IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN NIGERIA: BETWEEN UNIVERSALISM AND RELATIVISM*

Abstract
The achievement of a universal application of women rights has been fraught with many difficulties. In Nigeria, many international laws protecting and promoting women rights have been ratified but not domesticated. It was observed in this work that there are extant laws and practices which prevent the domestication of these laws. These laws and practices are supported by traditional, religious and customary beliefs which found their root under the relativist ideology; this also mitigates the implementation of the available women rights provisions. This paper critically considered the human rights of women with a great focus on how the relativist ideology hinging mainly on religious and cultural practices affects the implementation of the rights of women in Nigeria. The paper discovered that cultural and religious practices are prioritised over women rights in Nigeria. The work advocates for a universal application of women rights rather than an application determined in the context of particular cultural and religious leanings, and concludes that a universal approach to women rights would be most ideal. The method is doctrinal. Sources of materials for work include textbooks, articles in journals, newspaper publications and internet materials.

Keywords: human rights, women rights, universalism, relativism.

1. Introduction
The human rights of women throughout their life cycle are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. Governments must not only refrain from violating the human rights of all women, but must work actively to promote and protect these rights. However, in spite of this declaration and the duty imposed on the government to this end, women still suffer great violations of their rights. Women around the world are still married as children or trafficked into forced labour or sex slavery. They are refused access to education and political participation, and some are trapped in conflicts where rape is perpetrated as a weapon of war. Around the world, deaths related to pregnancy and childbirth is needlessly high and women are prevented from making deeply personal choices in their private lives. Nigeria, to a large extent, has made both general and specific provisions on women rights. The 1999 Constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria made certain provisions on human rights. These provisions protect both male and female citizens. Certain other legislations which protect the rights of women specifically have equally been made at certain times. Some international laws and treaties on women rights have equally been domesticated. However, one step is to make laws while another step is to implement and enforce the laws made. Without proper implementation, the laws made are merely ‘paper laws’ without any impact. In Nigeria, the presence of the plural system of law presents potential threats to the enjoyment of rights by women. This problem causes a situation where laws are being subjected to a relativist test to determine whether they should be applicable or not.

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2. Universalism as a Basic Principle of Human Rights

The human rights framework protects civil, political, economic, social, cultural, and every other category of rights. But no matter what kind of right is in issue, there are basic principles that are always part of human rights standards and implementation. Principles denote a rule or belief that helps you know what is right and wrong and that influences your actions. It is a basic truth or theory that forms the basis of something. Principles are different from rules. They form the underlying basis for rules. A principle of human rights would therefore be taken to mean something that forms a basis for human right rules. For example, while the right of life and the right to dignity of the human person are human right rules, both of them share the principle of universalism and inalienability (which means that they apply to all persons irrespective of any consideration, and cannot be denied any person). As such, rules must conform to principles.

Universalism as a basic principle of human rights is to the effect that human rights must be afforded to everyone without exception. Umobi opined that we all call human rights universal because each and every one of us wherever we are placed has human rights which are grounded in a moral order. Human rights are universal because everyone is born with and possess the same rights, regardless of where they live, their gender or race, or their religious, cultural or ethnic background. This universality of human rights is encompassed in the words of Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: ‘All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’. The entire premise of this principle is that people are entitled to these rights simply by virtue of their being humans. The principle of universality of human rights has been the subject of many controversies. While many people argue that human rights are not universal, and thus are relative, many other proponents of human rights are of the view that human rights should be applicable universally irrespective of any consideration. The partisans of universality claim that international human rights, like rights to equal protection, physical security, free speech, freedom of religion, and free association are and must be the same everywhere. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights emphasizes the fact that the universality of human rights is beyond question; that the humanity of all people was to be acknowledged beyond recognition by all states, with no exceptions. All humans were to be regarded as free and equal, with no distinction given to their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political and other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

3. The Concept of Relativism

Relativism is conceptually complex and there are varieties of relativist standpoints. Relativism could be brought about by cultural, religious, economic situation and political system differences. Generally, the most pronounced of all relativist approaches is the cultural relativism. It is trite that different cultures have different moral codes; based on this, advocates of relativism believe that there are no universal moral truths and that the customs of different societies are all that exist. Advocates of cultural relativism claim that (most, some) rights and rules about morality are embedded in and thus depend on cultural context; the term ‘culture’ often being used in a broad and diffuse way that reaches beyond indigenous traditions and customary practices to include political and religious ideologies and institutional structures. Hence, notions of rights based on them necessarily differ throughout the world, because the culture in which they take root and inhere themselves differ. This relativist position can then be understood simply to assert as an empirical matter that the world contains an impressive diversity in views about right and wrong that is linked to the

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diverse underlying cultures. But the strong relativists’ position goes beyond arguing that there is - as a matter of fact, empirically – an impressive diversity. It attaches an important consequence to this diversity; that no transcendent or trans-cultural ideas of rights can be found or agreed on, and hence that no culture or state (whether or not in the guise of enforcing international human rights) is justified in attempting to impose on other cultures or states what must be understood to be ideas associated particularly with it. According to the relativists, to call a custom ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect’ would imply that we can judge that custom by some independent standard of right and wrong; but no such standard exists; every standard is culture-bound. Consequently, it is naïve to suppose that rights that are universally identified and defined, regardless of their intrinsic value, may be implemented in defiance of values, rules, and customs that are locally prescribed in the name of culture. Relativists may even recognize rights with all its parts, but reject the accusation of certain cultural practices to be violation of these rights. Although cultures differ, a common thread that runs through virtually all culture is that it must deny rights to women who have become aware that they possess rights because they possess an identity that is theirs independently of the community to which they belong. Such that references to culture therefore become chimerical and alienated. Culture becomes a weapon of control; in the case of women- a patriarchal control. As such, relativism continues to pose a challenge to universalism of women rights. Relativism as a concept usually takes two major forms: cultural relativism and religious relativism.

**Cultural Relativism**

The conflict between Universal human right doctrine and cultural relativism is found from the very beginning of adoption of universal human right doctrine in 1948. So, to understand this conflict and relation to know how they influence each other before going to the main discussion, it is important to define and show the relationship between these two terminologies. The UN General Assembly (United Nations, 1948) proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as, ‘a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations’. So that such rights must be considered core rights to which every human being is entitled by virtue of being human. In the main part they are- or should be-common to all cultures and societies and the denial of any of these by any reason of cultural relativism is surely indefensible. On the other hand in cultural relativism, all points of view are equally valid, and any truth is relative. The truth belongs to the individual or her or his culture. All ethical, religious, and political beliefs are truths related to the cultural identity of the individual or society. The United Nations Department of Public Information defines cultural relativism as,

the assertion that human values, far from being universal, vary a great deal according to different cultural perspectives. Some would apply this relativism to the promotion, protection, interpretation and application of human rights which could be interpreted differently within different cultural, ethnic and religious traditions.  

Also, Lawson observed that cultural relativism maintains that there is an irreducible diversity among cultures because each culture is a unique whole with parts so intertwined that none of them can

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be understood or evaluated without reference to the other parts and to the cultural whole, the so-called pattern of culture.  

In other words, according to cultural relativist view, human rights are culturally relative rather than universal. Today’s world shows sign of positive progress towards the universal system of human rights (the globalization of human rights). Many nation states have rejected outright the globalization of human rights and claim that their nations have unique set of values, which provide the basis for their different understanding of human rights and justify the ‘exceptional’ handling of rights by some governments. In asserting these values, leaders from some nation states find that they have convenient tools to silence internal criticism and to fan anti-Western nationalist sentiments. At the same time, the concept is welcomed by cultural relativists, cultural supremacists, and isolationists alike, as fresh evidence for their various positions against a political liberalism that defends universal human rights and democracy.

According to some scholars, the universality of human rights can be challenged by cultural relativists on three different levels. The first level is the substance of the list of human rights to be protected. The thesis of cultural relativism holds that different societies have different perceptions of right and wrong, so human rights substances should also be different. But it is absurd to make a critical standard of morality dependent on the level of support it has from various societies as every society try to set it according to their own interest. The second level where cultural differences may challenge the universality of the human rights doctrine is the interpretation of specific rights. According to cultural relativists, interpretation of human rights is also relevant in cultural perspectives. But apart from the question of whether or not people differ a lot in how they interpret human rights and what they consider to be violations of them, it is not possible to allow for major differences in interpretation of human rights standards if they are to give any serious protection to individuals at all. Thirdly, there may be differences of form in how human rights are implemented in different cultures. But Independent of the form of implementation, the minimum standard set by the international human rights doctrine must be met. Differences in institutional implementation cannot be used as justification for lack of protection of universal human rights. So, though controversial, there are some grounds for cultural relativist to fight for a culturally relative human right doctrine. But these grounds became irrelevant when we see many nation states and leaders endangering human lives by violating basic human and group rights in the name of ‘cultural values’ and trying to justify it in the name of cultural relativism.

Religious Relativism

In a speech on 5th October 1995, Pope John Paul II referred to the Universal Declaration as ‘one of the highest expressions of the human conscience of our time’. The leader of the Catholic Church recognized that

every culture is an effort to ponder the mystery of the world and in particular of the human person: it is a way of giving expression to the transcendent dimension of human life; therefore, the quest for freedom cannot be suppressed. It arises from recognition of the inestimable dignity and value of the human person.

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No religious or cultural tradition is alien to this inestimable dignity and value of the human person. The claim ‘Do to others what you would like them to do to you. Try not to do things to others that you would not like them to do to you’ is an ethical code whose moral force can be appreciated by all reasonable people. Rushworth Kidder agreed that the idea of individual decency can be found in the early contributions of Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Taoism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and the rest of the world’s major religions.\(^9\) Despite their apparent differences, all religions share certain fundamental values: they honor the dignity of human life, and consequently refer to the issue of the human responsibility toward others, especially toward those who suffer.\(^{10}\) In his *The Evolution of International Human Rights*, Paul Gordon Lauren opined that, according to the principle of Buddhism established by Siddharta Gautama, ‘only when we learn to empathize and feel the suffering of others do we become truly and fully human ourselves.’ Around 2500 years ago, Siddharta Gautama explicitly attacked the entrenched and rigid caste system of his day by opening his order to both men and women, stressing the unique value of all individuals as physical and spiritual beings.\(^{11}\) Human beings have worth regardless of their social or political positions: this was accepted as an ethical principle already in the 6th Century BC. Confucianism was founded by Kong Qiu at approximately the same time as the emergence of Buddhism. Reflections on human nature and moral judgment are similar, since every individual has the responsibility to overcome his egotism in order to recognize the equal worth of others. The Confucian Principle ‘Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire’\(^{12}\) is regarded as a rejection of despotic governments who oppress their people. A Hindu maxim states: ‘One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one’s own self.’ People are prevented from causing pain to any living being at any time through the actions of one’s mind, speech or body. Every life is sacred and the value of tolerance is a prerogative in the Indian culture.\(^{13}\) Lauren observed that the tenets of Islam founded five hundred years after the lifetime of Jesus and revealed through the writings of Muhammed, also address responsibilities towards others.\(^{14}\) The scripture of the Qur’an speaks to social justice, the sanctity of life, personal safety, mercy, compassion, and respect for all human beings.

Differently from Confucianism, Buddhism and the rest, Islam regards individuals not in the first instance as members of groups or a community, but as ultimate locus of responsibility and accountability.\(^{15}\)


\(^{10}\) Kofi Annan, ‘*These values: compassion; solidarity; respect for each other - already exist in all our great religions [...] We can use these values – and the frameworks and tools we have based on them - to bridge divides and make people feel more secure and confident of the future*’, World Civilisations: ‘Bridge the World’s Divides’. Lecture given at the British Museum London on 25\(^{th}\) February 2010. Available at <http://www.kofiannanfoundation.org/speeches/world-civilisations> accessed on 13\(^{th}\) May 2017.


\(^{12}\) Do not unto another that you would not have him do unto you. Thou needest this law alone. It is the foundation of all the rest. (Confucius, 500 BCE).


\(^{14}\) PG Lauren, *op cit*.

\(^{15}\) LG Carli, *op cit*. 
Finally, human rights are an integral part of Judaism and Christianity, whose doctrines enhance the individual autonomous moral judgment. People are created in the divine image as members of the same human family. Thereby, brotherly love is a fundamental principle. By virtue of mutual recognition of people as human beings endowed with ethical codes, human rights have a moral universal validity in the Christian-Jewish culture. The many and various religious traditions attempt to address human relationships with compassion and justice. All of them had systems of justice as well as ways of tending to the health and welfare of their members. This becomes particularly remarkable if considered that religions historically emerged from pre-modern, male-dominated societies characterized by enormous discriminations, hereditary systems of inequality and hierarchies headed by kings or emperors. From a secular point of view, the equal dignity of human beings is a moral law inherent to the individual nature as a matter of natural law. According to Epstein, a Humanist Chaplain at Harvard University, the ethical principles as derived from human dignity are a concept that essentially no religion misses entirely, ‘but not a single one of these versions […] requires a God.’ As a consequence, believers find their commitment to human rights standards on their own religious basis; in the same way non-believers seek to affirm their commitment on secular philosophy. In view of our personal beliefs, human dignity may be God given or may be natural and innate. It might be simply asserted as a fundamental value in its own right – like in the Preamble of the Declaration - without reference to human nature or divine gift. The divine reference was on the contrary embedded in the American Declaration of Independence and in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man. After all; it could not be different in the historical context of the eighteenth century. The object of the modern human rights discourse is to agree on a body of universal principles in spite of the disagreements on the justification of these principles.

The common belief by the different religions on the universality of human rights on the grounds of its divinity does not however apply totally with regards to women. Women, from time immemorial, have been recognized as less of a human being. The Christian Bible gives instances of these. The Bible has its setting in the Jewish culture; and in the bible, even Christ choose only men as his disciples. During the feeding of the 5000, women and children were categorized as the same and were not counted; even the incident of the adulterous woman in the Bible where the law of the Jews was said to be that any woman who commits adultery should be stoned to death, one would be forced to ask, ‘what happens to the man? Or was the woman committing the adultery on her own?’ Even in the Quran, women were expressed as being less than men in certain instances. Husbands were even granted the right to beat their wives if they fear disobedience. The Quran equally grants husbands the right to divorce their wives simply by saying ‘I divorce you’ three times. So that, although these religions discussed above, believe in the divinity of

\[16\] Ibid.
\[17\] ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights […]’ American Declaration of Independence, Preamble, 1776.
\[18\] ‘The representatives of the French people […] have determined to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man’, Declaration of the Rights of Man, Preamble
\[20\] The Holy Bible, King James Version, ibid, John 8:3-10.
\[21\] Q 4:34
\[22\] AJ Droge, Trans. The Qur’an: A New Annotated Translation (Croydon: Equinox Publishing, 2013) p 24, this would be allowed only when the wife is not menstruating and there has been no sexual contact with her since the time of her last menses.
human rights and thus, its universality; their belief on these rights as regards women differ according to
their religions, giving birth to ‘religious relativism of rights’.

4. Challenges to Universalism of Women Rights in Nigeria

In Nigeria, religious, cultural/traditional, economic and political reasons have in a number of ways had an
impact (both positive and negative) on the rights of women. This brings about relativism in women rights
in Nigeria. However, in all of these, religion and culture plays the most part which would be discussed
below.

Religious Relativism of Women Rights in Nigeria

Nigeria practices two major religions: the Christian and Islamic religion. The Christians base their belief on
the bible, which provides a root for many of their practices; whereas the Muslims base theirs on the Koran.
Nigeria is a country more or less built on religion. The extent of the people’s belief in religion is
overwhelming. This has brought about a lot of religious fanaticism with its attendant positive and negative
consequences. Nigeria is signatory to many international treaties and conventions on women rights.

However, these conventions cannot be implemented in Nigeria because of their non-domestication,
which is mainly as a result of the opinions held and propagated by religious leaders in the country. For many years
in northern Nigeria, where majority of the population are Muslims, sharia has been in force. Sharia is seen
by many Muslims as an entire system of guidelines and rules which encompasses criminal law, personal
status law, and many other aspects of religious, cultural and social life, such that particular international
human rights norms have been questioned in the African and Islamic contexts, especially those relating to
women’s and children’s rights. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against
Women and the Maputo Protocol, despite the fact that their provisions, if domesticated, would go a long
way in improving the protection of the rights of women in Nigeria, have not been domesticated. The major
reason for this is that the provisions of these conventions on abortion are inconsistent with the teachings of
both the Christians and Muslims in the country. The provisions of section 29(4) (a) of the Constitution of
the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides thus

1) Any citizen of Nigeria of full age who wishes to renounce his
Nigerian citizenship shall make a declaration in the prescribed manner for the
renunciation.
(4) For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section—
(a) ‘full age’ means the age of eighteen years and above ;
(b) any woman who is married shall be deemed to be of full age,

This provision is bad for women. This is because, this provision by implication, constitutionalized girl-
child marriage. In an attempt to expunge the provision of this sub-section from the constitution, several
members of the Senate voted against it, with Senator Ahmad Sani Yerima holding the opinion that a

24 Until recently when its scope was limited to personal status and civil law.
25 The Senator representing Zamfara West from June 2007 to June 2019
removal of that provision would amount to an interference in marriages under Islamic Law and custom, which said marriages are already not within the powers of the legislators by virtue of Item 61 of the Second Schedule of the 1999 Constitution. This provision of the law has remained and survived several constitutional reviews because if amended or removed entirely, would amount in a way, to the abolition of girl-child marriage, which is unacceptable in Islamic religion. Section 55 of the Penal Code which provides that ‘Nothing is an offence, which does not amount to the infliction of grievous harm upon any person and which is done by a husband for the purpose of correcting his wife, such husband and wife being subject to any natural law or custom in which such correction is recognized as lawful’ condones domestic violence and may be used as justification for abuse against women in matrimonial relationships. However, it has been sustained despite all criticisms because it is acceptable in the Islamic religion. The Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill of 2016 which was premised on the International Covenant on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 1979 and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s rights on the Rights of Women in Africa 2003; and sought to prohibit discrimination against women in all forms and the denial or limitation of any privilege, respect, advantage or benefit accruable to any woman on the basis of her sex was rejected by the senate mainly on the grounds that the proposals contained in the bill was banned under the Quran and also because it was inconsistent with Nigerian culture.

These provisions pointed out above are all inconsistent with the universally acceptable standards on women rights, but have been sustained because of the relativity of Nigerian religions, which according to relativists, should be preserved.

**Traditional/Cultural Relativism of Women Rights in Nigeria**

Often, the strict human rights gender equality perspective does not consider cultural context. From time immemorial, Nigeria has been a patriarchal society. Women have been subjected to many discriminatory practices because it is believed to be the custom. In the Eastern part of the country, we have the widowhood practices which although offends the provisions on human rights in both the 1979 and 1999 Constitutions, are still in practice because it is culture. Under the primogeniture rule practiced by the Bini people of Mid-Western Southern Nigeria, the deceased’s principal place of residence (igiogbe) passes exclusively to the oldest surviving son for some traditional reasons. Consequently, a daughter who relocates and comes under her husband’s authority cannot effectively discharge the obligations attached to the igiogbe custom. Unless this traditional belief of the Bini people changes, their inheritance rule on igiogbe cannot be varied. This custom, despite being inconsistent with the universally acceptable standards prohibiting discrimination based on gender and promoting the equality of men and women, has been consistently upheld by the Supreme Court. The Islamic inheritance law which gives to a son twice the share given to a daughter is discriminatory, but has also been sustained because it is culture.

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26 This section provides that the formation, annulment and dissolution of marriages other than marriages under Islamic law and Customary law including matrimonial causes relating thereto shall be in the Exclusive Legislative List.

27 Penal code (Northern States) Federal Provisions Act (No. 25 of 1960)

28 Some states have enacted laws prohibiting such practices.

5. The Way Forward

A fight for the universalism of women rights can simply be understood as a fight for the best form of existence for women, as such, the widely held conception by advocates of relativism that universal women rights is a synonym for western based women rights would be wrong. Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration, States have repeatedly emphasized the universality and indivisibility of human rights. At the World Conference in Vienna women rights were specifically recognized as part of universal human rights and this has been subsequently reaffirmed, including at the Fourth World Conference on Women. As mentioned above, the Vienna Programme of Action also explicitly stressed the importance of eradicating ‘any conflicts which may arise between the rights of women and the harmful effects of certain traditional or customary practices, cultural prejudices and religious extremism.’ Despite these commitments by States, the question of universality has often been raised when States have tried to justify violations of women’s rights in the name of culture. Inasmuch as it is right that culture be preserved; there are however numerous cultural practices that marginalize women, impede their social growth, and cause them health challenges. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women in her report on cultural practices within the family that are violent towards women rightly highlights female genital mutilation, so-called honour killings of women, son preference and witch hunting as examples of bad customs that have been defended under the pretext of being part of a given culture. It is in the light of this that Article 2(f) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women requires States to ‘take all appropriate measures to, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women’.

The greatest challenge of the advocates of universalism is the argument by the relativists who brand these women rights as rights which are incompatible with cultural and religious values obtainable in their different communities. These relativists view these universalists’ belief as representing a form of cultural imperialism and hegemony perpetuated by the West. The questions to be asked these relativists are ‘what actually are your fears?’ would this cultural imperialism actually bring about positive or negative results? It is possible to negotiate human rights with culture, challenging discriminatory and oppressive aspects of culture whilst retaining its positive aspects as observed by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women in her report on the intersections between culture and violence. She argued that:

- compromising women’s rights is not an option. Therefore, the challenge that confronts us today is to respect and prize our diverse cultures while developing common strategies to resist oppressive practices in the name of culture, and to promote and uphold universal human rights while rejecting encroachments grounded in ethnocentric thinking.

The Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights has also discussed the interaction of the principle of universality of human rights, recognition and implementation of cultural rights and the need to respect cultural diversity. The Special Rapporteur views the universal promotion and protection of human rights, including cultural rights, and respect for cultural diversity as mutually supportive. She recalls the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and Human Rights Council resolution 10/23 to affirm that respect for cultural rights or cultural diversity may not undermine the universality of human rights.35

No doubt, the marginalization of women in any society is always a direct consequence of ‘societies clinging to their culture’. Traditionally, laws function to shape the conduct of the members of the society. The essence of making particular laws for the protection of women is because the society recognizes that women have been classified as a vulnerable group from time immemorial by the men who were in charge then; and thus the need for their protection from the whims and caprices of the men. The aim of the international community expressed through international and regional organizations in making of these laws protecting women would be defeated if nation states are to continue clinging unto some bad cultures and religious practices under the guise of cultural and religious relativism. For these reasons, governments in its three arms in Nigeria must operate to regulate the preferences of these cultural and religious guardians and perpetuators as it relates to cultural and religious practices which marginalize women. These preferences, if left unguarded, would continue to cause women all sort of ills. This requires the government to invoke the common good of the society and of women in its legal/policy considerations relating to women rights. Similarly, the legislature would need to make laws protecting women rights and adopt the standard set by the international community. Also, the judiciary (bar/bench) shall rise to the occasion of a special responsibility in the protection of women rights by declaring any discriminatory or unhealthy practice against women brought before it prohibited and criminal. This study is a call for a common ground to be found between universalism and cultural and religious relativism in Nigeria, a situation where women rights would be universally applicable whilst still preserving GOOD cultural practices, having in mind that culture does not make people, instead, people make culture. And if it is true that the full humanity of women is not the culture in any given place, then we can and must make it the culture.36 The rights of woman should against all odds be protected and enforced.

6. Conclusion
In any case, human rights are compatible with cultural diversity. Every culture can pursue its own vision of a good life, as long as it does not impinge on the rights of the individuals who exist within that culture.
So, in as much as the arguments and debates keep going on, there is greater support on universality being a basic principle of human rights and this principle should be applied to the implementation of women rights in Nigeria as well.

35Ibid.