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2022/2023 PhD Thesis Abstract

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RT: Access to Emergency Healthcare in Nigeria: Emerging Legal Issues

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AB: Globally, the demand for emergency healthcare requires that adequate attention and priorities be given to its accessibility by the Government through laws and statute in reducing loss of lives and disability. Nigeria has a population of about 200 million with a ratio of 1 Doctor to 2500 patients and 1000 Ambulances nationwide catering for only 20% of the national needs both of which falls below the minimum acceptable WHO requirements. Access to emergency healthcare is a major challenge in Nigeria, thus there is the need to examine laws in aid of this as majority of the people do not see access to emergency as a right that is protected by law. Previous studies explored access to health care in Nigeria while this study examined the application of laws to the enhancement of access to emergency healthcare in Nigeria. This study examined the key issues in the healthcare environment, legal and regulatory framework and government policies as it affects access to emergency healthcare.

The study adopted the doctrinal design. Primary and secondary sources of information were relied upon. The Primary sources included the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, the National Health Act 2014, The Dental and Medical Practitioners Act, The Code of Medical Ethics, Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshots Act 2017, and The National Health Insurance Authority Act 2022. Secondary sources comprised scholarly peer

reviewed journal articles, books, conference proceedings, internet sources, periodicals, manuals and newspaper reports. Data from these sources were analysed thematically.

The study revealed that there are many factors in the health system environment that impede access to emergency healthcare in Nigeria. These include corruption, financing, leadership problem, weak governance, inadequate health infrastructure, lack of qualified healthcare personnel especially in the area of emergency treatment. The study revealed that the existing laws and government policies that regulate access to emergency healthcare services in Nigeria are inadequate. The study further revealed that the non-domestication of some international laws that have relevance to access to emergency healthcare impede access to emergency healthcare in Nigeria.

The study concluded that with the existing many problems in Nigeria, the laws put in place are inadequate to provide access to emergency healthcare in Nigeria. The study recommended that for a sustainable access to emergency healthcare service in Nigeria, there is the need for the National Assembly to domesticate all existing international laws that have relevance with access to emergency healthcare. There is the need to increase the number of healthcare infrastructure and also train a number of healthcare personnel in the area of emergency healthcare.

Keywords: Access to health, Emergency healthcare, Healthcare policies, Legal framework, Sustainable access

Word Count: 424

Abbreviations: RFN: Researcher's Full Name, RD: Researcher's Department, RS: Researcher's School, RE: Researcher's Email, RAE: Researcher's Alternate Email, RP: Researcher's Phone Contact, RT: Registered Title, MS: Main Supervisor, ME: Main Supervisor's E-mail Address, SP: Main Supervisor's Phone Contact, CS: Co-Supervisor, CE: Co-Supervisor's E-mail Address, CP: Co-Supervisor's Phone Contact, AB: Abstract

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