



**UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT
(UNIPORT), NIGERIA**

WHY THE PARTNERSHIP IS BENEFICIAL, NOT ONLY FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF MY UNIVERSITY, BUT ALSO FROM A WIDER, THE NIGERIAN CONTEXT.

by Chioma Daisy Onyige

Collaboration between the Bonn Center of Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) and the Department of Sociology at the University of Port Harcourt holds immense potential for mutual benefits, not only for the university but also for the Nigerian society. This partnership is poised to be a catalyst for transformative academic endeavours and impactful research initiatives, addressing critical issues related to dependency and slavery. The synergies between these institutions are multifaceted, ranging from knowledge exchange and research advancement to community engagement and policy implications.



The University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria ©Uniport Nigeria

Furthermore, joint research projects and collaborations can lead to the advancement of research in the field of dependency and slavery studies. The combined resources and diverse perspectives from both institutions can contribute to more comprehensive and nuanced research outcomes. Currently, the BCDSS and the department of Sociology, UNIPORT are organising a two-day workshop that will be taking place in May 2024. The two-day workshop will bring together renowned scholars and PhD students from both institutions working in the field of asymmetrical dependency to discuss the historical, socioeconomic, and power dynamics at play.

Nigeria has a complex and rich history, including periods of colonization, the transatlantic slave trade, and post-independence challenges coupled with contemporary issues related to dependency, economic challenges, and social justice. Engaging in scholarly dialogue and exchange of ideas, presentations on issues of strong asymmetrical dependencies and slavery in Nigeria can shed light on current socio-economic dynamics, providing insights into the persistence or transformation of historical patterns. Collaborating with an international centre like the BCDSS promotes the internationalization of research at the University of Port Harcourt. This can enhance the university's reputation, attract more international scholars and students, and foster a more globally connected academic community. Also, students at the University of Port

Harcourt can benefit from exposure to international perspectives, research methodologies, and potential opportunities for exchange programs or joint degrees. This broadens their educational experience and prepares them for a globalized academic and professional landscape.

The collaboration and partnership between the BCDSS and the department of Sociology, UNIPORT fosters capacity building. This is because the partnership involves training programs, workshops, and seminars that contribute to the capacity building of faculty and students at the University of Port Harcourt. Exposure to international best practices and methodologies can enhance the skills of researchers and educators. Also, the BCDSS can benefit from the local expertise of the Department of Sociology in understanding the specific historical, cultural, and social contexts of Nigeria. This ensures that research on dependency and slavery is culturally sensitive and appropriately contextualized. Our collaboration and partnership has a wider policy implication for Nigeria. For example, findings from joint research efforts may have direct implications for policy development and implementation in Nigeria. Understanding the historical and contemporary factors contributing to slavery and dependencies can inform policies aimed at addressing social injustices and promoting economic development. Nigeria's diverse communities provide opportunities for community engagement in research. Involving local communities in the research process ensures that the study is sensitive to their experiences and needs, fostering a more inclusive and ethical approach. Nigeria's complexities invite interdisciplinary approaches, involving not only sociological perspectives but also historical, economic, and cultural lenses. This interdisciplinary approach can provide a more holistic understanding of slavery and dependencies. Embracing the complexities of Nigeria, the collaboration encourages interdisciplinary approaches. Beyond sociological perspectives, the research encompasses historical, economic, and cultural lenses, providing a holistic understanding of slavery and dependencies. Nigeria's historical role in the transatlantic slave trade and its current status as one of the most populous countries in Africa makes it a compelling case study. Findings from studies in Nigeria contribute not only to a nuanced understanding of African contexts but also offer insights into global patterns of slavery and dependencies. Comparative analyses with other regions and countries reveal commonalities, differences, and lessons with broader implications for the study of these issues globally.

In conclusion, the collaboration between the BCDSS and the Department of Sociology at the University of Port Harcourt represents a significant step towards academic excellence, global engagement, and societal

impact. The partnership aligns seamlessly with the university's vision of being a trailblazer in social science education and research, dedicated to addressing societal challenges. As these institutions join forces, they pave the way for a future where scholarly endeavours transcend borders, contributing valuable insights to the understanding and resolution of issues related to dependency and slavery in the African context. Through this collaboration, the University of Port Harcourt stands poised to not only elevate its academic and research standing but also contribute meaningfully to the advancement of knowledge and societal well-being.



Prof. Dr. Chioma Daisy Onyige

is Professor of Criminology, and current Head of Department at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. She is Senior Guest

Researcher & Guest Lecturer as well as former Heinz Heinen Senior Fellow at the BCDSS. Her research area includes gender and crime, environmental sociology, gender and climate change, and cognate issues such as conflict and peace building. Her current research is on contemporary slavery studies, specifically on human trafficking and smuggling of women and children from Africa to Europe.