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PUTTING THE CART BEFORE THE HORSE? VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSONS (PROHIBITION) ACT (VAPP) IN CONTEXT

Abstract:

On 2nd May 2015, the (now former) president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan signed into law the Violence Against Persons (prohibition) Bill. The law in effect prohibits all forms of violence against persons and particularly for the purpose of women and child rights, criminalizes the practice popularly known as female genital mutilation (FGM). Unsurprisingly, many human rights activists regard this development as a step in the right direction as far as human rights protection in Nigeria is concerned. There are however some issues, especially in relation to the constitutional and cultural outlook of the Nigerian society which the author of this article regards as highly significant as far as implementation of the law is concerned. The article aims to consider these issues in line with a predominant argument that there should be an increased focus on developing a 'rights protection culture' in the Nigerian society through other measures outside legislative enactments.

Keywords:

Nigeria, Rights, Violence, Law, Society,

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