

## **RESEARCH FOCUS**

My major research area is Cultural Heritage Law, a discrete branch of International Law which also remains an evolving developmental issue relating with other aspects of International Law. Thus, establishing my secondary research interests on Human rights within the Nigerian Legal system and Clinical Legal Education. My research focus is therefore tailored along the line of interweaving law with related issues of contemporary world to add value to legal education and shape law and cultural policy positively. My research perspective is domiciled in Jurisprudence and International law generally and specifically on the interface between cultural heritage law and its related areas of law. It is interestingly researching the interface between law and performative and material culture, in such a way that discourses on cultural heritage and development becomes apparent. This is an area of law which suffers from a dearth of deeper scientific and insightful analysis in Nigeria and by extension, Africa.

In the area of International Law with emphasis on Cultural Heritage Law, I have undertaken research work on the need for Nigerian lawyers to be versed in heritage law; impact of heritage crimes nationally and globally and determining if the legislation in Nigeria has been able to adequately put the situation under control or not; determining ownership issues of cultural property expropriated from conquered territories like Benin Kingdom in colonial times; critiquing the Nigerian legal framework for protecting cultural property from illicit exportation; drawing lessons to be learnt by other African countries from the protection offered by South Africa to her heritage; admitting the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)'s tireless work with international bodies to ensure the return of priceless objects signifying the identity of a people back to them; uncovering the reasons for the ineffectualness in achieving return and restitution of cultural property to Africa; suggesting what more needs to be done by the international bodies to achieve efficacy of UNESCO Conventions in Africa, taking into consideration the African realities; bringing to fore the benefits derivable from domesticating the 1954 UNESCO Convention by focusing on the destruction of cultural property in Mali; and imploring the Nigerian government to put mechanisms in place to ensure the fulfilment of her international obligations of protecting cultural heritage in Nigeria.

In the area of Human Rights Law within the Nigerian legal system, I have addressed rights of vulnerable groups such as children and Internally Displaced Persons from the cultural identity standpoint because of the relevance of culture to individual identity and hence to human dignity. I have examined Indigenous peoples' rights development; the nexus between democracy and women's rights vis-à-vis international and national laws; considered the rights open to a criminal suspect under the Nigerian Law and identified that the major challenge to achieving an efficient plea bargain process in Nigeria is corruption which can only be dealt with by the restoration of the indigenous societal values and mores which regulated the human conscience in the precolonial societies.

My goal is to extend the frontiers of law and legal education in protecting cultural identity and ultimately human dignity.