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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF MULTI-DOOR COURTHOUSE ON JUSTICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The emergence of the Multi-Door Courthouse (MDC) became a distinctive instrument in addressing the inherent challenges of the formal Court system. This paper critically examines the impact of the MDC on justice delivery. It adopted a qualitative approach to research methods which relied on secondary data. The study found delivery of timely and friendly justice, promotion of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), changes the court role of the Court from conflict escalator to conflict transformation, and relieving of court congestion, among others, as impactful roles of MDC. The work also found that the model provides numerous doors for litigants, improves the skills of lawyers and judges, produces mutually and confidential solutions, gives enforceable outcomes, and increases ADR knowledge seekers. Despite the model significant impacts, it faces challenges such as loss of its essential features, dearth of ADR professionals, misconceptions, lack of uniformity, and nonbinding coupled with the flexibility of the process. The study concluded that the success of the model has led to a gradual shift of psyche of stakeholders that justice can be obtained through numerous approaches provided by the multi-door concept. In addressing the identified challenges, the study recommended that the models should be allowed to play the role of complementing the court system rather than annexing it, recruiting and constantly training ADR practitioners, orientation of stakeholders about the model, and formulating operational policy across the globe. Making the process binding once the parties submitted to it is also fundamental.

Keywords: Administration of Justice, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Court System, Justice Delivery, Multi-Door Courthouse

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Introduction

Over the years, litigation was the only and formal system of resolving conflict notwithstanding the increase in the diversity of disputes coupled with the dynamic nature of human being and the disputes. However, experience has shown that litigation is not the only suitable means of resolving different forms of dispute (Senft and Savage, 2003). Persistent delay in litigation being the principal means of resolving disputes has led to congested courts. Therefore, some of the primary factors for the clamour for judicial reform across the globe are the monopolistic nature of court system and its failure to deliver timely and friendly justice (Adedeji, 2021a). With growing concerns of the nature of legal framework in 1976 in the United States of America and across the world, Professor Frank Sander proposed "Comprehensive Justice Centre" now known as "Multi-Door Courthouse" in a conference in honour of Professor Roscoe Pound renowned paper titled "the Causes of Popular Dissatisfaction with the Administration of Justice" in 1906 (Senft and Savage, 2003; Nwakoby et al., 2024).

The idea of Sander was a transformation of court system from an institution that formally established to offer a single form of dispute resolution where a judge or jury solely decides the outcome of a case, into an institution that provides an array of dispute resolution mechanisms handled by different experts (Johnson, 2012). This development indicates the need to provides multi-track processes for the resolution of dispute. It is believed that gives people options of using cheaper and less complex processes (Onyema, 2012). Many countries across the world have also carried out judicial reforms to ensure citizens have unhindered access to justice.

The Multi-Door Courthouse (MDC) therefore becomes one of the reforms measures that governments have adopted to achieve the objectives of modern judiciary (Okafor, 2013). The introduction and eventual emergence of Multi-Door Courthouse has revolutionised Alternative Dispute Resolution processes by incorporating them into regular court system (Nwakoby et al., 2024). The search for this model has grown into a movement as the number of Alternative Dispute Resolution centres has grown rapidly across the globe in recent time, which may indicate dissatisfaction with adversarial approach of formal court system (Ray and Clare, 1985).

Statement of the problem

Just like any other human society, conflict and conflict resolution is part of existence in Nigeria. The regular interpersonal relationship between the inhabitants of the country generates disputes, which are regularly resolved through formal court system, which largely limits the access of the disputants to justice. The use of litigation has many challenges as many conventional courts are overcrowded with cases which lead to delay in dispensation of justice. Court procedures are also challenged by technicality of the procedure and unbearable cost of litigation (Raji and Odunewu, 2021).

The quest for quick and peaceful resolution of dispute in Nigeria has led to a creative response to establish Multi-Door Courthouses across the country as a mandatory component of the justice system in the nation. The essence of this model is to provide windows of opportunities for disputants through various ADR mechanisms to litigation that are suitable for settlement of specific dispute.

However, in spite of the presumed success of the model as being catalogued by the government of Nigeria, there is no doubt that the MDC centres across the country are going through survival challenges of widely recognised and accepted, and become a viable alternative to litigation in Nigeria. MDC is also presumed to be going through the challenges of optimal enforcement of agreements, and efficiency and effectiveness, which is largely due to dearth of literature on the role and activities of ADR centres across the country.

It is therefore necessary to assess the success rate of the model through a scientific study, a scholastic task this paper anticipates to cover. The study is therefore designed to ascertain the impact of Multi-Door Courthouse on justice delivery in Nigeria.

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to do an assessment of the impact of multi-door courthouse on justice delivery in Nigeria.

Conceptual and theroretical framework

Conceptualising multi-door courthouse

The concept of multi-door courthouse seems simple, defining it needs care. The concept is a four-word phrase: multi, door, court and house. The word multi is seen as having more than one. It is opposed to mono-axial, having many ways or branches from one root. Multi could also be considered as multiple, having significant diversity or variety, to be diversified or to be manifold.

A door is an entranceway, a wall opening through which one enters and exits. It serves as a method of approach or access. Court is a legal term though similar to house or a building. A Court is defined as a hall, chamber, or place where justice is administered. It is a place where people officially assemble, under the authority of law, for the administration of justice. It is a formal gathering where parties in legal disagreement gather to conduct judicial business. A judge or judges sit in court to hear cases and conduct trials.

A house is a building or structure meant for use as a place of habitation or refuge, particularly one designed as a mansion or residence for humans. It can be a privately or publicly owned. It could as well be for commercial or domestic purpose. Simply put, a multi-door courthouse is a court with several means of reaching justice.

The concept was first brought into limelight by Professor Frank E.A. Sander in 1976, when he built on lecture delivered by Professor Pound in 1906 about the problem of delayed justice (Harriman, 2017). In addition to the existing door known as litigation, Professor Sander's proposal for a complete justice centre is based on a courthouse with many labelled doors, each representing one method of conflict resolution.

As stated by Harriman (2017), the Multi-Door Courthouse is an ADR centre, connected to the court, that helps parties resolve conflicts through mediation and other ADR procedures such as arbitration, early neutral evaluation, and other hybrid processes. The multi-door courthouse serves as a multifaceted dispute resolution centre within the administrative arrangement of the court, with doors open wide to a broad range of dispute resolution processes, where disputes may be efficiently resolved through the method best suited for the parties and the issues involved (Ogunyannwo, 2016).

The Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Center and Multi-Door Centre are other names for the Multi-Door Courthouse (Ray and Clare, 1985). Sander's concept of a multi-door courthouse includes a centre that provides sensitive intake services as well as a variety of dispute resolution services all under one roof.

The term "multi-door courthouse" means a system where a screening unit would "diagnose" disputes and then refer the disputants to the proper "door" for resolution (Sander, 1976). The quest for a means to overcome the challenges of the traditional court system led Sander to present a paper titled “Varieties of Dispute Processing” at national conference held by the American Bar Association in April 1976 that subsequently gave birth to the concept of “Multi-Door Courthouse”.

The objectives of multi-door experiment were to increase the number of doors open for conflicts to be addressed by making justice easy to access, creating networks that would lessen or eliminate citizen frustration, and creating and improving programmes to fill service gaps. The following are the identified objectives of Multi-Door Courthouse according to Roehl (1983) and Harriman (2017), to

1) Increase access to justice by offering alternative mechanisms to complement litigation in the resolution of disputes;
2) Increase citizens' awareness of the number of dispute settlement options available;
3) Assist citizens to locate appropriate mechanism for resolution of their disputes;
4) Minimise citizen frustration and delays in receiving justice by offering alternatives to litigation;
5) Act as a channel for the promotion of ADR across the globe;
6) Broaden understanding of relevant case-screening processes and ways for matching particular cases to particular dispute-processing venues; and
7) Encourage the use of ADR techniques to help the justice delivery system expand and improve.

Ajigboye (2014) highlighted agreement of the parties, referral by the court and intervention of the multi-door courthouse as approaches of referring cases to multi-door courthouse. Although it varies from one centre to the other centres due to its flexibility. The standard key procedure at the MDC for resolution of conflict comprises initiation of case, screening of case, referral, pre-session, ADR session and closure.

Theoretical framework

The study adopted change management theory as its theoretical background to elucidate the concern of the study. Change is a modification to the status quo; it is a transformational process, a shift from one state to another that is triggered by a particular event. Change is an integral part of life and is constant in societies across the globe. Any organisations that effectively manage change have a greater advantage over their competitors.

Robbins, Millet and Cacciope (1994) underlined factors of resistance to change to includes habits, low tolerance for changes, fear of unknown, selective information processing, inertia, threats to resources, threats to expertise and threats to power. Lewin (1951) underscored that when resistance is reduced and the forces driving change are boosted, change is more likely to occur.

A change in the general design of justice administration (justice reform) is necessary to accommodate parties' demands for an early and affordable resolution of their disputes. However, a change of mind of the stakeholders is necessary before ADR process in MDC in Nigeria may be considered acceptable. ADR then becomes the answer to some issues that have been brought up in court.

The theory discovered that MDC gives litigants the opportunity to express their viewpoint, have it taken into consideration, and make their joint outcome. Naturally, disputants base their fairness judgment on the facts afterwards incorporated into it from the procedure and outcome (Howieson, 2002).

The theory is relevant to the study as it enables us to examine and explain the doctrine of litigation and ADR in Nigeria justice administration. The theory provides a way to anticipate challenges of justice system and respond to it efficiently by allowing the stakeholders to access the overall impact of a change. The needless procedures of the process demand a change in the administration of justice.

Methodology

Qualitative research methodology was used to carry out the task of the study. Drawing from current literature and empirical research using qualitative method, data were mainly obtained from secondary source. Available and accessible literature on the subject matter such as textbooks, journals, magazines, government documents, conference papers, and the work of some distinguished scholars among other related documents were consulted and reviewed for the study.

Owing to its historical nature, the work adopted a thematic method to analyse the data by following chronological order. The reality of the subject of the paper has an effect on human relations in the mounting dissatisfaction of litigation, and this has been comprehensively and carefully studied. This is as a result of reflection of the dynamic of conflict and multifaceted nature of handling it. This study therefore drew insight from the various approaches of resolving conflict as against monopolistic nature of court system.

The limitation of the approach is its restriction to secondary source of data collection. It is believed that many scholarly works available may not be the best in the library. Some authors were also found to be biased and hence their works lack credibility. Despite this, the author did an objective selection of publications used for the study out of numerous scholarly works consulted on the subject matter. Hence the result can be relied on.

The emergence, the growth and the development of multi-door courthouse

The current generation of alternatives to court which later named the multi-door courthouse has many antecedents. The failure of the traditional justice system to meet up with the dynamics of conflicts across the globe made nations to look for other means of resolving conflicts aside the mono-track dispute resolution process (litigation).

The failure of the court system is evidenced by the congestion of the court, which led to delay in justice delivery, mono-track process and high cost of the process. Other deficiencies of court system are partiality in justice delivery, nepotism, favouritism and largely government undue intervention. The move to address some of these identified inadequacies started in United State of America (USA) in the twentieth century.

In the 1950s, as an innovation, the first community dispute resolution centers were developed by the juvenile court. An example was the New Jersey Juvenile Conference Committee (Judicial Administration Division, 1981). In the late 1960s, the prosecutor's office in Philadelphia made an attempt to improve on the existing court-annexed arbitration pioneered the use of arbitration as an alternative to formal adjudication for resolving relatively minor disputes (Ray and Clare, 1985).

Following this, American society witnessed the beginning of a significant movement in alternative dispute resolution in a climate of progressive criticism of the adversarial nature of litigation and the little change that had been made. The loss of faith in litigation and lack of competence and professionalism of lawyers also fuelled criticism by highly informed intellectuals from academia, politicians, practitioner, and society at large.

It was the Pound Conference of 1976 that is recognised as the birthplace of the multi-door courthouse. The conference theme was "National Conference on the Causes of Popular Dissatisfaction with the Administration of Justice". In supporting the theme of the conference and the frustration of the society, Subrin (1993) said:

> *"The Conference had a clear tone that the underlying ideologies of liberal pleading, open-ended discovery, and attorney latitude were no longer workable.*

The few bad lawyers could hardly be trusted to restrain themselves, thus the alleged litigation explosion would need to be managed".

Historically, Professor Sander, the father of modern ADR and multi-door courthouse, did not originally coin the phrase "multi-door courthouse", he used "Comprehensive Justice Centre" to express his opinion of a court that provides a variety of access to justice. He gave a raw and powerful speech at the conference, titled "Varieties of Dispute Processing". In his speech, Sander emphasised the need for specialisation in justice system. The system should operate comparative advantage in delivery of justice or settlement of disputes.

Sander emphasised that Courts should perform their exclusive functions while other means of dispute resolution should be allowed to perform duties which they are best suited for. He also envisioned that the court will not become a just courthouse but a dispute resolution centre, where grievances will pass through screening process before being directed to appropriate process.

According to Sander, cited in Ogunyannwo (2016), "courts should be retained as the ultimate agency capable of effectively protecting the rights of the disadvantaged". He also advocated a flexible and diverse arrays of dispute resolution processes. He highlighted methods such as mediation, conciliation, negotiation, arbitration and other ADR hybrids like Early Neutral Evaluation which he regarded as appropriate (Sander, 1976).

He argued that the aforementioned methods can be fused with the existing court system while their procedural rules are adapted. In his opinion, it will alter the existing structures, rules, and composition of court system. This idea envisaged an institution where alternative dispute resolution mechanisms are combined with agelong litigation process (Ajigboye, 2014). This idea conspicuously describes the concept of "Multi-Door Courthouse".

Further, Sander urged American Judges and Lawyers to have a rethink and see civil courts as a collection of dispute resolution procedures customised to meet the variety of disputes the disputants bring to the justice system (Hensler referencing in Law Reform Commission, 2008). Consequent to the conference and the arousal of the speech led the American Bar Association to publish an article about Sander's speech in its journal and title the cover page "the Multi-Door Courthouse", and hence the birth of the concept.

Sander's idea was a catalyst for what later became known as the "multi-door courthouse". In experimenting Sander's idea, America first established multi-door courthouse on a pilot basis in Tulsa (Oklahoma), Houston (Texas) and in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. The success of the experiment made the idea spread to many courts across the world (Woolf, 1996).

The evidence of the fast growth of multi-door courthouse, recognition and acceptance of ADR led to establishment of numerous ADR centres in the land of Africa. The foremost of this establishment was the Lagos State Citizens' Mediation Centre (CMC) now Citizens' Mediation Bureau (CMB) in 1999 followed by the establishment of the Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse (LMDC) in 2002 by Negotiation and Mediation Group in collaboration with High Court of Lagos and Lagos State Ministry of Justice (Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse, 2016).

Other centres followed in almost all the thirty-six (36) states of the federation and the FCT (Abuja Multi-Door Courthouse), which was set up immediately after Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse. Kehinde Aina who mid-wifed MDC concept in Nigeria said "the multi-door concept is a child of necessity, well-conceived and delivered at due season to the global justice system" (Aina, 2004). This substantiates the opinion that ADR is the fastest-growing mechanism for conflict resolution in the justice system worldwide.

The impact of multi-door courthouse on justice delivery in Nigeria

The introduction of Multi-Door Courthouse has greatly reformed the global justice system, which used to be single-track and limited in approach. Series of benefits were derived from the emergence of the model in line with judicial reform. The major influences of the MDC are discussed below:

Multi-door courthouse increases satisfaction with the administration of justice. It is known that users of court were widely dissatisfied before the emergence of multi-door courthouse. The model provides parties with the opportunity to reach solutions that are mutually acceptable and confidential. Unlike formal court system that based on the merits of a case and a legal argument, multi-door courthouse takes into consideration the psychological and emotional expectation of parties, and genuinely addresses the future rather than focusing on the past (Nwakoby et al., 2024). Similarly, the proceeding and the outcome of the process are also confidential, and are carefully protected from disclosure for any purpose, unless otherwise agreed by both parties. It can therefore be affirmed that the emergence of multi-door courthouse has reduced dissatisfaction in the dispensation of justice into minimal proportion.

The emergence of multi-door courthouse served as an advocate for wider acceptance of the Alternative Dispute Resolution services. Towards the proposal of multi-door courthouse in 1976 by Frank Sander, litigation was the primary official means of resolution of conflict. Through his lecture, Sander campaigned for the inclusion of ADR mechanisms in the justice system and for making them publicly available. Thus, the introduction of multi-door courthouse prepared ground for taken off of ADR as part of judicial structure of the state. Multi-door courthouses have also become institutions across the globe presumably funded by the state like the courts. Equally, most of the practice directions of courts in most developed nations have provisions for ADR. The situation in Nigeria is encouraging where the High Courts and other superior courts across the country also have provision for ADR (Oguntuyi, 2021). The universal acceptance of multi-door courthouse led many nations, from west to the south, to adopt ADR as alternative means of resolving conflict (Senft and Savage, 2003).

In addition, the introduction and practice of multi-door courthouse has led to increase in the number knowledge seekers. Effective and successive operation of multi-door courthouse has promoted ADR as a discipline (course of study). Faculties of law in universities and law schools of various countries have included ADR in their respective academic curriculum. This has equally increased the number of scholars appraising the emergence and the impact of the model on the justice delivery. Through research, new varieties of ADR are being developed alongside the existing ones to meet the particular needs of disputes and parties. Similarly, best practice of implementing ADR mechanisms is also been studied.

The growth of multi-door courthouse has changed the perception of court role in the administration of justice from that of a passive provider of trials to that of an active, problem-solving case manager, a catalyst for community change and conflict transformation rather than a conflict escalator. Some principles of ADR are being explicitly integrated into judicial system across the world through call for judicial reform. Judicial systems across the world encourage parties already in court to look for possible settlements in a multi-door courthouse (Harriman, 2017). Courts are beginning to treat litigation as last resort, rather than first resort.

The emergence and growth of multi-door courthouse has relieved court congestion and advanced one of the objectives of its establishment. Court congestion was found to be responsible for delay in the administration of justice, and as a result, cases are lingered unnecessary to the detriment of the state and the litigants (Ajigboye, 2014). The emergence of

multi-door courthouse aids in clearing of court backlog, which enables judges to handle other cases effectively, increasing productivity and enhancing access to justice for litigants. Decongestion of courts has minimised the frustration of users through timely and friendly outcome. Several studies have shown high rates of settlement and satisfaction with time and cost saving compared with litigation (Oguntuyi, 2021). Nwakoby et al (2024) stressed that a high rate of resolved cases through multi-door courthouse scheme will draw more litigants to it and promote the scheme. The table below shows the performance indicators of Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse between 2002 and 2018.

Table 1: Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse Performance Indicators, 2002 -2018

Year	No Of Cases Mediated	No Of Settled Cases	No Of Unsettled Cases		Success Rate
2002	4	2	2		50%
2003	39	17	22		44%
2004	26	14	12		54%
2005	35	12	23		34%
2006	13	4	9		31%
2007	18	10	8		56%
2008	49	17	32		35%
2009	207	83	124		40%
2010	201	80	121		40%
2011	289	97	192		34%
2012	430	212	218		49%
2013	627	352	275		56%
2014	549	387	162		70%
2015	832	539	293		65%
2016	1145	835	310		73%
2017	1109	833	276		75%
2018	1779	1068	711		60%
TOTAL	**7352**	**4562**	**2790**		62%

Source: Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse, 2019

Table 1 above shows the success rate in term of percentage dropped from 75% in 2017 to 60% in 2018. Several factors that can lead to such decline in LMDC are factors such as improper representation of the party or representative to take decisions that can resolve the dispute; unavailability of parties due to ill health; parties reneging on agreed terms; and stalling of matter by recalcitrant parties who prefer litigation (Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse, 2021). Beyond the above, in 2018, there was introduction and enforcement of timelines for Court Referred mediation and Walk-In mediation of ninety (90) days and one hundred and eighty (180) days respectively to curb the ill-actions of some recalcitrant parties who deliberately stall matters without making any appreciable progress (Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse, 2021). The implication was that cases that were yet to be concluded within the set timelines were closed and thereafter

removed from the case docket. Thus, reducing the number of ongoing cases which ultimately led to the decline in settlement rates in 2018 as shown in the above table.

In line with the thought of Harriman (2017), the process has made a wider variety of options or doors accessible to litigants for resolving disputes. Over the years, and sequence to the emergence of multi-door courthouse, court system was the only and available formal means of resolving conflict, which limited the choice of litigants despite the increasing nature and dynamics of conflict. The multi-door courthouse has become one of the judicial reforms programmes that provide many doors as alternatives to litigation. Multi-door courthouse encourages litigants to use a courthouse with several doors to resolve their disputes. The model has provided a fair and effective model for resolution of conflict through ADR mechanisms.

Progressively, it has led to greater skills among lawyers and judges. Due to the flexibility of the process, Lawyers evaluate approach that suits respective case before engaging in the process, on the principle that parties may return to litigation if they are dissatisfied with the results of the ADR process (Harriman, 2017). In some western countries, Lawyers offer volunteer services in ADR mechanisms. The practice of ADR volunteering is also gradually taken shape in the developing countries.

Multi-door courthouse agreements may as also be recorded as court judgments and made enforceable by the instrument recognised by the legal system of each country. Through official acceptance of the model and its collaboration with court system, the outcome of the process is enforced as court judgment once it is endorsed. According to Nwakoby et al (2024), the statutory framework of MDC under each national law ensures the outcome of the process is enforceable.

Challenges of multi-door courthouse in achieving effective justice delivery

The multi-door courthouse has made a substantial impact in justice delivery by providing users with open and easy access to justice. Despite these significant impacts, the model is still hindered by a number of factors such as:

1) **Losing Its Essential Features**: Annexing multi-door mechanisms to court system may remove its fundamental features of voluntariness, flexibility and individualised justice. ADR does not involve the process of applying law or forcing parties to the process. Rather, ADR is based on the willingness of the parties to submit to the process. Merging of law and equity will make ADR lose its distinctiveness.
2) **Dearth of ADR Professionals and Inadequate Training**: The flooding of people from different academic background into the practice of ADR call for attention. Majority of the practitioners operate the process with wrong principles due to inadequate training. Adedeji (2021b) stressed that the success of any organisation is majorly determined by the quality of human resources which is a product of quality and constant training. Few weeks of ADR training coupled with observation of few mediation sessions do not make any practitioner competency in the process. This remains a nagging problem against ADR.
3) **Misconception**: Despite years of practice of multi-door courthouse concept and its success, there still exist misconceived notion among some lawyers, judges and litigants that the model will alter their traditional roles in justice delivery. This works against the growth and development of the model.
4) **Low Level of Awareness**: In some third world countries such as Nigeria, low level of public awareness is a noticeable hindrance to its growth. It is a fact that not many people want to give in to unknown, hence many people including lawyers prefer engaging in litigation to get justice.

5) **Lack of Uniformity of Operational Policy:** There is no uniform operational policy of ADR at international, national and state levels, which would have formed the baseline for the uniqueness of ADR, as it is in litigation. This challenge limits the standardisation of the model.
6) **Nonbinding Coupled and Flexible Nature of the Process:** Most doors to justice do not render a binding award, except arbitration. The status of such process and agreement can be treated as contract simpliciter where a party can walk away during the process. The position is likely to be the same even when it is conducted under the supervision of the court. There could also be a predicament of double costs where a litigant renege his obligation to the settlement agreement. Though the agreement gets status of consent judgment once endorsed, but it requires a lot of brain work to get the agreement endorsed by both parties.

Conclusion

The concept of multi-door courthouse has become a force to reckon with since the historic lecture delivered by Frank Sander. The study argued that the failure of monopolistic formal court system to deliver timely and friendly justice led to the emergence and wide acceptance of multi-door courthouse model. This has revolutionised Alternative Dispute Resolution processes by incorporating them into regular court system.

The paper maintained that the multi-door courthouse is one of the judicial reform programmes that provide numerous doors as alternative to litigation. This has led to significant increase in establishment of ADR centres with the backing of national law of each nation. In agreement with the literature, the emergence of multi-door courthouse has reduced dissatisfaction in dispensation of justice. Thus, validate the impactful role of the model in justice delivery.

The study does not outrightly condemned litigation, and not established that multi-door courthouse absolutely replaces the court system in resolution of conflict. However, where litigation is the only official option for resolution of conflict, it is prone to dissatisfaction, as research and experience have revealed that litigation is not the only suitable means of resolution of all forms of dispute (Okafor, 2013). Hence, the model of multi-door courthouse is to complement the court system by providing several doors to justice and as well meet the challenges of litigation.

The paper concluded that success of the model has gradually changed the attitude stakeholders by accepting that litigation is not the only way of getting justice and availability of other approaches provided by multi-door concept. Many citizens now using ADR mechanisms, and this has significantly improved participation in the processes. International bodies and nations must sustain this progress through progressive policy.

Recommendations

Based on the challenges that obstructing the effectiveness of multi-door courthouse in justice delivery, the following recommendations were made:

(1) The government should make a policy that will allow multi-door mechanisms to complement the court system rather than absorb by it. Applying law to the Alternative Dispute Resolution should be to strengthen the process rather than forcing parties to the process. ADR is based on the willingness of the parties to submit to the process. Anything else this will make it to lose its fundamental features of voluntariness, flexibility and individualised justice.

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(2) Recruiting and constant training of ADR practitioners should be made a priority by government and private owner of MDC to guide against spreading of wrong principle. ADR training should be made thorough with combination of class work and practical sessions. Lawyers in the practice also need to be taught to change from their disposition of attack to cooperation.
(3) There is need to set the record straight about misconceived notion of multi-door modifying traditional roles of lawyers, judges and litigants in justice delivery. The government in collaboration with the practitioners should enlighten the lawyers, judges and litigants that the model does not alter their roles, but alter the approach from competition to cooperation. Even the alternative dispute resolution movement consents attorneys to define their roles more precisely.
(4) Mass enlightenment through greater publicity is necessary for awareness of the model and its achievements in resolving disputes in the third world countries. An intensive public enlightenment programme should be run on the radio, the television and the newspapers as well as regular community outreach by government. This will arouse the consciousness and awareness of the people about how the model works and its various mechanisms.
(5) For the sake of uniformity, operational policy should be formulated by government at national and state levels to serve as the baseline of ADR uniqueness across the world, as this will encourage the standardisation of the model.
(6) The Judiciary should make the multi-door mechanisms binding on the parties after submit to the process. This will guide against unnecessary walk away of any of the parties during the process, which can lead to predicament of double costs. The outcome should also be made binding and treated as a consent judgement which is enforceable.

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