do not know much about what is happening at such times. Like their civilian counterparts.[76]

This is consequently the dilemma of women, hence they had their eyes and ears glued to the television and radio sets, talking in hushed voices and waiting for more information as events unfolded. This circumstance was further compounded by the fact that many women could not .predict or define the engagements and contacts of their spouses within and outside the barracks. Adaptation in the system was usually difficult but women often strengthen their fate through the influence and power of other women. Sometimes, they took solace in providence believing that wisdom would continue to guide their spouses.

In view of the above, the question is, to what extent is the claim that most officers' wives talked their spouses into planning a coup? Or more succinctly, how factual is the argument that women provided the spirit and platform upon which coups were executed, particularly women desirous of the office of the first lady? This study shows that there is no validity in the debate as propagated by members of the public. The planning and execution of coup was simply a masculine exploit directed by officers of same ideology and course mates.

According to a soldier's wife,[77] on February 13, 1976, my husband had gone to the office and all of a sudden, a telephone rang. This phone normally rang, but we never used to pick it up because it was a crossed line. I was in the bath on this day and the phone kept ringing, so I decided to pick it up, suddenly, a voice on the other end said; get out of there now or never!

I dropped the phone and ran downstairs forgetting that I was naked. When I realised this, I ran back to my room, threw on a dress and on getting downstairs discovered that the whole house had been surrounded by armed soldiers. My children who were having their breakfast, and I had to run through the Boys quarters to a private house. My husband was then a State governor and the military men who surrounded the house were ordered by coup plotters to take over the Government House. In the same manner, Maryam Babangida remarks:

> The most anxious period was when an officer was sent to arrest a coup-plotter who happened to be a personal friend of his. When he arrived at the coup-plotter's house, he told him that he was under arrest. He (coup-plotter) was at the dining table with playing cards with his wife and three children with his gun by his right hand on the table. When told that he was under arrest, the coup-plotter replied that he would come with him without a fight because it was he who was sent to arrest him and not some other officers. He then left his wife and children. That was the last time they set their eyes on him.[78]

On the other hand, an officer's wife[79] recalled how an officer implicated in one of the coups was a regular caller to their house well before and after the planning stage of the coup. He was just like a member of this family, he would get any dish of his choice prepared for him whenever he wanted and whenever he ran short of cash, we used to give him. But it was shocking to hear his name in the broadcast. Thus, whenever, the door to my house opened, I thought security operatives had finally come to arrest my husband because of their friendship but this was not to be.

Nevertheless, these were some of the features that characterised the lives of military wives which their civilian counterparts do not experience. The event of 13 February 1976 which claimed the lives of General Murtala Ramat Mohammed, Col Ibrahim Taiwo, the then Military Administrator of Kwara State, and other officers caused much distress to their wives. First, wives and children had to leave the barracks into the private domain.

Second, wives had to lose their status in the Military Wives' Association. According to Maryam Babangida: "This is a great pain for many an army officers' wife ....At the end of the day there is nothing so glamorous about the army institution. Looking at it closely, I find nothing really glamorous. But it is certainly an experience" [80]

The predicament of some women who suffered the ouster of their husbands has been selected for discussion. These women include Hajia Safinatu, wife of General Mohammed Buhari, Cecilia Abiodun Idiagbon, wife of late General Tunde Idiagbon, and Mrs Gloria Labora Shoda, wife of Col Emma Shoda. The fall of General Buhari and Idiagbon's regime in 1985 created a lot of challenges to their wives and family in general. It was reported in the media that Hajia Safinatu, was away with her daughter Zulaihatu to Germany on medical grounds when her husband was toppled. Consequently, mother and daughter had to cut short their stay in order to ascertain the true position of events at home. On arrival, she went straight to Bonny Camp, Lagos where her husband was detained. Having conferred with him, she was said to have moved out of Dodan Barracks their official residence to a private abode in Kaduna with her children.[81]

The case of Cecilia Abiodun Idiagbon, was not so different. She was said to have been celebrating the Sallah holiday with her mother in-law in Ilorin when her husband was ousted. Following this development, she re-located to an old family quarter inside the Government Reservation Area (GRA) Ilorin. In her words, "I am thankful to God that he lost his job and not his life, for when he was in power; I counted each day he returned a bonus for the family." [82] The question therefore is why was it necessary for wives to relocate outside the barracks? According to an informant[83] the action was necessary to avoid mockery and ridicule of neighbours and friends.

Sometimes, it was to avoid the harassment of security operatives wanting to build on existing information about the husband. Worst still was the frequent calls by Military Police and other Agencies eager to extort information real or imagined from mother and children. On the other hand, the action was necessary because the fall of a military husband also marked the fall of his wife. For instance, since the 1966 coup nothing has been heard of the wives of late Brigadier Zakariya Maimalari, Colonels Arthur Unegbe, Kur Mohammed, Ralph Adetunji Shodeinde, Kur Mohammed, and a few others. Perhaps, in those days people did not know about military wives.

The account of Mrs Gloria Labora Shoda is informative because it provides an insight into the plight of officers' wives whose husbands were either implicated or involved in a coup.. Her ordeal began in December 23, 1997, exactly on a Christmas Day when her husband and two of her sons, a sister and bosom friend were arrested for allegedly planning a coup. Though, they were later exonerated according to media report but until then she had been put under house arrest for almost a year.[84] According to her:

> The soldiers indeed came on the third day and started harassing everybody in the house and one of the soldiers told me; your husband planned a coup! I replied him, you said so; I know my husband didn't plan a coup. The soldiers hit back if you don't take care, we will take you to where your husband is; I said it will be better for me to join my husband, son, sister, my friend and my husband's friend at wherever they are being detained. That shut his mouth.[85]

Extending the discourse, Gloria Shoda pointed out that "all the doors in the house were locked by the soldiers after which they put me and my three children who were on holiday from London in a single room for days denying us access to bath."[86] She further recalled how a band of Security agents, this time from the State Security Service (SSS) with so many policemen came to the house to interrogate her for hours. All this time, she emphasized, I was not scared of any of them because I know the hazards of military job. When your husband is

a military man and the military had gone into politics, you must expect anything anytime; It has happened so many times and most of us (wives of officers) have always prepared our minds for any eventuality.[87]

Apart from the predicament of women, to what extent were military children affected by coups and counter-coups as members of the household? Since the history of coups in Nigeria, children of military men and other dependants had never escaped without any trauma or embarrassment during the encounter. For instance, in the 1966 coup d'état officers' children were wounded in an attempt to shield their father from the hands of coup plotters. It was in one of such attempts that an officer's wife was murdered in cold blood with her husband despite the spirited eddort of the children and dependants who also suffered injuries.

In another development, an informant[88] notes that on 13 February, 1976 some pupils of Army Children Primary School, Dodan Barracks were sent home by their teachers to avoid the pandemonium caused by the coup. Unfortunately, some of the children were hit by stray bullets while others sustained various degrees of injuries. The teachers were not spared as some of them scaled the perimeter fence for safety.

Available literature has shown that children also suffered humiliation once their military father was overthrown. For instance, Safinatu Buhari remarks that her children had to suffer the taunts of school mates same way wives of coup plotters suffered the ridicule of friends and neighbours. As Safinatu Buhari pointed out, "one of my children, Fatima aged 12, a form two student of Bakori Federal Government College Funtua, went through hell before her principal came to her rescue."[89]

She added:

> Soon as the bell rang for lunch, the senior girls would send Fatima on errand to fetch water or face corporal punishment. By the time she came back, her meal had disappeared. Fatima once missed her meals this way for two days. Her case became worse when her mother (Safinatu) approached the principal, only to be taunted that she was worried because she had no money to send her children to schools abroad. The principal came to her rescue only when Safinatu produced a medical report on the girl. On the other hand, her last daughter, named Lami was denied admission into a nursery school in Kaduna for no just cause.[90]

Lucy Obem, a family friend of the Orkars states that "the children of Gideon Gwarzo Orkar had to be withdrawn from military schools were they were registered students following the hostility of schoolmates who accused them of the sins of their father in plotting a coup to overthrow the government of General Ibrahim Babangida."[91] She also stressed that the children were told by their friends and classmates that it was the devil that pushed their father into conspiracy and for this reason he must die.[92] In the same vein, their mother who worked as a senior nurse at the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre, Oshodi, Lagos could not escape such harassment. In consequence of this, she had to arrange her posting far away from the location because friends and colleagues had often accused her of being over-ambitious.

The question arises as to how do wives cope with life outside barracks with or without military husbands? Life could not be said to be easy for wives who had no previous professional skill considering the enormous privileges and opportunities enjoyed in the military circle. For instance, the experience and professionalism of Gloria Shoda cannot be overlooked even though, her husband; Col Emma Shoda was later exonerated of complicity and retired from service. What actually kept her going was her breakthrough in teaching, politics, and industry. She was reputed to have been a onetime chairperson of the Remo

Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) branch Ogun State. At the same time she was managing a flourishing primary and secondary school in Ogun State.[93]

The case of Safinatu Buhari was also not easy because adjustment to civil life as a First Lady was highly challenging. As Wale Oladepo remarks "As she settled in her lonely world in that eerie end of Kaduna G.R.A, Safinatu finds time to do some literary work, she was reported to have been putting finishing touches to the cookery book she started at Dodan Barracks."[94] But the condition of Cecilia Abiodun Idiagbon was not so much about skill but what to do with her life, despite her proficiency in nursing. In the end, she settled for hair dressing business and petty trading. [95]

Impact of Peacekeeping Operations on Wives of Military Personnel

Apart from the effect of wars and coup d'états on military wives in the barracks, the other problem that appeared worrisome but quite inevitable was the involvement of military men in peacekeeping and peace support operations (PSOs) abroad. This aspect of the study is significant because of the way it impacted on wives and the barracks culture in general, especially in the last decade of the twentieth century. Some of the challenges include: marriage between soldiers and foreign women, promiscuity, neglect of immediate families, problems of child training and home management, managing of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, burying the dead combatants, and representing spouses in different meetings in the barracks. As Bartholomew Edeh has shown:

> Military life will always keep you [soldiers] away from families, home and communities; this is certainly true during peace keeping operations. The long period of absence from home exposes soldiers to the risk of being infected with HIV.[Because] Peacekeeping missions are usually in countries where HIV-AIDS is pronounced due to the conflict situations that exposes people there to degradable and inhumane conditions.[96]

Nevertheless, much evidence exists on the exploits of officers and men in peacekeeping mission in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Here, one can only highlight the important and isolated cases as it affected wives in the barracks. The questions that confront this study include the following: First, what was the background to the Liberian mission? Second, to what extent were soldiers' wives affected by the involvement of spouses in peacekeeping operations and peace support operations? Additionally, how did the situation impact on some military children? And finally, how did the long absence of spouses affect the sexual behaviour of officers and wives both at home and mission area?

The challenges associated with peacekeeping operations within and outside the country are little understood by the public. This informed the criticisms of the Nigerian military in mission, particularly in the 1990s. Writing on the "Evolution and Issues of Peace Support Operations," I.S. Zabadi notes:

> The challenge to establish and maintain law and order, peace and security has pre-occupied humanity since political communities emerged on the face of the earth. This has been occasioned by the endemic nature of conflict as part of the features of human life in such an environment.[97]

The participation of troops in peacekeeping operations in the early years of the 1990s began with Liberia. According to Ephraim Udofiah, "The Nigerian military has been the vanguard in the quest of restoring peace in Liberia even at the peak of the two civil wars in that country."[98] When the first civil war broke out, it was the Nigerian military that spearheaded the 15,000 man strong, Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) set up to, among other things, impose a ceasefire, stop the killing of innocent civilians, ensure the safe evacuation of foreign nationals and assist the Liberian people to set up an interim government until election was held.[99] However, by 1st October, 2003, when UN took over the operations in Liberia, a large proportion of the troops were Nigerians.

Similarly, the first batch of United Nation Mission in Liberia (UNAMIL) troops were largely Nigerian troops turned over from the then existing ECOMOG troops and the trend continued till the return of peace.

In a similar circumstance, the Nigerian Contingent (NIGCON) was despatched to Sierra Leone under Resolution 1270 of 22 October, 1999 with two Battalions (NIBATTs 22 and 23) with a total strength of 1,500 men, eight Staff Officers and four Military Observers. With the expansion of United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to about 11,300 troops, Nigeria's contribution also increased to over 3,000 personnel making her the largest Troop Contributing Country (TCC) in the mission at the time following the inclusion of officers and men from the Nigerian Battalions in ECOMOG.[100]

The essence of this background is to demonstrate that over 45, 000 Nigerian officers and men fought in both Liberia and Sierra Leone civil conflicts between 1990-2000 and out of this number, Nigeria lost over 15, 000 men in the war, while close to 2, 000 Nigerian soldiers were reported missing in Charles Taylor's enclave till today. Thus when the former Chief of Army Staff, General Martin Agwai was shown a temporary morgue in Sierra Leone where the bodies of Nigerian soldiers were deposited awaiting evacuation to the military morgue in Nigeria, he lamented the loss and effect on military families.

Therefore it is safe to argue that in Darfur, Liberia and Sierra Leone civil conflicts about 17,000 wives of military personnel were made widows within a space of ten years. This marked the beginning of hardship for most wives in the barracks. It should also be noted that during the period some officers and men stayed between six months and one year while others stayed up to four years without visiting Nigeria to see their families. The prolonged

absence of men therefore impacted negatively on most women, and the same time created opportunity for sexual immorality and unwholesome behaviour in the barracks. This is corroborated by Theresa Ezak in the following lines, "It is not easy for a woman to manage a home without the assistance of a husband. Worse still, was the feeling that one does not know whether her husband was alive or dead. The incommunicado of some of our husbands during the period provided the opportunity for some women to misbehave."[101] This situation was also compounded by the fact that troops engaged in Liberia mission were later deployed to Sierra Leone as supporting contingents for another round of operation lasting beyond two years.

In most peacekeeping efforts by military men overseas, wives were not only ignorant, but isolated from the progress of events. This is because military authorities were not bound to notify wives of proceedings and casualties of war in mission except where one was directly affected as next-of-kin (NOK). Therefore while the men were in battle, women took over dual responsibility as mother/father in the household. This role(s) was crucial because of the challenges associated with the management of children in particular and the home front in general. The fate of these women to say the least was the same in most garrisons in Nigeria.

In the words of Grace Bako, a soldier's wife, "it is the frequent absence of soldiers from home coupled with the attendant indifference of the authorities to the plight of their families that made people admit that soldiering was a bad profession.[102] Rukayat Ademola, a cancer patient at the Military Hospital Yaba, "told her husband leaving for Liberia on peacekeeping mission, when you hear that I am dead take heart because the authorities might not allow you to come home for the burial. I know your profession"[103] This was the plight of most soldiers' wives over the years, as their husbands returned from one engagement no sooner they

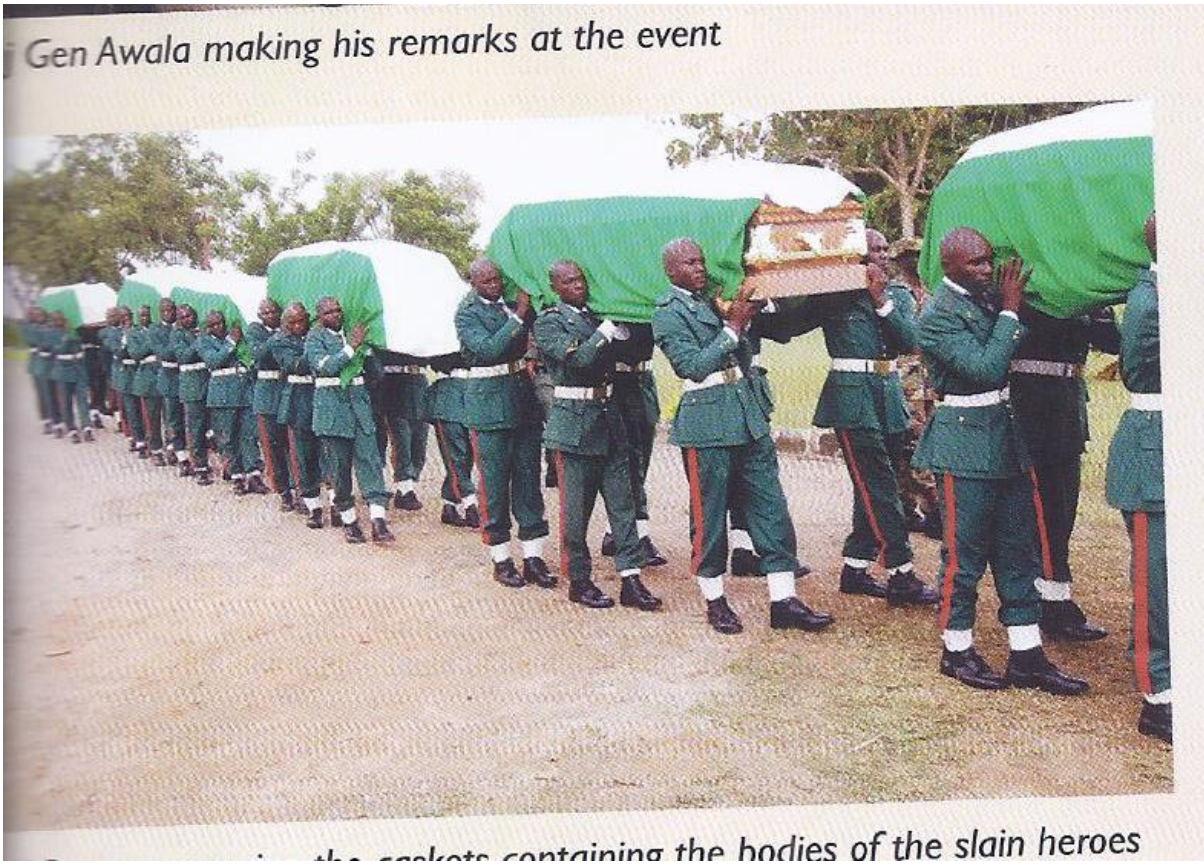
embarked on another. Though, the situation was not peculiar to Nigerian troops alone but a characteristic of the United States Military Force as highlighted by Hamilton. I. McCubbin and Barbara.B.Dahl:

> Families adapted to new responsibilities with modifications in family roles accompanied by related anxieties, frustrations, and feelings of insecurity engendered by the husband/father absence. Not surprising, the majority of the wives reported the lack of husband's companionship as the most difficult problem with which they had to cope. Concomitantly, difficulties with feelings of loneliness, making decisions alone, lack of suitable social outlets, concern for personal health, and guilt feelings about their change in role were emphasized by the wives as additional problem areas.[104]

The predicament of some servicemen's wives in Nigeria got to its height in the wake of the Liberian crises when officers and men of the Nigerian Army were mobilized from 103 Battalion (Bn), Awkwunanu, Enugu state, 149 Battalion Ojo, Lagos, 241 Recce Battalion, Nguru, 244 Tank Battalion, Shaki, Oyo State, 5 Battalion, Kano, 130 Battalion, Ogoja, 26 Battalion, Sokoto, 195 Battalion, Agenebode, 65 Battalion, Bonny Camp, Lagos, 73 Battalion, Elele, PortHarcourt and 1Battalion, Birnin Kebbi.[105]

One of the problems that confronted some Nigerian officers and men in 1990 and 1991, an era described as the early years of ECOMOG troops was the inability to arrange or settle the home front with their wives before departure. This was due to the fact that majority of the troops were caught off-guard due to the exigency of the assignment. Soldiers who attempted to feign illness or escape mobilisation were handcuffed and dragged from the office on board a waiting truck to the Airport. In consequence of this, most wives became stranded and uncomfortable with the military system because they could not access the salaries of their spouses as letters of introduction were not issued before their departure.

Figure 10



Pall Bearers Carrying the Caskets of Slain Soldiers involved in PKO in Sudan at National Military Cemetery Abuja. 2014.

Source: *New Soldier Magazine*, Ist Quarter, 2014, 79.

The plight of these women could not even receive attention in the banks because no directive or standing orders were given by account holders (soldiers) on who to pay and what amount of money as Automated Teller Machine (ATM) had not evolved in banking operations in the country. Since money was needed for the feeding and maintenance of the family, paying of school fees, and procurement of essential items, the condition generated financial crisis unknown in the history of military families in Nigeria. The situation was also unhealthy for a few families whose breadwinners handed over cheques to friends with a standing order on the remittances to be made to their families as monthly allowance.

Unfortunately, this arrangement worked against them as their families were either denied of such stipends or were short-changed. While other soldiers with moral problems took advantage of their friends' wives. An informant[106] pointed out that during the period some women engaged in unpleasant acts in order to feed their children because they had no skill or businesses of their own and no one to lend money to them because virtually all the women were in the same predicament. Perhaps, it was against this backdrop that Sultan Sa'ad Abubakar III, a retired General in the army suggests:

> The Nigerian Army must fully prepare its units before sending them out to the mission area. While we are talking about preparation, this includes personal well-being of the troops...and welfare of family. When sending out troops for six months or one year they must be re-assured with the arrangements the Army has made for the welfare of families they are leaving behind as this will allow them to concentrate in what they are doing.[107]

In the light of this development, one would like to ask, what were the reactions of women in the barracks to ensure that the right thing was done and how did the military authorities respond to this situation to restore order and stability in the system?

Reaction of Women and Responses of Military Authorities

When this problem became worrisome in the successive months of their husbands' departure, the women began to channel their complaints regularly to the office of the *magajiya* through the Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) of units for the attention of Commanding Officers. But due to military protocols and confidentiality in the system, excuses were made by these officers on the grounds that they had no powers of their own to authorize or implement the release of salaries of servicemen under command to dependants. Thus in some operation units, the women refused to be placated because of the enormity of pains and sufferings. As a result, they mounted protests which assumed a level of mutiny in the barracks to the point of attracting the attention of the general public.

In view of the foregoing, the authorities became disturbed and decided to make the following concessions. - A policy letter was issued directing Battalion Commanders to use their discretion and available local arrangements to solve the welfare problems of wives and dependants of serving personnel on peacekeeping operations.[108] Therefore, Finance Officers of respective units, Adjutants, and Commanders of Battalions decided that wives be allowed to collect the salaries of their spouses on Pay table to ease tension. This internal understanding or "allotment" as it is called in the system was not as effective as envisaged as a result of the argument of some women on the exact salaries of their spouses.

Thus an alternative arrangement was suggested by the Military Command, it stipulates that privileges be extended to all serving personnel on peacekeeping operations to dispatch endorsed cheque booklet to their wives. In this regard, Principal Staff Officers (PSO) of various units were directed to liaise with Bank Managers in their domain to facilitate the issuance of letters of introduction to wives to enable them open Current Account.

And women whose husbands died in mission or missing in action should be assisted to access whatever funds their husbands left in the banks. This measure was adjudged in most barracks as too little, too late, because some wives had already been fed up with the institution.

The other matter that disturbed most wives during the period was the report of indiscriminate sexual behaviour of some soldiers. Reports from Liberia confirmed that some Nigerian peacekeepers were already married to Liberian ladies. This anomaly on the part of servicemen gained currency in 1994 when the first batch of peacekeepers returned with tales of soldiers married with children in Liberia. By the second half of the 1990s when hostilities escalated among rebel factions, wounded peacekeepers and those infected with HIV/AIDS referred to Base Hospital Yaba, corroborated the account to some women who visited them.

Soon as most women became convinced of the sexual exploit of their spouses, their confidence collapsed because their matrimonial homes were in jeopardy. An informant[109] lamented that it was the long absence of her husband from home that caused their problem and the situation she argued, was compounded by the indifference of military authorities to families and dependants in the barracks. This development caused some women to have double loyalty in their matrimony, while others became carefree in their behaviour.

The strange behaviour of some children was another source of concern during the period. Indeed, the emotional and psychological behaviour of children under five years came to the fore. Most of them were either taken ill or resorted to asking questions on the whereabouts of their fathers. Thus, some infants became regular patients in hospitals and clinics following health failure and occasional crisis.

"For the families with children, the most reported symptoms reflecting adjustment difficulties were unwarranted and frequent crying, fear of darkness whenever there was power outage, nightmares, nail-biting, shyness and rebelliousness."[110]

On the other hand, social and interpersonal adjustments of children were also areas of concern to mothers, some were reported to have displayed unusual behaviour and inadequacy in the school while others had peer challenges and unfriendly relationship with mothers which was seen to be uncommon to other children and young people whose fathers were not involved in operations.[111] It was for this and other reasons, that Military Command decided to allow soldiers on mission to speak directly to their spouses and children once in a while since it was believed that hearing the voices of their fathers on phone would not only ease tension but improve their adjustment.

Added to this, was the problem of juvenile delinquency of soldiers' children. This became evident soon as some women assumed mother/father roles in the domestic affairs. Thus, most of the boys became unruly, while others clung to gangs, refusing to attend classes in schools. Some adult boys took advantage of the absence of their fathers to keep late nights and engage in petty stealing. In an attempt to be guided by their freedom, some of the boys began to challenge the authority of their mother in attempting to checkmate or regulate their movements and association. Majority of the children therefore contested that leadership of their fathers' homes passes to them immediately their fathers went on mission. This development became worrisome in some homes thereby attracting the attention of Military Police and Intelligence Office.

Extending the idea, McCubbin and Dahl pointed out that "the unfavourable consequences of father absence may manifest themselves at an earlier age in boys than in girls.... The absence of the father may cause problems as the young boys shifts from mother to masculine identification."[112]

Two issues manifested in most garrisons during the period, these were, stealing and promiscuity. These social ills competed for space in most barracks as buildings were burgled either at night or daytime when occupants were away to work. This prompted the authorities to intensify surveillance and documentation of dependants day and night. For instance, in Ojo, Ikeja and Owode Military Barracks, soldiers' children caught during the exercise were identified and punished, while others perceived to be illegal occupants were detained until useful information was obtained on their method of operations and networks. Others were thereafter evicted from their hide-outs.

As cases of juvenile deliquency assumed worrisome dimension, Commanders instructed that adult boys of 18 years and above be evicted from the barracks to serve as deterrent to others. This formed another twist in the myriad of problems facing wives in the community. To assuage the tension in most households Commanding Officer's meeting with wives became a fortnightly affair in the barracks. This was aimed at educating wives on the rules and regulations of the military and the position of children in the sub-system. In most of the gatherings, wives were advised to assert themselves, assume full control of their children, and establish themselves as the rightful and legitimate representatives of their husbands who were away serving their fatherland.[113]

Similarly, Officers' Wives Associations were encouraged to be alive to their responsibilities towards womenfolk, especially, those whose spouses were involved in mission. They were also advised to extend their empowerment effort to the door steps of wives of non-commissioned officers to alleviate their troubles.

The prevalent problem of household was also caused by daughters of servicemen. Most of them had become teenagers in their fathers' absence and engaged in pre-marital sex which sometimes resulted in pregnancies. For instance, Monica Adei, a soldier's daughter was impregnated in one of the barracks in Lagos when her father was on peacekeeping mission in Liberia. Her mother tried to terminate the pregnancy but was advised against it by a medical expert; hence, the child was born.[114]

The question therefore is why was her mother worried? As an informant[115] explains, her mother was worried because the boy that impregnated her was a student in the same class and at the same time a neighbour in the same block. As worrisome as the matter was, deviant behaviour was not excused by Commanding Officers in the barracks. However, this development became problematic thereby forcing the authorities to invoke appropriate sanctions on offenders, especially, servicemen who violated the rules of engagement to teach others a lesson.

Peacekeepers' Predicaments

The anti-social behaviour of some Nigerian peacekeepers in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s was an open secret. This is because available evidence indicates that the actions of the military to combat the amorous desires of troops was inadequate considering the circumstances under which Nigerian troops fathered the much debated 250,000 ECOMOG

babies.[116] Part of the measures introduced by the authorities stipulate that officers and men implicated in sexual misconduct in mission areas be reprimanded and where a service personnel was medically ascertained to have been infected with HIV/AIDS, the officer be returned to unit (RTU) to enable him/her access medical facilities at home.

In fact, when the Sierra Leone crisis broke out in 1999 the trend continued unchecked, so much so, that some soldiers returned home with their wives and children until the authorities reacted vehemently. But the spirit to be pro-active or punish affected officers and men by the Military Command was at first lacking. This standpoint was supported by the fact that no one was actually tried openly for indiscipline either in Liberia or back home in Nigeria, rather, Colonel M.M Yerima, the then former Director, Defence Information, Abuja argues:

> In fact, there is no mission in the world where soldiers would not have children... a relationship with local women is quite normal during war time...the army frowns upon marriage by a soldier to a foreign lady... "the Armed Forces will not say do not befriend a woman. All I know is a soldier can't marry a foreigner. Having a relationship is a soldier's personal life, and he should not do anything that will bring disgrace to the Armed Forces.[117]

It was the silence and indifference of military authorities that attracted the attention of the media, particularly, the print and electronic media in Nigeria where some of these social poverty where highlighted. For example, The *Sunday Punch*, June 14, 2009, lead story; "HIV/AIDS ravages Nigerian soldiers – US", [118] and Oyeniyi Bukola Adeyemi's "From Liberia with Love: Officers' Wives Confronting HIV/AIDS."[119] Also informative were the articles of Major (Dr) A.A.Ogbe, "HIV/AIDS Amongst Military Personnel: The Way Forward,"[120] and Tadaferua Ujorha's, "How Nigerian soldiers fathered 'ECOMOG Kids."[121] These commentaries from the media, scholars and activists on the exploits of Nigerian troops involved in peacekeeping mission, brought home these problems to the Nigerian populace.

Another outcry during the period emanated from foreign observers and indigenous people of Liberia and Sierra Leone who were uncomfortable with the desecration of their daughters and wives by ECOMOG peacekeepers. These groups therefore called for the immediate demobilization of troops for peace to reign in their countries.

At the same time, some military officers and men also highlighted their observations and suggestions in military journals and magazines, though, some of the articles glossed over the immediate and fundamental problems associated with sexual freedom of peacekeepers. A few of these articles included, Lcpl Bartholomew Edeh's "Peacekeeping Operation and HIV-AIDS"[122], Col. Pat Akem's "Peace Support Operations and the Challenge of Complying with International Human Rights Instruments"[123], Sultan Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar's "From Barracks to Palace: The Story of His Eminence Sultan Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar,"[124] and Major General Nuhu Bamalli's "The Nigerian Military and Peace Support Operations in a Democracy: The Sierra Leone Experience Under the United Nations"[125]among others.

Series of interviews with officers and men involved in mission in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the last decade of the twentieth century and the early years of the twenty first century indicate that many of the combatants had children while in mission. The question therefore is how did Nigerian soldiers father ECOMOG Kids? And how did this interaction play out on wives resident in Nigeria? Second, How did the military resolve the infiltration of Liberian and Sierra Leonean ladies married to Nigerian soldiers and how did it impact on the barracks culture? And to what extent did sexually transmitted diseases (STD) affect servicemen and wives in post-peacekeeping era? These questions tend to provide the hidden consequences of peacekeeping operations on military families in the last decade of the 1990s.

It should be recalled that before the Liberian conflict erupted in 1989, Nigeria had already entered into a military agreement with the then government of late president Samuel Doe. This accord motivated Nigeria to spearhead the formation and subsequent deployment of military intervention force of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). With the escalation of hostilities among warring factions, there was a breakdown of law and order which prompted civilian men and women to scamper for safety into the military camps.

At the initial stage, it was observed that the contingents viewed all displaced persons as victims of war and restrained themselves from entering into sexual relationship with any of the ladies under protection. It is for this reason that Major General Joshua Dogonyaro (rtd) a onetime ECOMOG Force Commander denied flatly the existence of 250,000 babies purported to have been fathered by Nigerian troops while on mission. According to him, "It's not true. That did not happen, at least during my time it did not happen. It was a purely military mission, and there were no relationships between troops and local Liberian women"[126]

As the years progressed, however, familiarity extended between troops and female Liberians desperate for comfort, food and refuge. This interaction cut-across food vendors, hawkers of drinks and cigarettes, and professional female entertainers roaming about in the barracks and duty posts. The association between troops and indigenous girls gradually metamorphosed into procreation of babies as many of the girls were raped, abducted or consented to marital life. This is aptly corroborated by Harrison Aniukwu, Chairman, Nigeria Citizens Union Red Light Monrovia: "ECOMOG was providing food supplies to the people here during the war and so relationships blossomed because ECOMOG provided security as well." [127]

However, this point did not undermined the barbaric role of rebel factions who took advantage of war situation to sexually molest some women and girls who in turn claimed to have been impregnated by ECOMOG troops, knowing full well that the use of the name would readily attract pity and sympathy of the Red Cross International. According to an informant[128] some of the girls hid under the cover of ECOMOG because having mentioned that ECOMOG soldiers were responsible, guaranteed them food and free medical services in the camps. At the same time, non-governmental organizations would rise to the occasion as part of their social responsibility. On the part of the girls, regular pregnancy was a modest way to escape torture and sexual ordeals of rebels.

The other factor responsible for increased reproduction of babies in Liberia was the case of "overstayed ECOMOG troops" especially Nigerians being the largest contributing contingent. It should be reiterated that during the conflict in Liberia, some Nigerian troops stayed between 4-6 years and from Liberia majority were drafted to Sierra Leone without visiting home to see their families or attend to pressing domestic issues in Nigeria. This perhaps provided the freedom for some of them to settle down happily with their foreign mistresses and children.

The other factor that contributed to this anomaly was the social and cultural life of the Liberian women. During the war, most women ignored the idea of artificial birth control or family planning even when a high degree of sexual relation prevailed among women and the combatants. The deliberate rejection of soldiers' use of condom by most Liberian women, even when they were dispensed by ECOMOG troops was a factor in the reproduction of children. Added to this, was the flagrant disregard to the campaigns of non-governmental organizations on the safe method of sexual relations in refugee camps.

Finally, there existed a high level of fertility among Liberian women so much so that women of 60 years and above were still bearing children in different refugee camps. The culture of the adult women also impacted greatly on adolescent girls, making it possible for two Liberian blood sisters to engage one ECOMOG soldier provided he satisfied them materially and sexually.

Abubakar Sadiq, an informant, recounted how he had three children from different Liberian Ladies. In his word, "Liberian Ladies lacked decency which affected them in the way they perceived marriage, while they were going out with you as a lover, at the same time they were engaged with your friend and this was what made some of our soldiers to abandon them after one or two children."[129]

An informant also affirmed[130] that in most Nigerian Battalion (NIBATT) in Liberia, ECOMOG Babies or ECOMOG Kids as they were known were seen running up and down as if it was a full-fledged peace settlement. For this reason, some of the troops were reputed to have had their Liberian in-laws (father and mother) around them in the same camp where the soldiers provided for them.[131] Staff Sergeant Akindehin Christopher also noted that "out of every twenty Nigerian troops, twelve had children in Liberia and out of this number eight had more than two children."[132] This is cogently substantiated by Tadaferu Ujorha:

> The number of births by Liberian women has been put at 250,000. The news broke recently when a senior government official stressed this figure before the House of Representatives Diaspora Committee, and said 'many of the kids have undergone registration and naturalization as Liberians, having waited for years without seeing their fathers.[133]

Allowing the children to undergo registration and naturalization was an interim solution. The principal issue in my opinion is that the children would later request to know their biological fathers as a result of stigmatization and the actors perhaps might not be alive to tell the truth. In the words of an informant:

> In the 1990s countless women came forward to say that they had children for Nigerian ECOMOG soldiers. So Ambassador Ogbonnaya Nduaka tried to get them registered at the Nigerian Embassy.Then the 2003 war broke out. We helped those who knew the addresses and names of the fathers of their children. But the population of births for our Nigerian soldiers is certainly higher than 250,000, given the numbers of those I saw who came forward to be evacuated[134]

Similarly, Abdulkazim Akanmu, who served with ECOMOG in Liberia and later found his way to Ijebu-Oru Refugee Camp, Ogun State, explained that the population of children born by Nigerian soldiers must be higher than 250,000. According to him; "it's more than that... I had five children by a Liberian wife.[135]

Unfortunately; these revelations were denied by some ECOMOG Field Commanders for fear of being accused of dereliction of duty and causing diplomatic strain. Yerima also stretches the argument in the following lines:

> The origin of the 250, 000 figure for Nigerian births in Liberia can be traced to a joke cracked by the Liberian Minister of Defence when he visited the country not too long ago. It was a joke cracked by their Minister of Defence who said that Nigerian troops had left 250, 0000 babies in Liberia by the time ECOMOG ended. I was present at the event which held at the Shehu Yar'adua Center. It was simply a joke.[136]

However, Tadaferu Ujorha lamented that "children born by Liberian women to Nigerian ECOMOG peacekeepers, who served in that country, are slowly coming of age and may soon start to ask questions about their identities and future."[137] This study shows that the debate on the number of children left behind by the Nigerian soldiers in Liberia would in subsequent

years become an endless dialogue, but the issues generated would also be informative to the military on the one hand and the Nigerian people on the other.

Paradox of Peacekeeping Mission

Following the demobilization of Nigerian troops in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the soldiers returned to the barracks with challenges and contradictions. First, it was open to soldiers married in the mission that their duties had abruptly ended. Some of the questions that bothered most soldiers on the eve of departure among others were, how and where to keep their wives and children. Would they be retained in Liberia or Sierra Leone or would they make their way to Nigeria at a later date? For some others, the contention was how to explain to their wives that they had children in mission areas that would be joining the family in no distant a time. To the majority, it was how to convince their wives on their present health status as most of them were ignorant of HIV/AIDS.

On the part of some women in the barracks who violated marital vows, a number of questions were also raised in their minds such as; how to explain that they had one or two children while their spouses were in mission. Related to the first was how to defend the allegation that they were caught in adultery with friends and colleagues of their military husband. To others, the burning question was how to absolve themselves of the circumstances surrounding their daughter's pregnancy while their husbands were away. On the part of the peacekeepers also, a few things were considered by most of them before attempts were made to bring along their mistresses to Nigeria irrespective of the charges or attendant consequences from the military. First, some of the women married to soldiers in mission were in most cases the only survivor in the family and attempt to abandon her was seen as uncharitable to her and the children. Second, it was also considered that most of the women provided useful information and

logistics that saved their lives from the hands of the rebels. To them, this was not only remarkable but indelible in their hearts and minds. On the other hand, those who could not muster the courage to face their wives in Nigeria left their contact addresses to the Liberian and Sierra Leonean wives with a view to reaching them at a later date. These were some of the contentions and contradictions in most homes during the period.

Dilemma of Nigerian Soldiers and Reactions of Military Authorities

The Nigerian peacekeepers were affected in many ways by the crises in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Some were injured and majority had psychological problems caused by the death of friends and gory sights of mangled bodies in war front. Those that returned with their foreign wives decided to provide alternative accommodation outside the barracks to avoid hostility of their wives at home. While others who were bachelors before the mission had no worries at first in settling down with their new wives and children until the reactions of military command.

In most homes, disagreement arose from indigenous wives who vowed not to live under the same roof with any co-wife or children. This development precipitated wife battering and divorce in most barracks as most of the soldiers refused to condone or accept what was called a woman's principle. Most often, families were invited to settle one problem or another as neighbours were already tired of such cases. But as luck would have it, Nigeria was selected as a refugee location for displaced Liberians. Why such idea was muted by members of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had remained undisclosed to troops and some members of the public.

Thus when soldiers learnt that a refugee camp was to be set up in Ijebu-Oru in Ogun State, it became a source of relief. For this reason, arrangements were made by most soldiers and their families to relocate their foreign wives and children to the camp on the promise that their monthly allowances must be regular. At first, this arrangement did not go down well with some of the alien wives who were determined to settle for good because they were convinced that the responsibility of child training would be transferred to them. Others who managed to trace their husbands to Nigeria feared that such an arrangement would place them in the same mess as others whose spouses were posted out of locations without any contact.

This state of affairs was aptly illustrated by Tadaferua Ujorha:

> In the year 2000 Cornelius Davis left Liberia and travelled to Nigeria with the intention of abducting a child. His sister Lydia Glabor had earlier given birth to a son for a Nigerian soldier who had been in Liberia as part of the ECOMOG contingent. The soldier never told her that he had a wife in Nigeria. When Lydia arrive his house sometime in 1991, he told his wife that Lydia is a poor orphan he met on the streets of Liberia. Now, he wanted to help her, or so it seemed, and sought the cooperation of his wife. He then told Lydia that the lady in his house is his sister. The young girl became pregnant and this fact could not be hidden. Drama soon ensued: Lydia now found out that the lady in the house is the soldier's wife. While the soldier's wife learnt in a shocking fashion, that Lydia was really her soldier husband's young lover. Thereafter, Lydia fled to Ghana in great fear because the first wife suddenly began to fume and to rage. Assisted by other Liberians in the barracks, Lydia fled in the dead of night leaving her son behind. Cornelius then travelled down to Nigeria to abduct the child and reunite mother and child. When he got to the barracks he discovered that the soldier had been posted up north.[138]

Apart from the problem of resettling foreign wives and children, some other consequences came to the fore. These include; the spread of HIV/AIDS in military barracks in Nigeria, cases of divorce indicated above which assumed its highpoint in the 1990s, the introduction of alien culture in the barracks following the influx of mission wives who had no orientation of barracks life, cases of juvenile delinquency which manifested in another dimension as a

consequence of separation of soldiers and alien wives and finally, the abandonment of kids in the hands of soldiers some of whom became misfit for lack of attention.

However, questions have been asked as to the nature of response from the authorities Available evidence shows that the military command was worried over the turn of events and consequently decided as a matter of policy that officers and soldiers married to foreigners be exposed and punished accordingly. The second attempt was the publications in the "Unit Routine Orders" requesting that useful information be provided to Unit Commanders of anyone married to Liberian ladies in the barracks for proper punishment[139]

When this effort failed to yield the desired result in most units and battalions, the authorities decided to set up an independent panel with the responsibility of conducting physical parade of troops with a view to arresting the culprits. Indeed, the panel commenced action from barracks to barracks, and house to house, beginning with Ikeja Military Cantonment and other barracks in Lagos suspected as flash points. Thus officers and men implicated were dismissed on the spot and evicted from the barracks while others whose wives were not on ground but actually had kids with them were reduced in rank in addition to intensive hard labour (IHL) to serve as deterrent to others.

At first it threatened the status quo of the military, but because of lapses in the system and the lack of continuity in implementation, most soldiers that relocated their wives to the refugee camp in Ijebu-Oru, Ogun State later returned them into the barracks. This therefore contributed significantly to the culture contact experienced in present times in most barracks in Nigeria, especially, in language, dressing, names of children, and food culture, among others.

The question of HIV/AIDS and the reactions of military wives to the health status of their military husbands were also threatening. The reactions of these women was bitter at the early stage especially those who were not informed by their spouses of their present status. As Pauline asserts, "We all anxiously awaited their arrival. We longed to see our husbands. Not only because of the fact that they have gone for months, but because many had died in the war. We wanted to know, if we had become widows or not."[140] According to an officer's wife as quoted by Oyeniyi, Bukola Adeyemi: "He left here a man, but returned a walking corpse"[141]

Nevertheless, HIV/AIDS pandemic and its attendant stigmatization by friends and fellow wives became commonplace. For this reason, most wives reacted by insisting on proper medical test soon as their husbands returned from mission before sexual intercourse to avoid the bitter experiences of others. This was a major problem in most households in 2004 following the return of Nigerian peacekeeping force called African Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and the United Nations African Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) in 2009/2010. The recollections of some wives who were initially reluctant to speak on their HIV/AIDS status was revealing, Tessy Oliver, a soldier's wife remarked that "it was horrible to say the least, it was as if my entire life had collapse and I found it difficult to forgive."[142]

In the words of Oluchi Emmanuel Animalu, "I knew about the disease called HIV/AIDS, I used to discuss it with my husband at home, but when he returned from mission he looked so frail and that sent some jittery into my spine. When I probed about his health he replied that it was the bad condition in Liberia. I was so eager to have him in my arms but he was reluctant, when I requested to know, he cried and I knew that something was wrong. He is late now, but I am grateful to him."[143]

The problem also affected the strength of the military, so much that the authorities decided that a clean bill of health be issued to servicemen before proceeding on peacekeeping mission and once implicated as a carrier of the deadly HIV disease, the soldier was promptly returned to unit (RTU). Thus where a soldier was cleared of health challenges before mission assignment, his RTU before the expiration was an indication to wives that all was not well with the health of their spouses.

The question is to what extent did military wives organisations assist members in particular and the community in general. The effort of military wives organisations comprised of NAOWA, NOWA, NAFOWA and AWA among others in creating awareness in the barracks cannot be overlooked. It was in part prompted by the staggering figure of people living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria purported to have been "3,300,000 people out of which 67% were female. With a 20% rate in the military and 40% were said to be female"[144]

The women's associations took up the challenges in fulfilment of their roles as a non-governmental organisation in the military community. This was also reinforced by the reports of ECOMOG returnees on the unrestrained sexual activities of officers and men. The situation became worrisome when one of the leading Daily Newspapers in Nigeria had as its headline "HIV/AIDS ravages Nigerian Soldiers."[145] This was sequel to the comments of Judith.A.MacHale, the United States Under Secretary on Public Diplomacy and Security in State Department who spoke on the national security implications of US engagement with other countries in the world at a public lecture on "Public Diplomacy: A National Security Imperative." The lecture centred on relationship of United States Military Cooperation with perceived HIV/AIDS ridden nations in which Nigeria was a focus.

Once again the Director of Public Relations of the Nigerian Army, Brigadier General Chris Olukolade described the US claim as false and malicious.[146]

Contrary to the views of the Army Chief, two separate articles by officers on ground in Sierra Leone published in Military magazine were informative. First, was the report of Major (Dr) A.A. Ogbe, a Sector One United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and a Senior Medical Officer: "HIV/AIDS Amongst Military Personnel: The Way Forward." in this exciting piece, he argues: "Studies have shown that the incidental rate of HIV/AIDS amongst the military is higher than that of the civilians....This he attributed to lack of discipline among soldiers, habitual womanizing and prolong stay in Mission Area."[147] He therefore advocated for regular workshops, sensitization of the Armed Forces, and the need for the armies of all nations, particularly Nigeria to have regulated postings capable of not prolonging separation of troops from their families.[148]

Another article of interest was written by Major Andrew Idachaba which reads: "Ms Hirut Befecadu Warns Against HIV/AIDS."[149] Befecadu was of the Civil Affairs Mission of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone and also doubled as an Ethiopian Diplomat, she writes: "The best way to stay AIDS-free is abstinence from sex ... those who cannot abstain to use condoms, since UN wants all who came to go back sound and healthy will be discipline enough to use them.'[150] These were pointers to the fact that Nigerian soldiers and their wives were dying in alarming proportion following the lack of sensitization or proactive measures by the military authorities in Nigeria. In the end, the military hierarchy capitulated as a result of overwhelming evidence.

Figure 11

Government Cemetery, Liberia, Where ECOMOG Soldiers were buried in the years 1991-1996.
Source: "Fifty Years of Nigeria's Peacekeeping Experience" (A Publication of the Defence Headquarters, Abuja, 2010), 25.

Oyeniyi Bukola Adeyemi explains:

> After the initial denial to stave-off embarrassment, the military in Nigeria came out to admit that some of its men "went beyond the rules of engagement" in Liberia and returned home with HIV/AIDS. The military shied from explaining why it had not initially conducted tests on these men before releasing them into [the] society.[151]

The reactions and responses of Military Wives' Associations contributed immensely to the establishment of HIV/AIDS Special Unit in three Reference Hospitals - Yaba, Abuja and Kaduna where AIDS patients were offered free medical services as well as Anti-retroviral drugs. The associations equally commenced aggressive awareness campaign through house to house enlightenment and talk show. It also printed instructional materials and pamphlets to guide wives of military personnel on the danger associated with unprotected sex. Some of the materials were designed to make families discuss their health status freely through objective questions.

As the years progressed, the organisation engaged in open street campaign, film shows, and free medical tests programme for people wishing to establish their HIV/AIDS status. They equally encouraged the people through workshops and seminars organized in their zones and branch offices, through which they taught women healthy living, despite the HIV/AIDS disease. The seminars and workshops also provided opportunities for women suffering from HIV/AIDS to register with the National AIDS Action Committee on AIDS (NAACA) and other cognate HIV/AIDS associations because of the advantages it offered patients and accessibility of drugs. Similarly, the associations also embarked on individual assistance of women infected with the pandemic disease both at the zonal level and cell units. This assistance came in the form of provision of foodstuffs and monetary gifts because most of them were unable to engage in any meaningful labour or productive activities of their own.

Some others benefited from the empowerment programmes of the association where sewing machines, baking utensils, ice-block making machines and other small scale industrial machines were distributed.

To alleviate the sufferings of some soldiers' children, the association initiated the payment of school fees of children of HIV/AIDS infected parents, particularly those whose parents were deceased. To what extent have the welfare programmes of military wives association impacted on HIV/AIDS patients? Available literature points to the fact that the empowerment programme of the association achieved negligible result despite the publicity and commitment of the military. This was attributed to a number of factors -- the unwieldy population of military families in the barracks, stigmatization, logistics and co-ordination.

More importantly was the problem of finance which hampered the procurement of drugs in large quantity throughout the military units. This is because financial obligation was shouldered by members of the association as against the support of donor agencies and government. Similarly, the organisation suffered from shortage of counselling and psychological units, and welfare department in the military. Thus, it was difficult for the association to tackle the enormous challenges confronting infected wives and children. Thus, most women were not only disillusioned but disenchanted from the activities of life.

Related to the above, was the association's inability to curb the stigmatization of women infected with HIV/AIDS by colleagues and co-tenants in the barracks. This issue remained problematic in the 1990s and efforts by government over the time to educate people that it was an unfriendly act to isolate infected patients yeilded little results both in the private and public domain. This was even made worse by employers of labour who discriminated against

wives infected with the deadly disease. On the issue of logistics, the women's associations were unable to provide accurate data on women infected with HIV/AIDS in the system, probably due to lack of awareness on the part of infected patients or out of shame. In consequence of this, procurement of adequate anti-retroviral drugs became a problem until major reference hospitals where given the mandate.

Up till this period of research, the military had no precise statistics of its men and women infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. Available data at their disposal only indicated soldiers admitted in military hospitals. The paucity of data is compounded by the fact that a greater proportion of officers and men claim that their ailment was a "spiritual one that required a spiritual solution." For this reason, they obtained an "Open Pass" from their Commanders to enable them travel to their villages for traditional treatments. Majority died while receiving local treatments and the military were simply notified of the loss. Infected women were equally given the privilege to acces their medication in military hospitals since the cost of treatment was free for military dependants.

Conclusion

The nature and impact of wars and conflicts on women have received adequate attention in intellectual discourse in contradistinction to that of wives of military personnel in Nigeria which remained somewhat obscure and unexplored. The effect of wars, coups and peacekeeping has been a great challenge in military organisation. This is because military husbands had often returned from such assignments wounded, incapacitated or dead. In all these, it was the women that manned the households, taking care of children, managing the home, praying for the safe return of spouses through vigils and thirst in order to remain dependable wives despite the challenges of household.

It is therefore suggested that the Federal Government and military authorities in particular should adequately provide for wives of military personnel before their spouses are sent on mission. The nature of assistance could be in form of loans to enable them have a headstart in small scale business enterprise. It could also take the form of training in skill acquisition and craft, or other capacity building. The importance of this is to avoid the problems that characterised ECOMOG peacekeeping operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone in which wives were left in quagmire, while some soldiers' children wandered into the hands of thugs and gangs.

Since peacekeeping operations had great impact on wives, welfare and juvenile departments should be established as obtained in advanced countries to help take care of the needs of women, children and other dependants in the barracks. This will go a long way in alleviating the burden of wives whose military husbands are on tour of duty and peacekeeping operations. Related to the above is the need to employ qualified counselors, psychologists, and competent resource persons to do the job of bringing succour to bereaved military families. Finally, government and military authorities should collaborate and support the activities of military wives' associations to enable them achieve set objectives in the barracks. It is along this thinking that the burden of war, stresses and separation of husband from the family for extended periods as highlighted in the theory of social system can be alleviated and adaptation to the environment feasible.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ROLE OF MILITARY WIVES ASSOCIATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1960-1999

Introduction

This chapter investigates the role and contribution of military wives associations to national development. The study notes that the involvement of women in different associations in Nigeria was not a recent development because over the years women had attempted to secure the general well-being of their colleagues and category. Women also understood that their objectives and vision would not be achieved independently but collectively. For instance, in pre-colonial societies there were robust women's associations and guilds which contributed immensely to the development of politics and social organisation. In Yoruba country, Hausaland and parts of Igbo heartlands, women's bonding projected their identity despite patriarchial ideology.

Colonial period also witnessed the participation of European wives in different associations within and outside the barracks which perhaps laid the foundation for the development of military wives' association in contemporary times. In view of the foregoing, this chapter examines the following: The evolution of women's associations and guilds, the origins of Military Wives' Associations, and the contributions of First Ladies. Others include the impact of the programmes on women and on barracks' development.

The study argues that these associations were not only essential but necessary for national development. As non-governmental organisations, wives of military personnel exploited the strength of their associations to initiate wide-ranging social action and empowerment engineering in the barracks.

Evolution of Women's Associations and Guilds

The involvement of women as a group has attracted debates in many quarters, probably because they propagated matriarchy and equality in the gendered space. In Yoruba Kingdom, for example, there were several guilds and associations of skilled professionals who used their gathering to guide and protect trade and craft. Citing the work of N.A Fadipe, A.E. Afigbo notes; " In every Yoruba town, particularly among the Oyo people an organization known as *Egbe Iyalode*, (The Association of First Lady) constituted a recognized political pressure group."[1] "Any representations made by this body to the political authorities are listened to with respect whether they are concerned with their own interests or with some broader political issue...the association was represented in the state council by its president, the Iyalode."[2]

In Egba, the Association of Erelu was reputed to have made great contributions to the political and social life of the people particularly in the nineteenth century. These women had power and influence in the commonwealth. It was also observed that their position and honour was derived mainly from the fact that they placed duty above sentiment in the government of the people.[3]

The formation of associations, on the other hand, was critical to the growth and development of many professions, thus, prospective entrants had to be assessed and considered before admittance. This measure was necessary in order to avoid an all comer affair, as this was capable of eroding the 'spirit and ethics' of their profession. Perhaps, it is this idea that informed the establishment of the guild of prostitutes as Lucy Mair declares: "In Hausa kingdom of Maradi, a royal lady, not necessarily the king's mother was appointed the official head of the prostitutes, a recognized profession in Muslim societies."[4]

Similarly, in Igbo society there was the association of *Umuada* or "daughters of the community" whose duties among others were to sanction erring wives and sometimes men who battered their wives.[5]

The import of women's association in the last four decades cannot be overemphasized. This is because most of the organisations performed dual responsibilities; first, as pressure groups and a rendezvous with people of same class and ideology, second, as outlets for empowerment or poverty alleviation programmes. Perhaps, it is for this reason that Akachi Ezeigbo referred to these associations as "women bonding," an expression extensively used in modern times by women scholars, activists and writers to denote ties of friendship and ideology existing between and among women and groups that enabled them to support one another or work together for common good.[6] The above illustration is important because it serves as a background to the understanding of women's associations in both colonial and post-colonial barracks in Nigeria.

The origins of women's associations in the barracks began immediately European wives joined their spouses in colonial Nigeria. Prior to this development, British military officers in the colonies had long established clubs as a place of relaxation and social relations after work. "It also provided relief and comfort to the lonely man separated from his family in the colonies and empires. More importantly, was the fact that the clubs served meals for its members and ensures that the bachelors or grass widower is reasonably fed, and saves him from the tender mercies of a cook who is probably inefficient."[7]

Some of the associations that survived in colonial period include; Corona Club, Royal West African Frontier Force Dinner Club, The West African Dinner Club, Lagos Club, (rudely known as the "Gin Tank)[8], Ikoyi Club, Tennis Club, Polo Club, Western Sudan Turf Club founded by Major Crawley of mounted infantry Zaria[9], and Ex-Servicemen Organisation, to mention but a few.

However, in the classification system of Colonial Service, it was obvious that the boundaries were more strongly drawn between men and women than between officers and men. Thus, in all the clubs indicated above, women were excluded, perhaps, for gender-specific reasons and inequality which was encapsulated in the argument that the "colonies was no place for White woman."[10] As for Corona Club founded in 1901 by Joseph Chamberlain, the underlying argument for the exclusion of women was stated in the "Colonial Service in Nigeria which considered itself to be men's institution, doing a job requiring 'masculine' capacities."[11]

Consequently, in the intervals between the Great wars, campaigns and reactions were stepped up against the sharp segregation in the relationship between European men and women in the colonies, perceived by liberal progressives and thinkers as unhealthy for the realisation of social goals. Some of the liberal thinkers whose arguments made meanings included Governor Bourdillon, J. Flint, Alan Burns, Joseph Chamberlains, and a few others. These men worked tirelessly to break the British officers' gender bias against women because it attracted condemnation and ridicule from the colonised. Arguing in a similar manner, J. Flint wrote: "Bourdillon criticized the model of all-male club by saying that in Nigeria, the women are much more important than the men, they are far more go-ahead and anxious to improve relations, my wife has got a first class Club going on here with 120 members equally European and African."[12]

Following the establishment of Ikoyi Club in the succeeding years, it became inevitable to admit women as members of the club since they needed men and women of similar background, interests, and art. Perhaps this was the first time British officers and European wives were admitted in the same club as contemporaries. Writing in the same vein, Allan Burns argues, "It was only after Ikoyi Club came into existence as a meeting place for men and women alike that the habit of giving small chop parties began to die….[as] these parties afforded a pleasant way of passing time between games and dinner."[13]

The opportunity therefore provided a platform for European wives to press for an all exclusive European women's club in the colonies. Thus, it was during the Governorship of Sir Graeme Thomson that the 'Ladies Progressive Club' was formed and they gathered once a fortnight in the 1930s at the Government House.[14] Membership of the Club later grew to about 120 and with the arrival of Mrs Violet Bourdillion in 1935, the post of patroness was passed to her.[15] Corroborating the view, R.D.Pearce explains that "Lady Bourdillon's involvement began when she was requested to advice on how to give a dinner party, how to decorate a room, and how to send the husband off to work in the morning to be good."[16]

As the years progressed the 'Ladies Progressive Club' became a flourishing association that promoted contact between women of all races in Nigeria. Under its auspices, dancing was arranged, plays performed, and talks given on wide ranging subjects. From 1939 as R. D Pearce indicates, it did valuable work in raising money for the War Relief Fund and for the education of several children.[17] Lady Violet Bourdillon used her influence and power to make the Club a democratic institution and also advised the Yoruba women to use their own polite form of salutation rather than the stilted British, "How do you do? Which many of them had affected"[18]

The achievements recorded by the 'Ladies Progressive Club' in the inter-war years, probably led to the establishment of Corona Women's Club in 1937 in London, designed for women members of the service and wives with branches all over the British colonies.[19] The question arises as to what motivated European wives to establish clubs?

The attempt by some European officers' wives in Colonial Nigeria to form their own association bordered on the need to have an outlet through which essential lines of welfare programmes would be extended to women and children in the colonies.[20] The association was also intended as an avenue to breakdown male dominated ideology which was harmful to the colonies. But more importantly was the need for an association that would serve as a rallying point for lonely wives whose spouses were involved in military assignment outside home. It is for this reason therefore that Anne Macdonald referred to the 'Corona House' as a "centre for friendship,"[21] a theme captured in her work and published in *Corona Journal*, the main organ of the association.

In Lagos, for instance, the society started with a government loaned office, when members discovered a small derelict house and were granted its use by government and from there they expanded their activities and networks.[22] One of the greatest contributions of Corona Club was the establishment of Corona Schools and Day Nursery which began in 1953 through the generous help of commercial firms. The increase in enrolment within a short time became so great that two more schools were set up in the suburbs of Lagos and later, one each in Kano and Jos. These schools were made possible by the voluntary efforts of women in the multinational Corona Society and this continued for many years after Independence.[23]

The programmes of the school was unique because it occupied the premises in the mornings while in the afternoons voluntary workers arranged lectures, exhibitions and teas for members. Similarly, Thursday afternoons was planned for baby weighing, Tuesday evenings for Scottish dancing, while Sunday mornings was set aside for Church service. The success of the schools was also attributed to the management skills of voluntary and paid staff under the leadership of Mary King, the first Secretary of Corona Club. Added to this, was a handful of Women Management Committee of the Corona Schools.[24]

To assist the school in its development agenda, the Committee decided to raise money for new equipment and thereafter recruited more qualified teachers to meet the challenges of the schools and crèche following the influx of Nigerian and Asian children who joined European students from families in commerce and government. This is further explained by Anne Macdonald:

> A visitor going round during break time might hear excited chatter from a French, Nigerian and a British girl about what they would do at an American birthday party to which they had just been invited...In the crèche, forty tiny camp beds would just have been put out for 'first rest' and several heads would bob up to see who was coming, Scandinavian flaxen plaits next to tight African curls.[25]

Since post-World War II, much problem has confronted women in the wider space and the barracks in particular. The inequality between men and women cut across politics and economy which incidentally marginalized women in nation building. It was against this social construct that wives of military personnel decided to emulate the efforts of Corona Club in the 1950s to form the Army Wives' Association (AWA) in 1959. The role of women's associations in national development is of utmost importance. This is because they contributed immensely to the welfare of women in particular and the nation in general.

Some of the women's associations that thrived in contemporary military barracks and para-military institutions include, Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA),[26] The Naval Officers' Wives Association (NOWA) established in 1965.[27] and The Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association (NAFOWA) formed in 1967.[28] In the para-military services there were the Police Officers' Wives Association, (POWA),[29] Defence and Police Officers' Wives Association (DEPOWA), Nigerian Custom Officers' Wives Association (COWA), Immigration Officers' Wives Association (IMMOWA), and Spouses of Heads of Government (SHOG), to mention but a few.

Comparatively, in the United States Army as captured in the film *Army Wives,* [30] there are the "General Jonathan Spencer's Foundation," and the "Family Readiness Group." The former was a foundation that offered award to military wives who demonstrated extra-ordinary service in the home; it also recognised the dedication and contributions of wives in the career of their spouses. The latter was similar to contemporary Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association. According to their official website: "It was entrusted with the responsibility of assisting Commanders in maintaining readiness of soldiers, families and communities within the Army by promoting self-sufficiency, resiliency, and stability during peace and war."[31]

Its goal among others include; "reducing soldier and family stress, assisting soldiers to focus on their mission during deployments, provide avenue for sharing accurate information and helping soldiers' spouses become self-reliant in their businesses."[32] This analysis shows that women's association is not restricted to Nigeria, but a global affair. Women's associations in modern barracks evolved in the spirit of welfare, inter-service cooperation and collaboration. Indeed, it has been established that the quest for relevance in the public space by wives of sister services such as COWA, POWA, IMMOWA and others was due largely to the

achievements and social recognition of NAOWA. This is aptly illustrated by Ibrahim Babangida:

> Our greatest consolation is the effect that a substantial number of the Nigerian Army officers are blessed with highly devoted conscientious and dedicated housewives. Our wives have been contributing immensely to the success and well-being of the officers; which goes to confirm the old saying that behind every successful man, there is a woman.… I must express our appreciation and gratitude for all their efforts, and to go further to request them not to relent their strive to assist us, in maintaining a very high standard of performance.[33]

In view of the foregoing, the role and contributions of NAOWA will be discussed in detail more than NAFOWA and NOWA because the activities of NAOWA were either reproduced or replicated by these sister associations in their barracks.

The Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association

The Army Wives' Association unfortunately did not exist long in the barracks due to the nation's independence and subsequent changes in the country. But the foresight and commitment of members of the association led to its transformation from Army Wives' Association (AWA) to Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) in 1960.[34] It would be recalled that AWA was a gathering of military wives with little power, identity and space.

The question therefore is why was it imperative to integrate officers' and non-commissioned officers' wives in the early years of the association but no longer ideal after independence? As Maryam Babangida argues, "We got the name Army Wives' Association (AWA) changed to the current one (NAOWA), because the previous name was simply bland and non-descript."[35] Perhaps, the change of name was informed by the challenges of military profession which demanded that dependants and wives be catered for to alleviate their

sufferings whenever the unforeseen occurred.[36] On the same matter, Maryam Babangida reiterates:

> The peculiar nature of soldering, which makes it normal for officers' wives to be literally abandoned, a number of times in a life time, made paramount the need for a forum where the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives may achieve at least a sense of social communion. It is a need much like that experienced by professional interests and pursuits. NAOWA is indeed such a forum and more.[37]

The study reveals that the change of title was inevitable because the impact of indigenous officers' wives in colonial barracks was negligible probably due of the following reasons: First, the association was dominated by British officers' wives. Second, a greater proportion of their activities were confined to the barracks.[38] Additionally, there was the problem of marginalisation of indigenous officers' wives by European wives which created social dichotomy in the barracks. Consequent upon, in 1960 it became compulsory for wives of commissioned officers in the army to register with the association, unlike its initial arrangement which accommodated all wives irrespective of rank, background, and status.[39]

The study underscores the fact that the change was equally noteworthy considering its history and age, as the transformation was intended to create social distinction and inequality between officers' wives and wives of other ranks in the barracks. Extending the idea, Ifi Amadiume argues that "over the years this association has emerged as the most powerful women's organisation in the country."[40] This claim, however, cannot be substantiated even though the idea was corroborated in NAOWA's official website.[41] According to an informant[42] the influence and autonomy of the association is captured in the following lines:

a. The Association was set up by officers' wives.
b. The Association had a secretariat and clerical staff.

c. Its budget and expenditure was outside the military allocation.

d. The accounting officers of NAOWA/NOWA/NAFOWA funds are the presidents of the respective associations.[43]

e. The president of NAOWA must be the wife of the most senior ranking officer in the army.

The question that comes to mind is why was NAOWA criticized by some officers and soldiers in the barracks? As an informant notes,[44] the association was criticised on the grounds that military wives' association was not incorporated in the Terms and Conditions of Service of the Army, Navy or the Air Force, it was simply aimed at creating jobs for senior officers' wives, and this had made some of them too powerful and overbearing in the system. The existence of military wives' association in the barracks shows the interconnection or nexus of social relationship between military men and their wives. It was this state of affairs that encouraged wives of military personnel to assist their husbands in governance and nation building. As Maryam Babangida observes:

> A lot of officers' wives have found their membership of NAOWA quite rewarding, One member claimed that her experience in 'raising funds for the disabled children and the unfortunate people in the society' has made her come to reality with the problems that other people face in the larger society'. More importantly, this has helped her to develop that spirit of helping the needy.[45]

Perhaps, it is for this reason, that Maryam Babangida further stated that "most officers' wives, if they had their lives to live all over again would still get married to officers [because] they are provided with house helps paid from the coffers of the army and the instant security of living in the barracks or in well-guarded and sometimes best areas of towns."[46]

According to Cecilia Odede, "being an officers' wife was a great privilege because of respect and honour people accorded me. Sometimes, people would like to associate with me even when I do not know them deeply, it surprised me"[47] As Maryam Babangida puts it, "Another officer's wife stated that once while she was on a queue in the bank, the moment they realised she was an officer's wife, she was asked to come forward by customers on the queue and attended to promptly."[48]

This courtesy, in my opinion, was associated with the fact that the period was a military era in which so many people were afraid to exercise their rights even in public. An informant[49] equally notes that officers' wives lived a life of bliss because their military-husbands' were in power and this had exposed them to various opportunities within and outside the community which was uncommon to women outside the barracks. Why were these privileges a source of rancour among wives of other ranks? The privileges of officers' wives had been a source of debate among soldiers' wives in the barracks, because they felt marginalised in the scheme of things. Because of this, some soldiers' wives viewed their membership in the barracks as a stop gap knowing fully that their spouses' profession held little or no prospect for them.

The study therefore discovered that it was the creation of social stratification by officers' wives that made the participation of wives of other ranks insignificant in women affairs and post projects. Up till 1999, Soldiers Wives' Association had not fully evolved in most army barracks, unlike the Navy which maintained "Wives of Ratings Association and "Wives of Airmen Association" for the Air Force. Lady Welby Everald was the first National President of AWA.[50] She was fondly remembered for developing a programme of action which centred on welfare and empowerment of dependants in the barracks.

It was during her tenure that AWA was changed to NAOWA to coincide with the country's new status. However, with the exit of the last vestiges of colonial officers and wives, Victoria Aguiyi-Ironsi became the first indigenous President of the Association.[51]

The Nigerian Army officers' Wives Association had branches throughout the Army units across the country. The leadership of the Association was automatic, this implies that the office of the chairperson was only restricted to the wife of Chief of Army Staff who doubled as head and National President of the Association. Since inception, there existed over 20 National Presidents of NAOWA. The National President was assisted in the management of the Association by a number of executives. The hierarchy was also replicated at all levels of command up to battalion level.

At the divisional level; the wife of the General Officer Commanding (GOC) was the Divisional President of the Association**.** For the effective organisation of the association she was assisted by a number of representatives or coordinators who reported directly to her. The Nigerian Army Officers' Wives' Association as a non-governmental and non-profit making venture generated its capital from the good-will of individuals, corporate organisations, and others. This is further elaborated in the *Manual of Financial Administration for Armed Forces of Nigeria*: "NAOWA/NOWA/ NAFOWA funds are generated by the association of officers' wives through grants, donations and some commercial ventures and schools operated by the associations."[52]

Figure 12

DEPOWA National President and her Entourage on a Visit to NAFRC, Oshodi, Lagos May17, 2013
Source: *NAFRCOWA Magazine*, June, 2013, 26.

Figure 13

DEPOWA National President with NAFRC Staff Officers,
NAFRC, Oshodi Lagos. May17, 2013
Source: *NAFRCOWA Magazine*, June, 2013, 26.

According to Maryam Babangida, "the feat achieved in fund raising could be attributed to the initial effort of Mrs David Ejoor the then president of the Association who publicized the association to the Military Government and some spirited Nigerians."[53] Major General David Ejoor, it would be recalled was the Chief of Staff Army in the years 1972-1975[54] when NAOWA leadership were frantically trying to resuscitate the association. Above all, its success were attributed to the generous support it received regularly from the military, not only in cash, but in the deployment of skilled personnel to manage some of their departments.

This study discovered that the commitments of military authorities to the success of the association was not negotiable, not only because of the position of officers' wives in the military organisation, but the simple reason that it was the first attempt at bringing together officers' wives as a group. The argument of generous donations by patrons and friends of the military also came to the fore during the pet projects of the former First Ladies, - The Better Life Programme for Rural Women (BLP), The Family Support Programme (FSP) and the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), in which they were criticized by some scholars and activists as "government's attempt at wastages in using government fund to support government projects."[55] Be that as it may, the donations came to the association because their husbands were in power.

At the beginning, NAOWA established its headquarters in a Mess located in Dodan Barracks Lagos. It was from this base that the headquarters was shifted to Abuja following the transfer of the seat of government to Abuja. The secretariat had a few administrative, protocol officers and secretarial staff in its employment. It prepared and distributed identification cards to members as well as the Association's constitution.

As the years progressed, the association reviewed its constitution to enable it address current realities in the barracks in particular and the society in general. It was in line with its transformation agenda that the highest office was allotted to the wife of Chief of Army Staff.[56] This re-engineering was also emulated by the Navy Officers' Wives Association as well as the Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association in their formative periods.

The study is of the opinion that the appointment of the wife of Chief of Army Staff as head of the association was intended to give the organisation a head start, relevance, and popularity in military circles where rank and protocol matters. It was also opined in some quarters that the appointment was to provide the group the privilege of consent to major requests and demand before the military authorities. But what seemed plausible was the fact that the association needed someone with a wealth of experience in the military system as well as track record in the hierarchy.

As part of effort to re-position the association in private and public space, a code of conduct was drawn for members, perhaps to put an end to the speculation that the association was a gossip outlet.[57] The importance of NAOWA code of conduct cannot be overemphasized because; it gave the association identity and relevance. It also erased the stereotype that they were unserious category. The code of conduct to a greater extent has provided a guide to the officers' wives in modern times, particularly, in their day to day activities in the barracks and outside.[58] Perhaps; this was one of the major achievements in the transformation from AWA to NAOWA. Details see Appendix 3. As part of the transformation programme, a new logo was introduced to mark its new identity. The Secretariat also succeeded in organising a number of social calls, dinner nights, seminars, symposia, workshops and fairs for members and civilian counterparts in their neighbourhood.

The association published its magazine annually for the propagation of its activities, opinions and comments on topical issues. Other social activities include entertainment programmes, trade exhibitions, fairs, and completed projects in the magazine. The beauty of the magazine was its coverage and wide readership in most of the military formations in the country.[59] The magazine also served as a veritable source of image making, through which they eroded some of the negative perception which affected their identity in the early years, when the association was perceived as a gossip outlet and a rendezvous for trivial pursuit of ego, latest costume and jewelry,[60] similar to the steps taken by the military spouse association of United States called the "Family Readiness Group."

These associations exploited their position in the system and effectively deployed it in challenging the broadly accepted negative stereotypes of military spouses which were rooted in their perceived desire for being dependents.[61] The contributions of NAOWA to the barracks in particular and national development in general were enormous. According to Major General Kenneth Minimah, the Chief of Army Staff, "NAOWA is pivotal to army's development"[62] The achievements of the association cut across social and economic spheres. In fact, "members of NAOWA have been described as the pillars that guarantee happy and solid homes. This is more so because soldiering makes it necessary for husbands to leave their families for a longer time."[63]

At the social level, the association contributed greatly in unifying the officers' wives as a class and category. In the war years also, the association pursued the welfare of women, children and wounded combatants. They equally carried out solidarity for soldiers' wives, especially those who were displaced or whose husbands were missing in the coup. In recent time, they have had to assist the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in most parts of the

country occasioned by Boko Haram terrorists' attacks. Describing the war situation, Maryam Babangida wrote:

> The grim tragedy of the Nigerian Civil War sprung Army Wives Association into action, it complemented the war efforts by organizing donations for the comfort of the troops and assisting in looking after the sick and the wounded. It also helped organize recreational activities for soldiers families back home.[64]

In the welfare of combatants and families, members of the association assisted in visiting bereaved families and burying the dead. While others grouped themselves for the treatment of wounded soldiers and evacuation of supplies to those in hospitals whose families were either missing or killed in the barracks.[65] Women nurses and traditional health care providers in the barracks also volunteered their services in the war effort. Similarly, there were arrangement for cooking and carrying of victuals to men in battle which alleviated their plight.

During the period of resettlement, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, the association participated in the reconciliation effort of the barracks by calming frailed nerves, and condemning the use of obscene and offensive languages to spite some ethnic groups.[66] They equally collaborated with other Nigerian Women's Organisations in assisting internally displaced people in different camps by providing relief materials, medical food and health care.[67] The question arises as to what impact did NAOWA made within and outside the barracks in the 1980s and 1990s?

Since the 1980s and 1990s, the programme of the association had expanded due to several factors: First, the relative peace enjoyed in the country, second, increase in the number of barracks and population, and finally, enlightenment and contacts of wives of military personnel. With the emergence of Maryam Babangida, the association assumed prominence and control leading to the establishement of day-care centres, model nursery and primary

schools, skill acquisition outfits, and children's parks in the barracks. One of the official correspondences of NAOWA dated January 24, 1995 reads:

> The national body of NAOWA demands and encourages the zones to embark on viable ventures within the zones. Such ventures usually attract the full support of the National body of NAOWA. We of this zone (Oshodi) have decided to have an arm of the NAOWA Nursery School established here at NAFRC Oshodi Barracks. There are presently NAOWA Nursery Schools at Ojo Cantonment and also in some other areas.[68]

Since then, NAOWA had established their presence in virtually all the barracks in Nigeria, participating in the social responsibility of the barracks and welfare of dependants. According to the *New Soja Magazine*:

> The association also embarked on a number of projects in 82 Division of the Nigerian Army, Enugu. These include building of Vocational Training Centre, establishment of 82 Division NAOWA's Widows and less privileged foundation and the expansion of NAOWA Group of Schools by building and equipping a computer training centre. Others were repairs and servicing of disused boreholes within the schools, and purchase of a school bus for ease of movement of staff and students. [69]

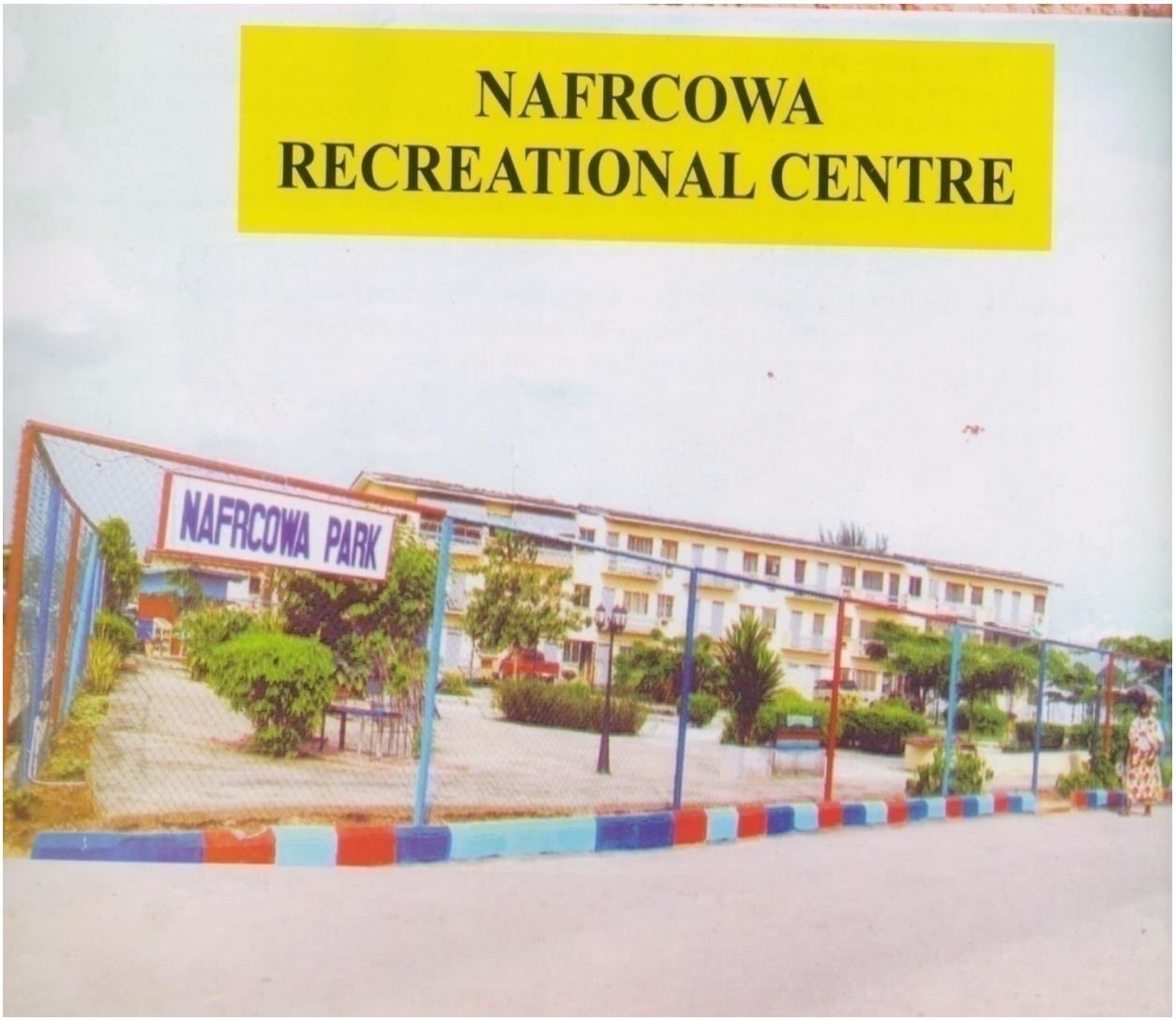
Apart from the establishment of schools and parks the association also contributed to the development and upgrading of health facilities in the barracks. For instance, they built cancer diagnostic and treatment centres in the barracks. They also provided lectures, seminars and workshops on health and healthy living. This is contained in one of their correspondences titled "Lecture on Drug Abuse" dated July 1, 1991:

> The Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) is organizing lectures on the above mentioned subject for our barracks children on the July 6, 1991 by 10.00, as part of her activities marking the Army Day Celebration. Your auditorium has been suitable to accommodate the children that will be drawn from all the army barracks within Lagos. In view of this, could you please permit the use of the auditorium and also provide security as necessary.[70]

Figure 14

The National President DEPOWA Laying Foundation for NAFRCOWA Shopping Complex, Lagos, 2013
Source: *NAFRCOWA Magazine*, June 2013, 29.

Figure 15



NAFRCOWA Park in NAFRC, Oshodi, Lagos, 2013
Source: *NAFRCOWA Magazine*, June, 2013, 76.

Other welfare programmes in which NAOWA made great progress included vocational and adult education programmes, barracks sanitation, and visits to the less privileged homes. For instance; a vocational training centre was opened in Abuja and equipped with state of the art facilities in 1992, where resource persons taught secretarial studies, catering and hotel management, fashion and fextile design, information and computer technology (ICT), cosmetology, hair dressing and barbing, extramural and adult education to mention but a few.[71]

As part of NAOWA's contribution to secondary school education, the association embarked on the reconstruction and renovation of block of schools in most barracks as well as the provision of teaching materials. This effort perhaps was informed by the attempt to boost the level of enrolment in both nursery and secondary schools in the barracks. The rationale behind this initiative was to complement the effort of the Nigerian Army and Federal Government's welfare schemes initially designed to broaden the knowledge of soldiers' wives, youths, widows and the less privileged.[72] In addition, the programme was to contribute to national development by producing self-employed people who could be self-reliant and at the same time employers of labour even on retirement.

In consolidating these achievements, NAOWA initiated a number of welfare and philanthropic schemes for the less privileged and the motherless babies home. Such welfare included the donation of mattresses and bedding materials, food items, cash, and drugs among others. The activities of the association in nation building was not limited to the barracks alone but also touched on the surrounding communities. For instance, the association had successfully completed a maternity block in Kaduna and Abuja to alleviate the suffering of women in the cantonment during child delivery especially at night.[73]

As a way of sustaining barracks culture, as mentioned elsewhere in this study, "NAOWA assisted newly married officers' wives in the socialization process. This is because going into military life for the first time is not an easy experience; it is even more difficult for the young bride. [Thus] NAOWA assisted many members going through the difficult process of adjusting to military life."[74] NAOWA also partnered with local community leaders in the provision of health-care services and treatment of eye related problems and issuing of recommended glasses. It also contributed to the environmental sanitation programme of State Governments aimed at improving the lives of the community as well as the cleanliness of the environment.[75]

Records indicate that NAOWA had consistently maintained cooperation and friendship with first ladies in their effort to promote the activities of women in their domain. For instance, "Mrs Roli Uduaghan, wife of Governor of Delta State, urged NAOWA to continue its good work on the upliftment of women in the country. She also encouraged members of the association to ensure that they maintained the home front while their husbands are away on tour of duty."[76] The wife of the Kaduna State Governor, Mrs Amina Yakowa also commended NAOWA for their stewardship and contributions to national development.[77]

At the international level, NAOWA had collaborated with women's associations in other countries of the world such as India. On a visit by the wife of Vice Chief of Army Staff Indian Army, Mrs Kusum Singh, she commended the effort of the President of NAOWA for the upliftment of the less privileged in the society and humanity in general. She was later conducted round NAOWA's new projects.[78]

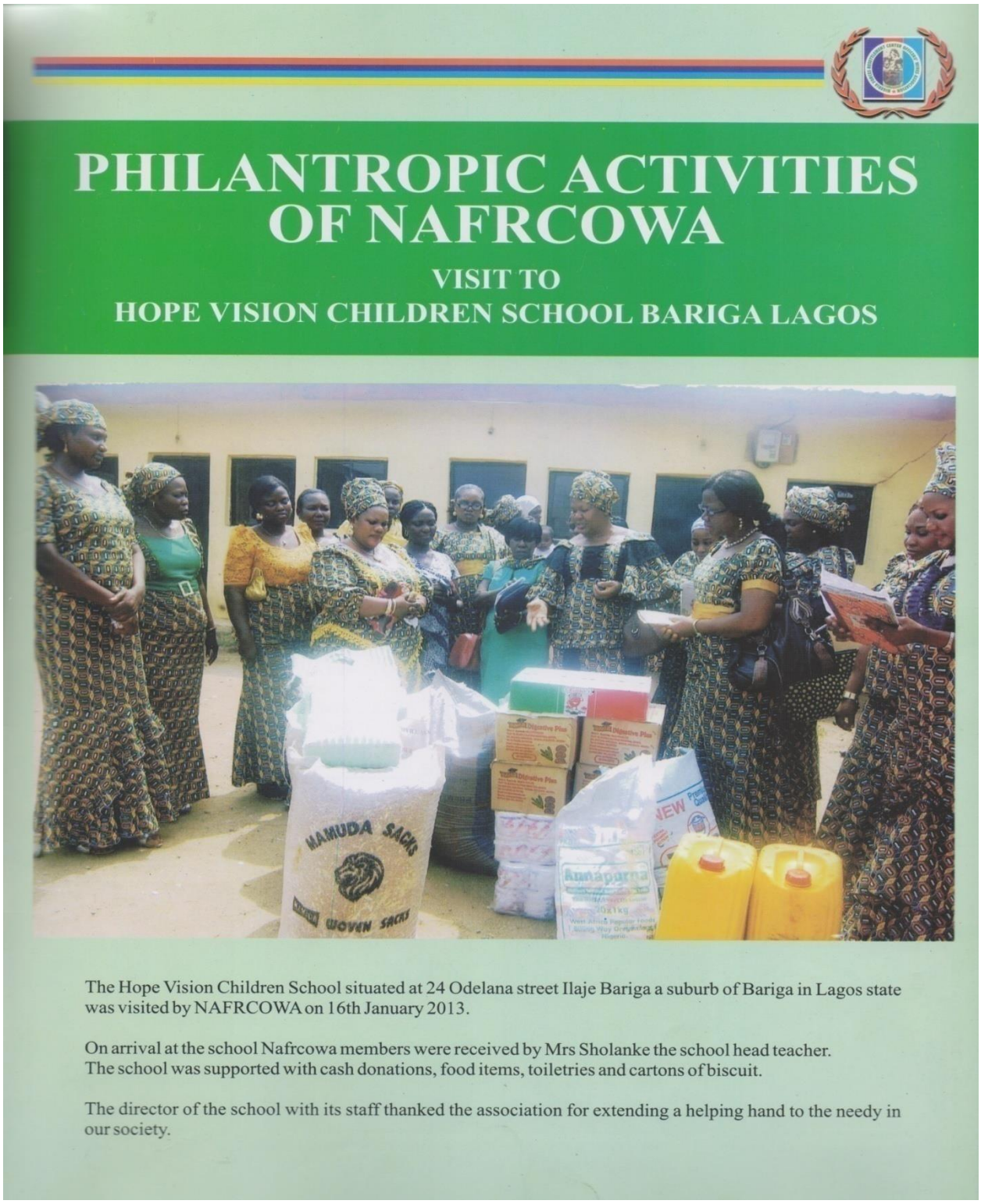
Figure 16

NAFRCOWA Daycare and Nursery School, NAFRC, Oshodi, Lagos.
Source: *NAFRCOWA Magazine*, June, 2013, 30.

Figure 17

NAOWA Donates to Less Privileged in Abuja. 2011
Source: *New Soja Magazine*, 1st Quarter, 2011, 96.

Figure 18



NAFRCOWA Donates to Hope Vision Children School, Bariga, Lagos, January 16, 2013. Source: *NAFRCOWA Magazine*, June, 2013, 33.

The achievements of NAOWA in the economic sphere cannot be overlooked. This is because the legacy assisted most wives in improving their economic capacity even in contemporary times. According to Maryam Babangida, "NAOWA got land from the Lagos State Government and started a farm on the Ojo-Badagry stretch."[79] This was intended to support the food security of government and food basket of the barracks.

In furtherance of their project, NAOWA Oshodi Zone, in a letter dated 18th February, 1991, requested for a space and a loan of Three Thousand Naira (N3, 000.00) from the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre to enable it establish a poultry project. Unfortunately, this request received a counter offer "which requested that unless, members of the association will be required to work on this poultry once a week and HQ NAFRC will also demand 15 percent of whatever gain NAOWA will make from the project." In view of this development, NAOWA decided to source for land and space outside the barracks.[80]

Following the financial constraints experienced by members of the association, the Military Government of Ibrahim Babangida decided to establish the Peoples Bank Plc to enable members of the association source for loans for economic purposes. Thus, the association began to establish cooperative markets where foodstuffs and household commodities were sold in the barracks. Nevertheless, the advantage it offered was that officers' wives had to manage the supermarkets with soldiers' wives whom they had long despised as lesser queens. Items sold in NAOWA Supermarkets were cheaper but sellers had no accountability of the monies realised because the co-ordinators of the programme were wives of senior military commanders who kept records of funds. This was one of the challenges that confronted the operation of the supermarkets leading to its collapse.

Similarly the proceeds from poultry and farm produce also went down the drain due to inefficiency, lack of supervision and incompetent personnel. Therefore NAOWA had to establish cooperatives in the barracks through which women accessed loans from Peoples Bank Plc. Consequently, in a letter dated 02 July 1991 titled "NAOWA: Peoples Bank Loan to Soldiers' Wives." It explains that Peoples Bank Plc had made necessary arrangement to provide loans for wives whose husbands were not due for retirement within a year. And requirements included three passport size photograph and husband's regimental number and rank. On completion, the form should be submitted to the Administrative Headquarters of Units. [81]

In view of this privilege, wives of military personnel began to enrol into cooperative associations which offered them the privilege to learn one vocation or the other. Some of the trade had been mention ear[ier but others include, soap and pomade making, tailoring, waste to wealth, bead making, candle production, bleach and disinfectant production, hat and knitting to mention but a few. In order for the skills to gain acceptance among women, NAOWA solicited the cooperation of military formations. In a letter dated, 16 June 1994, The National HQ of NAOWA requested the use of Soap Making Department in NAFRC Barracks, Oshodi, Lagos and other barracks in the country for 20-23 June, to teach soldiers' wives the method of producing soap, pomade and detergents among others. [82]

It is safe to argue that NAOWA was an association that brought fame and identity to military wives in the barracks. Its relevance cannot be overemphasized in the barracks because it changed and redefined the traditional roles of wives of military personnel. Unfortunately, this effort was marred by lack of continuity, change of government and indifference on the part of some women who diverted the association's loans to other ventures.

This therefore contributed to its abandonment in the barracks. Though, some of the programmes later found vent in the Better Life Programme for Rural women initiated by Maryam Babangida and Family Support Progamme.

Questions have been asked about the existence of Wives of Soldiers'Association/ Wives of Ratings' Association and Air Wives' Association. The establishment of wives of other ranks association was only a recent development, because the Officers' Wives Association overshadowed its activities and relevance. In the Navy, for instance, Wives of Ratings' Association was created in 2011 to cater for the needs and welfare of ratings' wives and since it was a new association not much had been achieved, rather it was beset with the following: First, the problem of Secretariat which had not been constructed. Second, the association was still battling with sensitization of ratings' wives. Third, the secretarial staff had not been fully recruited for lack of fund and office space. Suffice to state that meetings were held regularly in their temporary office were issues pertaining to women's welfare, empowerment programmes, and security of the barracks was discussed.

The Air Force authority, on the other hand, had established Air Wives' Association (AWA) since the 1990s; initially they were under the umbrella of the Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association. Though, AWA had performed creditably well, especially in the empowerment of Airmen's wives and employment of members in the barracks. Apart from the problems of logistics and funding, the activities of NAOWA and other sister organisations in the military system did not impact effectively on wives of non-commissioned officers who were supposed to be the beneficiaries of the programme, rather, there was the social exclusion of this group in the formation and implementation of the programme in the barracks.

In Consequence of this, wives of non-commissioned officers became indifferent to the programmes of NAOWA because of existing inequality and division. For instance, non-commissioned officers' wives that desired to acquire computer skills were subjected to payment of course fees while the duration lasted. Others who had no background of computer but wanted to rent or lease shops in NAOWA Shopping Malls were unable to do so because of high cost of rent, especially shops located in Abuja, Lagos, PortHarcourt and Kaduna. Worst still, were the Nigerian Army Shopping Complex, Ikeja, The Veteran Shopping Mall Marda Barracks Yaba, Navy Officers' Wives Shopping Complex Okokomaiko Lagos, and a few others.

It should be clear from the discussion that effective cooperation and collaboration in the barracks cannot be reached unless officers' wives minimised the existing social division which distanced non-commissioned officers' wives from the scheme of things. This is because it was rigidly stratified creating isolation of the lesser queens. It is also important that the empowerment programme of NAOWA be modified with a view to integrating wives of non-commissioned officers into the scheme.

In addition, officers' wives and wives of non-commissioned officers should in principle agree on wide ranging issues with a view to providing a fulcrum upon which NAOWA projects can turn and meaningfully impact on lives. It is also expedient for members of NAOWA to use their influence, power and networks to source for loans for women farmers and other small scale entrepreneurs in the barracks because it will go a long way in enhancing the productive capacity of women.

Naval Officers' Wives Association (NOWA)

Motto: Sail in Unison

Apart from the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA), there was also the Naval Officers' Wives Association (NOWA), an umbrella body responsible for wives of naval officers' wives in the country. The association came into existence on 30th November, 1965 and was later issued certificate number 3224 on 27 January 1967 under the leadership of Mrs Anne Wey, wife of the first indigenous Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Joseph Edet Akinwale Wey.[83] "The association began as a small 'Tea Group' for light-hearted discussions by wives of naval officers to 'kill boredom' because of regular absence of their husbands to sea. It subsequently transformed into a forum for rendering assistance to wives of naval ratings in the base." [84]

Aside from being a channel for empowerment programme and assistance, it also addressed the social problems of the less privileged in the society just like its counterpart the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association. NOWA was established to provide opportunity for social interaction, cooperation and collaboration, among naval officers' wives and their families. Additionally, it was designed to provide solution to problems peculiar to wives of naval personnel, especially, the challenges of long absence of spouses on tour of duty.

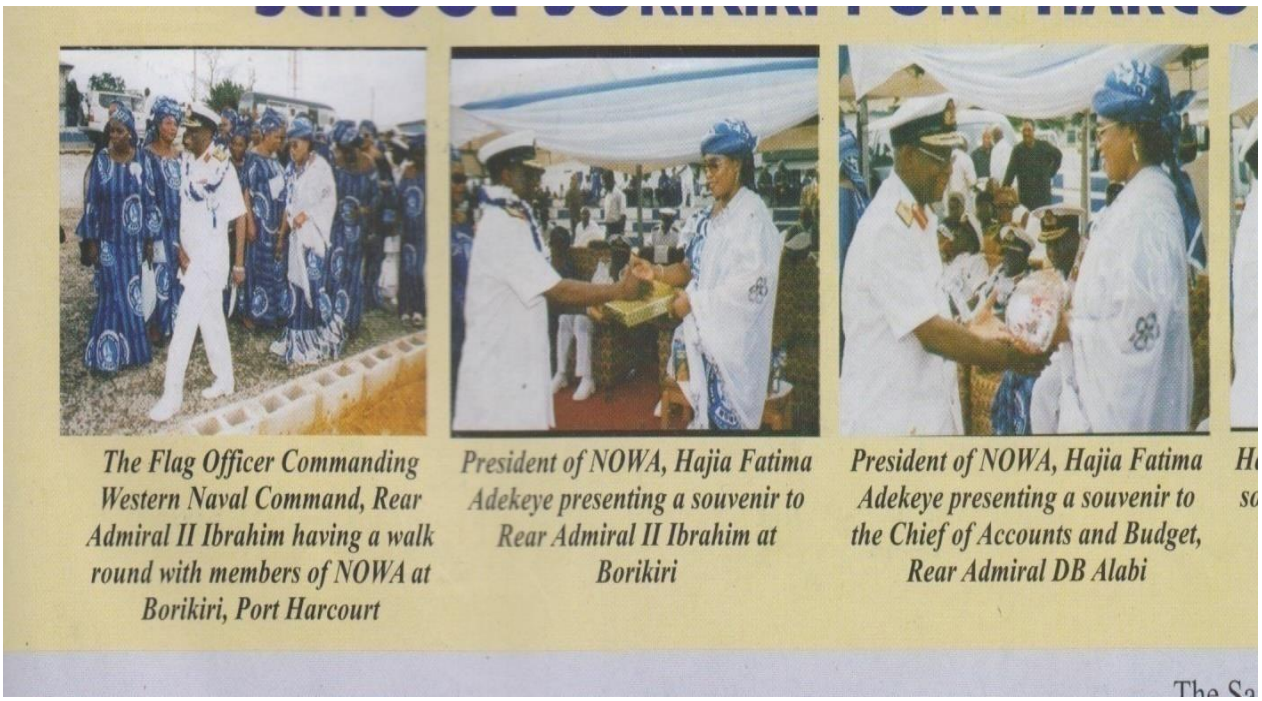
Thus, in the last four decades or so, NOWA recorded achievements in education, charitable ventures, economic empowerment, health and social services as well as sporting activities.[85] Their interactions and collaborations with Naval authorities has also improved in the preceding years thereby making it possible for them to actualise some of their objectives in the system. In their official formalities, their rapport and synergy with other sister organisations was equally strong and vibrant.

Over the years NOWA had provided opportunities for social interactions and peaceful co-existence between officers' wives and wives of ratings in the barracks. These noble roles had endeared the association to many people within and outside the barracks. NOWA's progress in the last four decades had been attributed to the dedication and foresight of members which complemented the efforts of naval authority in the barracks. In the social and economic spheres, the association had provided schools[86] and markets in different naval locations such as Okokomaiko and Navy Town in Lagos, Offa in Kwara State, Borikiri in Rivers State, Owerrinta in Imo State and Warri in Delta State.

It also established information and communication technology centres, health care facilities, welfare programmes for the needy and motherless babies' homes. Others included cervical and mammographic centres, children's park, as well as welfare for accident victims.[87] Its effort in counselling of women in the barracks was equally commendable because it fostered harmonious existence in the naval bases.

At the economic domain, the association constructed markets in all the naval barracks across the country. It also encouraged women to form cooperative society through which loans were advanced to them for the production of goods and services, farming and trading. In evaluating the programmes of NOWA, this study reveals that wives of ratings were marginalised in major programmes of the officers' wives in the barracks; similar to the reactions and responses of non-commissioned officers' wives in other sister organisations. Perhaps, what was critical in the lives of most ratings' wives was financial empowerment to kick start their trade, farming and small scale industries for which they looked to the association since they had no collateral required in the banks.

Figure 19



Flag Officer Commanding Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral II Ibrahim Visits NAOWA at Borikiri, PortHarcourt. 2007.
Source: *The Sailor Magazine*, December, 2007, 81

On the other hand, the prices of NOWA shops was another challenge that made it impossible for most ratings' wives to acquire shops in designated markets, particularly, the NOWA Shopping Plazas in PortHarcourt, Warri, Calabar and Lagos. This was compounded by the fact that ratings wives had no association from the beginning until 2011 when it was established by Rear Admiral O.S. Ibrahim, the then Chief of Naval Staff.[88] Above all, the activities of NOWA were commendable considering the spread and impact on wives.

More importantly, was the association's welfare programme directed at officers' and ratings' wives, children and youths in the bases. For instance, they rolled out a programme of scholarship for best students in their group of schools, concessions were also given to officers and ratings' children in NOWA Daycare centres, nursery and primary schools in the barracks.[89] This perhaps made it possible for most nursing mothers to manage the home front and official duties. In a similar manner, there were prize rebates in most NOWA supermarkets and shops which made shopping a delight for most officers and ratings' wives in the community.

At the informal sector, most ratings' wives were engaged in different departments in the bases as nurses, cleaners, ward maids, and teachers to mention but a few. While others took on Civil Service employment and self employed enterprises aimed at complementing the effort of military husbands in the home front. In conclusion, K.B.Aliyu asserts:

> In the last 4 decades, NOWA has recorded a number of achievements in its efforts to compliment the Navy in welfare-related projects in the barracks. These are in the areas of education, charitable ventures, economic empowerment, health and social services as well as sporting activities.[90]

Figure 20

Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral GTA Adekeye at NOWA Activities in Lagos

Source: *The Sailor Magazine*, December, 2007, 81

NOWA had succeeded in maintaining peace, unity and cleanliness of the barracks despite its challenges. Similarly, the association contributed greatly to national development through the provision of adult literacy programme, Computer Training Institute and Cyber Cafe, assistance to the needy, motherless homes, and the aged. The association also succeeded in carrying out HIV/AIDS awareness campaign in major cities - Lagos, Offa, Ilorin, and PortHarcourt, to mention but a few.[91]

Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association (NAFOWA)

Motto: "Service to Humanity"

The Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association began in 1967 as an assembly of wives of Air Force personnel in Nigeria. It was a non-governmental and non-profit oriented gathering with the objective of promoting interaction and welfare programmes for the poor and the needy.[92] NAFOWA anthem was one of the key instruments that reminds officers' wives of the their identity and loyalty in the community,[93] as contained in the appendix of this study.

The Association's magazine is called "Mothers Voice". "It was an in-house publication that provided a platform for women and children in the barracks to express their views and project their voices on topical issues. The magazine was re-launched in 2001 by the wife of erstwhile Chief of the Air Staff Mrs Nkese Eduok after half a decade of out of circulation."[94]

NAFOWA was headed by the National President of the Association and wife of the Chief of Air Staff. This position was incontestable because it was what obtained in other sister associations. The Office of the National President was assisted by the wife of the Air Officer

Operations. The Association was also represented by three Chairpersons or wives of the Air Officer Commanding (AOC) the three Commands of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF), namely: Tactical Air Command (TAC) Makurdi, Training Command (TC) Kaduna, and Logistics Command (LC) Lagos. The National President had a working team made up of National Executives whose duties were wide ranging and far reaching.

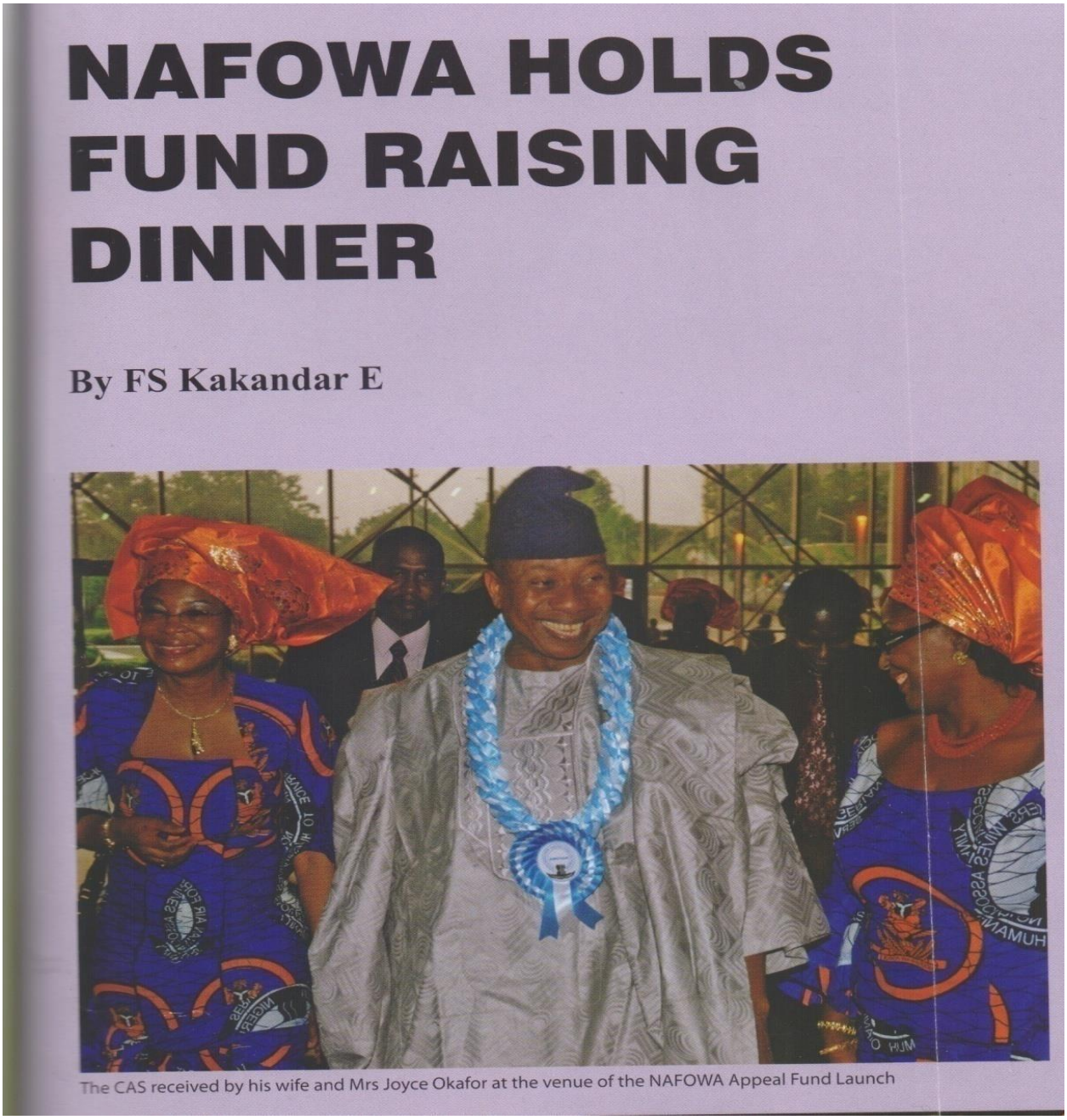
Over the years, the achievements of NAFOWA had been visible on wide-ranging projects similar to the activities of wives in other services. Some of these contributions include: empowerment and poverty alleviation programme of wives of Airmen, construction of schools and markets, scholarships to military children. Others included, charity works, visiting of Less Privileged Homes, establishment of cervical and Eye treatment centres for officers' wives, wives of Airmen, and other members of the public.

The association organised a number of fund-raising dinner to boost its financial capacity to execute more projects in the barracks.[95] It also organized HIV/AIDS Awareness workshops, conferences and seminars for youths and wives of personnel in Abuja and Ikeja bases. It was in furtherance of their service to humanity that the former National president, Mrs Folasade Dike donated industrial fans to the Catholic and Protestants Churches, and Mosques during the commissioning ceremony of NAFOWA Little Angels Kindergarten / Nursery School in Abuja. Mrs Dike and NAFOWA members also paid social visits to a number of places in fulfilment of the association's mandate. These included: 445 Nigerian Air Force Hospital, Ikeja, Blind Centre Oshodi, Lagos as well as Modupe Cole Memorial Home for the physically and mentally challenged in Lagos.

Figure 21

AOC Logistics Command, Ikeja, AVM Nyananyo with AWA Executives.
Source: *The Airman Magazine*, 16, no.1 2009, 63.

Figure 22



NAFOWA HOLDS FUND RAISING DINNER

By FS Kakandar E

The CAS received by his wife and Mrs Joyce Okafor at the venue of the NAFOWA Appeal Fund Launch

NAFOWA Fund Raising Dinner in Abuja, 2009.
Source: *The Airman Magazine*, 16, no.1, 2009, 81.

Figure 23

NAFOWA
Sends Off Former
Executive Members

idents of DEPOWA, NAFOWA and other executive members singing the NAFOWA anthem

Petinrin and Mrs Paul Dike on the high table

Mrs Sade Dike with her successor, Mrs Appolonia Petinrin pose for a photograph

Mrs Petinrin presenting a gift to the daughter of DEPOWA President, Miss Nkem Dike

NAFOWA Send-off Ceremony
Source: *The Airman Magazine*, 16, no. I, 2009.83

Figure 24

Women Empowerment and Skill Acquisition Programme for AWA Members in Abuja
Source: Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association Calendar, 2010

It was on this occasion that the Association donated executive delivery bed and air-conditioners to the delivery rooms of the hospital, while at SOS Home they donated cash and foodstuffs. At the Blind Centre Oshodi, her team donated various food items and a set of rechargeable lantern. The Association later promised to provide them with computers to enhance their learning skills. As part of members' contribution to national development, "a member of NAFOWA, Engineer (Mrs) Iniobong Louisa Usoro (nee Etuk) has been elected the 11th President of the Association of Professional Women Engineers of Nigeria (APWEN)"[96]

In conclusion, this study shows that NAFOWA was the only women association that incorporated wives of Airmen in their activities. For instance, while the officers' wives had their own association, the wives of Airmen (AWA) also had theirs, including secretariat and members of staff. The cooperation between the two associations to say the least was better, more cordial than those of NAOWA and NOWA, though there were some gaps because of protocol and rank. The study indicates that NAFOWA was unable to tackle holistically the problem of poverty alleviation among wives of Airmen in the bases for reasons of financial constraints. Be that as it may, much progress was made in the socio-economic projects of the two associations (NAFOWA and AWA) and this had enhanced the welfare of members in the barracks.

This study reveals that the activities of Military Wives Association were the same all through the barracks and bases. However the empowerment programmes of the outfits were inadequate for obvious reasons which bordered on finance, sensitization, cohesion and co-ordination. It was also hampered by the indifference of non-commissioned officers' wives who felt that the scheme was the exclusive preserve of officers' wives just like in other sister

organisations. But more importantly, was the conflict of status and privilege between the women as a result of hierarchy and precedents. Nevertheless, the officers' wives associations in military barracks in the country had contributed greatly to national development, especially in promoting the welfare of dependants and unity of women in the barracks.

Contributions of First Ladies

The role of first ladies in national development has remained a subject of debate in Nigerian history. This is because the Nigerian constitution did not provide for the office or assign any role to them. What seems obvious is that the presidential system of government of the United States of America which Nigeria borrowed allowed the participation of first lady in their system. Nevertheless, the contributions of first ladies to the political and socio-economic development of Nigerian women cannot be ignored. A few of these examples were, Maryam Babangida the initiator of the Better Life Programme, Mariam Abacha, the arrow-head of Family Support Programme (FSP) and Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) as well as Hajia Fatima Abubakar's Family Empowerment Advancement Programme (FEAP), a continuation of her predecessors' projects.

The impact of Better Life Programme (BLP) was significant in the history of rural women in general and military wives in particular. It was the first attempt at incorporating rural women in the political and socio-economic spheres. Tracing the origin of the BLP Sola Lufadeju observes:

> For two days, rural women from all parts of the federation, rubbed shoulders with the First Lady, Mrs Maryam Babangida, wives of military governors and others. They sang and they danced, encouraged by the presence of the First Lady whom they dubbed 'the number one rural woman'….They told the First Lady that life in the villages and hamlets was very difficult and that they wanted something done.[97]

The question therefore is what were the issues surrounding the establishment of the BLP and what were the reactions and responses on issues raised by Maryam Babangida. These and other principal issues are highlighted in this section. The BLP cannot be said to have been established at a better time than when the economic productivity of women were at a serious decline due to misguided policies of government.

During the period, the local economies of most Nigerian women were groaning under the hardship of the Structural Adjustment Programme of the military regime. In consequence of this, outlets to alleviate the sufferings of the common people were sought, thus, the BLP became the alternative. It was officially launched on September 14th and 15th 1987, following a workshop on "Women in Development" organised by the Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI) in Abuja. This event witnessed a gathering of rural women from all parts of the country including wives of State Governors, market women, and professional women in commerce and industry, among others.[98]

In her opening speech, Maryam Babangida states:

> We all know that our population is concentrated in rural areas where modern amenities are either inadequate or not functioning. Therefore, the business of daily life poses serious problems and challenges to the rural women, most of whom have the additional responsibility for such complex activities as farming, trading, and raising of children, in accordance with the structures of our beliefs, culture and traditions. While it is true that the women's population is larger than that of our men, and that the greater percentage of this population lives in the rural areas, the role of rural women is still not adequately recognized by the non-rural members of our society. There is hardly anyone of us who has no parents or close relations living in the rural areas. Our commitment to uplift of their standard of living and development is a responsibility which we must assign to ourselves and we cannot afford to fail…[99]

In response to her opening speech, Sola Gbade who spoke on behalf of the women told the workshop that the women were not asking for palliative measures from government. In her words, "We have started a public enlightenment campaign to educate and mobilize ourselves and we are ready to work hand in hand with government, we are not asking for handouts, only what is rightly ours."[100] Describing rural conditions, Professor (Mrs) Bimpe Aboyade, stated that "rural life is one long uninterrupted life of toil and sweat, what is needed now is to open up new avenues of hope that would lead rural women out of this tedious life."[101]

Therefore, in her closing remarks on the 15th September, 1987, Maryam Babangida reiterates:

> Happily, the present administration has demonstrated its awareness for the need to change its attitude towards the women and their role in rural development by encouraging the increasing participation of women in our national life. We the womenfolk are ever prepared to cooperate fully and assist the administration to achieve its laudable objectives. Our objective is to motivate the majority of our rural women to discover themselves, recognize their potentials, and help improve themselves, their families and their immediate environments. These are indeed noble objectives which if we succeed in implementing will give the Nigerian women a new lease of life, a new identity and a new confidence in herself. She will then be better equipped to contribute meaningfully to the national development effort.[102]

The launching of the Better Life Programme for rural women, in the words of Maryam Babangida, was the beginning of a "new movement" designed to ensure a better life for the Nigerian rural woman through the elimination of "hunger, poverty, and disease."[103] In the light of the foregoing, it is safe to argue that the BLP was not a feminist movement like other women movements which sought political, social and economic equality with men, but an empowerment project designed to alleviate the sufferings of Nigerian women in the socio-political and economic space. This is expressed in the elimination of hunger, poverty and illiteracy.

Writing on the "Role of the Better Life Programme in National Development, C.U.Okoye and M.O.Ijere argue, "The administrative system of the BLP was like a whole government in itself. It was similar to that of ministries or parastatals."[104] The "Commission for Women" was believed to be the baby and the official mother of the BLP.[105] Indeed, it was Decree 30 of 1989 that legalized the creation of Women's Commission under which the BLP thrived.[106]

It is important to explain here the integral workings of the BLP and its management. The BLP team organised a series of meetings for its officers at different levels of command. First, there was the General meeting headed by the National chairperson with the State chairpersons and representatives. Also important was the meetings with Chairmen of States' Boards of Women's Commission as well as meetings with State Executive Secretaries and Directors-General. Equally important, were meetings with Women's Commission, Directors of BLP and their State Chairpersons. Similarly, there was the State Planning Committee's meeting with the First Lady which provided opportunities for investment appraisal with monitoring teams at both national and local government levels.

From the analysis, it shows that there were checks and balances and concerted effort in the planning stage. Registration and membership of BLP was open to every Nigerian woman irrespective of background, education, class, rank or ethnicity. This was informed by the ideology of the programme which made it a people oriented project. For this reason, membership drive was carried out through cooperative societies, because, it was the cooperatives that were the sole registered corporate bodies that possessed the rights to hold movable and immovable property.[107]

The Family Support Programme (FSP) was a brainchild of the former First Lady, Mrs Mariam Abacha."[108] The project was launched in 1994 in Abuja to promote family unit. Present at the occasion were some former First Ladies - Hajiya Tafawa Balewa, Stella Obasanjo, Ajoke Mohammed and Mrs Victoria Aguiyi Ironsi. Other dignitaries included General Yakubu Gowon (rtd) and State Governors, while Maryam Babangida, her predecessor was conspicuously absent.

To achieve this laudable objective therefore, a supporting outfit known as the 'Family Economic Advancement Programme' (FEAP) was launched and incorporated in 1997 with a budget allocation of 4.3 billion Naira.[109] The presence of these dignitaries at the launch, perhaps signified the genuineness of the pet projects and by extension the foray of women into the public space. Indeed, it was the array of crowd at the ceremony that informed the criticisms of scholars and activists who opine that, "one pathetic syndrome exposed at the FSP launching was the sycophancy of some Nigerian elite…it was the same set of people who hailed Maryam Babangida at the launching of the BLP for Rural Women six years ago."[110]

Nevertheless, this study notes that there was a prevailing culture in Nigeria at the time that required orientation in contemporary period for posterity sake. This had to do with the way notable personalities gathered at Government functions to make it appear realistic even when such projects or programmes were cosmetic exercise. Likewise, when notable personalities were appointed to work at the national level, some people and their immediate constituency sang praises of them to the extent of giving them chieftaincy titles or taking up congratulatory messages in daily newspapers. But when such individuals were excluded from governance, they stood at the sidelines of opposition, using the print and electronic media to fight their

exclusion. In fact, Mallam Bata, one of the directors of FSP projects, remarked that "FSP was a fulfilment of a ten-year old dream which Mariam Abacha had been nursing when her husband was a General Officer Commanding (GOC), 2 Mechanised Division of the Nigerian Army, Ibadan in 1984."[111] The aim and objectives of the programme was to bring happiness to family bonds by making life easier for the handicapped and the under-privileged.[112] (Details are contained in the Appendix of this study.)

It was also Government's concern for the stability and economic empowerment of the family as a basic unit of society. Illustrating the idea, Regina Emehulu notes, "The overall aim of Family Support Programme was to improve and sustain family cohesion through the promotion of social and economic well-being of the Nigerian family for its maximum contribution to national development."[113] She added that "FSP was also intended to promote policies and programmes that strengthened the observance and protection of human rights and the advancement of social justice and human dignity."[114] Therefore to achieve its goals, FSP focused on eight areas of priority namely, health, education, women in development, agriculture, child development, youth development, disability and destitution, income generation and shelter.[115]

The Family Economic Advancement Programme, on the other hand, was a subsidiary empowerment project of the administration aimed at improving the family unit and the abundant natural and agricultural resources of the rural areas.[116] General Sanni Abacha in his 1997 budget speech described "FEAP as a project that would alleviate the sufferings of the teeming poor, through the process of granting soft loans and advances."[117] Mariam Abacha, also "described FEAP as a programme meant to cushion the effects of the current fiscal disciplinary measures being implemented by the Federal Government."[118]

According to Ogbonna M. Dom, the Co-ordinator FEAP Enugu State Chapter: "FEAP was designed to engender the utilization of the abundant local raw materials and skills in the production of goods and services and the establishment of cottage industries at the grassroots levels of the country.[119] He noted that the basic strategy for achieving these laudable objectives was through the provision of micro-credit and training to cooperative societies and interest groups.[120] This appeared to be another panacea in the empowerment programmes of the first ladies but much was expected by Nigerians on how N400million capital base of the project would be spent to counter the argument of Dokun Abolarin who prophesied that "FSP was going to be another white elephant project"[121]

The structure of Family Support Programme was hierarchical and centralized in nature. It was a system inherited from the Better Life Programme (BLP) of Maryam Babangida. At the top of the structure, was the wife of the Head of State, Mrs Maryam Abacha, she was assisted by wives of Military Administrators or First Ladies of the States. The First Ladies of the States were assisted by wives of Local Government Chairmen who co-ordinated the affairs of women at the Local Government Areas and also doubled as caretaker committees at the grassroots.[122]

The question that stands to illuminate our understanding is, what motivated the first ladies, particularly, Maryam Babangida to venture into this project? It has been argued by activists and political thinkers that her primary objective and drive was to place women on the agenda of social recognition. Others believed that she exploited her privileged position and power as the first lady and head of the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) to popularise the scheme. In an effort to achieve her ambition, "she had to bypass specific legislative enactment required to kick-start the project."[123]

Available literature indicates that prior to the establishment of BLP, there existed fundamental and immediate structural problems in the barracks. One of such fundamental problems was the general lack of sensitization and empowerment of wives of military personnel for self-reliance. As a matter of fact, the absence of these directly and indirectly affected the home as well as their contributions to public space. In a similar manner Morris Janowitz wrote:

> Since the end of World War II, there has been widespread belief among military personnel all over the world that their standard of living had not been adequately looked into or improved upon. They were beset by a sense of subjective deprivation and a feeling that the material welfare of the rest of the society is somehow advancing more rapidly than theirs."[124]

In broad perspective, it was observed that most Nigerian troops were demobilized in 1946, which created far-reaching problems in the lives of military families. In consequence of this, majority of them wrote to the colonial authority on issues of gratuities and benefits which was inadequate for the challenges of civil life. Unfortunately, the appeal received little attention thereby compelling most military wives to absorb the challenges of household[125]

The immediate factor responsible for the establishment of Better Life Programme was the hardship experienced by low income earners in Nigeria following the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), launched in July 1986 by the Babangida Administration. This economic programme, according to government sources, was intended to answer the problems that beset Nigerian economy at the time. Paradoxically, the effect of the policy was severe on the populace following prescribed guidelines by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.[126]

Perhaps, another compelling factor was the cry of women activists, commentators, and the lessons of the United Nation Decade for women (1975-1985) which underscored the palpable marginalization of women in the socio-political and economic spheres,[127] arguably orchestrated by patriarchal ideology. They contended that the dissolution of this philosophy would place women on the part of politics, economy, and nation building.

It is pertinent therefore to highlight the integral workings of the BLP/FSP and FEAP even though they operated at slight variations. The first phase in the mechanism of BLP was the sensitization of wives of military personnel on the objectives and empowerment opportunities of the programme using the officers' wives associations as the co-ordinating agency in the barracks. The involvement of the officers' wives association assisted the BLP/FSP/FEAP to identify some community-specific needs. It also provided legitimacy to the entire effort, thereby superintending over the military wives' asoociations in the barracks

The second phase of the programme focused on the learning of basic skills in English, Mathematics and General Studies. It was the adult literacy programme that provided the platform for capacity building and skill acquisition. The BLP utilized the availability of space in most schools in the barracks for adult classes which were arranged between 4.00 – 6.00 pm Monday to Friday and on Saturdays 9.00 am to 2.00p.m in most barracks. This aspect of the programme was essential because it involved day to day activities or transactions within and outside the home. The curriculum was formulated by professional resource persons engaged in teaching and human resources development. Apart from military wives, they also accredited women outside the barracks at designated centres and locations. The impact of this programme on women was tremendous because the basic acquisition skill was comparable to adult literacy classes in reputable institutions.

Besides, the scheme afforded most wives the opportunity to complete their primary and secondary schools, especially, those who were unable to fulfil their dreams at the early stage of life. The understanding of the basic instructions was necessary because it was the criteria required for skill acquisition and membership of cooperatives.

The third phase revolved around the acquisition of practical skills.[128] This stage was important to the development of women and participation in women's cooperatives in the barracks. In her recollection, Yemisi Bashiru, one of the beneficiaries noted that it was critical during the period for a wife to demonstrate interest in at least one vocation or another. She observes further:

> Cooperatives members or trainees were registered free of charge and membership cards given at no cost. On the other hand, raw materials were provided at different workshops and vocational centres in the barracks by the resource persons and accredited supervisors. On graduation, accredited agencies and financial institutions, particularly, the Peoples Bank Plc were required to provide a loan of Two Thousand Naira (N2,000.00) to graduating students of the cooperatives as take off grants.[129]

In the area of agriculture, FSP assisted wives of military personnel involved in farming with credit facilities, fertilizers, agro-allied chemicals, improved seedlings and water pumps to mention but a few. FSP also supplied modern equipment, such as, grinding machines, millers, and storage facilities to registered women farmers through their cooperatives. Some of these equipment were employed in the processing of cassava, rice, and beans among others.

Impact of the Programmes on Women and on Barracks' Development

The impact of First Ladies pet projects on the barracks and wives of military personnel in particular cannot be glossed over. These programmes were the most popular empowerment effort directed at Nigerian women since independence. Beginning with the Better Life

Programme, it was the first project that provided succour and opportunities for most military wives interested in politics and economic development. In the area of politics, Maryam Babangida affirmed that the BLP was 'a new movement' designed to sensitize women into politics, social and economic participation. Scholars are agree that it was the first time the office of the first lady in Nigeria was noticeable and exploited for specific empowerment projects. Encapsulating the idea, Oluwakemi Agosu asserts:

> Maryam Babangida was so influential with her husband that she practically operated the leverage of power behind scene.With her Better Life for Rural Women Programme, she influenced the creation of the Ministry of Women Affairs, the Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and Peoples' Bank Plc, which to some extent helped the masses. She also influenced the creation of Delta State with the capital in her hometown, Asaba.And when asked about that, she said "so what"[130]

Apart from the office of first lady, wives of Military Governors also occupied the office of First Ladies of States where they assisted their spouses in the administration of the states. As Ronke Ayuba, wife of the former Governor of Kaduna State opines:

> Iam proud to be a part of this pioneering work which is part of the campaign to get women to write about various fields which will support the BLP by further assisting to get most of our sisters and children to find their feet in the stream of national development through the reading of what they write.[131]

During their tenure, a number of women from the barracks assisted wives of Military Governors as special assistants, advisers and health consultants. For instance, Helena R.Hassan was the wife of Major J.A.Hassan (rtd) who compiled a bibliography on the Better Life Programme under the auspices of the Kaduna State Better Life Committee in 1991.[132] The involvement of these women in governance improved to a greater extent the perception of wives of military personnel and the development of the barracks. It also assisted in capacity building and restoration of confidence among women in the community.

The role of wives in politics and governance during the military era also propelled a few others to contribute their quota to the civilian regime. These included: Mrs Grace Bent, a Senator of the Federal Republic, Mrs Stella,Ufuoma Paul Omu, Mrs Patricia Akwashiki, members of the House of Representatives, and Mrs Laila Dogonyaro, woman leader of a party, to mention but a few.

At the economic level, the BLP introduced adult literacy programme and skill acquisition in the barracks. It was through the cottage industry that women learnt the act of transforming waste to wealth. Thus, snail shells, buttons, beads, threads, battery lids, broken plastics, used tyres and other waste materials were converted into the production of variety of goods. The women in this group were known in the barracks as "Waste to Wealth Cooperative Members." Patrick Nwoko, one of the resource persons of BLP stresses:

> There was the Fashion and Tailoring Cooperative Society which engaged in dress making, knitting, sewing and embroidery which contributed their products in the trade fairs. Similarly, wives of personnel involved in art and craft industry in the barracks produced art works, designs, graphics, and sculpture through their cooperative society[133]

In her words, Feyi Ogunfolajimi emphasizes that: "other cooperative socities that assisted women in the economic space included: Detergent and Cosmetics, Pottery and Basketry, Bread and Confectioneries, fish production, snailry, poultry, and farming to mention but a few.[134] Apart from the impact of the projects on some women, the programme also brought about remarkable development to the community. The BLP and FSP assisted in the construction and renovation of some workshops and schools where they carried out their programmes. Also the collaboration of BLP with the National Directorate of Employment in 1990 and 1991 facilitated the accreditation of some courses in military institutions to diploma and certificate levels.

For instance, in Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlememt Centre Oshodi, certificates were awarded in fashion and tailoring, shoemaking, soap, pomade and cosmetics management to mention but a few. Also in Nigerian Air Force Base Ikeja and Nigerian Army Barracks, Ojo, certificates were awarded in computer and information technology, catering and hotel management, health and laboratory science, to mention but a few. These courses are still being offered in their institutions in contemporary times. The schools had graduated a number of students within and outside the barracks in different fields of human endeavour. With the transition to civilian government in 1999, NAOWA, NAFOWA and NOWA took over the control and management of some of the schools and projects initiated by the first ladies.

The BLP and FSP also made significant progress in the health sector, particularly, the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), Training of traditional birth attendants (TBAs); seminars and workshops on nutrition and family planning techniques, Oral Dehydration Therapy, (ORT) Maternity and Child Care Services among others.[135] Other activities that received the attention of the BLP and FSP in the barracks included rental services, construction of shopping complexes, and youth empowerment centres. Similarly, there was a focused attention on the orphanage homes, vocational centres, eye treatment and provision of glasses to the aged and nursery schools outside the barracks.[136]

To consolidate some of the projects, FSP raised the sum of N4.3 billion for the establishment of FEAP,[137] as an outfit for poverty alleviation programme to assist dependants of deceased soldiers and widows through the payment of school fees, provision of uniforms and scholarships. Widows, on the other hand, were supported with various sums of money for business activities and capacity building.

However, this study notes that Mariam Abacha's FSP would have been better off if it had continued with the blueprint of BLP with little modifications or innovations where necessary. Despite the criticisms of BLP/FSP/FEAP by some scholars[138] and political activists,[139] this study reveals that these women's efforts contributed immensely to national development, capacity building and poverty alleviation programme of the barracks. Indeed, it is fair to argue that the pet projects of the first ladies in the military era were 'a new beginning' for wives of military personnel, and a foundation for first ladies' pet projects in the new democratic era.

Though questions have been raised as to what other skills wives of military personnel had beyond being wives? Available evidence shows that apart from being wives of military personnel, some of the women deployed their skills and competence in the development of society. Notable among them were Engineer (Mrs) Iniobong Louisa Usoro, wife of Air Vice Marshal S.J.Usoro, who worked with the Highway Department of the Ministry of Works and Urban Development. She later became the Chief Maintenance Engineer of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA). In 2010, Engr (Mrs) Louisa Usoro was elected President Association of Professional Women Engineers of Nigeria (APWEN).[140]

Dr (Mrs) Becky Aroriode, wife of Air Vice Marshal C.E. Aroriode also trained as a medical doctor in one of the Nigerian Universities. She contributed her expertise in military hospitals where she assisted wives of military personnel with health challenges. She was also President Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre Officers' Wives Association (NAFRCOWA) between October 28, 2010 - 08 November 08, 2012.[141] Others included Drs (Mrs) Arafat Ifemeje and Aisha Ndayako.[142]

Mrs Blessing Jacob Danladi, wife of Lt Colonel Jacob Danladi also trained as a teacher in College of Education, Plateau State, before proceeding to the university to study education administration. She is presently a teacher in (NAFRCOWA) and a columnist in NAFRCOWA Magazine.[143] Mrs Juliet Funmilayo Akinsanmi, wife of Air Vice Marshal M.A Akinsanmi (rtd), was a successful Chartered Estate Surveyor and a Fellow of the Nigerian Institute of Estate Surveyors and Valuers, She was the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer JF Akinsanmi and Partners.[144]

There were others to many to mention here who had exported their professionalism to the development of Nigerian economy, politics and legal system. It is for this reason, therefore, that Mrs J.F Akinsanmi in an interview stated, "We are here to make a difference."[145] These women succeeded in their endeavours because of the support of their husbands and perhaps the advantage of interactions in their Associations.

Conclusion

The contributions of military wives to the development of the barracks and the country in general cannot be overemphasized. Indeed, it was the achievements of the Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) that encouraged the establishment of both the Naval Officers' Wives Association and the Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association in the 1960s. As non-governmental organizations, these outfits began by sensitizing wives of military personnel on the need to be more productive and self-reliant in the barracks, since this would assist them in contributing to the career of their spouses. It was apparent during the period that majority of wives of military personnel benefited extensively from the literacy programme, skill acquisition and loan facilities of the associations.

In the public space also, the association played prominent role in assisting the less-privilege home, widows, and creating awareness campaign on HIV/AIDS. The drive to impact on wives of military personnel provoked the associations to set up markets, cancer screening centres, and women cervical cancer locations in the military hospitals.

The role of the associations in promoting the welfare of members was also a cardinal objective of the period. Thus, the body utilized the positions of wives of senior ranking military officers to press home their demand, especially in the areas of contracts, promotion of spouses and postings to lucrative areas and missions. The officers' wives associations also encouraged wives of military personnel to be involved in the affairs of the barracks, considering the opportunities and privileges it offered to women in service and out of service.

The legacies of Military Officers' Wives Association were remarkable. First it laid the foundation for the establishment of First Ladies' pet projects hitherto unknown in the country until the 1980s. These included Maryam Babangida's Better Life Programme for Rural Women, Miriam Abacha's Family Support Programme and Family Economic Advancement Programme and Fati Abubakar Abdusallam's Family Economic Advancement Programme and Family Support Programme. Some of the infrastructure provided by the empowerment outfit in some States had been converted in contemporary times by Local Government Councils. However, the challenges of these empowerment projects bordered on finance as most of the contributions were generated by members, friends of the military, contractors and donations from military authorities. Thus, the financial base was said to be inadequate in solving the myriad of problems that confronted Nigerian women during the period.

This study emphasises that government needs to re-position and sensitize wives of military personnel in this democratic era through conferences and seminars with a view to improving their socio-economic life. This will complement the activities of Military Wives' Associations. This study also establishes the fact that Military Wives' Associations have contributed to national development by creating social identity and influence for wives of military personnel. Similarly, the Better Life Programme (BLP) and Family Support Programme (FSP) of the first ladies equally had positive impact on the lives of wives of military personnel and the barracks in general contrary to the position of some published works and articles.

It is clear from the discussion that military wives associations have contributed to the 'task of integration' as derived in the theory of social system. It has also survived as a result of pattern maintenance and goal attainment which focused on the barracks, welfare and empowerment of wives of military personnel, dependants, and aspects of inter-group relations.

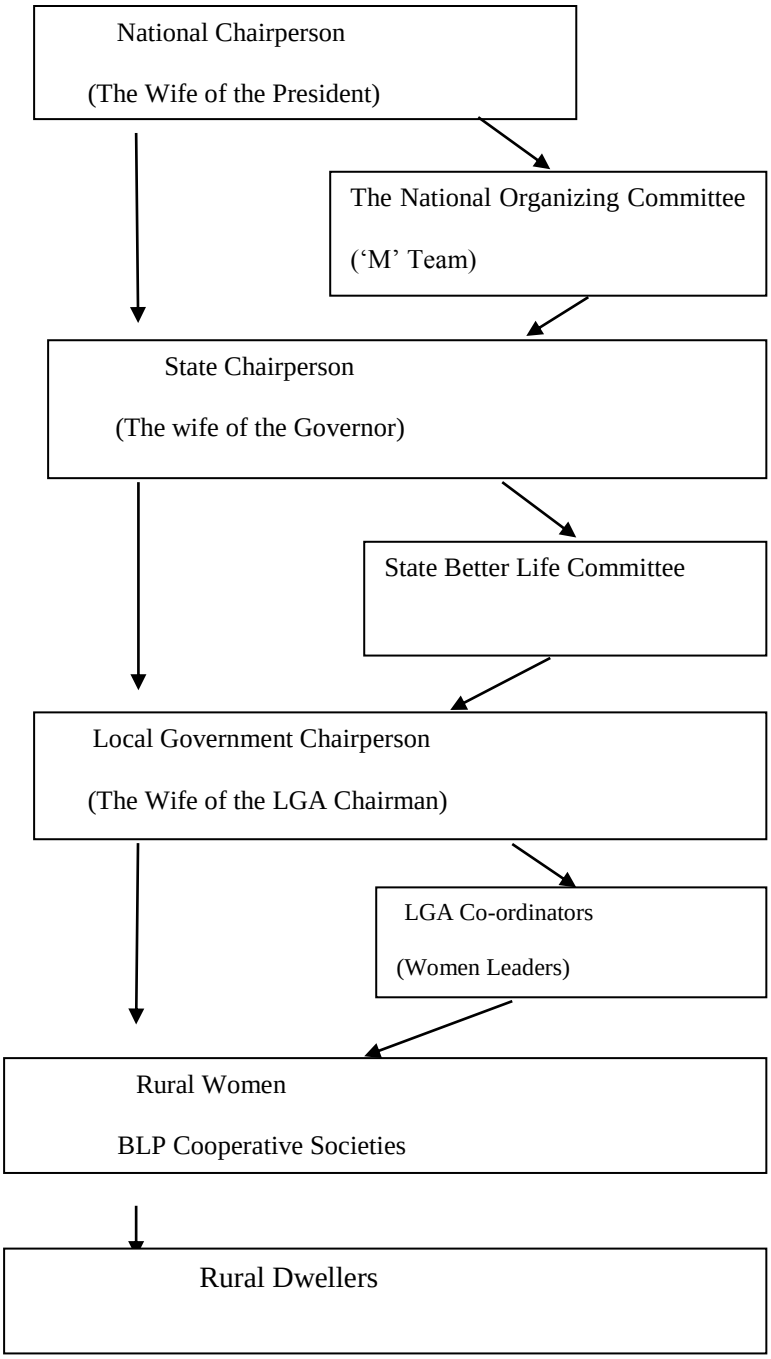
Figure 25

Mariam Abacha, 2011

Source: http://www. Naowa. com.org. (accessed on 3/06/2011).

Figure 26

Organizational Chart of Better Life Programme



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CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This study has examined eight critical issues in the history of wives of military personnel in Nigeria. Chapter one is the introduction, chapter two, discusses the evolution of Nigerian military and an overview of military barracks, 1863-1999, while chapter three traces the origins of wives of military personnel in Nigeria, 1905-1999. In chapter four, the study investigates the political and economic development of wives of military personnel in colonial barracks, 1905-1960, and chapter five, explores the social and religious development of wives of military personnel in colonial barracks, 1905-1960. Others include chapter six which focuses on wives of military personnel after independence, 1960-1999. Chapter seven highlights the nature and impact of Nigerian Civil War and peacekeeping mission on wives of military personnel, 1967-1999, while chapter eight evaluates the role of military wives association in national development and chapter nine is the conclusion.

This section of the study provides a summary of main issues discussed in the work. It also contains recommendations for improving the socio-economic life of wives of military personnel and dependants in the barracks, as well as, the contributions to knowledge. It establishes the fact that there was a nexus of social relationship between wives of military personnel and their spouses. This interaction, according to record, complements the activities of military men in the organisation.

The Nigerian military force comprised of the Army, Air Force and the Navy. Since the evolution of the force, there had been steady transformation in the system both in policy and regimentation. Available literature indicates that military barracks came into existence in

1863 following the establishment of the constabulary force. In the early years of the force, soldiers' lived in barracks made of tents and bush huts,[1] that did not encourage military profession and family life. Prior to the period, the West India Force was in-charge providing security and logistics for the commercial interests and imperial desire of the British Government. On the other hand, the Nigerian Navy and Air Force came into prominence in the 1960s and participated effectively in the Nigerian Civil War. In contemporary times, they had accommodated their personnel in the barracks except those who desired to live in towns out of choice.

The historical and geographical setting of the barracks was not only unique but different from other habitation. Indeed, several factors influenced the location of barracks in an area. These include: The absence of diseases and epidemics, tsetse flies, waterlog and swamps. Other features included availability of communication and road networks, portable drinking water and good landscape to mention but a few. However, the early years of the force was marked by the problem of accommodation which was one of the factors that directly and indirectly contributed to the rejection of women until a policy for the construction of modern barracks was initiated in 1904.

This study reveals that the construction of modern barracks was not the initial plan of the Colonial Office, because from 1863 to 1904 was so long a time for the construction of habitable accommodation. The underlying assumption as the study shows was the fact that the British never wanted to invest in such huge venture which they termed a waste of public funds. Besides, they wanted to make their colonial enterprise transitory but the events leading to the First World War, in addition to the economic profile of colonial Nigeria stimulated their interest and desire to prolong the administration.

After much agitation, the construction of of modern barracks began in Zaria with the accommodation for 10 British officers, 10 British Non-Commissioned Officers (BNCOs), 250 men and 250 horses,[2] By 1927 the construction of soldiers' quarters had spread to Ibadan in Western Region of Nigeria. Furthermore, by 1935 as Haywood and Clarke observe, 'bush houses' had disappeared from all but the small stations and parts of Zaria.[3] This social development as some scholars note was provoked by changes in imperial attitude.

Between 1954 and 1958, the Nigerian government had assumed responsibilities for troops' accommodation from the War Office. Therefore, a ten-year programme was drawn up but implementation of the plans was slow for lack of funds and shortage of staff in the Public Works Department (PWD).[4] Thus the army estimates had to be increased from £1,698,000 in March 1957 to £3,306,000 in March 1958.[5] The army budget between 1959 and 1960 was also increased from £4,000,000 to nearly £8,000,000 in 1965 and 1966.[6] Indeed, between 1959 and 1965 as N.J. Miners pointed out "almost all the barracks in Nigeria had been rebuilt."[7]

This study demonstrates that between 1970 and 1999 much progress had been made in the construction and maintenance of new barracks in Nigeria. Thus, old buildings were demolished for new and modern architecture befitting peacetime armed forces. This suggests that there has been some element of change and continuity in the structures and layouts of barracks since the colonial times in Nigeria. Barracks were composed of military men, dependants (wives and children), and civilian personnel of the Ministry of Defence. Others included men and women traders in the *mammy* markets as well as artisans and craftsmen. The social stratification in the barracks encouraged officers' wives to live far apart from wives of non-commissioned officers, due to rank and status of their husbands, a tradition which began in colonial Nigeria due to racial segregation.

The study reveals in the main that the population of wives of military personnel cannot be ascertained with statistical precision because of the following: There was paucity of verifiable data on the population of wives because most barracks had no up-to-date information on wives. Second, there was the influence of customs and traditions which encouraged some soldiers to marry more than one wife, one in the barracks others in the village. Third, cases of divorce in the early years of the force occasioned by brutality and battering of wives as well as constant demobilization of troops since 1918 among others. It is for this reason therefore that the population of wives of military personnel since 1905 to 1999 was tentatively put at about 500,000.

Much literature on the origins of women in modern barracks indicates that women camp followers and wives of combatants have always had a place in military stations. For instance, in pre-colonial period, majority contributed to the politics, economy and social life of the camp. The emergence of women in colonial barracks was the outcome of a Board of Inquiry instituted at the Headquarters of the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) in Gold Coast, composed of the former British colonies of Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia.

The 'Wilkinson's Inquiry' was necessitated by incessant desertion of troops from areas of primary assignments in virtually all the British colonies. First, most of the soldiers lacked the comfort of their wives. Second, the quality of food given to troops was undesirable to most of them as it was not part of their food culture; worst still was the fact that rotten grains formed part of the diet which caused sickness and sometimes death to many. Third, there was a marked distance between soldiers' primary assignment and home place which caused homesickness to many. Consequently, the Colonial Office declared in 1905 that it was

mandatory for troops to bring their wives into the barracks. The emergence of indigenous military wives marked a new beginning in the barracks culture in Nigeria.

The situation was not the same for commissioned and non-commissioned British officers who had hitherto opposed the introduction of women in the colonies on the grounds that the barracks was a bachelors' paradise, and the coming of women would affect the career of troops. However, when the British officers began to see the robust life of indigenous troops coupled with the fact that they rarely fell ill, they began to agitate for the inclusion of European wives into the colonies. Consequently, the 'Debate of August 23rd 1920' authorised Colonel Amery to announce that married life should be the rule rather than the exception in the colonies.

This study notes that the emergence of women eroded the masculine world of men in the barracks, because they were not as free as they used to be when they were all bachelors; this was hitherto the reasons adduced by the military conservatives popularly called the 'Old-Coasters.' During the period, most wives suffered a lot of challenges which endeared them to a lot of people both at home and abroad. These challenges ranged from the effect of weather and climate, tropical diseases, hostility of local people, and language barriers, among others. The low reputation of wives of military personnel was stereotyped because quite a good number of them excelled in several department of life. For instance, Violet Bourdillon was described in 1935 as the perfect Governors wife who contradicts completely the stereotyped conception of British women in the colonies.

Since independence, images of wives of military personnel had remarkably improved due to their participation in governance and mission assignment. As they took over power and controlled resources, these women became associated with power and influence which they deployed in private and public spheres. Consequently, beautiful and educated women became the attraction of officers and men in the organisation.

The desire for quality and educated women as wives became important in the 1980s and 1990s because of the office of the First Lady and Defence Attaché. This development, began to provoke headlines in leading magazines and newspapers in Nigeria as beautiful women attended Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) and its sister organisations.

The contributions of these ladies were remarkable because they succeeded in transforming the domesticity of wives and exploited it beyond the confines of military cantonments into the public space where some of them achieved excellence in politics, economy and social life. The involvement of women in the politics of military system dates back to pre-colonial camps and since then, they had played notable roles in major deliberations of the barracks. Worthy of mention were issues affecting their welfare, husbands and dependants. They had also exploited their positions to affect the lives of junior officers as well as non-commissioned officers in diverse ways, especially in matters of promotion, courses and postings.

The role of wives of Commanding Officers ('Mother of the Unit') and the Centre *Magajia* in the political organisation of women cannot be underestimated because both offices were indispensable in the internal structure of women. Their influence had not only sustained but enhanced the unity and culture of military barracks today. For this reason, both offices were

highly respected by men and women in the community as their judgments were sometimes binding to officers and men.

In the economic space, the study demonstrates that women's involvement in farming in the barracks gained popularity in the 1970s and 1980s following the concerted efforts of government at food security in the country. It was also heightened by the introduction of the Structural Adjustment programme by the Babangida Administration which incidentally affected most military families and their dependants. This development was significant because it initiated close understanding in the sexual division of labour between wives of military personnel and their spouses. It was also the first time after the Nigerian Civil War that most military men saw the need to forgo the merriment in the messes and drinking spots in the barracks to assist their wives in the farms and gardens on off days and public holidays. This perhaps, was in realisation of the fact that women's income generation in the home was significant. This study has shown that wives of military personnel had elaborate social system which centred on internal and external relations.

On the other hand, the nature and impact of conflicts on wives of military personnel in Nigeria cannot be overlooked in a study of this nature. This is because over the years, wars, coups and peacekeeping mission had remained issues of great challenge to women in the barracks. It is also compounded by the fact that military men had often returned from such assignments wounded, incapacitated or dead. In all these, it was the women that manned the households, praying for the safe return of their spouses, absorbing the shocks of bad tidings in the war zones, and sometimes victims of HIV/AIDS as was the case in Liberia and Sierra Leone missions.

The other negative effect associated with peacekeeping mission was the marriage of wives in areas of assignment as obtained in Liberia and Sierra Leone missions. The infilteration of these alien women created culture contact in dressing, names, food culture, and language to mention but a few. It also led to cases of juvenile delinquencies as some soldiers abandoned their first family to live with Liberia and Sierra Leonean women, therefore compounding the already worrisome problem of divorce and juvenile cases in the barracks.

The role and contribution of Military Wives' Associations (NAOWA/ NAFOWA/NOWA) to the progress of the barracks in particular and national development in general cannot be overemphasized. As non-governmental organisations, these outfits began by sensitizing women in the barracks on the need to be more productive and self-reliant in the community, as this would improve their welfare and contribute to the career of their spouses. The study underscores the fact that most women in the barracks benefitted from the literacy programme, skill acquisition and loan facilities of the association.

At the social level, the association played prominent role in assisting the less-privileged in the society, construction of markets, schools, cancer screening centres and HIV/AIDS awareness department. The involvement of the association in promoting the welfare of members was equally outstanding, particularly, that of widows, orphans and dependants in the system. The association utilised the positions of wives of high ranking military officers to press home their requests, especially, in the areas of contracts, promotion of spouses, and postings to lucrative and other places of interest. It was the Officers' Wives Association that inspired most wives to participate in the career of their spouses realising the enormous opportunity it offered them within and outside the barracks. The theory of social system as employed in the study reveals that the military is a social system just like any society, and it fulfills the four-

functional system problems – adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latent pattern maintenance represented by the letters '*AGIL,'* and this has been engaged in the appriopriate chapters of the study.

The study discovered that the tradition of social stratification in the military was a functional necessity because it solved partly the problems faced by the military system since it motivates individuals in the social structure. It equally contributed to pattern maintenance, goal attainment and well-being of officers' families. Military Wives' Associations have also helped in the integration of military families through empowerment programmes, poverty alleviation, and inter-group relations.

The idea of social stratification perhaps, is embedded in Susan Moller Okins' "Liberal Feminist Theory of Power as a Resource. This is because it helps us to understand how and why power as a resource was unequally distributed between officers and other ranks, on the one hand, and officers' wives and wives of other ranks on the other. In conclusion it is important for wives of other ranks to be adequately empowered in the system so that thay can partake in the 'critical social goods' of the barracks rather than the prevailing social exclusion.

Summary of Findings

First, the study establishes the fact that the Nigerian military began with the constabulary force in 1863 which later transformed into the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) in 1897. Since then, the Nigerian barracks had witnessed remarkable changes in composition, structure, and layout. Since independence, more barracks had also been established in many parts of the country with modern facilities and state of the art weaponry.

Second, the study demonstrates that wives of military personnel were actively involved in the political, economic and social life of colonial barracks. During the period, women were actively involved in domesticity and motherhood. Some European and indigenous soldiers' wives also participated in gardening, livestock production and cottage industries to mention but a few. It was in the process that some pets and perennial plants were introduced and domesticated in colonial barracks.

Third, the study reveals that wives of military personnel were active in the political, economic and social activities of the barracks after independence. For instance, between 1976 and 1990, wives of military personnel had opened the gendered space by accompanying their spouses on courses and trainings abroad, while others took on new roles in foreign missions, following the appointment of their spouses as military attaché or diplomats. This study also notes that the second half of 1980s and 1990s witnessed great improvement in the political and socio-economic development of wives of military personnel in Nigerian barracks.

Fourth, it establishes the fact that Military Wives' Association such as, NAOWA/NAFOWA/NOWA had positive impact on the lives of wives of military personnel, particularly, the literacy programme, skill acquisition, information and communication technology, cooperative and loan schemes, schools and markets to mention but a few. On the other hand, the pet projects of the first ladies, the Better Life Life (BLP), Family Support Programme (FSP) and Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) improved the lives of women in the barracks. It did not only initiate wives of military personnel into governance but improved the negative perception of women in the barracks.

Fifth, the study recognised that wars, coup d'état, and peacekeeping mission had adverse effect on women. For instance, between 1914 and 1918, most of the women lived in suspense following the deployment of their husbands to East Africa and the Cameroons campaigns. By the end of the First World War, some of them had lost their spouses, while others lived with injuries sustained by them for life. Between 1967 and 1975, the activities of wives of military personnel in both the private and public space had been affected by the civil war and the programmes of reconstruction and rehabilitation in the barracks. Thus, women began to nurse their injured husbands, participate in post-war reconciliation, and managing the home.

Similarly, the involvement of Nigerian troops in peacekeeping mission in Liberia, Sierra Leone and parts of Africa equally impacted negatively on some families, due to improper planning and arrangement by military authorities and the personnel. Thus managing the children and other dependants became a problem. It also introduced alien wives in the barracks, as some soldiers' got married while on mission.

Sixth, it establishes that wives of military personnel have had distinct experiences over the years arising from their unique social environment; an understanding of their history presented in this study exposes an important section of Nigerian women and by extension gender historiography.

Finally, the study discovered that the emergence of women in the barracks was not the original intention of the British imperial regime, but was necessitated by desertion of troops, homesickness, and poor quality of food. Since the introduction of women there had been far-reaching and wide-ranging changes in the military system. First, it eroded the exclusive masculine world in the barracks hitherto feared by the conservatives. Second, it curbed illicit

sexual behaviour and maintenance of concubine by some British officers in the barracks, which caused negative perception. Third, it initiated an era of respectability in the military system and the beginning of a robust barracks culture.

Contributions to Knowledge

This research has sufficient potential to contribute meaningfully to knowledge. It is a study of women and an aspect of military history and culture. Specifically, it has the following contributions to knowledge.

First, the study establishes that Nigerian military barracks have undergone tremendous transformations over the years in terms of structure and layout.

Second, it demonstrates that wives of military personnel had a unique political and socio-economic system, which complemented the traditions and values of the military.

Third, It establishes that Military Wives' Associations have contributed to national development by creating social identity, power and influence for wives of military personnel. The Better Life Programme (BLP) and Family Support Programme (FSP), for instance, had positive impact on the lives of wives of military personnel contrary to the position of some published works and articles.

Fourth, the study demonstrates that the contribution of wives of military personnel to the maintenance of peace and harmony in the household was crucial to the well-being and success of most military husbands.

Recommendations

First, the study recommends that government needs to re-position and sensitize wives of military personnel in this democratic era, through conferences and seminars with a view to

improving their socio-economic life. This will complement the efforts of Military Wives' Association.

Second, there is need for Federal Government and military authorities in particular to adequately provide for wives of military personnel before their spouses are sent on mission. The nature of assistance could be in form of loans to enable them start off small scale businesses. It could also be an intervention programme directed at training women in skills and crafts or other human development. The importance of this is to avoid the problems that characterised ECOMOG peacekeeping in Liberia and Sierra Leone in which women were left in quagmire, while children wandered away into the hands of gangs.

Third, Military Wives' Association (NAOWA/NAFOWA/NOWA should be overhauled to enable it address pressing challenges affecting wives of military personnel in contemporary times, especially, in this nascent democratic era where socio-economic challenges are greater. For this reason, government and military authorities should find a way of supporting Military Officers' Wives Association financially and morally to enable it execute more of its programmes in the barracks and the wider space.

Fourth, officers' wives should close existing social inequality and privileges between them and wives of other ranks to enable the latter partake in the critical social goods of the barracks. Similarly, wives of other ranks should see themselves as stakeholders in the military system rather than viewing their husbands' career as a stop-gap which is inimical to social development.

Fifth, military authorities should endeavour to establish welfare and juvenile departments as obtained in advanced countries to help take care of the needs of women, children and other dependants in the barracks. This will go a long way in alleviating the burden of spouses whose military husbands are on tour of duty and peacekeeping mission.

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APPENDICES:

(1) **Aims and Objectives of NAOWA**

The Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association was a non-governmental organisation whose membership was compulsory for officers' wives in the barracks. Its main aim is to promote the welfare of troops and their families as well as foster friendship, unity and understanding among officers' wives. Other stated aims included:

a. Promoting and undertaking social welfare schemes such as sewing, cookery and handicraft and conducting health care classes for soldiers' wives.
b. Undertaking philanthropic and social activities such as visits to the motherless babies' homes, old people's homes, Save Our Soul (SOS) village and handicapped people's home
c. Assisting baby welfare clinics and baby shows as well as family planning clinics for soldiers' families.
d. Organising seminars, symposia, local and international tours to enable the association participate fully in national and international welfare activities.
e. Promoting self-help projects such as day-care centres, play grounds and establishing libraries in barracks and
f. Organising visits to military hospitals with gifts.
g. Provide recreational activities for women.

(2) **NAOWA Chronicle of Command 1960-1999**

Former National Presidents:

1. Mrs Welby Evarald. - 1950s - 1960
2. Mrs Victoria Aguiyi Ironsi - 1960 - 1967
3. Mrs Aisha Usman Katsina - 1967 - 1972
4. Mrs David Ejoor - 1972 - 1975
5. Mrs Grace Danjuma - Jul 1975 - Oct 1979
6. Mrs I.A.Akinrinade - Oct 1979 - Apr 1980
7. Mrs G.S. Jalo - Apr 1980 - Oct 1981
8. Mrs .M.I. Wushishi - Oct 1981 - Dec 1981

9. Maryam Babangida	-	Jan 1984 - Aug 1985
10. Mariam Abacha	-	Aug 1985 - Aug 1990
11. Mrs Salihu Ibrahim	-	Aug 1990 - 1993
12. Mrs Chris. Alli	-	1993 - 1994
13. Mrs Ishaya Bamayi	-	1994 - June 1998
14. Mrs Victor Malu	-	1999.

(3) **NAOWA Code of Conduct**

An officer's wife must:

1. Maintain proper public manner to reflect the high standards of the military.
2. Respect other people's feelingsand be tolerant.
3. Be courteous, polite, loving and kind.
4. Maintain high-esteem in the home for good upbringing of children.
5. Be a complement to her husband's success.
6. Be earger to listen and reluctant to talk.
7. Love and respect her neighbours.
8. Pay particular attention to the children's behaviour and upbringing.
9. Be punctual at all engagements.
10. Create conducive atmosphere for peace in the home and her environment at all times.
11. Be neatly dressed and maintain a good turn-out at all times.
12. Keep her home and surroundings clean.
13. Teach her children to respect the laws of the land and their elders.
14. Intensify cultural and moral values in the home.
15. Bring up their children with the fear of God in them.

Don'ts:

1. Do not take undue advantage of her husband's position in the Army
2. Do not fight in public.
3. Do not quarrel before children
4. Do not disagree with your husband publicly.
5. Do not disgrace your husband in public.
6. Do not gossip. Avoid idleness.
7. Do not disregard your husband's comments, especially on food or cleanliness of the home.Take them in good faith.
8. Do not carry rifts between you and your husband over to the next day
9. Do not indulge in distructive criticisms.
10. Do not engage in dubious activities that can cause embarrassment to your husband.
11. Do not indulge your children in luxury items or high spending.

(4) **Aims and Objectives of NOWA**

1. To promote the upkeep of the home and environment.
2. To contribute to the welfare of the needy e.g. motherless children, handicapped and disabled people, the poor, the aged and others.
3. Establish day-care centres, nurseries and other welfare facilities that could enhance the standard of life of naval personnel and their families.
4. To seek the welfare and progress of the ratings' families.
5. To engage, participate and be part of any international activity or organization as is conducive for the advancement of the Association.
6. To organize and promote seminars, symposia, workshops, lectures, film shows, trade-fairs, debates and other relevant media on any subject related to the welfare of women and home among others.

(5) **NAFOWA Anthem**

1. We love this family
   We love this family of NAF
   So closely
   So closely knitted into one
   You've taken us into yours}
   And we're so proud to be } 2ce
   A part of this great family}
2. We love this modern force
   The force that reaches everywhere
   So timely
   So timely
   So timely and so efficient
   We are able ready willing to serve}
   Our dear father land } 2ce
   We're proud of this great force }
3. We love this NAFOWA
   We love this NAFOWA of ours
   Our motto

Service to humanity
We touch lives positively }
And we make the needy smile } 2ce
We love this NAFOWA of ours }

(6) **Chronicle of NAFOWA Presidents**

1.	Mrs Nne Furo Kurubo	09 Jan 66 - 04 Aug 67
2.	Mrs Pauline Alao	05 Aug 67 - 15 Dec 69
3.	Mrs Ikwue	17 Dec 69 - 28 Jul 75
4.	Mrs Phoebe Yisa-Doko	29 Jul 75 - 14 April 80
5.	Mrs Sylvia Bello	15 Apr 80 - 01 Dec 83
6.	Dr (Mrs) Laraba Alfa	01 Jan 84 - 01 Jan 90
7.	Alhaja Yusuf	02 Jan 90 - 30 Jan 92
8.	Mrs Rekiya Hanna Dada	31 Jan 93 - 16 Sep 93
9.	Mrs Victoria Ada Femi	17 Sep 93 - 29 Mar 96
10.	Mrs Nkese Eduok	30 Mar 96 - 29 May 99
11.	Mrs Grace Alfa	29 May 99 - 24 Apr 01

(7) **Objectives of Better Life Programme**

a. To raise the social consciousness of women about their rights, as well as their social, political and economic responsibilities;
b. To bring women together and closer for better understanding and resolution of their problems through collective action;
c. To mobilise women for concrete activities towards achieving specific objectives; including seeking leadership roles in all spheres of national life;
d. To educate women in simple hygiene, family planning and on the importance of child care and
e. To enlighten women in rural areas on the opportunities and facilities available to them at the local government areas; among others.