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Nigerian Social Institutions in the Lens of Anomie Theory

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Abstract

Sociological theories are focused towards analyzing and explaining situations and circumstances surrounding social phenomenon, interpreting them and predicting their likelihood hence, the relevance of sociological theories in every human society to scholarly evaluate the direction of the society for important action by the members of the society. Among the sociological theories, Anomie theory (Though relatively old) is one of the foundational sociological theories by one of the founding fathers of Sociology which, still hold relevance in the explanation of the modern social institutions. In view of the explaining power of anomie theory such as Durkheimian perspective, Parsonian perspective and Mertons, in examining the healthiness of the Nigerian social institutions such as the political institution, economic institution, religious institution, family institution etc.

Keywords: Anomie theory; Social institution; Social structure; Subjectivity; Objectivity

Introduction

In the world of academics, efforts are made to explain, analyze and predict the operation of a phenomenon, its diverse manifestations and the possibility of bringing it under control or better still; adapt to its existence and changes. All the efforts in doing the aforementioned activities are captured in the concept of theory. Theory is a cause effect Logical explanation of a phenomenon and prediction of its subsequent development. It is the highest of generalization in its scientific discipline containing all of essential elements of the explanation at the particular stage of knowledge and embodying within the laws, principles and hypothesis, which clarify issues at corresponding level of analysis [1]. Theory can be Meta theory (which tries to explain existence and directions of phenomena in the society as a whole) or middle range theory (which isolate and analyze phenomenon or segment of the social life in relation to other phenomena or segment in the society). Anomie theory as recognized today in the criminological and sociological paradigm is traceable to the works of such great sociologists as Emile Durkheim, Robert Merton and Talcolt Parsons [2]. Anomie which is a French word and loosely translated to English word as "normlessness" was first introduced in sociological literature in the late 18th century by Emile Durkheim in his work (the rules of sociological method 1895/1982 cited by Ritzer [2]). In his own definition, Durkheim meant more than any other thing, that Anomie is the conditions in which humans lack sufficient moral restraint. A condition, which he maintained was imminent in the modern industrial society as a result of lack of common morality of mechanical solidarity [2,3]. In the Late 19th century, Robert Merton applied anormie to criminology. In 1938, he used the term to describe a disjunction between socially acceptable goals and means in American society. Merton maintained that while the goals are held out by society as desirable for everyone, they are not equally available to all. In his overview, Talcolt Parsons gave an institutional analysis and social relationship in the society which the end result is the socially classified deviant behavior [4].

The influence of the anomic perspective in Sociology generally has risen and fallen over the past seven decades or so. Martons' well-known formulation, which was originally published in 1938, dominated sociological enquiries into crime during the 1950s and 1960s only to be relegated at the background by some to the dustbin of criminological history [4]. However, researchers have subsequently responded to critiques of earlier formulations of anomie theory, crafted expanded versions of the theory, and applied the theory in novel ways. The distinguishing feature of revitalized anomie theory in criminology is its principal focus on culture and social structure as manifested in social institution followings in the spirit of Durkheimian sociology, anomie theory is built upon the underlying premise that the normal levels and forms of deviance in society reflect the fundamental features of social organization [4].

Social Structure and Anomie Theory

Merton in Haralambos et al. [5] argued that deviance resulted from the culture and structure of society itself. He began from the standard functionalist position of value (consensus) that is, all members of society are placed in different position in their social structure, and they do not have the same opportunity of realizing the shaped values. This situation can generate deviance in Merton's word, the social and cultural structure generates pressure for socially deviant behavior upon people variously located in that structure [5]. Merton believed that while that same goals and means are held out by society as desirable for everyone, they are not equally available to all. Using American society as example during his time of writing, Merton maintained that socially approved goals in American society, for example include wealth, status; and political power. The acceptable means to achieve these goals are education, wise investment and hard work unfortunately, however, opportunities are not equally distributed throughout society, and some people turn to illegitimate means to achieve the goals they are pressured to reach, still others, subject both acceptable goals and legitimate means of reaching them. In his Anomie theory and implied types of criminality which contained five categories (Conformist, Innovation, Retreatists; Ritualist and Rebel), Merton maintained that conformists accept both goals and means that society holds out as legitimate while

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innovators accept the goals but reject the means, and use illegal means to gain money, power and success. It is innovationists whom Mertons identifies as criminals, ritualists are those who reject success goals but still perform their daily tasks in conformity with social expectations. They might hold regular jobs, but lack the desire to advance in life. Retreatists reject both goals and means and usually drop out of society by becoming derelicts, drug users, hermits or the like. The rebels constitute a special category. Their desire to replace the existing system of socially approved goals and means with some other system more to their liking makes them revolutionists of the theory. Merton believed that categories are not intentionally selected by the individuals who occupy them but are imposed on people by structural aspects of society where people live, how wealthy their family is, and what ethnic background they come from are all significant determinants on the box into which people are placed [5-7]. In summary, Merton claimed his analysis showed how the culture and structure of society generate deviance. The overemphasis upon the cultural goals of financial success and high status in the society at the expense of institutionalized means created a tendency towards anomie. This tendency exerts pressure for deviance, a pressure which varies depending on a person's position and the class structure.

Social Institution and Anomie Theory

The institutional theory in the criminological paradigm was drawn from parsons' work on general sociological theory and is compatible with more recent application in other social science disciplines' [8]. Parsons explains that two valid approaches to the study of institutions can be differentiated; subjectivity and the objectivity [4]. Subjectivity adopts the view point of the actor and is essential for understanding individual level of behavior. Objectivity refers to the perspective of the sociological observer and is particularly relevant to the sociological observer and the characterization of the institutional order in society at large [9]. From the subjective points of view, institution plays an important role in guiding actions which generally involves some kind of means - ends relationship. Actors formulate goals (ends) and they choose suitable means of obtaining these goals. The suitability of the means can be determined with reference to a specified standard of rationality. The precise standard of rationality invoked differs depending on the nature of the end. Individual actors have multiple ends and multiple sets of means that involve complex chains of meansends relationship, so constituted that the end of one sector of the chain is a means to some further end. Moreover, for social order to exist, different individuals must coordinate their actions. Parsons assumed that this can only occur if there is an appreciable degree of integration of ultimate ends among those in a social system. In other words, he assumes that a concrete, on - going society presupposes a value system that is to some meaningful degree shared or common to the members of that society. Of course, according to Messner et al. [4] not all people embrace every single value, and even those who accept the values do not always act in ways compatible with them. Nevertheless, Parsons maintained that a situation lacking any agreement on ultimate values would be highly unstable and would likely lead to chaos. The common value system is therefore, the foundation on which social institutions rest for Parsons [10,11]. The members of the society collectively formulate or accept rules or regulatory norms that govern the means that is judged to be acceptable in the pursuit of ends. These norms are accompanied by sanctions and they have an obligatory of validity surrounding them. There are of course a multitude of norms that pertain to different forms of behavior and it is according useful to conceptualize systems of regulatory norms that pertain to particular kinds of tasks and performances commonly differentiated on the basic of functional considerations. These systems of rules or regulatory norms constitute the major social institutions in a society such as the economy, the family, education etc. [12].

According to Douglass following parsons analysis, institutions are the humanly constraints that shape human interaction. In Parsons own view, concrete behaviors in human society are determined by many factors such as the physical environment, biological heredity, and psychological traits. The primary motive for obeying institutional norms lies in the moral authority it exercises over the individual when a norm is imbued with such authority, the actor complies with the norm because the prescribed behavior is good for its own sake and is not merely a means to some other end. Meanwhile the secondary motive for obeying the institution norm involves the calculation of the advantage or disadvantage which follows such obedience.

Shifting from the subjective to the objective view of institution, Parsons maintained that institutions themselves constitute collective system in which institution has an implication for another. Institutions are interrelated with respect to their mutual relatedness. The norms of a given institution are not compatible with just any kind of norms in other institution. Due to the incompatibility of the norms of different institutions such as education, family, economy, religion etc., the domination of one institution may result to the undermining of the vital norms in other institutions leading the ongoing society to the state of anomie [13,14]. Following Durkheim; Parsons used the term anomie to refer to the situation in which the moral authority of the institutional norms had broken down. In essence, a high degree of anomie implies that concrete behaviour is no longer institutionalized in the sense of being governed by the moral authority of social norms [4]. Social institutions are to some extent distinct with respect to the primary activities around which they are organized which is the basis of conventional classifications of institutions [4]. The functioning of the institutional norms are necessarily overlapping and interdependent in the sense that the functioning of a giving institution has a consequences for the functioning of other which in the long run ensures the smooth moving of the ongoing society [15-17]. Among some social institutions such as education, economy, religion, family etc, if any of them dominate there by undermining the norms of the rest, it will lead to anomie encouraging deviance and in extension, criminal activities which the society has classified. For example when the economic institution (Market institution) dominates other social institutions, individuals will sacrifice their moral obligations to other institutions such as the family, education etc. to satisfy the demand of the economic institution. In essence, the clashing of the norms of the economic institution which encourages the possession of wealth and living affluence live style will undermine the moral obligation to be honest and just dedication to family responsibilities and careful commitment to academic excellence, etc. All these when left unchecked, due to the continuous domination of economic interest, will grow to encourage what society has classified as crime [18].

Nigerian Society and Anomie Theory: an X-Ray through Different Perspectives

The different perspectives which had been discussed above all have different approaches to what anomie is, as it affects deviant behaviors. On one hand, Durkheim maintain that anomie refers to the illformulated goals within the culture of an industrial society where as Merton relied on the Marxist explanation of the relationship between the poor and the rich in face of lopsided rules, which claims, that there is normlessness due to inadequate means available to fulfill society's goals. Ultimately, each perspective revolves around the weight that the market economy holds in regard to the spirit and atmosphere of the cultural rather than the ethos of the culture being dependent on the values set forth by the family and education. The pursuit of self-interest, attraction of monetary rewards and competitions, become exaggerated relative to the value of orientations of these institutions, resulting to economic dominance stimulating the emergence of anomie in the society [19]. With regard to crime, the emphasis on competition and materialism combined with anomie ethic as theorists have termed it spark a disregard for the moral status of the way in which one achieves goals. Following Parsons view, the dominance of one institution among the different social institutions triggers the relegation of the norms of other institutions, encouraging anomic and deviance in the society. In his work [Rules of sociological methods], Durkheim was of the view that a pathological society is a sick society due to anomie (normlessness) and this can result to other situations which are detrimental to the societal survival or balance. He gave such instance as anomic suicide which can be a result of lack of or loosed moral control [2]. The geographical setting known to the as Nigeria, was the conglomeration of cultural values, belief systems, small and medium scale traditional economy, ethnic sentiments, etc. However, the penetration of the Western Europe via empire building and colonization of the area created a fluid link that brought the groups together there by reducing the groups into subject to Western European value system and economic system which more or less diffused the social cohesion that were available among these traditional groups. The individuals started seeing themselves as separate entity from the social system as a whole and started pursuing private objectives irrespective of the negative impact on the general objective of the traditional social system provided; they had their way to achieve this in collaboration with their foreign allies who are the same time interested in their own private objectives. Though the political and merchant empire builders succeeded in achieving their central objective (economic exploitation of the group), their local collaborators who made themselves the willing and faithful instruments became a thorn in the flesh of the hitherto, colonial subjects as they continued to create ceaseless chaos among the colonized. The belief system that was instrumental to moral restraint was broken down by the foreign religions and at worst, no regard for social belief system. Though the foreign religions and their adherents preach morality and fear for the nemesis, the manner at which they were presented to the new convert who ostensibly seek for freedom from traditional belief system made them a mere philosophical and psychological rehearsal which is more or less optional. The breakdown in the traditional belief system of the indigenous people unleashed on the different societies the undiluted nature of man which is seeking for satisfaction to the detriment of anyone. The presence of the Western Europe value system into what later became Nigeria made an inroad for capitalism and destroyed the small and medium scale economy of the traditional societies there by leaving the system at the mercy of capitalistic tendencies both at group and individual levels. As a matter of fact, the small scale economies that value honesty and hard work give way for the capitalistic principles which seek for profit and accumulation of more wealth by individuals at the expense of the group value and interest. The leadership system among the groups which is a matter of group consensus and cultural value became, the game of few against all as the empire builders introduced government by imposition. This further created a loophole for the miscreants who in any case are undesired elements to the indigenous value system to hijack the leadership power. The degeneration of the traditional social institutions due to the impact of the European contact with the indigenous people Page 3 of 6

moved from one level to the other until the present stage. While the religious institution was destroyed by the foreign religions which sought for strongholds through the undermining and destruction of the indigenous religions; the new adherents (converts) who were mostly running away from the strong cohesion for moral restraint by the indigenous religions started using them as an umbrella for recognition and immunity from the invocation of the wrath of the traditional gods when they commit atrocities. Having mastered the process of manipulating religion for other goals other than the social cohesion and private business of the soul and the gods, the supposedly "holy and righteous" converts turned their attention of religion into profit making venture and umbrella for individual and group sentiments. While religion was the umbrella for the individuals to escape the wrath of the communities and traditional oath taking during the colonial era, it became a lucrative business for those who were controlling them and subsequently the coverage for ethnic and political sentiments hence, any issue at the national level currently is always narrowed down to religious sentiment as it is another means of bringing people into some level of understanding other than facing the reality. The intrusion of the capitalism into the small scale economies that value honesty and group interest made it possible for the individuals to realize themselves as an entity which ought to pursue their interest at all odds. In the traditional economic system though the individuals still pursue their interests, the group interest superseded the individual interest where both clash, however, due to capitalism in its faceless nature have less regard for group value system, it inculcated in the individuals the quest for rich at all cost even if it means keeping the whole group stagnant. While the colonial stooges sold their people to the colonial agents for meager sums to relatively live in affluence, just by acting as the informants and messengers, the public perception of wealth making and rich shifted from that of hard work to short cut and stealing by tricks and even falsehood of all kinds. Wealth making at all cost got to the level of individuals betraying the indigenous system for wealth and affluence under the colonial agents to the level of using the colonial government to accumulate wealth by intimidating and confiscating the properties and rights of those who were not privileged to be closer to the colonial agents, by those who have been privileged for such. When the colonial agents left and handed over the government to the already inducted anti-traditional value system agents, the betrayal against the indigenous people turned to the idea of stealing the public fund to continue in the quest for wealth and affluence hence, the problem of corruption. Though corruption seemed to be obvious and troublesome in the fourth republic when democracy became apparent, it has been there since the presence of the colonial agents but surfaced in different dimensions and degrees, however, due to the level of political knowledge and gradual withdrawal from politics by the military the issue of corruption became obvious and a concern to many. Due to the degeneration of the social institutions especially the economic institution, by the elements of capitalism, the problem of high level of individualism manifested among the local population and continued to grow in different dimensions and circles first, it was on individual aspiration to live a relatively life of affluence; secondly, it turned to the accumulation of wealth for unburned generations; thirdly, it got to the level of sharing the national wealth among ethnic groups who are privileged to power and presently it has entered the complex and complicated stage at which corruption is concealed among ethnic groups and the political party faithful. The leadership system as part of the political institution of the small scale societies was configured by the European contact as the issue of imposition of leaders other than leadership on general consensus became the order of the day. When the colonial agents were looking for staunch allies among

the indigenous people, they introduced their own method of selecting the leaders especially among the groups with somewhat loosed leadership system and traditional republican government. The methods and criteria were not in any way compatible with the original pattern among the groups as the element available to the colonial agents were mostly individuals with questionable characters. As the idea of imposing leadership on the populace become a common thing and workable for the colonial masters, their faithful allies among the indigenous people followed south and continued on the trend even after the colonial agents left. This by implication destroyed the traditional leadership system and even created a weak foundation for the democracy which the Western Europe and America purported to have planted among their political empires. As the colonial agent left and planted the idea of leadership imposition with their empires, those were privileged around the power continued the idea such that the colonial stooges were arrogating power to themselves after which they imposed whoever they have chosen among themselves, on the general populace. After the circle of the colonial stooges who arrogated power to themselves and consequently imposed themselves on the general populace, the game moved to the level of tribes and ethnic groups selecting and imposing candidates on the general public whether the candidate is acceptable or not. Consequently, the game moved to the level of political parties and ethnic groups (ostensibly for regional selection), the case of the present situation in the country. Though on the surface the nation or rather the political class claim that we have freedom of political association and political participation however, the foundation of imposition has made it impossible for the populace to choose their leaders rather than what the political parties and the ethnic groups has imposed on them. Thus, the traditional political institution degenerated against the indigenous people and at the same time the concept of democracy which the Europe and America brought became corrupted that the indigenous people could depend on them anymore. Though Nigeria maintain the posture of great nation and a country with government, institutionally the nation has failed as there are some level of normlessness in virtually all social institutions leaving the nation with the Hobson's concept of war of all against all.

Meanwhile, the Merton's variant of anomie theory which focused on the social structure, societal goals and the means to such goals still holds sway in the explanation of the relationship between crime and poverty. In Nigeria for instance, many protocols which are required as a means to the top as the societal goal such as good jobs, political power wise investment etc., all are only for the rich and are blocked against the lower class so that, the option for the lower class remains committing what society has termed crime to get to the top, resigning to fate or revolting against the system. Due to the extent of degeneration of the social institutions in Nigeria, the societal approved goals had created chaos among the larger populace. Though in Merton's formulation there are categories of individuals and groups who react to the societal approved goals in different manners, it is yet debatable whether there is absolute level of conformity to the goals and the means to it. According to Mertons, the conformists are the individuals who accept the goals set by the society and the means to them however, the level of decay in virtually all the social institutions put a question mark on whether any one has strictly followed the due process to achieve these goals. Good jobs are for those who are properly trained and skilled and this is obtainable through quality education and in extension, a fortune. In Nigeria currently, government as an institution has failed and cannot provide the citizens with quality education and by implication leave the individuals and family who are looking for quality education in the hand of the private education institutions. Again, due to the domination of the economic institution which raise the quest for wealth and profit making in all ramifications, the private education institutions are still found wanting in terms of providing the required skills for better jobs at home and abroad. The government educational institutions are living in the past glory while the private ones still operate at questionable framework. Only few negotiate their way out into the goal acceptance and the process of achieving them without violating the rules of other social institutions. For instance, the political class and other few elements who may boast of training their wards for academic excellence and good job in most cases, are surviving on corruption and other unethical behaviours to ensure the achievement of this goal. On the other hand, most students in the private education institutions in Nigeria who may claim to have acquire powerful certificates, learned under substandard academic curriculum which, made their qualification a thing of chance. Even the process of acquiring good job in Nigeria is still faulted on the ground that what ought to be standard in some situation are altered by some elements within the system such that many people in Nigeria who are working in big companies and government institutions with big salaries are not the best by conventional standard but the products of chances and connections with the insiders. The normlessness in the government institution in Nigeria has affected every other institution so that the conformists to the societal goals and the means of achieving them are very few and are in most cases in time and context. The extent of normlessness in the social institutions in Nigeria further fuel the problem of deviance among the citizens in all capacities such that individuals live to actualize only their personal interest against the societal rules where such contradict their ambition. Deviance here stand for the behaviors and approaches to phenomenon which contradict the rules guiding a particular institution. In the political institution, it is about personal interest other than the interest of the society at large hence the problem of corruption and mismanagement. In the economic institution it is more of profit for the accumulation of more wealth to the detriment of others. The rules for investment and profit making in virtually all businesses are being violated every day as a result of institutional normlessness. If you know the back door to meet with the members of the Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON), NAFDAC, Consumer Protection Council (CPC), etc, you can sell and manufacture substandard products, expired products, hazardous products etc to make your wealth even if you are killing millions of people by that. The educational institution has been subjected to the instrument of making money so that in Nigeria is the slogan that the poor man should not be talking about education is only the wealthy men and those who are ready to soil their hands to make wealth. The ultimate purpose of the legal institution also, has been defeated as the human right has become a commodity which only the rich can buy and by implication, can pay also to eliminate the right of the poor. Due to the level of decay in the Nigerian legal institution, poor man has no trust on the system and may be vulnerable to the mischievous intention of the rich through court processes. In the religious institution, you can use religion to achieve anything against the peace and progress of the general public. Even if it means using such to destabilize the country, it is possible since there are no consistent norms guiding that and of course, the other institutions that are to checkmate that are already in shamble. Viewing the Nigerian society and the social institution from Merton's perspective on theory of anomie, the conformists to the goals and the process of achieving them become extremely few while the, Innovationists, Retreatists; Ritualists and Rebels are on the sociological majority.

In Parsons' own variant of the anomie theory, the objectivity and subjectivity of the social institutions lies on the fact that individuals and

groups only follow the rules of the institution if they were structured to understand that the institution is above them however, where the understanding and perception is that the individuals and groups can be above the institutions, they dictate and manipulate them to their convenience. Again, where the members of the society view the importance of one institution as greater than that of other institutions, it will result to the state of anomie in the society in question. The dominance of one institution leads to deviance which in essence is the violation of the norms of other social institutions. In Nigeria as a society with network of social institutions, there is the problem of subjectivity after the degrading of the originally small scale societies by the colonial agents. Before the advent of the merchants and political empire builders in the region, the objectivity of the social institutions was held in high esteem by the individuals and groups who were later brought together. The individuals and families formulated their goals in line with the ultimate goals of the society and the means to an end however, the degeneration of the social institutions has led to the individuals formulating their goals and devising a means to an end irrespective of who is being endangered even if it is the entire society. What the society view as deviance such as corrupt practices, stealing, falsehood and manipulations of all kinds are on the increase in Nigeria due to the individuals and groups perception of the social institutions as what they can dictate for instead of such institutions dictating for them. High level of individualism has made even the family as a social institution, vulnerable to recklessness of the individuals such that the family at some point cannot even control its members because of the issue of human rights. A child is expected not to be flog or punished by the parents and at the same time is free to do the things that gives him pleasures whether it is acceptable to the family norms which is connected to societal norms or not. This unfounded freedom is carried over into the general society where every individual is permitted to live his life the way it pleases him. These individuals brought up in this loose setting still end up in controlling the social institutions that they were not properly developed to understand such as political institution, legal institution, religious institution, economic institution, etc. When these elements grab the social institutions they start viewing the existing norms as archaic and inhibition to freedom and at the same time pursuing their individual interests contrary to the ultimate value system. This leads to the gradual destruction of the generally accepted norms on which the society had been established towards, the individually introduced attitudes which subsequently strain to all other units of the society and engender normlessness. Perceiving the Nigerian social institutions by the citizens as subjective to their private interest is responsible for bribery and corruption which the individuals sometimes sees as the avenue of negotiating their ways through when then institution in question contradict their interest. Much the same, when a group of individuals find their way to the corridors of power and view the existing rules as against their private gain, the next step is usually, to change the rule in their own interest even if it means eliminating the sociological majority whose the security are ensured by the existing norms/rules. Moreover, the dominance of one institution over another institution becomes a problem as this leads to some level of normlessness. In the present age, the dominance of market capitalization (economic institution) has resulted in a chaos in moral order. Due to the great value attached to the economic institution which reflects in over ambition, self-interest and high level of materialism. The modern society has run into the problem of high level of economic and other forms of crimes triggered by economic institution itself [8,20,21]. In the case of Nigerian social institutions, the dominance of the economic institution is the genesis of normlessness in most other institutions. In the political institution for instance, the quest for the accumulation of more wealth using political office is the byproduct of the dominance of the economic institution which the general public has come to perceive its essence (wealth and material things) as the evidence of popularity and object of influence. The conventional leadership norms and even the original traditional leadership norms surrounding the political institutions have been downgraded or at worst viewed as archaic way of controlling the people. This behavior is predicated on the fact that since the society has viewed wealth and material things as the evidence of popularity affluence, all attempts to be popularly recognized should be focused towards making the wealth by all means especially as the political office holders have access to the wealth and the material things of the society. Since the essence of the economic institution has dominated other social institutions in the sub conscious mind of the members of the society, every other institution is seen as object of pursuing economic interest such that the educational institutions today are focused on money making, religious institution, family and others in the same order.

Conclusion

Anomie theory and crime is an attempt to explain certain factors which can encourage deviance in the society as a result of breakdown in moral constraint in the society. While Durkheimian perspective of anomie focused on the normlessness in the society as a result of breakdown in mortality, leading to pathological society; Merton was interested in how social structure in itself breeds deviance as a result of lack of morality reinforced by the creating of goals and blocking the means of attaining them by the society. Finally, Talcolt Parsons was focused on the implication of the dominance of one social institution against others, to the morality and deviance in the society. All these perspectives under anomie theory have succeeded in giving a clarification of what relationship exist between social structures and deviance, social institutions and deviance and morality. In view of the Nigerian social institutions, the theory from different perspectives explains the extent of degenerations and moral decadence which have plunged Nigeria into a serious chaos. Currently, Nigerian social institutions in the lens of anomie theory are very weak and cannot offer the sociological majority of the nation the required services and assistance the citizens are entitled by the nation.

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