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Codification Of Laws A Tool For Effective Law Reform In Nigeria: Challenges And Prospects

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ABSTRACT
Codification is one of the oldest machineries for an easy and neat arrangement of body of laws into comprehensive mechanism for understanding, consistency, clarity and certainty of laws. The codification provides a pivotal role in law reform and revision for its uniformity and coherence. The paper seeks to provide a historical evolution of codification, prospect and challenges as well as plausible suggestions, mirroring few legislations that codified branches like the Companies and Allied Matters Act, the two Codes on offences i.e Criminal and Penal Code as well as Evidence Act standout to provide a perfect example of codified laws and have underscored the pivotal role of codification in legislative governance in Nigeria. It reduces duplication of laws, aid clarity and certainty. Thereby countering the regime change that tries to unbundle or decodified the Codes or Acts, especially, those laws with rich historical jurisprudence of our legal system and that did not only raise the question of continuity of the codification but also poses a signal, a threat caused by proliferations of piece meal legislations on same subject matter. Invariably the trend of piece meal legislations on same subject matter or of same branch of laws makes the laws untidy and unkept resulting in uncertainty
Keywords: Codification, law reform, Nigeria

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The term "code" refers to a compilation of existing laws, systematic arrangement into chapters, subheads, table of contents, and index, and revision to harmonize conflicts, supply omissions, and generally clarify and make complete body of laws designed to regulate completely subjects to which they relate. [1] Legislation is the process, through which a new law is enacted, or a custom or usage is codified and codified in a clear and systematic manner, and it is implemented. Codification in a legal context is the process of gathering and reiterating the legislation of a jurisdiction in specified areas, typically by matter, into a law framework, like a codex or book of law.[2] In civil law systems, codification is a key characteristic. Codification is the method of changing judge-made law into statutory law in common law systems like the English legal structure. By definition, civil law countries rely on codification. The Codes of Lithuania from the sixteenth century are one important early version.[3]

[1]B A Gardner, (*Black's Law Dictionary* (8th Ed, St Paul: West Publishing Co. MN 2004)323.
[2]M Katie and M Brittany, 'Codification/Definition, Process & Law' [2023].
<https://study.com/learn/lesson/codification.html#quiz-course-links> accessed 20th September, 2024.
[3]ibid.

According to the Black's Law Dictionary, codification is the process of compiling, arranging, and systematizing the laws of a given jurisdiction, or of a discrete branch of the law, into an ordered code, i.e., into a complete system of positive law, scientifically ordered, and promulgated by legislative authority. [4] Codification or systematization of law is the practice of compiling and restating a jurisdiction's law in specific areas, typically by theme, in order to create a legal code.[5] In order to prevent municipalities from implementing duplicated or inconsistent new regulations, codification assists the committee or board to see the system of law as a collective and notice any shortfalls that may necessitate laws.[6]

Codified laws refers to rules and regulations that has been collected, restated and written down for the purpose of providing civil order to a society. The process of collecting, restating and writing of laws are known as codification. Codified laws are sometimes referred to as statutes, codes, Acts, Bills or simply laws.[7]

In codification, Codes are typically organized by subject matter, grouping related ordinances.[8] This allows users to navigate to specific topics quickly, whether looking for zoning regulations, traffic ordinances, or business licensing requirements.[9] Wieacker explained that, "the Codification was not focused on gathering, compiling, improving or reforming the existent scientific or prescientific law - as the former German reforms or Roman and Spanish compilations-, but planning a better society by means of new systematic and creative law."[10] Codification focused on systematising and simplifying the legal system while avoiding the complex *ius commune* framework.[11] Codification entails a diligent derivation or taking out of all laws within a particular subject matter and condensing same into a single Act (Code) in order to attain predictability, simplicity and certainty within a legal regime.

1.2 Importance of Codification

Codification plays a critical role in today's legal landscape for several reasons, which enhance the effectiveness, clarity, and accessibility of laws. Codification fundamentally enhances transparency and accessibility,[12] making it easier for individuals to understand their rights and obligations. It reduces uncertainty in legal interpretation, serves as a living document that can adapt to societal changes while maintaining its foundational structure. Hart acknowledges that judges play a critical role in interpreting these codes.[13] However, he emphasizes that judicial decisions should not overshadow the authority of the codified law itself, advocating for a balanced relationship between legislation and judicial interpretation.[14] The importance of codification helps in shaping modern legal systems by enhancing clarity, consistency, and adaptability, ultimately supporting the rule of law.

1.2.1 Historical Context

1.2.1.1 Evolution of Legal Codification

The Roman legacy through the Code of Justinian of 529AD codified all existing legislation from the time of Emperor Hadrian, 117 – 138AD. The collection of laws and constitutions made by order of the Emperor Justinian is distinguished by the appellation of "The Code," by way of eminence. The Code of Justinian (*Codex Justi nianeus*) was a collection of imperial constitutions, compiled, by order of that

[4]B A Gardner, ibid fn 1, 323.
[5] M Katie and M Brittany, ibid fn 2.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Civic Plus, 'Unlocking the Power of Codification for Local Government' [2023].
<https://www.civicplus.com/blog/cs/unlocking-the-power-of-codification-for-local-government/> accessed 20th September, 2024.
[9] Ibid.
[10]F Wieacker, Historia Del Derecho Prdado De La Edad Moderna (Francisco FernAndez Jard6n trans, Aguilar ed. 1957 (1908) 292.
[11]J Merryman and others, 'The Civil Law Tradition: Europe, Latin America And East Asia' (1994) 3, 449-51.
[12]Ibid.
[13]H. L. A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (Oxford University Press 1961)
[14]Ibid.

emperor, by a commission, and promulgated A. D. 529.[15] It comprised twelve books, and was the first of the four compilations of law which make up the *Corpus Juris Civilis*. This name is often met in a connection indicating that the entire *Corpus Juris Civilis* is intended, or, sometimes, the Digest; but its use should be confined to the *Codex*.[16] It was chosen as the baseline with modification necessary to "purge the errors and contradictions, to retrench whatever was obsolete or superfluous", retaining only such law s as were "wise and salutary and best adopted to the practice of the tribunals and the use of the people".[17]

In ancient Middle Eastern legal systems, the system of law was a prevalent characteristic. Cuneiform law can be found in several of them. Cuneiform law pertains to any of cuneiform-scripted law frameworks that were produced and implemented across the old Middle East by the Kassites, Babylonians, Sumerians, Elamites, Hurrians, Assyrians, and Hittites.[18]

To this date, the Code of Ur-Nammu is the world's earliest surviving law code. Mostly in Sumerian language, it dates back between 2100 and 2050 BCE and was inscribed on a stone in Mesopotamia. Ur-Nammu, ruler of Ur between 2112 and 2095 BCE, is credited in the introduction. The writer of the cuneiform tablets on which the laws were written is still a subject of debate. Shulgi, the son of Ur-Nammu, has been the subject of some speculation.[19]

The first society to codify its laws was the Babylon, the code of Hammurabai was compiled in Circa in 1760 BC by the Babylonian king around and it is known as civil code. [20] The first permanent system of codified laws could be found in China with the compilation of the Tang Code in CE 624. This formed the basis for the Chinese Criminal code.[21] In the ancient Roman Empire, important codification was also developed. Since crime (IF) and punishment (THEN) are placed in casuistic form, this pattern has been used in practically all subsequent codes.[22] In contrast to the future *lex talionis* "eye for an eye" tenet of Babylon law, it establishes monetary sanctions for bodily harm. Capital punishment was reserved for crimes such as murder, robbery of property, infidelity, and assault.[23]

The Babylonian legal code known as the Code of Hammurabi dates back to the year c. 1755-1750 BC.[24] Legal texts from antiquity have never been better organized or preserved than the Code of Hammurabi. It is said to have been drafted by Hammurabi in the Old Babylonian language of Akkadian. The original writing was carved onto a block of basalt.[25]

Ancient Babylonian culture and the Code's presumed justice and respect for law were admired by contemporary researchers. Discussions focused on how it influenced the Mosaic Law as well.[26] These two collections were rapidly linked by *lex talionis*, the "eye for an eye" premise. For decades, scholars of Assyriology have been debating the Code's aim, its foundational concepts and its language, as well as its relationship to earlier and subsequent law compilations.

Code civil is the code which embodies the civil law of France. It was promulgated in 1804. When Napoleon became emperor, the name was changed to "Code Napoleon," by which it is still often designated, though it is now official ly styled by its original name of "Code Civil."[27] *Code de commerce* is a French code, enacted in 1807, as a supplement to the Code Napoleon, regulating commercial

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[15] B A Gardner, ibid fn 2, 324.
[16] Ibid.
[17] B Nwabueze, *Save Our Constitutional Democracy from Emasculation* {Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd 2017).
[18] M Katie and M Brittany, ibid fn 2.
[19] M Katie and M Brittany, ibid fn 2.
[20] Code of Hammurabi 1760 B.C Encyclopedia.
[21] C C Wigwe, Jurisprudence and Legal Theory, (Readwide Publishers, 2011) 171.
[22] M Katie and M Brittany, ibid fn 2.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] B A Gardner, ibid fn 1, 323.

transactions, the laws of business, bankruptcies, and the jurisdiction and procedure of the courts dealing with these subjects.[28]

1.2.1.2 History of Codes in Nigeria

The history of codification of laws in Nigeria is complex, reflecting the country's colonial past and diverse legal traditions. Prior to that, Nigeria's customary law or native law and custom and its enforcement system was the only legal system that existed among the indigenous people and communities, long ago, before the colonists, and other religions and systems of law came and took root in the area.

In *Oyewumi v Ogunesan*,[29] Obaseki JSC defined custom to be the organic or living law of the indigenous people of Nigeria, regulating their lives and transaction. Customary laws from one community to another are either wholly unwritten or partly unwritten.[30] *Dawodu v Danmole*;[31] where the unsuccessful application of one method of distribution, per stirpes (*Idigi*), will lead to another method (*Ori Ojori*). This law leaves room for abuse, oppression, and exploitation of the weak, because in most cases, the head of the family as a last resort will be asked to choose a more convenient system of distribution. He will often decide the option that will be more beneficial to his own interest. In this process, he would have breached one of the demands of natural justice: "a man must not judge in his own case."[32] In such a situation, fair judgment cannot be obtained (*nemo judex incausa sua*). Codification will weed out all irrelevant areas and uncertainties in the law, leaving certainty behind. Codification respects moral and legal considerations, unlike most aspects of our country's law.[33] As there was a lack of uniformity in the Nigeria society, the British found it difficult to administrate the various practices, norms, culture, and customs that were present in Nigeria society. This is borne from the fact that customary laws are most times not compiled non codified in form of statute.

Owing to the exponential increase in the population of the society, novel transactions and vices are bound to arise. It is on this stead that it becomes imperative to make customary laws incorporated into the framework of national legal systems and developed and adjusted to be in line with modern day realism and in order to test the efficacy of codified statutes.

Prior to the arrival of the British Criminal Law, a large number of systems of criminal law existed in Nigeria. The advent of the British did not at first alter the prevalent situation so much with the development of centralized government, however, some need began to be felt by the British administration for a clearly worded, concise and unified set of criminal principles to be applied in British courts. The common law of crime was unsuitable because it was, and still is, relatively complicated and not easily ascertainable.[34] The introduction of codified laws began during British colonial rule, with the Criminal Code Ordinance enacted in 1916,[35] which was applicable to the Southern Nigeria. This Code was adapted from English law and aimed to consolidate various legal practices into a single framework. In contrast, the Penal Code was introduced in Northern Nigeria in 1960.[36] This Code was influenced by the Islamic law and customary practices.

Following the independence in Nigeria the laws are all codified and enshrined in the 1999 Constitution. This enables easy accessibility to the laws, although once in a while, the Constitution may be amended

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[28] Ibid.

[29] [1990] 3 NWLR (Pt . 137)162, 207.

[30] E Malemi, The Nigerian Legal Method (Princeton Publishing Co, 2012) 162.

[31](1958) 3 FSC 46 (1962) 1 All NLR 702.

[32] *State Council Service Commission and Another v Burugbe* (1984) 7 SC 19.

[33] For instance, the *Osu* Caste, Disinheritance of female child of property right in *Mojekwu v Ejikeme* (2000) 5 NWLR pt. 657 402.

[34]Learn Nigerian Law, 'History of Nigerian criminal law'. <https://www.learnnigerianlaw.com/learn/criminal-law/history> accessed 20th September, 2024.

[35]CC, 1916.

[36]PC, 1960.

and when it happens, it goes through a process of re-codification. For instance, the Nigerian constitution has gone through various stages of alterations from the 1960 Constitution to the 1963 constitution, followed by the 1979 and 1989 Constitutions and presently the 1999 Constitution which was altered in 2011.[37]

There was a movement in the institutions from informal to formal when the British introduced formal regulations and codified laws. Criminal law was easy to adapt since it was intended to be applied equally to all people everywhere. However, Warren Hastings disagreed with the codification of Indian personal laws because he understood it was risky and wanted to avoid getting involved.

In this wise, the Criminal Code Act, Occupiers Liability Act of 1957 and the Company and Allied Matters Act, become readily available examples. These codified laws illustrate the diverse legal landscape in Nigeria, shaped by its colonial history and cultural complexity.[38]

In our contemporary Nigeria, the Companies and Allied Matter Act[39] is a typical example of law crystallizing from practice and conventions. Sevigne particularly deprecated the trend toward the codification of law which is spreading all over the world as illustrated by Napoleonic codes.

Again, there was an attempt of a draft proposed legislation of 'Security Interests in Movable Property' to provide for the creation, priority, registration and enforcement of security interests in personal property.[40] The proposed reforms intends to be applicable to all security interests in personal property, both tangible and intangible, in Nigeria regardless of its form or denomination, thus accepting their economic purpose as functional equivalents.[41] The existence of the law would not repeal all the previous laws which governed security interests, except those that are contrary to the provisions of the Draft Law.[42] The scope of the proposed Law encompasses all security interests in personal property created by agreement that secure payment or other obligatory performances.[43] For the avoidance of doubt, a security interest will be deemed as synonymous to a security right, interest or charge in personal property inclusive of fixtures which secures payment or performance of an obligation.[44] This was the first ever attempt to unify and codify all security interest laws in personal property in Nigeria under one statutory enactment. Even though, this proposed Law which was deemed impeccable was not enacted into legislation in Nigeria.

1.3 Current Trends

Countries have succeeded in codification through various strategies and practices that enhance the clarity, accessibility, and effectiveness of their legal systems. Some countries like France and Germany have developed comprehensive legal codes that cover multiple areas of law, such as the Louisiana Civil Code, which is exceptional, or codes drafted under the influence of European methods, such as the Uniform Commercial Code or even the Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure, are organized according to a methodical and logical plan.[45] The French Civil Code[46] was used as a "model" by several 19th century Latin American civil codes. Subsequently, new legal approaches and doctrines were used, such as Germanic[47] and Italian civil legislation.[48] These codes provide a systematic structure for laws, ensuring

[37]C C Okara, 'The Jurisprudential Analysis of Adaptation and Codification under Nigerian Legal System' [2020]41. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346609212_The_Jurisprudential_Analysis_of_Adaptation_and_Codification_under_Nigerian_Legal_System

[38]T C Jaja, and E O Anyaegbunam, 'Law Reform in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective' [2020].*Journal of Law* <https://doi.org/10.15294/jllr.v1i3.36702> accessed 20th September, 2024.

[39] CAMA 1990.

[40] Draft Law, preamble

[41] Ibid.

[42]Draft Law, para 92.5.

[43] Draft Law, para 1.1.

[44] Draft Law, 8.

[45]J L Bergel, 'Principal Features and Methods of Codification'. (1988) 48 *La. L. Rev,* 1092. <https://digitalcommons.law.lsu.edu/lalrev/vol48/iss5/3> accessed 20th September, 2024.

[46] G Mary Ann and others., 'Comparative Legal Traditions' (1994) 44-64.

[47] J Merryman and others., 'The Civil Law Tradition: Europe, Latin America and East Asia' (1994) 1163-73.

[48] L Diez-Picazo, 'Codificacin, Descodificacidn Recodificacion, Anuario De Derecho Civil' [1992]473-84.

consistency and clarity across legal interpretations and applications. Throughout the 20th century, the tendency towards decodification and recodification in Latin America had substantially transformed the content and structure of the civil codes.[49]

Successful codification often involves public participation in the drafting process. For instance, local governments in the United States engage communities to ensure that codified laws reflect the needs and values of residents, fostering trust and compliance.

It is vital to note that codification is not a one-time endeavor;[50] countries like Canada regularly update their legal codes to incorporate new laws, amendments, and societal changes. This ongoing commitment helps maintain the relevance and accuracy of the legal framework. New ordinances, amendments, and repeals are a constant reality in local governance. A robust codification process ensures that these changes are seamlessly incorporated into the existing code, maintaining accuracy and accessibility.[51]

The digital age has escalated the importance of codification, transforming it from a strategic advantage to a necessity.[52] This can help in streamlining access to laws. For example, many jurisdictions utilize online platforms to make their codes easily accessible to the public, enhancing transparency and understanding.

Countries that prioritize legal education and training for practitioners ensure that those who enforce and interpret laws are well-versed in codified statutes. This approach is evident in jurisdictions with robust legal education systems that emphasize understanding codified law. All these strategies contribute to effective codification, enhancing legal certainty, accessibility, and public trust in the legal system.

1.4 Prospects for Codification

The prospect of codification in Nigeria's legal system presents both opportunities and challenges. The prospects codification can help to –

a. simplify legal provisions, making laws more understandable and accessible to the public. This is important in a country with diverse legal traditions and languages;
b. harmonise various customary laws across Nigeria's numerous ethnic groups, reducing conflicts and inconsistencies in legal interpretations;
c. serve as a foundation for ongoing law reform efforts, allowing for systematic updates to reflect societal changes and best practices;
d. enhance the predictability of legal outcomes, fostering public trust in the judicial system and promoting adherence to the rule of law;
e. The prospect of codification in Nigeria holds potential for enhancing the legal system, it must be approached with careful planning to address inherent challenges.

1.5 Key Challenges

Some of the key challenges are –

a. corruption within public institutions significantly undermines the enforcement of codified laws. The pervasive culture of secrecy and lack of accountability erodes public trust and hampers the effective functioning of the legal system[53];
b. the judiciary in Nigeria faces significant delays in case processing, leading to prolonged legal battles. This inefficiency discourages citizens from seeking justice and diminishes the effectiveness of codified laws[54];

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[49]B Jorge, *Historia Del Derecho Peruano* (Libreria Studium 4th ed. 1988) (1937) 323.
[50] Civic Plus, ibid fn 8.
[51]Ibid.
[52]S Jain, 'Codification in Knowledge Management' <https://bloomfire.com/blog/codification-in-knowledge-management/> accessed 20th September, 2024.
[53]U Ngozi, 'Addressing the Implementation Challenges of Institutional Obligations and Reporting Requirements under the Nigerian Freedom of Information Act, 2011' [2019] 10, 1305-1330. doi: 10.4236/blr.2019.105070, *Beijing Law Review*.< https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=97115> accessed 20th September, 2024.
[54]O Timothy and O S Hannah, 'Factors Affecting Effective Policy Implementation in Nigeria: Focus on Federal Character Principle' <https://www.zjpd.com.ng/index.php/zjpd/article/download/17/19> accessed 18th September, 2024.

c. resistance from communities that rely heavily on customary laws, which are often flexible and deeply embedded in local cultures. This cultural attachment can lead to non-compliance with codified laws, particularly in rural areas[55];
d. complex policies and bureaucratic processes create obstacles for implementing codified laws effectively. Navigating these regulatory frameworks can be time-consuming and dissuade stakeholders from engaging with the legal system[56];
e. lack of public awareness among the populace regarding their rights under codified laws. This gap limits public engagement with the legal system and hinders individuals from utilising these laws effectively[57];
f. integrate diverse legal systems into a single codified framework is a complex task that requires careful consideration of local customs and practices;
g. inadequate infrastructure, including unreliable electricity and internet access, poses challenges for implementing and accessing legal resources. This limitation affects both legal practitioners and citizens seeking information about their rights[58];
h. requires significant resources for research, drafting, and public education, which may be limited in Nigeria's current economic climate.
i. Proliferation of fragmented pieces of legislations of a particular branch of law by lawmakers.

A code is likely to disrupt current rights and duties by introducing new ones, disrupting the legal order and causing confusion and uncertainty**.** Codification ensures that the law is known with certainty, avoids the pitfalls of judicial legislation, avoid any legal malpractice, it is required to preserve a country's custom and it is required for national unification.

To address these challenges, it requires concerted efforts from various stakeholders, including government reforms, public education initiatives, and infrastructural investments to enhance the legal framework's effectiveness in Nigeria. Other ways to address the challenges are –

a. to review the Nigerian Law Reform Commission (NLRC) Act, No. 7, 2022, to grant the Commission greater autonomy from the Attorney-General, enabling it to operate more independently and effectively;
b. establish clear timelines within which the Attorney-General must submit the Commission's reports to the Federal Executive Council and National Assembly;
c. implement nationwide campaigns to educate citizens about their rights under codified laws, increasing public engagement and compliance with legal frameworks;
d. to foster community discussions and workshops to explain the importance of codified laws and how they impact daily life;
e. introduce measures to streamline judicial processes, such as case management systems, to reduce backlog and improve efficiency in the courts;
f. provide training to judges and legal practitioners on new laws and reforms to ensure consistent application;
g. computerise public records and legal documents to facilitate easier access and timely disclosure of information. Also, develop online platforms for citizens to access legal information, submit complaints, and engage with legal processes;
h. empower the Attorney-General to create monitoring teams that ensure compliance with codified laws and implementation of reforms;
i. avoid piece meal legislations of same subject matter by the National Assembly;
j. introduce adequate sanctions for public institutions that fail to comply with legal requirements, enhancing accountability;

[55] PC, 1960.
[56] O Timothy and O S Hannah, ibid fn 52.
[57] T C Jaja, and E O Anyaegbunam, ibid 36.
[58] 'Coding Projects in Nigeria' < https://nigeriacodingacademy.com/coding-projects-in-nigeria/> accessed 18th September, 2024.

k. conduct regular reviews of existing laws to identify outdated or redundant statutes, ensuring that the legal framework remains relevant and effective.

Implementing these recommendations can significantly improve the codification process in Nigeria, fostering a more robust and accessible legal system. This will amount to the formation of a planned notion for growth. It makes it possible for the legislation to achieve the goal for which it was created.

In today's world, codification has become absolutely necessary. So, it is the most effective technique of advancing legal progress, which is why it has been accepted throughout the world. In Nigeria, what needs to be put in mind as significant goals of law reform is the uniformity of laws. Also, there must be a sense of unity between the Agency in charge of reform, the legislative, and the judiciary.

It is difficult to envisage a legal structure that is based solely on oral regulations, uncertain and confusing conventions, and ambiguous legislative provisions. Many people believe that the legal system is confusing, clouded, and inconsistent in some ways. This point of view cannot be totally disproved because it is evident that the procedural and technical structure of laws, the sheer number of them, and the inconsistency of their variation in terms of geography and time, complicate the very essence of the law-making process.

Spain, German and France have ancient civil codes, but partial reforms and flexible judge-made law have adapted them to new necessities.[59]However, in the absence of such a change, a global reform that substitutes the entirely legal system would be appropriate. A second and third generation of civil codes have been enacted in Europe, Latin America, and North America, including the civil codes of Italy (1942), Netherlands (1992), Peri (1984) and Quebec (1994).[60]

By the turn of the 20th century, it has become clear that the recodification process has had substantial momentum in Europe and Latin America, indicating that it will influence the development of the civil law tradition in the foreseeable future.[61]

The world of codification offers local governments a pathway to streamlined governance, enhanced transparency, and empowered communities. By understanding the nuances of codification best practices, you can unlock the true potential of your municipality's legal framework.

1.6 CONCLUSION

Codification is essential for a reliable legal system, especially in a country such as Nigeria, where less regard is paid to the rule of law, even where the law is adequately enshrined (the Constitution). Codification of laws in Nigeria represents a crucial step towards creating a more coherent, accessible, and effective legal system. While significant progress has been made since the introduction of codified laws during the colonial era, numerous challenges remain, including corruption, judicial inefficiency, limited public awareness, and cultural resistance.

Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that includes strengthening legal institutions, enhancing public education, reforming the judiciary, leveraging technology, and ensuring compliance with established laws. By implementing targeted recommendations, Nigeria can build a legal framework that not only reflects its diverse cultural heritage but also promotes justice, accountability, and the rule of law.

Ultimately, successful codification will empower citizens, enhance governance, and foster national unity by providing a common legal foundation that respects both statutory and customary practices. As Nigeria continues to evolve, the commitment to refining its legal system through effective codification will be essential for achieving sustainable development and social harmony.

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[59]L Diez-Picazo, 'Codificacin, Descodificacidn Recodificacion, Anuario De Derecho Civil' [1992] 482-83.

[60] J Merryman and others., ibid fn 45, 1241-46;

[61]M, M Luisa "The Evolution of Codification in the Civil Law Legal Systems: Towards Decodification and Recodification," Florida State University Journal of Transnational Law & Policy (2001) Vol. 11: Iss. 1, Article 5, 191. <https://ir.law.fsu.edu/jtlp/vol11/iss1/5> accessed 18th September, 2024.